revival. The Germans turned toward a similar kind of seriousness and quietness in the 1890s, with the beginnings of the *Heimatschutz* movement. Yet, by the late 1880s these new trends had signaled the end of *Deutschrenaissance* boisterousness. Many of the younger German critics of renown, such as Alfred Lichtwark, Julius Lessing, and Ferdiand Luthner, bitterly attacked the movement only a dozen years after the style had gone into full swing. This sudden turn was also probably a special German sensitivity towards styles and their meaning. All this may also be taken forward to the “German Sonderweg,” referring to the way in which some post–World War II historians have traced the causes of the German catastrophes of the twentieth century back into the nineteenth. At the same time, Mennekes rightly points out that it was precisely some of the critics of the new German Renaissance in the 1890s and 1900s, such as Paul Schultz Naumburg, who later turned to Nazism.

On the whole, Mennekes’s book is frustrating. Side and major issues are not balanced in a fruitful way. Thus, in spite of its length, one is not sure whether the book can really be taken as comprehensive. There is no real beginning, as the book starts with a miscellany of places, exhibitions, books, persons, and events. The chapter dealing with building types often degenerates into a list, there is not nearly enough on the beer hall and its interior, and virtually nothing appears on the history of the German exhibitions, books, persons, and events. Part III grandiloquently announces “Meaning” and “Synthesis” but deals chiefly with a mix of social-sociological (“bürgerlich”) and national political issues. But perhaps one should ignore all these problems. A somewhat unusual excuse could be that the German neo-Renaissance movement itself was characterized by a forceful and fulsome individualism and a lack of discipline—thus perhaps it was not really such a “German” style after all.

What most definitely cannot be excused is the lack of an index, a deplorable habit of many German-language publications. This severely restricts the usability of the book, especially given its diversity of material. A good index would have greatly helped those coming from other fields and other languages; as it is, such users will find the book almost unmanageable. The small illustrations, although admittedly well reproduced, and the lack of color, despite so much being made here of the importance of polychromy, restrict the book’s use even further. Nevertheless, to specialists and to anybody dealing with the nineteenth century, it is an indispensable book.

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**Notes**

4. On the movement in Munich, see Sabine Wieber, *“Designing the Nation: Neo-Northern Renaissance Interiors and the Politics of Identity in Late Nineteenth Century Germany 1876–1888”* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004).

Kathleen James-Chakraborty, editor  
*Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War*  
$25 (paper), ISBN 0-8166-4688-0

This collection of essays about the Bauhaus by eight serious scholars clarifies many aspects of the Bauhaus’s importance to visual education, both during the years of its formation and operation and during their long aftermath. The editor and publishers are to be commended for producing a book of such pertinence at a reasonable cost. In her introduction to the essays, editor Kathleen James-Chakraborty describes how the Bauhaus embraced the linking of art and industry during the Weimar Republic. Although only one chapter deals with Bauhaus architecture and architects per se from 1919 to 1933, progenitors, notably Herman Muthesius and Henry van der Velde, are discussed at the beginning of the book, and chilling Nazi and Cold War forces bring it to its conclusion. James-Chakraborty claims that the book’s authors “are self-conscious about their relationship to the historiography of their subjects” and wish for an understanding of “the school’s position in the history of Weimar Germany and, more broadly, twentieth-century culture” (xii–xiii). The fact that half of the book’s authors are women indicates how times have changed since the heyday of the school, when many of the students were male but only a few of the faculty were.

James-Chakraborty suggests that the shift in the United States from classicism to modernism in the 1930s was due more to financial circumstances stemming from the Great Depression and World War II than from the arrival of émigrés like Gropius and Mies van der Rohe or the exposure to the modern European architecture shown at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932. Yet once at Harvard, Gropius’s ideas flourished and dovetailed with the cost-cutting and new construction methodologies then being introduced into the United States. In his propagandistic Harvard activities, Gropius broadcast that he was realizing mainstream Bauhaus goals, yet he did not acknowledge the important early contributions of Johannes Itten and Hannes Meyer. James-Chakraborty fills out the picture of European Bauhaus émigrés by describing the contributions of Josef and Anni Albers, Marcel Breuer, and Ludwig Hilberseimer in America. Mies’s first large contribution to the American scene came in his Lake Shore Drive Apartments in Chicago (1948), where his attention to carefully proportioned windows and cost-cutting technologies soon set a pattern for corporate architecture firms. Accompanied by much publicity, many American embassies and consular offices also then began to bear the stamp of the Bauhaus émigrés, directly in the work of Gropius and Breuer.
and indirectly in the work of SOM and many others.

