

Licht (1932), her ability to adapt to the National Socialist regime suggests that some women were able to leverage their talents to their advantage despite Nazi chauvinism. The complexities of this situation suggest an avenue for further research that accounts for the varied experiences of these “interstitial” women and the manner in which some were able to find a degree of success under Nazi rule while others met with oppression and death.

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Thomas Mann’s War: Literature, Politics, and the World Republic of Letters.
By Tobias Boes. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021. 354 pages + 24 b/w images. \$34.95 hardcover, \$21.95 paperback, open access e-book.

Tobias Boes’s *Thomas Mann’s War* is the first monograph to trace the formation and shifts of Mann’s role as a representative of the German and European cultural traditions in a global context. Drawing on a wealth of material, Boes reveals that Mann’s public image was shaped by the interplay of the writer’s self-stylizations, national and world politics, and far-reaching changes in the German, U.S., and global media landscapes and literary communities. The book focuses on Mann’s time in the United States, to which he and his family emigrated in 1938. Finding himself separated from his home country and original audience, Mann redefined the tenets of national culture and gave up his earlier non-political stance. Boes highlights pivotal moments of Mann’s political and cultural engagement while shedding light on the key figures that the writer encountered. He offers a novel view of Mann that pinpoints both the extent to which the writer was driven by a strong sense of his responsibility as a public intellectual in exile and his ambition to be considered the pre-eminent modern writer. At the same time, Mann’s development serves as a lens through which Boes offers a novel view of the intersections of politics, culture, and literature during a period of authoritarianism, nationalism, and ideological wars.

Thomas Mann’s War is organized chronologically and is divided into seven chapters, an introduction and conclusion, as well as five so-called interludes, which offer brief discussions of literary works. It begins during the Weimar Republic, when Mann worked tirelessly to establish himself as an emblematic German figure in the tradition of Goethe, Schiller, and Wagner and stylized himself as a bourgeois writer firmly anchored in German culture and society. As such he appeared well-positioned to examine contemporary issues without taking sides or entering political debates—a role he reflected upon in *Reflections of a Non-Political Man*. A Europe-wide series of lectures ensured that Mann’s reputation as a modernist German author was consolidated beyond the nation’s borders: he became an important actor in the European republic of letters, many members of which viewed literature and art as cultural antidotes to the permeation of politics into all aspects of life and the growing belligerence among nation states. When the Nazis increasingly blurred the boundary between culture and politics, Mann regarded his (self-)image as the representative of an autonomous cultural sphere as under threat. He had to reconceive his identity as a German writer, particularly after leaving the country in 1933.

American culture differed from German culture at the time: it connected “aesthetic refinement with moral responsibility” (49) and looked to writers for guidance on social and political issues. With the help of his American publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Mann succeeded in reinventing himself simultaneously as the “Greatest Living Man of Letters,” a modern classic and representative of sophistication and European culture, and as a key representative of an inherently democratic and transnational middlebrow culture. This image meshed perfectly with the increasing importance of literature in the mass culture of the 1920s and 30s. When in 1936 Mann eventually positioned himself against the Nazis publicly and became an outspoken opponent, it required that his “avowed membership in an international republic of letters was [. . .] first translated into the political realm and then patriotically appropriated” (89). Since Mann’s earlier political writings, including *Reflections*, were not available to the majority of his U.S. audience, reinventing himself as a “political man” and supporter of democracy did not raise eyebrows as it would have in Germany.

Boes analyzes the strategies Mann employed to cultivate his reputation as the representative of a transnational culture, including the use of Judeo-Christian references to characterize his antifascist efforts and his involvement with the Marxist Popular Front. Boes highlights Mann’s political independence and notion of himself as a cosmopolitan artist who pinpoints what unites humanity and the world. Once he had moved to the U.S., Mann’s public persona became increasingly important for his reputation. To fight the Nazis, he went on extensive public lecture tours, published articles, organized meetings, and raised funds. By identifying with the writer, Americans could partake in fighting fascism vicariously. Mann’s affiliation with the Library of Congress as a Fellow underlined his representative role as a German intellectual and a supporter of liberal democracy.

