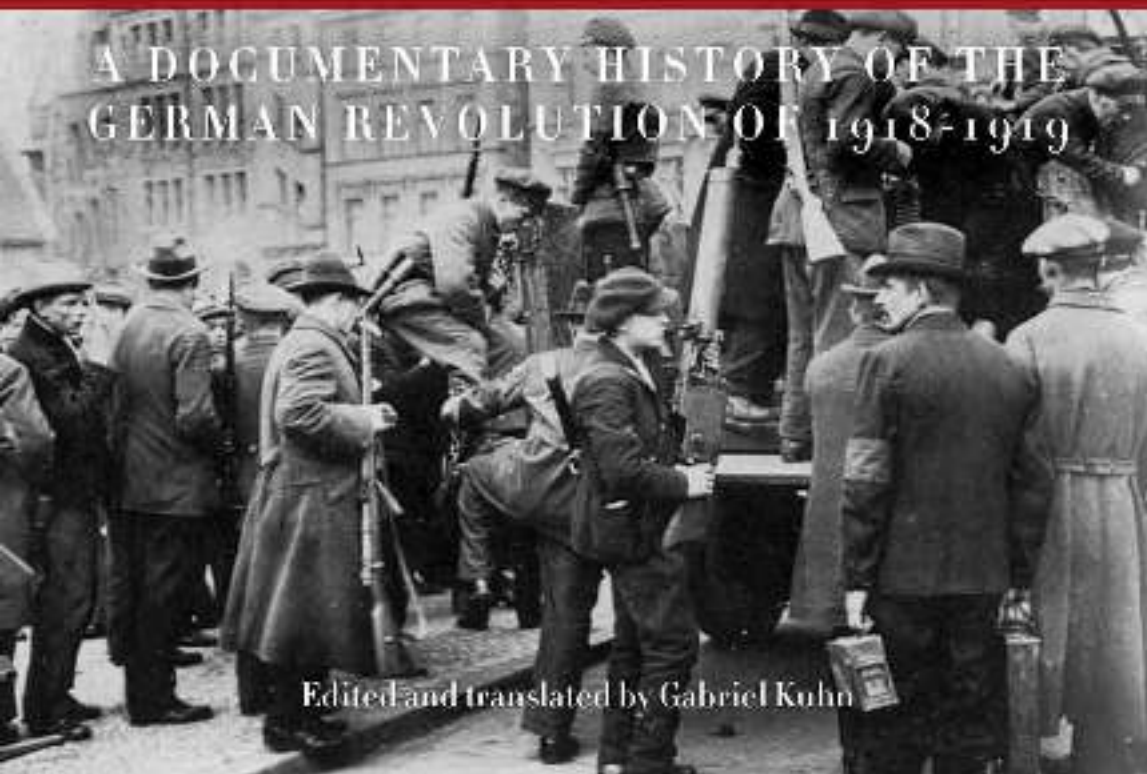




ALL POWER TO THE COUNCILS!

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE
GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918-1919



Edited and translated by Gabriel Kuhn

PRAISE FOR
All Power to the Councils!
A Documentary History of the
German Revolution of 1918-1919

Gabriel Kuhn's excellent volume illuminates a profound global revolutionary moment, in which brilliant ideas and debates lit the sky, and from which emerged the likes of Ret Marut, a.k.a. B. Traven, perhaps history's greatest proletarian novelist. Herein lie the roots of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* and much else besides.

—Marcus Rediker, author of *Villains of all Nations* and *The Slave Ship*

This remarkable collection, skillfully edited by Gabriel Kuhn, brings to life that most pivotal of revolutions, crackling with the acrid odor of street fighting, insurgent hopes, and ultimately defeat. Had it triumphed, millions would have been spared the inferno of fascism; its failure ushered in counter-revolution far beyond its borders. In an era brimming with anticapitalist aspirations, these pages ring with that still unmet revolutionary promise: I was, I am, I shall be.