Wallis Miller emphasizes that architecture was a prime subject and influence at the Bauhaus, even though it was not offered as a subject area until 1927, after the arrival of Hannes Meyer as director. Yet all three of the successive Bauhaus directors (Gropius, Meyer, and Mies) were architects. This suggests the prominence held there by architectural ideology. In Weimar and Dessau, Gropius took gifted students as apprentices in his practice, but they never experimented on their own or received studio critiques. Although Miller is thorough about most architectural matters, she gives short shrift to the tectonic meanings of Mies's concept of Baukunst, and she does not convey much about Van Doesburg and his De Stijl impact in Weimar and Dessau.

We know about that subject well from Magdalena Droste’s writings, which explain that Gropius did not like Van Doesburg and that the De Stijl coordinator became a Bauhaus renegade, teaching clandestine courses from a house in Weimar but never given an actual teaching position at the Bauhaus.

The most politically sobering essays are those by Frederic J. Schwartz and Winfried Nerdinger. Countering the utopian image of the Bauhaus presented in other essays, Schwartz and Nerdinger present a Bauhaus that is market oriented and suspect. Bauhaus objects were commodified and cheapened to become a kind of kitsch. Of course the goals of both the Bauhaus and the Werkbund (also well presented in this book) were to see it that goods were manufactured so as to reach the common man, the public. As Schwartz concludes, the Bauhaus was in no way an ivory tower. Yet, there were degrees of sincerity among the creators. We learn that Meyer's socialist goal was "in providing good products to those with little disposable income" (120), while other Bauhausers were more excited about the capitalistic processes of moving the objects through the process of distribution and exchange. Nor was there any lack of enthusiasm for advertising the Bauhaus style. Despite all of this commercial activity and the school's subsequent influence, Schwartz concludes that the Bauhaus failed in realizing many of its goals in industrial pursuits.

Nerdinger's essay shatters any illusion we might have about Gropius as a heroic figure postulating democratic values in the thirties. Although out of favor, Gropius did not reject Nazism, and he was hardly alone amidst the former Bauhausers and members of their offices. Mies was in this category as well, and Nerdinger claims that whatever the political situation, Mies did not compromise on his formal solutions. His move to the United States was not for political or financial reasons but to gain the recognition denied to him by the Nazis. Besides Hilberseimer we are also introduced to lesser-known German figures at the Bauhaus who worked under the Nazi regime. Many German architects were able to use minimal architectural vocabularies while still meeting the Nazi requirements of such features as saddle or hipped roofs for residences and symmetrical layouts and excessive monumentality for factories and other industrial buildings, some of which had the unforgivable mission of housing mass murder.

Bauhaus painting and photography under Gropius's directorship were headed respectively by Wassily Kandinsky and Lazlo Moholy-Nagy, along with Lucia Moholy, as discussed by Rose-Carol Washton Long. While both Kandinsky and Moholy-Nagy painted geometrical abstractions with universal implications, influenced by Russian Constructivism and the Dutch De Stijl, it was Moholy-Nagy who advanced photography. He saw that it could be linked with the technological goals of the Bauhaus, and as a result he suggested painting was more of an elite phenomenon. Under Meyer's direction, photography became part of the school's curriculum while painting was not given much attention. Interestingly, women during Meyer's tenure branched out from weaving to embrace photography as well. Walter Benjamin wrote that Moholy-Nagy welcomed photography for “unmasking the present in contrast to aestheticizing it” in painting (61). On the other hand, Washton Long maintains that the photography was nonetheless influenced by painting, as in the work of Malevich and Kandinsky.

Theater is distinct from the other arts, and Juliet Koss delineates its reach at the Bauhaus in her essay “Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls.” Koss splendidly describes the history of its performance, recounting how the naive, playful dolls changed to icons of strangeness and foreboding. Following the principles of the total work of art, or Gesamtkunstwerk, fashion, music, set design, abstract costumes, and stilted dance movements were fused in a union quite in keeping with Oskar Schlemmer’s uncanny vision. The concept of the total work of art was also operative in the costume parties organized at the Bauhaus. Informally, Bauhaus students and masters would perform on the Dessau building’s balconies and roofs in doll costumes or in normal attire. Boundaries between spectators and performers were dissolved in these institutional spectacles. Theaters by Farkas Molnar, Andreas Weininger, and Gropius were created in order to facilitate this marriage between stage and audience.

