

Other belligerents displayed similar issues – deeply flawed leaders, vicious rows between civilian and military leaders, and a lack of strategic coordination. These flaws contributed to the defeat of the Habsburg and Romanov regimes and arguably laid the basis for the collapse of liberal Italy in the early 1920s. Tens of thousands of French and British soldiers died in ill-conceived offensives between 1915 and 1917. However, their access to economic resources in North America and their empires ensured that the costs did not prove fatal to the French or British regimes. In the German context, poor decisions determined the fate of the regime, which did not have access to the same level of resources to compensate for strategic errors. In addition, German leaders’ own perception of their long-term economic weakness relative to the Entente and the United States led them to gamble on military solutions to underlying strategic problems. Holger Afflerbach’s deep insight into German high politics refreshes the debate about the outcome of the war by reminding scholars of the importance of decision-making and the dreadful human costs of miscalculation.

doi:10.1017/S0008938924000657

## **Ein “bündischer Kulturmarkt” entsteht. Die deutsche Jugendbewegung und Jugendmusikbewegung als Katalysator für den Aufbau von Kulturmarktunternehmen 1918-1933**

**By Franziska Meier. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2022. Pp. 319. Paperback €64.00. ISBN: 978-3515133043.**

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Franziska Meier has produced a rich study of bourgeois youth-movement culture during the Weimar Republic. That this book appears in Franz Steiner’s economic history series is no accident: its exploration of how culture and capitalism intertwined adds a new element to the historiography on German youth movements. By the mid-1920s, entrepreneurs from within the movement established what Meier calls a “bündischer Kulturmarkt” that supplied the goods needed for hiking, camping, and singing. Her main actors are idealistic publishers driven by the idea of rejuvenating the nation by rejuvenating its youth through music-oriented practices. They were also businessmen, interested in profits insofar as these allowed them to continue their work for the movement. The songbooks, periodicals, and books they produced were both marketplace commodities and tangible expressions of movement culture.

After an extended discussion of key concepts, the book’s thematically organized chapters explore these publishers’ social networks, economic activities, and intellectual property challenges (chapter 2); the *bündisch* idea as product, marketed and distributed by writers and publishers (chapter 3); the operations of specific publishers (chapter 4); and the dissemination of the *bündisch* idea through music pedagogy (chapter 5). Meier draws mainly on surviving publishers’ records and archives of the youth movement. She makes particularly good use of photographs, analyzing them both as documents of participants’ activities and as visual evidence of participants’ values.

After 1918, Wandervögel and Pfadfinder groups found themselves in a radically new political environment. Meier's subjects allied with the Neue Pfadfinder faction that coalesced during the ferment of 1919-1920. These young war veterans rejected party affiliation, confessional ties, and "Prussian" authoritarianism. To longstanding youth movement values of joy in nature, anti-urbanism, interest in European folk cultures, and "authenticity," they added nationalistic concern for Germans in the borderlands. They compared the present to an idealized past, which had to be reclaimed in order to rejuvenate a people sapped by defeat and division. They reverentially cultivated folk music as the site "where the Volk conceives itself anew" (212) – *Volksgut* threatened by urbanization and competition from popular entertainment. Group singing after a vigorous hike was central to their organizational and emotional cohesion. The publishers Meier studies fostered that communal spirit through the publication of folk-song collections and related works. Music educators also helped institutionalize movement ideals. These publishers' influence and financial success grew as schools adopted their songbooks and several house authors became powerful pedagogues after the mid-1920s.

Meier traces all this through the archives of publishers that served the *bündisch* movement, most extensively the Weisse Ritter/Voggenreiter Verlag. These houses were founded in the early 1920s as shoestring operations formed by young people willing to work cheaply on behalf of the *Gemeinwohl*. They evolved from niche, subculture-driven affairs into more professional operations by the late 1920s. Their mingling of subcultural idealism and capitalism extended to their advertising strategies and graphic design. Meier explores these themes as well as publication rosters, negotiations with authors, copyright issues around publishing traditional music, and the trials of running a business during the inflation and Depression. That spadework alone makes this book a valuable portrait of the Weimar-era publishing business.