—Sasha Lilley, author of *Capital and Its Discontents* and co-author of *Catastrophism*

Drawing on newly uncovered material through pioneering archival historical research, Gabriel Kuhn's powerful book on the German workers' councils movement is essential reading to understanding the way forward for democratic worker control today. *All Power to the Councils! A Documentary History of the German Revolution of 1918–1919* confers important lessons that will avert the setbacks of the past while providing penetrating and invaluable historical documentation crucial for

anticipating the inevitable dangers in the struggle for building working class democracy.

—Immanuel Ness, Graduate Center for Worker Education,
Brooklyn College

An indispensable resource on a world-historic event. Gabriel Kuhn's remarkable, richly annotated documentary collection gathers eyewitness accounts and revolutionary voices from Germany's 1918–1919 worker-soldier-council revolution. Whereas the Independent SPD and the Spartakusbund/KPD dominate most accounts, up to the point of exaggeration, Kuhn's balanced work at last recovers the vital, central contributions and alternative perspectives of other mass proletarian currents: the anarchists and syndicalists of Bavaria, the Ruhr, and elsewhere, including Landauer and Mühsam, the Revolutionary Stewards, mutineers at Wilhelmshaven and Kiel, and the Ruhr Red Army.

—Lucien van der Walt, Rhodes University, South Africa

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GERMANY



ALL POWER TO THE COUNCILS!

INTRODUCTION

GABRIEL KUHN

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1918–1919 IS A CURIOUS phenomenon, not least because the jury is still out on whether it really was a revolution, or, more precisely, whether the revolution was brought to its end. To this day, social democrats celebrate the end of World War I as Germany’s transition from Kaiserreich to republic. Radical socialists, on the other hand, bemoan the betrayal of the revolution’s proletarian ideals and of the communists, radical labor organizers, and anarchists who fell victim to the social democrats’ collaboration with reactionary military forces that paved the way to the Weimar Republic.

The Weimar Republic, named after the eastern German town where Germany’s republican constitution was drafted, was an attempt in democratic parliamentarism that never functioned, instead causing the rise of fascist organizations in the 1920s, among which the National Socialists emerged as the strongest force, eventually seizing power in 1933. This propelled Germany, and soon the rest of the world, into a disaster of unspeakable dimensions.

One of the most compelling questions with respect to the German Revolution is, “What would have happened if?” Would the world have been spared National Socialism if a socialist republic had been established? Would socialist republics in both Russia and Germany have triggered many more socialist revolutions, at least in Europe? Or would two competing socialist systems have been established? Could the entire history of socialism have been different? Could the anarchist influence have created a less bureaucratic and centralist socialist model?

On the one hand, there is little point in pondering these questions. History cannot be undone. On the other hand, there is a lot to learn from history’s course and from the consequences of what was, and was not, done. It helps strategizing for the future. This is one of the hopes connected to this publication.

All Power to the Councils! is the first English-language history of the German Revolution based on original documents by active participants representing all of the radical factions involved. There exist a few general histories of the German Revolution in English, some of which are very good and highly recommended—see the Bibliography for details. However, most of these histories are written from a strongly communist perspective and focus almost exclusively on the role of Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, and the Spartacus League. While the Spartacists played an important role in the events, their politics were not uncontested in the radical left, and in some sections of the proletariat as well as in certain regions, unionist, syndicalist, and anarchist influences were equally important. Furthermore, while historians have so far summarized their research in monographs, which make for very useful introductions and overviews, most of the eyewitness reports of the German revolutionaries have remained untranslated. In this sense, the volume presented here hopes to contribute to the ongoing study of the German Revolution by providing firsthand accounts of active revolutionaries, compiled in a way that chronologically traces the revolutionary developments. Using the introductory glossary and timeline, the background information to the individual chapters and texts, and the annotations, even the reader unfamiliar with the broad strokes of the German Revolution's history should not lose sight of the revolution's narrative, being able to also read this book as a general history of the events. At the same time, the English readers already familiar with the history shall find new texts and therefore perspectives and analyses that should deepen their understanding of the events and inspire their own perspectives and analyses.

