

KATHARINA GERUND and HEIKE PAUL, eds. *Die Amerikanische Reeducation-Politik nach 1945: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf 'America's Germany'* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2015), 303 pp.

In the epilogue to Katharina Gerund and Heike Paul's edited volume *Die Amerikanische Reeducation-Politik nach 1945: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf 'America's Germany'* Winfried Fluck writes: "Reeducation and Americanization cannot be viewed separately" (291; my translation). Fluck's statement fittingly reflects the content, agenda, and structure of the volume. At the same time, it phrases a task and challenge for a book that aims at an interdisciplinary exploration of US reeducation politics. On the one hand, the volume needs to tackle the tension between focusing and zooming in while, on the other hand, catering to the awareness that reeducation and/or reorientation opens up a broad and complex range of multi-layered and multi-disciplinary trajectories.

The volume approaches this task by collecting contributions from different disciplines such as history, cultural studies, film and media studies, literary studies, and didactics as well as from a likewise broad array of concepts, theories, and methods. These voices highlight different modes of cultural transfer and processes of political, social, and cultural entanglement and thereby focus on different agents and different time frames after 1945. The articles engage in an investigation of cultural (and ideological) transfer, contextualize and explain both the institutions and agents of transfer themselves as well as perspectives on them with larger political, social, and cultural desires of these times—a desideratum also phrased by Fluck in the epilogue. Phenomena and especially their conceptualizations (be they political, cultural, or scholarly) depend on, and are shaped by, the respective time of production—an awareness that, within American Studies, became widely circulated at the latest with the advent of memory studies to the discipline.

In the introduction to their volume, Gerund and Paul state that reeducation has "in political and scholarly discourse unfolded lasting impact and received manifold attention" (7). The editors not only justify the publication of a volume tackling a field that continues to have relevance in contemporary political, social, and cultural German and American reali-

ties. They also—and refreshingly so—point to the fact that the volume does not claim to fill a full-fledged research gap but locates itself in a field that has already produced substantial research. Gerund and Paul's introduction provides a precise and comprehensive research report, which despite its adequate brevity, succeeds in embedding the volume within scholarly debates about prominent concepts ranging from Americanization vs. Westernization and Americanization from above and below to, among others, *Stunde Null* as radical break vs. focal point within longer developments, cultural diplomacy, and agency. The editors thus locate the volume within the well-established field of German-American postwar relations, encounters, spaces, and cultural transfers.

Gerund and Paul define "reeducation" as more than the early (and narrow historical) phase of reeducation in the immediate postwar years. They emphasize the volume's understanding of reeducation as a concept that focalizes—the metaphors of the turntable and prism might be helpful here—different portrayals of the postwar years (in a broader sense); thus it serves as a tool to make visible links and (dis)continuities between different processes and phenomena (10). The idea of rejecting the term "reeducation" as a narrow denominator that needs to strictly be applied and turning it into a dynamic concept that raises more complex questions and trajectories and alludes to the much more complex historical, cultural, political, social, and scholarly entanglements of German-American relations after 1945—often defying categorization as 'either or'—is fully persuasive, especially in the light of these complexities.

The articles in the volume discuss 'reeducation's' immediate effects and relations as well as long-range impacts and thus embed the phenomenon within larger time-frames and wider contexts. Focusing in particular on American perspectives on Germany that can be traced via the looking glass of reeducation, they also shed light on asymmetrical power relations in this era of German-American relations. In sync with the editors' definition of "reeducation" as a category of analysis rather than a qualifier, some articles address reeducation in a more narrow sense; others explore issues that may not be denominated as reeducation proper but which nevertheless are brought to the forefront when looking at power structures of cultural diplomacy, reeducation/reorientation, or Americanization.

The volume opens with Herbert Sirois's article on the so-called Smith-Mundt Act (U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act) of 1948. The act construed the legal framework for Germany's reeducation although reeducation itself did not play a significant role in the debates about the Smith-Mundt Act and although the act was actually intended as a more general and US-directed policy platform for the United States. Since interests in alliances against the perceived communist threat prevailed, the lack of particular focus on German reeducation opened venues for more independent German developments, e.g. the German school system. The essay highlights the relevance of the period under consideration as a historical phase that paved the way for Cold War politics. It demonstrates that reeducation was not a phenomenon pertaining to and impacting two nations but an effort within complex multi-national relations and entanglements.

Michael Hochgeschwender's contribution to the volume explores the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), founded in Berlin in 1950, as an "instrument of reorientation." Consequently, he contextualizes the CCF and its objectives as a tool of Cold War endeavors that defined the German political, social, and industrial/economic Western orientation. Within the CCF, Hochgeschwender illustrates, "select Germans were supposed to help promote American cultural and political ideologies—adapted to German circumstances" (36) in order to ensure an anti-communist stance, which they shared with the United States. Hochgeschwender sees the impact of the CCF rather within the near future of the postwar years. He argues that the CCF shaped and accommodated anti-communism as a means of integrating German society; and he displays a critical and careful perspective when it comes to evaluating its "success," for example when he points to its shortcomings and insufficiencies when dealing with the Holocaust.

