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Gabriele Clemens, ed. *Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland, 1945-1949*. Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994. 264 pp. DM 88,00 (paper), ISBN 978-3-515-06324-1.

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Over the past decade or so, historians of Germany have begun to turn to the study of culture and cultural politics as a way of elucidating areas of social and economic organization, behavior, and experience that would remain otherwise inaccessible via the more traditional focus on political reconstruction, narrowly defined. Recently, such historians have come to insist that culture should not be seen as a tertiary sector, subordinate to politics and economics, but as an integral force that shaped the way German reconstruction was conceptualized, instituted, administered, and experienced.

This recent book of essays edited by Gabriele Clemens seeks to address a number of imbalances in the current historiography of the post-1945 period. Highlighting the cultural assumption and initiatives of the occupying powers in Germany, the collection attempts to elucidate the three-way relationship between the cultural politics of the victorious allies, their political and ideological goals, and the nature of the resulting reconstruction. As Clemens notes in her all-too-brief introduction, the current state of research on culture and cultural policy during the occupation varies greatly according to zone and cultural area. Thus, while the French zone has been the object of intense investigation, work on the British zone has been confined largely (but not exclusively) to explorations of educational policy. Moreover, certain cultural areas have been under-researched or only recently subjected to careful scrutiny, such as music, theater, film, and architecture. The volume, then, is intended to address two imbalances: first, to provide a forum for fostering comparative investigations of the policies of the four occupation powers; and second, to encourage work on hitherto neglected areas of cultural activity during the Occupation.

The essays in this volume range from a focus on *Eigenheime* and new directions in West German *Wohnkultur* by Hans H. Hanke; to a consideration of gender politics and women's political activities in essays by Rebecca Boehling and Annette Kuhn; to a discussion of difficulties in reestablishing the Wagner festival in Bayreuth by Sabine Henze-Doehring; to an essay on the reestablishment of musical and theatrical performances in Stuttgart under the American occupation by Thomas Steiert. Two essays focus explicitly on the British zone: Gabriele Clemens's general survey of the British administration of music, theater, film, and literature, and David Phillips's brief analysis of British efforts regarding the reconstruction of universities and intellectual life. In addition, the aims and meanings of French cultural politics are discussed by Corine Defrance in relation to the opening of the University at Mainz and, more analytically, by Rainer Hudemann in relation to the existing historiography. The final two essays – by Gerd Dietrich and Roland Koehler – explore Soviet cultural politics, and a lengthy contribution by Annie Lacroix-Riz takes a comparative look at political schools and universities in all four zones of occupation.

Originally delivered as papers at a 1992 symposium in Paderborn, the volume attempts a taking-of-stock of the current state of research. Its emphasis is heavily weighted toward case studies, an essential first step in working toward a more synthetic understanding of culture under the occupation. Nonetheless, as is often the case with published proceedings, the coverage of the volume is spotty and the quality of contributions uneven. Some, like Henze-Doehring's piece on Bayreuth, appear to be early works-in-progress which quote extensively from papers of the military governments but lack a discernible interpretative framework. This problem is com-

pounded by the absence of an adequate introduction, which would have been useful for identifying overlapping themes and for providing a theoretical grounding for the essays to follow.

The most interesting contributions are, as usual, those that move beyond mere textual exegesis to grapple with significant historical questions. Rebecca Boehling and Annette Kuhn, for example, argue in separate essays that in the years immediately following the war, German women enjoyed an all-to-brief “moment of openness,” during which they articulated and pursued alternative visions of political activity and gender relations. Boehling’s study of local politics in Munich provides a fascinating account of the Cold War motivations and subsequent limits of the American military government’s sponsorship of women’s political activity; the strength, feminist agendas, and strategies of *Stadtraetinnen*, who often operated according to principles of gender solidarity with other female colleagues at the expense of party-political considerations; and the ultimate waning of women’s prominent voice in communal politics, which Boehling analyzes in terms of generational shifts, changes in female employment rates, party-political response, and more general trends of political and social “normalization.”

In his piece on music and theater politics in Stuttgart, Thomas Steiert emphasizes material devastation and other problems of restoring German high-cultural life (including the noisy interruptions of opera performances by partying American troops, whose club was housed in the same building). American officials’ attempts, moreover, to introduce German audiences to modern, international music of the American variety ran into substantial resistance. Though this resistance ultimately subsided, American cultural initiatives in this area made little lasting impact, Steiert argues, because of the reemerging activity and influence of “German-conservative” cultural interests. These were exemplified by Fred Hamel, publisher of the journal *Musica*, who represented a return to the anti-modernist, anti-international *Kulturrichtung* of the late 1920s and early 1930s which had served the National Socialist cultural agenda.

Rainer Hudemann’s discussion of the role of cultural politics and the nature of the French occupation considers issues of policy-making and administration, the relationship between Paris and French officials in the field, and the ways in which French cultural politics were

connected to both national security interests and issues of German democratization. In gauging the impact of French policy in Germany, Hudemann makes some intriguing comments about the role of historical allusion and memory (of the Napoleonic Wars, the First World War) in conditioning Germans’ responses to the French occupation.

Despite the significant contributions of some individual essays and the editor’s good intentions, the focus of the volume is not as expansive as it might have been. While the definition of *Kulturpolitik* has been broadened to include attention to the role of gender in postwar political and ideological reconstruction, American music policy, and even a brief sketch of film policy in the British zone, the *culture* discussed continues to be predominantly elite and institutional (university education, theater, concert music). This is a somewhat lopsided offering, given both the volume’s ambitions to revise our understanding of the role and nature of culture and cultural politics in German reconstruction, and – not incidentally – the fact that German audiences for radio, film, and glossy magazines mushroomed (and ultimately peaked) during the decade or so following 1945, attracting large numbers of the newly pauperized educated classes, to the horror of some cultural and religious elites and to the delight of media industries and advertisers. One would like to know more about the impact of commercial interests on the Allies’ political and cultural agendas in Germany, and, more broadly, about the relationship between cultural policy, economic and commercial interests (both domestic and foreign), and the articulation of national-cultural identity, so richly documented for the Weimar period in Thomas Saunders’ *Hollywood in Berlin* (Berkeley 1994). More attention should have also been paid to questions of historical continuity as well as rupture, to the impact of commercial and social pressure groups, and to the reconstruction of national culture within an international market (as well as within a changing international political system). The point is not to peripheralize *the political* in studies of postwar German culture, but rather to broaden its definition in order to enrich our understanding.

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