The main radical factions during the revolution were:

1. The communists, first organized in the *Spartakusbund* [Spartacus League] and the *Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands* [International Communists of Germany] (IKD), then in the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* [Communist Party of Germany] (KPD), founded by the Spartacus League and the IKD on January 1, 1919.
2. The *Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* [Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany] (USPD), founded in 1917, when the left wing of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* [Social Democratic Party of Germany] (SPD) split from the mother party in protest against the SPD's continued support of the war. All Spartacus League members were part of the USPD before the founding of the KPD.
3. Radical labor organizers, most notably the *Revolutionäre Obleute* [Revolutionary Stewards], who were predominantly factory workers with long experience in union struggles and strong trust among the radical proletariat.
4. The *anarchists*, most notably Gustav Landauer and Erich Mühsam.

The differences between these factions will become apparent. The Spartacists, while critical of what they saw as authoritarian tendencies in Bolshevism—most

clearly expressed in the writings of Rosa Luxemburg—regarded a strong communist party as a necessary requirement to protect the revolution and to establish a proletarian council system. Most USPD members were open to certain parliamentary concessions, mainly to avoid armed conflict. The Revolutionary Stewards championed the direct involvement of workers in the administrative apparatus, drawing on their experience as labor organizers. They criticized the Spartacists for their alienation from the working masses and for their insurrectionist tendencies. At the same time, both the communists and the Revolutionary Stewards perceived the anarchists as politically inexperienced utopians. The anarchists, for their part, were champions of federalism and formulated a strong critique of what they saw as the centralist tendencies of the Spartacists and of the Revolutionary Stewards' focus on the factory workers of the big cities. Despite these tensions, however, the different radical factions never hesitated in defending and honoring each other in the face of social democratic and bourgeois attacks. Landauer, for example, gave the Munich eulogy to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg after they were murdered in January 1919. Mühsam called Luxemburg "the flame of the revolution" in an obituary published in his journal *Kain*.¹ All of the radical factions were also united in their commitment to a council system and in their opposition to bourgeois parliamentarism.

Although it captured the hopes of many revolutionaries and wide sections of the proletariat, the council idea was not very developed in Germany at the time. Inspiration came from the example of the Russian Revolution, experiences in workplace organizing, and a few texts by Antonie Pannekoek. Only after the revolution was the council system explored in more theoretical depth by authors like Otto Rühle, Karl Plättner, and Erich Mühsam. Nonetheless, *Alle Macht den Räten!* [All Power to the Councils] was the common rallying cry of the radicals during the revolutionary period.

The defeat of the revolution had various causes: the vagueness of the council idea, the lack of common organization and strategy, the lack of revolutionary experience, the counterrevolutionary tendencies within the SPD, the remaining strength of reactionary forces in Germany, especially within the military, the exhaustion of the workers and soldiers after years of war, the propaganda of the press, the prevailing conservatism of many sections of the population, the lack of deeply rooted internationalism, etc. Reading the texts compiled in this volume, one cannot help but feel that the belief in a German council republic was often naïve, that actions were hastily conceived, and that enormous tactical errors were made. At the same time, the commitment of the revolutionaries is inspiring, many of their observations and insights are extremely valuable for revolutionary theory, regardless of place and time, and there is plenty to be learned from their mistakes. All this, I believe, lifts the texts far above mere historical interest.

In this context, it was extremely interesting to work on this volume as the so-called Arab Spring, the 2011 revolutions and uprisings in the Middle East, unfolded. It was

so apparent that many of the Arab revolutionaries faced questions that were essentially the same that the German revolutionaries had faced almost a hundred years earlier—or, for that matter, pretty much all revolutionaries throughout history: What do we do once the tyrant is gone? How do we facilitate a true transition of power? How do we establish political and economic institutions that really alter the forms of government and production? What is the role of the military and the police? What are the actual demands, needs, and interests of the people? How do we secure democratic and social progress? How do we defend the revolution? How do we prevent reactionary forces from using the situation for their own ends? How do we go from mass rebellion to a mass effort of building a new society? How do we turn a radical moment into long-lasting radicalism? The list of questions is long. This book does not contain any answers, but many reports and reflections that shall help us find some in the long run.