While not the book's focus, the thorny question of the youth movement's relationship to National Socialism lurks in the background. Meier rejects the tendency in the literature to either apologize for or dismiss youth movement participants for their actions after 1933; her stated goal is to understand them in the context of 1918-1933. We see the Neue Pfadfinder glorify *völkisch* culture, but we also see their anti-militarism and desire for "world unity" (278). We see moments of antisemitism, as when the Weisse Ritter Verlag published antisemitic work by Hans Blüher other presses turned down. Their racialized romanticization of native peoples and love of colonial adventure stories – which these presses' catalogs catered to – are also noted but not interrogated. Meier's subjects felt no love for Weimar; the few who discussed politics rejected both left and right, with one author eulogizing Walther Rathenau after his assassination. Some were ambivalent about the NSDAP. One journal ran a forum on the NSDAP program in 1929, but Meier does not discuss its content. The Nazis' June 1933 ban on autonomous youth organizations led to the Neue Pfadfinders' dissolution. Movement publishers skeptical of Nazism soon ran into trouble. But others openly celebrated the new regime as the "breakthrough to a true *völkisch* state" (242). Business boomed for the Voggenreiter Verlag after 1933, as the Hitler Youth and the military ordered mass quantities of their songbooks. But Meier does not discuss her subjects' political attitudes beyond what is explicitly in the sources.

That reluctance to venture outside of the letter of the sources leaves the movement's connection to and effects on society unclear. I was left wanting to know more about *bündisch* culture in relation to Weimar culture. For example, Meier documents the Bauhaus-designed Musikheim at Frankfurt an der Oder, a fascinating teacher-training institute that aimed to break down barriers between art and life, but she misses the opportunity to explore the interplay between tradition and modernity in its form and approach. In addition to folk culture, the presses under review published works on health, eroticism, masculinity, and hygiene – all hot topics during Weimar – but we never learn about their content. Male publishers had help from sisters, girlfriends, and wives – did youth movement

ideals of camaraderie extend to gender? Participants' style of dress was a clear rejection of modern fashions, yet for all their glorification of rural ways, these educated young women and men were quite modern in self-fashioning lifestyles and identities using consumer goods.

This work raises fascinating questions about how culture and commerce intersected among a segment of Weimar-era youth. It should be read by anyone interested in the German youth movement.

doi:10.1017/S0008938924000736

## Moderate Modernity: The Newspaper *Tempo* and the Transformation of Weimar Democracy

**By Jochen Hung. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2023. Pp. 266. Hardcover \$75.00. ISBN: 978-0-472-13332-1.**

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Jochen Hung's engaging monograph is an important addition to the scholarship on modernity, media, democracy, and the late Weimar Republic. Using a microhistorical approach, the author captures how the newspaper *Tempo* articulated a vision of "moderate modernity" through the broad themes of democracy, citizenship, and consumerism. In doing so, the newspaper constructed an identity of a "modern, young German citizen, who expressed their citizenship through participation in a burgeoning consumer society" (222).

While the concept of multiple modernities is not unique to Hung's work, his analysis of a liberal alternative modernity underscores the contestation and flexibility of the concept of modernity itself. Historicizing modernity provides a more nuanced and complex understanding of the late Weimar years rather than a simple characterization of crisis or failure. *Tempo*, published by Ullstein, is particularly suited to the interrogation of modernity, as its publication dates of 1928-1933 encompass a vibrant and fraught period. Hung argues that the positioning of *Tempo* was one of "moderate modernity, that contained the promise of modest material and social progress without the need for drastic political measures" (17).

Hung offers a thorough and engaging introduction, situating the book within existing scholarship and positioning *Tempo* in conversation with the media landscape of the late Weimar Republic. This work presents an important historiographical intervention on the role of the liberal press in Weimar and assumptions that the press was powerless, too focused on entertainment, or that it undermined democracy through its attention to crisis and difference. Through his analysis of *Tempo*, he challenges the validity of the question of the "failure of Weimar's liberal press," and points to the "plurality" and "fluidity of Weimar's public discourse" (11).

The first chapter focuses on *Tempo* in 1928 and 1929 and its vision of consumerism, the celebration of technology, the belief in a "rational body politic" (82), and emphasis on a modern masculinity and femininity. Emphasizing an optimistic vision of an American style of consumerism and a "democracy of goods," *Tempo*'s features on the automobile, leisure time on the "weekend," nightlife in Berlin, radio, and photo contests from holiday trips stressed the possibility of consumerism for its readers (47). Modern technology was not to be feared, but embraced as a way to make a "peaceful, democratic consumer society a reality"