By 1940, Mann was a celebrity in the U.S., while it became ever more difficult to stay connected with his European audiences. Still, he was able to establish himself firmly as a transnational writer whose thoughts were valued across borders. Between 1940 and 1945, he produced antifascist radio broadcasts which were transmitted into occupied Europe by the BBC and Voice of America. The dissemination of his texts in print was equally transnational in nature, as it involved individuals and offices in various countries, whether for the publications by the Berman Fischer publishing house or the distribution of political writings “as leaflets hidden in bags of Lyons’ Red Label Tea” (176). Mann’s wartime response to the events in his former home country culminated in his lecture “Germany and the Germans” at the Library of Congress in May 1945, where he laid out his belief that fascism grew out of a long cultural tradition. Therefore, all Germans shared in a common guilt, which, however, had to be distinguished from the responsibility for actual crimes. Unwilling to accept any guilt, many Germans turned away from Mann in response.

Nonetheless, from the beginning, Mann was a presence in postwar German literature. The U.S. government had some of Mann’s works distributed to German POWs, thus introducing a new generation to his writings. Through these texts young Germans, including writers, connected to the Western cultural tradition from which they had been severed for twelve years. Concurrently, people in Germany (re)encountered some of Mann’s works through the English-language Armed Services Editions carried by American soldiers. In both cases, Mann was associated with the U.S., and a few years later, the book-jacket blurbs and introductions for the early

postwar editions of his works emphasized the transatlantic connection further. Mann's postwar status was shaped by forces outside of Germany.

Soon, however, political developments required once again that Mann reconceive his role in the global literary community. The Cold War politicized world literature, reshaping it from a commons of many cultures to a binary construct juxtaposing two worldviews and value systems—East and West, Communism and capitalism—and writers were expected to stand with one or the other. In the U.S., “official circles turned away from” (249) Mann when he would not unequivocally denounce Communism but promoted peace with the Soviet Union. Accusations of being a Communist sympathizer did not hurt his position as a cultural leader, yet ultimately prompted him to leave the U.S. for Switzerland in 1952. Back in Europe, he used his final years to promote again the image of the writer as independent of political and social developments and as a champion of humanity—as he had done in the 1930s.

The five interludes of *Thomas Mann's War* are dedicated to works published between 1938 and 1948, which Boes links to Mann's shifting self-image in a world where cultural and literary communities were in flux. Boes argues, for instance, that with *Lotte in Weimar* Mann proposed that the role of the representative writer does not rely on personal experience, but is a construct of literary criticism and other cultural forces over time. Just how correct this assessment was has become clear in the wake of the publication of Mann's diaries starting in 1975: revealing his sexual interest in men, it shifted the focus from Mann's public to his private life and changed the reception of his works, biography, and public engagement.

Thomas Mann's War is a fascinating read and an important contribution to Mann scholarship. Moreover, it furthers our understandings of the dynamics effecting shifts in twentieth-century cultural, political, and media landscapes, of the manner in which the perception of writers is shaped, and of their role in creating and defending an autonomous artistic and literary sphere. The subject of the émigré writer during times of war and authoritarian governments is most topical today. Boes's excellent study is highly interdisciplinary, and its jargon-free language makes it accessible to a broad audience. Some prior familiarity with Mann's biography is helpful to fully appreciate the intricacies of the dynamics Boes describes. The book will appeal to academics and non-academics interested in history, politics, culture, and media, and scholars will welcome the extensive bibliography and index.

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Weimar in Princeton: Thomas Mann and the Kahler Circle.

By Stanley Corngold. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. xiii + 192 Seiten.
\$81.00 hardcover, \$24.25 paperback, \$19.40 e-book.

Als „Weimar in Princeton“ präsentiert der renommierte Kafka-Forscher Stanley Corngold ein bisher unterbewertetes Vorspiel zu dem „Weimar am Pazifik“, dem deutschen Exilleben in Los Angeles, das durch die wegweisende Gesamtdarstellung des UCLA-Germanisten Ehrhard Bahr (*Weimar on the Pacific*, Berkeley 2008) Sprichwörtlichkeit erlangt hat. Corngold lehrte von 1966 bis 2009 an dem außergewöhnlichen Ort, über