* * *

The vast majority of the texts included in this book appear in English for the first time. The “Icarus Paper” on the revolt in Wilhelmshaven, originally written in English, and the texts by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg are the exceptions. The latter appear in new translations, mainly to have consistent terminology throughout the volume. All translations are by Gabriel Kuhn.

All of the included texts have been written by eyewitnesses and active participants in the revolution. Some were written during the events, some afterward; some are descriptive, some analytical. What ties them all together is their authors’ direct involvement.

The structure of the book follows the most important sites of the revolution in chronological order: *Wilhelmshaven and Kiel*, where the sailors’ revolt in late October 1918 triggered the revolution; *Berlin*, the capital and therefore a natural center of activity; *Brunswick*, a stronghold of the federalist visions prevalent outside of Berlin and Prussia; *Bremen*, where the first council republic was established; *Bavaria*, where the best-known council republic was proclaimed; the *Ruhr Valley*, where workers turned the resistance against the reactionary Kapp Putsch of March 1920 into one of the last proletarian attempts to establish a council system; and the *Vogtland* in eastern Germany, where “communist bandits” led courageous campaigns against the bourgeois order until 1921. With the arrest of the most charismatic leader of the Vogtland rebels, Max Hoelz, in 1921, the persistent effort to give the German Revolution a clearly proletarian character despite all obstacles finally found its end. Radical workers’ rebellions flared up in Germany until 1923, but these were isolated incidents no longer carried by the mass movement of 1918.

Each chapter and each text are briefly introduced. A timeline and a glossary of key organizations, personalities, journals, and terms are included for easier orienta-

tion. Other explanations have been added in notes. Information on individuals mentioned in the texts has been added whenever it was available, and information on geographical places whenever this seemed necessary to understand the narrative. All notes are by Gabriel Kuhn unless specified.

As many terms as possible were translated into English. When an English translation might have been misleading, the German term has been retained and explained in a note. Sometimes a very specific German term follows the English translation in parentheses. English translations of German names and book titles follow the original in square brackets.

Some key terms of the history of the German Revolution have been translated differently by English translators. *Rat* has been rendered both as “council” and “soviet,” *Volksbeauftragte* both as “people’s delegates” and “people’s commissars,” and so forth. In general, I have avoided English terms that evoke the Soviet Union’s political order—such as “soviets” and “people’s commissars”—as the situation and the debates in Germany were quite different. At times, it also seemed important to differentiate. For example, there existed *Staatskommissare* and *Volkskommissare* next to *Volksbeauftragte* during the revolution, which makes a terminological distinction between, in this case, *state/people’s commissioners* and *people’s delegates* useful.

The language of German writers at the time, both male and female, was marked by an inclusive use of male terms. Given the many problematic implications of a modern cleansing of historical texts, the original patterns have been reproduced.

Readability has been a priority in the translation work in order to make the texts included in this book relevant for a contemporary English audience. When this demanded a liberal rather than a literal translation, I opted for the liberal one. Needless to say, no liberties were taken that, in my judgment, would have jeopardized the intentions or contents of the original.

As always, many people deserve thanks for having made this publication possible. Apart from the folks at PM Press, these include the wonderful staff at Stockholm’s *Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek* [Workers’ History Archive and Library], Wolfgang Eckhardt, Teo Panther, Mark Haarfeldt, Chris Hirte, Ralph Klein, Regina Wamper, and Siegbert Wolf.



1. *Kain*, January 1919. A translation of the obituary entitled “Karl Liebknecht—Rosa Luxemburg” is included in Erich Mühsam, *Liberating Society from the State and Other Writings: A Political Reader* (Oakland: PM Press, 2011), 117–119.

