

Remembering the Armed Struggle

My Time with the Red Army Faction

Margrit Schiller • Foreword: Ann Hansen

Afterword: Osvaldo Bayer

Appendix: J. Smith & André Moncourt

Margrit Schiller was an early member of the Red Army Faction, the West German urban guerrilla group. In 1971 she was captured and charged with a murder she did not commit, and upon her release she returned to the underground, being captured again in early 1974. She would spend most of the 1970s in prison, enduring isolation conditions meant to break the human spirit, and participating hunger strikes and other acts of resistance along with other political prisoners from the RAF.

In *Remembering the Armed Struggle*, Schiller recounts the process through which she joined her generation's revolt in the 1960s, going from work with drug users to joining the antipsychiatry political organization the Socialist Patients' Collective and then the RAF. She tells of how she met and worked alongside the group's founding members, Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Jan-Carl Raspe, Irmgard Möller, and Holger Meins; how she learned the details of the May Offensive and other actions while in her prison cell; about the struggles to defend human dignity in the most degraded of environments, and the relationships she forged with other women in prison.

Also included are a foreword by Ann Hansen, who situates the draconian prison conditions inflicted on the RAF within the context of a global counterinsurgency program that would help spawn the plague of mass incarceration we still face today, an afterword by the late Osvaldo Bayer, and an appendix by J. Smith and André Moncourt summarizing the politics and history of the RAF in the 1970s.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Margrit Schiller was a member of the Red Army Faction in the early 1970s, and as a result spent most of the decade in West German prisons. Released in 1979, she moved to Cuba in 1985, and then to Uruguay in 1993. After ten years in Montevideo she returned in Germany. She is now living in Berlin. She described her experiences in Cuba and Uruguay in her memoir *So siehst du gar nicht aus!* (2011).

Ann Hansen served seven years of a life sentence in federal prisons for acts carried out as part of the group Direct Action in Canada. She is a prison abolition activist and author of *Direct Action: Memoirs of an Urban Guerrilla* and *Taking the Rap: Women Doing Time for Society's Crimes*.

Osvaldo Bayer (1927–2018) was an author, journalist, and scriptwriter who was exiled from Argentina during the years of military dictatorship. His works include *The Anarchist Expropriators*, *Anarchism & Violence*, and *Rebellion in Patagonia*.

J. Smith and **André Moncourt** are the coeditors of the Red Army Faction Documentary History series, comprising *Projectiles for Imperialism* (Vol. 1) and *Dancing with Imperialism* (Vol. 2), with a third volume forthcoming.

ACCOLADES

"Margrit Schiller's life story *Remembering the Armed Struggle*, is not meant to mark a hard break with the Red Army Faction, but is more of a critical reflection in the spirit of solidarity. Even those who do not share Schiller's perspective will find it interesting to join her as she looks back on her years underground and in prison."

—diessaits



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