

# Armed Confrontation in West Germany

in the 1970s and 1980s



La Belle Epoque  
(1984 Wellington, metro Charlevoix)  
Saturday, June 30, 1PM

traduction anglais-français disponible

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After the surge of protest that was the sixties, all around the world radicals were drawn to new forms of action and experiments in an attempt to cope with the movement's ebb.

In West Germany, the armed struggle was one important pole in this post-sixties revolt. Although only ever involving relatively small numbers of people, the armed groups constituted a reference point for tens of thousands of supporters, and repeatedly challenged State power, at times cracking through the State's hegemony. The 2nd of June Movement was based in West Berlin, and initially sought to act based on contradictions within their own society. The Red Army Faction targeted killer cops, U.S. military bases, and members of the judicial apparatus. The Revolutionary Cells emerged out of the RAF support scene in Frankfurt, and would develop a truncated existence, with an international wing working closely with the Palestinian movement, and a domestic wing that sought to lend armed weight to various social movements. Emerging from the Revolutionary Cells, Rota Zora was a feminist guerilla, whose targets included opponents of abortion reform, sex traffickers, companies involved in the exploitation of women in the Third World, and genetic researchers.

Together, the armed groups successfully challenged idea that the State holds a monopoly on violence, and constituted an example of State power being successfully challenged. By the same token, errors committed by the armed groups would take a heavy toll, and miscalculations repeatedly dealt heavy setbacks to the entire radical left. The guerilla's legacy is a mixed one.

Join us for a discussion about the armed experience in West Germany, and its ongoing reverberations today.



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