GLOSSARY

Organizations

Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands [International Communists of Germany] (**IKD**): founded in late 1918 by the Bremen group *Linksradikale* [Left-Wing Radicals] and other radical socialists; formed the KPD with members of the Spartacus League in 1919.

Kommunistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands [Communist Workers' Party of Germany] (**KAPD**): founded in 1920 by a revolutionary faction expelled at the October 1919 KPD party congress; split into various groups in the mid-1920s.

Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands [Communist Party of Germany] (**KPD**): founded in 1919 by members of the Spartacus League and the IKD; after the left majority of the USPD had joined, the party officially carried the name *Vereinigte Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (VKPD) from 1920 to 1922; after the Nazi regime, the party was revived in West Germany but had no big influence—in East Germany, it became a part of the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* [Socialist Unity Party] (SED) in 1949.

Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Social Democratic Party of Germany] (**SPD**): founded in 1890 as a successor of the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* [Socialist Workers' Party of Germany] (SAP); one of Germany's main parties to this day; also called *Mehrheitssozialisten* [Majority Socialists] or *Rechtssozialisten* [Right Socialists] to distinguish them from the USPD.

Spartakusbund [Spartacus League]: a group of internationalist, anti-war SPD members that emerged from the *Gruppe Internationale* [Group International], founded in 1914; in 1917, the Spartacus members formed the left wing of the newly founded USPD; the name *Spartakusbund* [Spartacus League] was officially adopted in November 1918, although the group had already been known as the *Spartakusgruppe* [Spartacus Group] since the first "Spartakusbriefe"

[Spartacus Letters] published in 1916; the Spartacus League was the main group behind the foundation of the KPD in 1919; its most prominent members were Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

Revolutionäre Obleute [Revolutionary Stewards]: radical anti-war labor organizers who played a major role in the German Revolution's council movement; the most prominent figures were Richard Müller and Ernst Däumig.

Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany] (**USPD**): founded in 1917 by an anti-war faction that split from the SPD; in 1920, a large faction joined the KPD, in 1922 the majority of the remaining members rejoined the SPD, which rendered the USPD politically insignificant; it officially disbanded in the early 1930s.

Personalities

Artelt, Karl (1890–1981): joined the SPD in 1908, later the USPD and the KPD and, in 1946, the newly founded *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] (SED) in East Germany.

Auer, Erhard (1874–1945): prominent Bavarian SPD politician, chairman of the Bavarian SPD during the revolution.

Baden, Max von (1867–1929): last chancellor of the Kaiserreich; handed his office to Friedrich Ebert (SPD) on November 9, 1918.

Barth, Emil (1879–1941): trade unionist, SPD member, and opponent of the war; joined the USPD in 1917 and was a member of the Council of People's Delegates; rejoined the SPD in 1922.

Brandler, Heinrich (1881–1967): expelled from the SPD in 1915 because of his opposition to the war; founding member of the Spartacus League and the KPD; chairman of the KPD together with August Thalheimer in the early 1920s; Brandler and Thalheimer became increasingly critical of the KPD party line and co-founded a splinter group in 1929, the *Kommunistische Partei-Opposition* [Communist Party-Opposition] (KPD-O).

Clemenceau, Georges (1841–1929): prime minister of France from 1917 to 1920.

Däumig, Ernst (1866–1922): SPD member and one of the *Vorwärts* editors until 1916 when he was removed from his post for opposing the war; joined the USPD in 1917 and became a member of the Council of People's Delegates; changed affiliation between socialist and communist parties several times after resigning in December 1918.

Dittmann, Wilhelm (1874–1954): SPD and USPD politician; member of the Council of People's Delegates for the USPD.

Ebert, Friedrich (1871–1925): SPD chairman 1913–1919, member of the Council of People's Delegates, and the first president of the Weimar Republic, 1919–1925.

Eisner, Kurt (1867–1919): key figure of the USPD in Munich; proclaimed the Bavarian Republic on November 7, 1918, and served as its first minister president; assassinated by Anton Graf von Arco, a young aristocratic soldier, on February 21, 1919.