The articles by Philipp Baur and Reinhild Kreis debate particular programs and institutions, the humanitarian aid program CARE (Cooperative for American Remittance to Europe) and *Amerika Häuser* as institutions of (post)reeducation, and their role in processes of cultural transfer and (mutual) (national) identity construction. In his exploration of the functions of CARE, Baur views the relief program not only as a symbol for U.S. political and cultural diplomacy in the

postwar years, but also stresses that CARE was a major instrument in shaping German perceptions of America and vice versa. It is especially the latter aspect that gives the article the somewhat fresh perspective of evaluating CARE not from a non-German and impact-oriented perspective. Instead, and in sync with the volume's agenda, Baur's article is interested in CARE's role in shaping American perceptions of Germany. Baur emphasizes the political dimension of relief programs and zooms in on CARE as a "non-governmental organization bec[oming] an active agent in narrating and communicating th[e] process of [Germany's] 'westernization' (Doering-Manteuffel:1999) to the American public" (117). The explication of this process to an American public, Baur states, caters to the agenda of American foreign policy in these years and "neatly fits into the standard narrative of the Federal Republic's transformation from enemy to partner" (137). Taking a long-time perspective on the American reeducation politics, Reinhild Kreis returns to her well-known and substantial work on *Amerika Häuser*. Using these material, spatial, and cultural means of knowledge and ideology transfer as a case study, Kreis argues that the American interest in reeducation continued its endeavors and impact beyond the occupation years and beyond the reeducation period in a narrow sense (up to 1955). Paying attention to the complexity of processes of cultural transfer, Kreis does by no means argue that the philosophy of reeducation simply persisted; rather, by means of the example of *Amerika Häuser*, she traces a development from American cultural imperialism to binational cooperation and ultimately a loss of American interest in the *Amerika Häuser* and their purpose—a development that is defined by the political and social geographies on both sides of the Atlantic.

A set of essays—by Frank Mehring, Jean-paul Goergen, Dieter Meindl, and Philip Beard—illuminate the volume's topic via different forms of (pop) cultural representation, i.e. literature and film. Mehring and Goergen highlight documentary films as an instrument of democratization in the context of reorientation and the Marshall Plan. Mehring persuasively discusses Marshall Plan films as a widely circulated and potentially effective means of transmitting and promoting the desirability of democratic ideals—not without critically noting the commodification (62) of children as actors and as symbols for the future and

a “young Europe.” Mehring illustrates the films’ suggestion and construction of European national identities as “overcoming national stereotypes” (86), as democratic, and ultimately as participating in “cosmopolitan” (86) “New United States of Europe” (61). Despite the films’ focus on “tolerance in multiethnic societies” (61), Mehring does not fail to emphasize the films’ restrictive and limited perspectives on cultural plurality. “Blackness,” for example, is situated “outside the European continent” (87). Goergen reads the movie *Europe 1978* (1958/59) as a vision of a Europe—a hopeful and unconditional utopia, as Goergen describes it (94)—that is designed according to American ideals. Thereby, the article’s search for the film’s “intended message” (transl.; 96) as well as a possible official sponsor in order to determine its likewise official purpose does not seem as important to the reviewer than the context-oriented discussion of its social and cultural impetus as a blueprint for European society/ies along the lines of American public diplomacy (94).

Dieter Meindl’s “Nazi Germany in American Fiction: Thomas Wolfe and Thomas Pynchon” and Philip Beard’s article with the lengthy title “Technical Aristocracy and the Dark Mirror of German Fate in *The Quiller Memorandum* and *Gravity’s Rainbow*: or: the End of the Bugs Bunny, Heroic Line at the Orpheus Theater, Los Angeles, 1973” are the two contributions furthest removed from the actual topic and agenda of the volume. Both articles focus on literary—and Beard’s also on filmic—representations of Germany during and after the war. Meindl compares the anticipation of Nazi Germany in Tom Wolfe’s work, especially in *You Can’t Go Home Again* (1940), with Thomas Pynchon’s *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973). Contextualizing both authors and their works predominantly in literary history and debating blank spots of literary history—“American novels [...] enshrined in literary history [...] paid scant attention to Germany” between 1945-1965, i.e. the focus years of the volume (185)—Meindl uses Wolfe and Pynchon “as a frame for, and foil to, that era” (186). “[O]ne is amazed to note,” Meindl argues, “how Wolfe, who prophesies, and Pynchon, who looks back, often see eye to eye in dealing with Nazism and its aftermath” (203). Beard likewise is interested in Pynchon’s *Gravity’s Rainbow* and juxtaposes it with the film *The Quiller Memorandum* (1966) in order to discuss U.S. portrayals of the German

Nazi as a continuation of an identity between aristocratic and military realms.

