

Weimar Republic, that attends to converging cultural tastes and markets while simultaneously seeing the reception of each as distinct in their own national context. Thinking through the shifting sands of what nationalism meant as it came to be highlighted in artistic debates is a strength of the book. In this regard, von Saldern is especially interested in figures who nuance or obscure any simple lines between nationalism and art. Not surprisingly, thus, the US section opens with Marion Anderson's 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, where she sang spirituals but also German *Lieder*. In these choices, and in this context, what—or who—was “American” and what music was “art” became thoroughly entangled in racist politics as well as progressive political aspirations during Roosevelt's era. Perhaps the best German equivalent is the example of Kurt Huber, the nationalist and antisemitic musicologist who taught in Munich and joined the Nazi Party in 1940; he was also later arrested in 1943 for his activity in the White Rose resistance group and executed. Huber's complicated relationship to nationalism and music helps clarify how and who claimed authenticity over German music in these years.

The strengths of the volume are in its scope and comparative focus; at the same time, these also point us to some of the book's limitations. While the reader will find a strong synthesis of cultural history with a rich bibliographic range, as with any book that tackles the broad sweep of the literature, each reader will also come with bibliography that s/he finds missing. I was surprised, for example, that Andrew Hemingway's deep work on art and leftwing politics in the US did not feature in the text, nor did such canonical figures as Berthold Hinz make an appearance on the German side. With the example of Hemingway in particular, some of these exclusions mark a particularly odd omission from the book, i.e., the lack of attention to political history. For von Saldern, cultural comparison rests almost always in the ideological realm. The nuances of party politics, the institutional change over time within a political regime or era, or the reorientation of cultural actors with ever-shifting relations to the state are in the background at best. Indeed, the “state” is rarely a focus here, other than as a patron for the arts or in the guise of a few key actors, such as Joseph Goebbels. (In this regard, the reader might look at another work that also came out recently, Otto Karl Werckmeister's *The Political Confrontation of the Arts in Europe from the Great Depression to the Second World War* [2020], with its even-more rigorous dialectical structure and laser focus on the state.)

That critique aside, von Saldern's book is a satisfying synthesis of the variety of painting, architecture, film, orchestral music, jazz, literature, and other arts connected to the complex debates around nationalism in these two countries in the first half of the twentieth century. It serves as an introduction to major movements and artistic players but also as a methodological challenge to scholars for a more critical and complex comparative cultural history.

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November 1918: The German Revolution

**By Robert Gerwarth. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
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This is a timely reassessment of the importance of the German Revolution of 1918, one which, the author argues, aims to do “more justice to the achievements of the events of

1918-19, which constituted both the first and the last revolution in a highly industrialized country worldwide prior to the peaceful revolutions in Eastern and Central Europe in 1989-90" (vii). While it is open to debate as to whether the 1918 German Revolution is currently as forgotten or overlooked as this book claims, it is true that there has long been a need for a new synthesis for an English-language readership, presenting the latest scholarship. This book fulfils this task admirably, with particular strength in examining how the revolution arose out of the First World War. In fact, the post-armistice phase of the revolution is covered only from chapter eight on, out of twelve chapters total, where the impact of Germany's defeat, as both the cause and the context of the revolution, receives richly detailed attention.

While the historiography has long emphasised how fears provoked by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia shaped reactions to Germany's revolution, Robert Gerwarth also reveals, exceptionally well, the degree to which 1848 was a model for many Germans in their understanding of the events of 1918 and their hopes for a liberal democratic revolution. As Gerwarth points out: "It was not a coincidence that the Weimar Republic was to adopt the black-red-and-golden banner of the 1848 revolution as its national flag" (171). Many policy makers in Weimar "firmly believed that they had delivered where the liberal revolutionaries in 1848 had failed" (171). However, the author also weaves in important details, such as the amount of weapons carried by protesting crowds demonstrating in support of a more socialist revolution in Berlin on November 9, 1918. This threat of radical violence provided the more immediate rationale behind Philipp Scheidemann's preemptive declaration of a new democratic republic, even if the 1848 tradition inspired its ideals. While 1848 is reintegrated well here, however, more could have been said on the tradition of moderate German socialism and its thinking on the state and economy, the key ideological well from which the SPD drew first and foremost, and which dominated its November 1918 propaganda. How the SPD successfully later welded this with 1848 liberal symbols and rhetoric merits further exploration.

