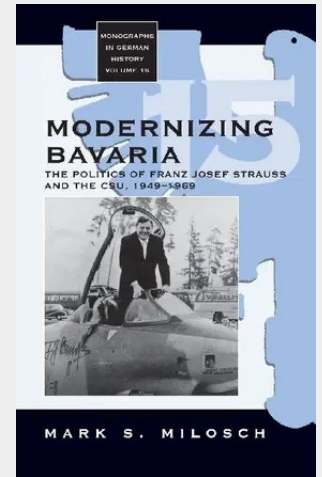


Modernizing Bavaria

The Politics of Franz Josef Strauss and the CSU, 1949-1969

In 1949 Bavaria was not only the largest and best known but also the poorest, most agricultural, and most industrially backward region of Germany. It was further its most politically conservative region. The largest political party in Bavaria was the Christian Social Union (CSU), an extremely conservative, even reactionary, regional party. In the ensuing twenty years, the leaders of the CSU's small liberal wing (in particular Franz Josef Strauss, long-time party chair and the most colorful and polarizing politician in postwar Germany) broke with the anti-industrial traditions of Bavarian Catholic politics and made themselves useful to industry. With tactical brilliance the politicians pursued their individual political ambitions, rather than a coherent modernization strategy, which, by 1969, had turned Bavaria into a prosperous Land, the center of Germany's new aerospace, defense, and energy industries, with a disproportionate share of its research institutes.

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