Erzberger, Matthias (1875–1921): prominent politician of the Catholic *Deutsche Zentrumspartei* [German Center Party]; signed the armistice of 1918 for the German government; murdered by the reactionary *Organisation Consul* in 1921.

Frölich, Paul (1884–1953): lifelong communist activist; expelled from the KPD in 1928 because he supported the dissident faction around Heinrich Brandler und August Thalheimer; published a standard biography of Rosa Luxemburg (see the Bibliography) and was the author of *Die Bayrische Räterepublik. Tatsachen und Kritik* [The Bavarian Council Republic: Facts and Critique] under the pseudonym P. Werner—the publication inspired Mühsam to write *Von Eisner bis Leviné* [From Eisner to Leviné].

Haase, Hugo (1863–1919): chairman of the USPD after its foundation in 1917; first vice-chancellor after the revolution and a member of the Council of People's Delegates until the three USPD members resigned in December 1918; severely injured by an assassin in October 1919, he died one month later.

Hindenburg, Paul von (1847–1932): appointed chief of the general staff in 1916, Hindenburg wielded strong influence during the last years of the Kaiserreich; served as the president of Germany from 1925 to 1934, paving the way for the Nazi takeover of the country.

Hoelz, Max (1889–1933): the son of a rural laborer, Hoelz was radicalized as a soldier during World War I, joined the USPD, then the KPD, then the KAPD; he led several workers' rebellions in eastern Germany in 1920–1921; sentenced to life in prison in 1921, released by an amnesty in 1928; emigrated to the Soviet Union in 1929 upon Stalin's invitation; drowned under mysterious circumstances in the Oka near Gorki in September 1933.

Hoffmann, Johannes (1867–1930): SPD politician, Bavarian minister president 1919–1920.

Jannack, Karl (1891–1968): soldier and SPD member during the war; joined the KPD in 1919 and remained a leading party figure until 1933; incarcerated by the Nazis, he survived the war and became an SED parliamentarian in Saxony.

Jogiches, Leo (1867–1919): Co-founder of the Spartacus League and KPD member; KPD chairman after the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg; arrested and executed by reactionary soldiers in March 1919.

Kautsky, Karl (1854–1938): one of the main SPD theorists; co-founded the USPD in 1917; returned to the SPD in 1922.

Landauer, Gustav (1870–1919): one of Germany's most influential anarchists; editor of the journal *Der Sozialist* and founder of *Sozialistischer Bund* [Socialist League]; key figure in the Bavarian Council Republic; murdered by reactionary soldiers after the council republic's overthrow on May 2, 1919.

Landsberg, Otto (1869–1957): jurist and SPD politician; member of the Council of People's Delegates.

Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825–1864): highly influential early German socialist.

Ledebour, Georg (1850–1947): SPD and later USPD politician, close to the Revolutionary Stewards; resisted the early-1920s USPD defections to the SPD and KPD and remained USPD chairman until 1923; active in various socialist organizations before leaving Germany following the Nazi takeover in 1933.

Levi, Paul (1883–1930): co-founder of the KPD and party chairman from 1919 to 1921; after strong criticism for his reformist orientation, he returned to the SPD in 1922.

Levien, Max (1885–1937): German-Russian Spartacus League and KPD member in Bavaria; kept close contact with the anarchists around Erich Mühsam; escaped to Austria after the crushing of the council republic; moved to the Soviet Union in 1921; victim of Stalinist purges in 1937.

Leviné, Eugen (1883–1919): German-Russian KPD member, leader of the Munich KPD during the Bavarian Council Republic; executed for his involvement in the council republic.

Liebknrecht, Karl (1871–1919): son of the prominent SPD co-founder Wilhelm Liebknrecht; the first SPD parliamentarian to oppose the war; founded the Group International, later Spartacus League, with Rosa Luxemburg in 1915; after an anti-war rally on May 1, 1916, sentenced to four years in prison for high treason; released by an amnesty on October 23, 1918; murdered by right-wing soldiers on January 15, 1919, in Berlin.