Greg Castillo’s essay about the Bauhaus’s postwar successors and how they were caught up in the Cold War is also insightful. He reveals the short memory of Gropius’s leftist leanings at the Bauhaus and the cruel treatment of Mart Stam by his own leftist political affiliates in the former East Germany. The history of the Bauhaus building in Dessau is traced from its bombed state in the postwar years to its renovation by the East German government in 1978 as part of the post-Stalinist acceptance of its cultural value. Castillo also delves into Max Bill’s Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm and its emergence as the West German postwar successor to the Bauhaus, with financial support from the United States. We are told of its creation and direction by Bill, Otf Aicher, Inge Scholl, and later, after the resignation of Bill in 1957, by Tomas Maldonado. All four participated in the democratic politics of the West, though some were more leftist than others. Bill’s modernism was realized in his
HfG Building and in its minimalist furnishings and products. Maldonado had an analytic preference for socialist central planning that led to much semiotic and information theory. He also made possible the complimentary biography on Meyer and his work by Claude Schnait, a faculty member of the school, written from a socialist point of view.

As Mary S. Hoffschwelle shows in compelling detail in *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South*, one of the Rosenwald schools’ unique aspects was their financing and administrative procedure, designed to encourage biracial community support for the school building program. Community matches, a strategy both men had previously used, lured state education bureaucracies into doing more for their black taxpayers. The black educator and the white philanthropist then engaged black Rosenwald Fund agents, black Tuskegee administrators, white state education supervisors, white state agents for Negro education, white county superintendents, black female teachers, white managers of coordinating philanthropies, and—ultimately and most importantly—black men and women of the American South who gathered the required match in land, material, labor, and cash (often after decades of doing just this all on their own for minimal results). The Rosenwald schools program was a triumph of “inter-racial cooperation” (the historical term) but never a simple process.

Negotiations could begin with rival black churches allying to approach white county supervisors to apply for Rosenwald funding. Traveling black teachers, supported by the Philadelphia-based Anna T. James Fund, could inform isolated black communities of the opportunity, but the county supervisors would have to select the school design—if they could be persuaded to act at all. Supervisors may have had to travel to hamlets they had never seen to verify the funding match and the site. Applications then went to the state level for approval and to black Rosenwald administrators on the Tuskegee staff. Projects could fail, of course: a foot-dragging county supervisor, fundraising fatigue, arson, or a community's understandable unwillingness to hand over its hard-won real estate to the white educational bureaucracy. Even though privately instigated, Rosenwald schools were to be public to force states to maintain them and lengthen school terms. That the process worked five thousand times is a testament to community tenacity as well as to professional dedication all along the line.

The buildings that resulted are best introduced by two pamphlets, both with plans, elevations, and the offer of free blueprints, the intent being to distribute the progressive designs widely. In 1915 Tuskegee published the first plan book, *The Negro Rural School and its Relation to the Community*, with help from James L. Sibley, an idealistic state agent for Negro education. Two Tuskegee-based black architects, Robert R. Taylor and William A. Hazel, produced the designs. Their schemes were mostly small and simple, but they were distinguished architecturally by banks of five or six double-hung windows that lit classrooms from the students’ left so writing arms would not shade the desk. The particularly appealing two-teacher Madison Park school was built with banked windows on the long side, surrounded by a pediment-like gable inserted into the roof, and flanked by rhyming smaller volumes at each end, at least one of which has a corner entrance porch cut into the block. The second plan book seems to have developed this formula, minus the pediment, in a series of small school designs that it disseminated widely.

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In 1920, after Washington’s death, Rosenwald moved the program to Nashville. This contested decision, which Hoffschwelle narrates in exemplary detail—as she does every element of the program’s history—was partly triggered by Frederick B. Dresslar, a school-building expert at the George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, a white institution affiliated with Vanderbilt University. The change sacrificed the racial intimacy of black administrators in a famous black institute aiding poor black communities, as Washington intended, and it abandoned the flexibility that allowed the poorest to build, even if below standards.

The Nashville administration redid the designs for the second plan book, *Community School Plans*, published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund in 1921 and reissued in 1927, 1928, 1931, and 1944. Hoffschwelle credits Samuel L. Smith,