Werner Sollors begins his article on “Dilemmas of Denazification: Karl Loewenstein, Carl Schmitt, Military Occupation, and Militant Democracy” (taken from Sollors’s 2014 *The Temptation of Despair: Tales of the 1940s*; my translation) with the question: “Why would one professor have another professor arrested, then have his library confiscated?” (225; cf. *Temptation* 154). Sollors’s article juxtaposes two professors of law, Schmitt, who was associated with National Socialism, and Loewenstein, a Jewish scholar of constitutional law, who first emigrated to the United States and then returned to Germany as an American agent in reeducation and denazification politics (e.g. as an advisor for the Legal Division of the Justice Ministry Branch and the Reorientation Program of the Military Government). Loewenstein failed in taking Schmitt to court. Tracing the encounters between the two, Sollors’s article brings to the forefront blanks in reeducation, reorientation, and denazification processes. While prominent Nazi politicians were punished, the system missed out on (at times high-ranking) government employees and intellectuals. Contemporary readers at the beginning of the Trump era may take Sollors’s article as a subtle reminder that professors—and scholars—need to ponder their own responsibilities and consider the systemic blanks of their respective times.

With Dorottya Ruisz’s “Social Education as Reeducation: The Implementation of US-American Policies in the English Language Classrooms of Bavaria (1945-1951),” partly based on the author’s dissertation (2014), the volume of essays turns towards the perspective of education and didactics. Ruisz traces the connections between reeducation and occupation, on the one hand, and schools and curricula in the American zone, on the other hand. Reeducation politics hardly focused on the curriculum of the school subject English but more on *Sozialkunde*. While attempts to change the German school system as a whole failed, American officials displayed an interest in social education as both a general principle for German schools and as a new school subject in order to introduce and ensure democratic ideals and practices (see e.g. 162). English, however, was not seen as essential in these endeavors and was “apparently not considered to be essential in the pursuit of the goals of social education, namely in develop-

ing democracy and international understanding” (177).

By investigating literary and visual case studies, Barrett Watten’s article on “Zero Hour/ Stunde Null” contributes to the ongoing debate about *Stunde Null* as a radical break versus a moment in time within longer and more complex developments. “As a metahistorical event,” Watten explains, “Stunde Null is not simply reducible to its historical date; it has a structural relation to real-time historical unfolding in both narrative and nonnarrative terms” (258). Zero Hour thus was not only a particular historical event constituting an actual caesura, but a “structural, narrative, and phenomenological moment that took place ‘as if’ it were an actual event, no matter how many particular details of history coincided with it” (258). Watten investigates the construction of Zero Hour via literary and visual representations of this alleged historical moment; these representations—William Carlos Williams’s work, the film *Judgment at Nuremberg* (1961), and photographer Lee Miller’s work—participate in its co-creation either in retrospection or at this particular moment or in anticipation. The editors of the volume wisely chose this article to close the scholarly section of the volume (to be followed by Fluck’s epilogue) since it may be viewed as a final pointer towards the intricate entanglement of political, social, psychological, and cultural phenomena when it comes to German-American encounters from liberation via occupation, reeducation to reorientation and beyond. It may also be viewed as a final reminder—taken up again by Fluck’s more personal memories in the epilogue—to view scholarly discussions of the volume’s topic not as objective facts but as participants in the ongoing processes of constant re-definitions of historical moments that may or may not extend into the present.

While Fluck’s epilogue in the form of personal reminiscences of the reeducation period neatly captures and recapitulates many of the topics addressed by the articles, and while his essayistic musings on the topic summarize important concepts and issues, the volume might nevertheless have benefitted from a more scholarly final framing. It may not be possible to disentangle the discourses and phenomena of German-American relations that the articles highlight and it may likewise not be possible to connect all articles to a comprehensive picture of the period under consideration. Yet an explicit elaboration on these impossibilities and the consequences for our understanding of reeducation in the editors’ broad sense might have emphasized the volume’s strength, i.e. its non-claim to work with narrow (disciplinary) lenses and (terminological) categories. Such a conclusion could also have addressed the volume’s timely and topical location—albeit reflected unevenly by its articles—in the midst of American Studies debates about transnational and triangular phenomena and about critical perspectives on regions and their (cultural) (re)definitions.

As a whole, the articles offer a wide spectrum of disciplinary perspectives on reeducation in the editors’ broad understanding. The volume collects insights into and overviews of established scholarly viewpoints, provides extended and revised versions of well-known topics, and adds some fresh questions, materials, and viewpoints. For readers interested in the topic and for newcomers to the field, it provides a comprehensive look into central topics of the field seasoned with fresh angles that may serve as starting points for further research and original approaches.

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