Lloyd George, David (1863–1945): prime minister of the UK and head of the wartime coalition from 1916 to 1922.

Ludendorff, Erich (1865–1937): German general; appointed as Paul von Hindenburg's deputy in 1916, he wielded significant political influence during the last years of the Kaiserreich; involved in both the Kapp Putsch of 1920 and the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923.

Luxemburg, Rosa (1871–1919): active in the social democrat movement in Poland and Germany and an opponent to World War I, Luxemburg co-founded the Group International, later Spartacus League, in 1915; murdered by reactionary soldiers on January 15, 1919, in Berlin.

Mehring, Franz (1846–1919): publicist, historian, and founding member of the Spartacus League and the KPD.

Mühsam, Erich (1878–1934): one of Germany's most influential anarchists; editor of the journals *Kain* [Cain] and *Fanal* [Signal]; key figure in the Bavarian Council Republic, sentenced to fifteen years of confinement in a fortress for his involvement, freed by an amnesty in December 1924.

Müller, Richard (1880–1943): radical labor organizer, leading figure of the Revolutionary Stewards; USPD member, and chairman of the Executive Council of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils of Great Berlin during the revolution; KPD member from 1920 to 1922.

Noske, Gustav (1868–1946): SPD politician, first minister of the Reichswehr after the revolution; mainly responsible for the military crushing of workers' uprisings in Germany from 1918 to 1920.

Pannekoek, Antonie (1873–1960): prominent Dutch theorist of council communism.

Pieck, Wilhelm (1876–1960): KPD member; president of East Germany 1949–1960.

Plättner, Karl (1893–1945): left the SPD in 1914 as an opponent of the war; joined the KPD in 1919 and belonged to the founders of the KAPD in 1920; leader of several workers' uprisings and direct action campaigns from 1920 to 1922; arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison in 1922, released in 1928; received great attention with the 1929 publication of *Eros im Zuchthaus. Eine Beleuchtung der Geschlechtsnot der Gefangenen* [Eros in Prison: On the Sexual Needs of Prisoners]; imprisoned by the Nazis, Plättner survived the Third Reich but died soon after his liberation from the Buchenwald Concentration Camp.

Radek, Karl (1885–1939): Polish-German socialist; close to the Spartacus circle during the German Revolution as Lenin's agent; sentenced to ten years of hard labor by the Stalinist regime, he disappeared after sentencing; officially killed by another labor camp inmate in 1939.

Retzlaw, Karl (1896–1979, born Karl Gröhl): SPD, USPD, and KPD member; involved in the Spartacus Uprising and in the Bavarian Council Republic; underground KPD activist for years and active in various anti-Nazi resistance groups in exile.

Rühle, Otto (1874–1943): SPD, USPD, KPD, and KAPD member, Rühle joined the *Allgemeine Arbeiter-Union* [General Workers' Union] (AAU) in 1921 and became Germany's most prominent theorist of council communism; emigrated to Mexico after the Nazis' rise to power.

Scheidemann, Philipp (1865–1939): leading SPD politician; proclaimed the German Republic on November 9, 1918, and became its first minister president.

Schnepfenhorst, Ernst (1881–1945): Bavarian SPD member and Bavarian minister of military affairs in 1919.

Severing, Carl (1875–1952): prominent SPD politician from North Rhine–Westphalia; belonged to the party's right wing.

Solf, Wilhelm (1862–1936): conservative diplomat and the last foreign minister of the Kaiserreich.

Stampfer, Friedrich (1874–1957): influential journalist and SPD politician; editor-in-chief of the *Vorwärts* from 1916 to 1933 (except 1919–1920).

Thalheimer, August (1884–1948): SPD, Spartacus League, and KPD member; chairman of the KPD together with Heinrich Brandler in the early 1920s; Thalheimer and Brandler became increasingly critical of the KPD party line and co-founded a splinter group in 1929, the *Kommunistische Partei-Opposition* [Communist Party-Opposition] (KPD-O).

