Antonescu accused some legionary intellectuals of taking part in the rebellion staged against him by the Iron Guard. From February 1941, Antonescu regained full control over the fields of culture, education and propaganda, previously managed by Iron Guard appointees. His resolutions on several documents dated between March and May 1941, published in the current volume, vehemently criticize the state of affairs at the institute.

Pușcariu managed to navigate these political muddy waters but failed to make the activity of the institute truly impactful in Germany. As the documents published in this volume aptly show, the institute had to work in a political minefield and deal with financial shortages, all while seeking a balanced approach between its cultural and propagandistic missions. Accusations of corruption, nepotism and financial mismanagement were also present, especially once the legionaries were thrown from power and Antonescu began consolidating his dictatorship after January 1941. In this context, the institute also owed its survival to the broadly held view that Romania needed such an institution in Germany in order to counter what was perceived to be a growing and more efficient Hungarian propaganda in Berlin. Besides an analysis of the aforementioned trials and tribulations of this short-lived institution, the reader will find a wealth of documents that shed light not only on German-Romanian cultural and academic relations during World War II, but also on their political implications, both in Bucharest and in Berlin.

To conclude, this is a good and thoroughly researched volume, a welcome and useful addition to the historiography of German-Romanian relations, and could also constitute a starting point for other beneficial contributions to the field.

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***Culture in Nazi Germany.*** **By Michael H. Kater. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2019. 472 pp. $35.00 (hardback).**

In her 2016 book, *Art of Suppression*, Pamela Potter sums up the simplistic but still widely shared view about Nazis and culture: 'that Hitler, with Propaganda Minister Goebbels at his side, controlled all manifestations of artistic creation and established rigid guidelines, according to their own personal tastes, of what was acceptable or unacceptable. They stamped out all forms of modernism and debased the arts, à la Stalin, to mere tools of ideology and propaganda' (p. 1). Potter shows that all aspects of this view have been undermined by decades of research; her important book explores why that research has failed to shake this popular consensus. Michael H. Kater's scholarship—from his 1974 study of the SS's Ahnenerbe project to his three books on music in Nazi Germany—has played a key role in challenging elements of the old narrative, as Potter notes with appreciation. It is therefore surprising and disappointing that Kater's new book essentially restates this discredited view.

In *Culture in Nazi Germany*, Kater proposes to tell 'the story of culture in the Third Reich'. He pursues this goal by describing the role that the visual arts, literature, music, film and the news media were made to play in the regime's effort to control the German population and, from 1938, to dominate Europe. 'The National Socialists', we are told, 'systematically set out to destroy Modernism in the arts throughout Germany, to make room for their own kind of culture' (p. 1). Having purged the arts of the democratic ethos of Weimar modernism,

the Nazis exploited them to serve propaganda, crafting art, novels and movies that were mediocre in quality and yet awesomely powerful in their ability to spread lies, misinformation and Nazi ideology.

Kater does add important caveats to the view that Potter caricatures. He documents the infighting and confusion that characterized the regime's policy-making; he acknowledges that it was never possible to define 'Nazi' music, art or architecture; he notes that aspects of modernist art and jazz music did survive under Hitler. Nonetheless, the dominant narrative throughout the book's six chapters remains a new version of the old storyline.

That Kater ends up relying on this narrative is the result, I think, of two of the book's central features. First, Kater has chosen to prize the individual story at the expense of any kind of broader, structural argument. Exploring a period through the lives of several of its key participants is a technique Kater pursued to excellent effect in his *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (2000). Here, however, the capsule narratives are too short to offer much real insight, and putting several of them in a list does not make up for the absence of a broader perspective. The result is an emphasis on personal motivations that is more conducive to moralizing than to analysis.

Second, the analytical claims the book does make rely on a simplistic understanding of the relationship between culture and power. According to Kater, art and culture had three uses under Hitler: propaganda ('to influence popular attitudes toward the regime'), entertainment ('to keep the people satisfied, diverting their attention') and diplomacy ('to impress foreign governments') (pp. 62–63). As Kater gives this third claim almost no attention, we are left with 'culture' as nothing more than a tool for mind control, applied by a mighty state to a passive and undifferentiated population, as either mass propaganda or mass entertainment. This narrow model stands in the way of a richer analysis that might more fully have taken stock of the last several decades of historical research on so many aspects of cultural life in Nazi Germany—to say nothing of the sophisticated theoretical literature on the relationship between culture and power.