In chapter ten, this book's most impressive chapter, Gerwarth sets out clearly the hopes of German liberals in spring 1919, in particular revealing the extent to which hopes of unification with Austria dominated post-armistice German thinking. Chancellor Friedrich Ebert, in his opening address to the new Weimar National Assembly on February 6, 1919, requested authorization for his government to "immediately begin negotiations with the government of neighbouring German-Austria about a unification of the two states" (165). This widespread belief and expectation that *Anschluss* would take place, creating a new German future now that the "old" German state settlement of 1866-1871 had evidently failed in ignominious wartime defeat, is something that has been underexplored in previous historiography. When the Treaty of Versailles expressly forbade German unification with Austria, it caused consternation and accusations of Allied hypocrisy regarding self-determination. It also ensured that *Anschluss* moved from being a "democratic project of the left" (200) to one of the far right. This book also fully integrates the most recent gender history of the revolution, showing the prominence of women, not just among the left radicals but also among the liberal supporters of the republic, such as Marie-Elisabeth Lüders who, along with Hugo Preuss, helped write the new Weimar constitution. Among other reforms, the Weimar Republic introduced the re-regulation of alimony issues and the continued payment of salaries during maternity leave.

Gerwarth offers a re-reading of some of the factors usually cited as undermining the Weimar state. He points out that Article 48 of the constitution was invaluable in ensuring the republic survived its early years. Chancellor Ebert used it a "remarkable sixty-three times in 1923-4 alone when Germany was fighting an economic emergency and serious threats from the Far Left and Far Right" (169). There is also good contextualisation of the Treaty of Versailles, with Gerwarth showing that, while the treaty was seen by the German public as a defeat for the new state and almost universally detested across the political spectrum, actually the treaties with the other defeated Central Powers were as harsh, if

not harsher (as in the case of the Treaty of Sèvres), and German politicians foolishly tried to instrumentalise the wave of nationalism that the Treaty of Versailles provoked rather than damping it down.

While offering a measured assessment of how the brutal crushing of the January 1919 uprising, and of later worker insurrections, helped quickly radicalise support for the far left, Gerwarth convincingly shows that the majority of Germans supported the Weimar Republic in its early years, as shown in electoral results in which the lion's share of votes went to moderate pro-republic parties. He points to how the Kapp Putsch of 1920 was brought down by a universal general strike, supported by workers and the middle classes alike, indicating the scale of support for the Weimar state. When Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau was murdered by the far right, in Berlin alone, "400,000 people took to the streets to protest against the assassination and express their support for the republic" (215). It was only ever a small minority, Gerwarth points out, on the far right and far left who rejected the republican compromise.

Gerwarth argues that the Weimar state's ability to survive against challenges from both the far right and the far left and overcome economic turmoil during its early years suggests that 1918 was not the stillborn revolution it is sometimes purported to have been but rather reflected a genuine centrist consensus among the majority of its citizens. "In fact," he argues, for Germany "in late 1923, the failure of democracy would have seemed far less probable than its consolidation" (221). Weimar's later collapse in 1933 thus appears more contingent, a product of the Great Depression, than of anything the November Revolution instigated. This is a useful, fascinating and highly readable synthesis which emphasises that it was no small achievement to turn a semi-authoritarian state into a liberal democracy in 1918-1919, following defeat in a world war – Gerwarth's kinder reassessment of the German Revolution's successes is one that will resonate with modern audiences all too aware of the challenges of founding new democracies.

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Dragonslayer: The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich

By Jay Lockenour. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021. Pp. xiv + 292. Cloth \$32.95. ISBN 978-1501754593.

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In his engaging study of Erich Ludendorff, the quartermaster general who led a military dictatorship during the Great War, Jay Lockenour aims to write about what he calls the "Ludendorff Myth" (7). That is, he compares his own biographical approach to what Ian Kershaw accomplished in his influential book on Hitler. In many ways, Lockenour is successful at achieving this goal as, like Kershaw, he offers an impressively researched exploration of both how Ludendorff carefully managed his own image and how sycophants and the German public perceived, and largely projected, an image onto him. Ludendorff promoted himself as a symbol of the politics of victimhood and the desire for revenge that appealed to so many Germans in the interwar period. In his memoirs, publishing ventures, and political activism, Ludendorff obsessively preserved his "legend" as a war hero, defending his