Wilhelm II, Kaiser (1859–1941): Germany's last Kaiser; ousted on November 9, abdicated on November 28, 1918.

Wilson, Woodrow (1856–1924): U.S. president from 1913 to 1921.

Journals

Berliner Tageblatt [Berlin Daily]: widely read liberal daily, 1872–1939.

Berliner Zeitung (BZ) am Mittag [Berlin Journal at Noon]: popular daily tabloid, 1904–1943.

Deutsche Tageszeitung [German Daily Paper]: conservative daily, 1893–1934.

Die Rote Fahne [The Red Flag]: irregularly published organ of the Spartacus League, later the KPD, 1918–1945.

Freiheit [Freedom]: daily of the USPD, 1918–1922.

Vorwärts [Forward]: main publishing organ of the SPD since 1876.

Vossische Zeitung [Voss's Journal]: popular liberal journal published in Berlin under different names from 1617 to 1934; the name *Vossische Zeitung* refers to the eighteenth-century editor-in-chief Christian Friedrich Voß (1724–1795).

Terms

Black-white-and-red: the colors of the German Kaiserreich.

Circus Busch: the theatre house of the popular Circus Busch enterprise and one of Berlin's biggest meeting halls; built in 1895 and demolished in 1937.

Council of People's Delegates (*Rat der Volksbeauftragten*): installed as the provisional government of Germany after the revolution; Councils of People's Delegates were also formed in some federal states.

Entente: the name given to the alliance of Great Britain, France, and Russia during World War I; first used following the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

Executive Council of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils of Great Berlin (*Vollzugsrat der Arbeiter- und Soldatenräte Großberlin*), often abbreviated as **Executive Council**: provisional government chamber after the proclamation of the German Republic on November 9, 1918; lost all practical relevance with the elections for the national assembly in January 1919.

Free Corps (*Freikorps*): reactionary military units formed by soldiers returning from World War I; used by the SPD to quell radical uprisings; dissolved in 1923.

Great Berlin: the area including the city of Berlin and adjunct municipalities.

Hohenzollern: the House of Hohenzollern was the royal German dynasty of the Kaiserreich, 1871–1918.

Junker: antiquated term for aristocrats and big landowners in Prussia and Mecklenburg.

Kapp Putsch: reactionary coup attempt in March 1920, led by the civil servant Wolfgang Kapp (1858–1922) and General Walther von Lüttwitz (1859–1942), therefore also known as the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch; a general strike and a lack of obedience among civil servants made the coup fail.

Landtag: provincial parliament.

November Revolution: Since the proclamation of the German Republic occurred in November 1918, the German Revolution of 1918–1919 is commonly referred to as *Novemberrevolution* in German. The term is not commonly used in English and has therefore been avoided here, except for translations of German book titles.

Philistine (*Philister*): here, a person bereft of soul and spirit, not a term indicating a lack of education, culture, or taste.

“Quiet and order”: *Ruhe und Ordnung*; common German phrase referring to law-abiding behavior, order, and tidiness.

Rathaus: town hall.

Red Guards: originally used in the Russian Revolution of 1917 for revolutionary militias and military units, the term described armed groups of revolutionary workers, sailors, and soldiers in the German Revolution of 1918–1919. See also “White Guards.”

Reich: the term *Deutsches Reich* [German Reich], usually abbreviated to *Reich*, was commonly used as a substitute for *Deutschland* [Germany] from 1871 to 1945.

Reichstag: national German parliament.

Reichswehr: official name for the German Army from 1919 to 1935.

Vendée: a department in western France where strong resistance was organized against the revolutionary government from 1793 to 1796.

Volksmarinedivision: revolutionary unit of sailors in 1918–1919.

War bonds: bonds were the main means of financing World War I in Germany.

White Guards: originally used for a loose alliance of anti-communist and pro-tsarist military forces during the civil war that followed the Russian Revolution of 1917, the term described reactionary militias and military units in the German Revolution of 1918–1919. See also “Red Guards.”

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