The combination of Kater's emphasis on the micro-perspective with the bluntness of his analytical instruments rather limits what this book can offer. A chapter on the exclusion of Jews from German cultural life has many compelling stories, but offers no explanation of the significance of anti-Semitism in Nazi cultural policy. Anti-Semitism appears here less as an ideology, with deep roots in German and European cultural history, than as a set of falsehoods, advanced by regime-sponsored cultural products that were really propaganda, 'to be ingested by the general population that did not have the means or desire to check message content for the truth' (p. 149). A discussion of Nazi culture during World War II amounts to a list of examples of the Nazis' use of cultural forms—movies, music, literature and visual art, as well as radio, print media and newsreels—to spread ideological indoctrination and misinformation to wartime German audiences, or simply to distract them. Because Kater fails to distinguish between cultural politics and propaganda, he can offer no analysis of the Germans' sophisticated, multi-pronged mobilization of high and popular culture at home and abroad in support of the war effort. When Kater presents what he sees as evidence of 'a transfer of Nazi culture, or artists working under Hitler, into post-war Germany, certainly the western part' (p. 309), he does this chiefly through stories of German writers, artists and scholars who managed to find employment in their fields after 1945. As he heaps scorn on their efforts to downplay or justify their cooperation with the regime, it is clear how Kater judges these people. It is not equally clear what he thinks these continuities mean for German history or for our interpretation of Nazi cultural policies.

The book's final chapter offers a welcome, if brief, comparison of the Nazis' manipulation of culture with cultural policies of fascist Italy and the Soviet Union, based on an overview of relevant secondary literature. But the chief finding here—that in all three regimes 'culture had to be an instrument of autocratic rule, manipulated by political revolutionaries from the top, on the path to or in perfection of totalitarianism' (p. 338)—amounts to a restatement of the book's point of departure.

Kater commands an extraordinary wealth of knowledge about German cultural history in the Nazi period. Each of the book's chapters presents striking and often shocking vignettes, portraying a varied and colourful set of characters as they fled from, profited from, or were crushed by the Nazis' cultural-political project. Ultimately, however, because they are presented without a broader explanation of the social, economic, political and cultural context in which individuals acted, these scenes end up inviting readers to join Kater in shaking our heads in disapproval at the horrors committed by the Nazis and their collaborators, or at the vulgarity and mediocrity of 'Nazi culture'. This may feel good, but it does little to advance our understanding. In particular, it cannot help us answer what, to my mind, remains a vital question: why did so many highly educated and 'cultured' men and women—in Germany and around Europe—support Hitler's regime?

Rather than confirm our self-righteous condemnation of the errors of the past, historical research on culture and fascism might challenge us, forcing us to think critically about the relationship between aesthetic expression, social life, economics and politics in our own day. In a time marked by the resurgence of nationalist and authoritarian political forces, the historical example of Nazi Germany continues to have much to teach us in this regard. Scholars seeking to conduct such research will find rich materials here, materials that testify to Kater's eye for the compelling narrative. Readers looking for a nuanced, up-to-date historical analysis of culture in Nazi Germany will, however, need to look elsewhere.

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***Empire in the Heimat: Colonialism and Public Culture in the Third Reich*. By Willeke Sandler. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2018. 360 pp. £47.99 (hardback).**

Willeke Sandler's *Empire in the Heimat* is a useful contribution to various recent scholarly debates, among them general discussions about the overall importance of colonialism for—and within—Germany, and more specific debates about continuities between colonialism's role within the German Empire, in Weimar Germany and during the Nazi period.

Sandler intervenes in and complicates the traditional narrative of the demise of those groups and individuals that promoted overseas expansionism and lobbied for the return of Germany's colonies under the Nazi regime. While Sandler confirms that most prominent members of the NS regime had little to no sympathies for a renewed overseas expansionism, *Empire in the Heimat* nevertheless shows how overseas colonialists and their institutions, most importantly the *Reichskolonialbund* (RKB), explored and exploited the room the NS regime left for what Sandler calls 'single-issue dissent', (p. 12) a concept he borrows from Claudia Koonz. According to Sandler, colonialists used their openly proclaimed loyalty to the regime