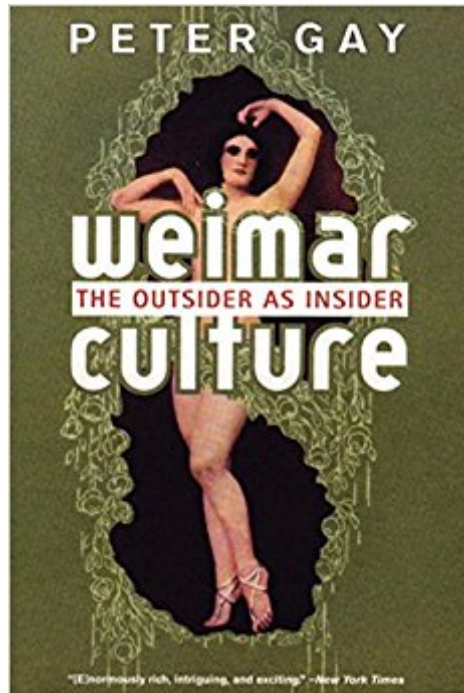




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Weimar Culture: The Outsider As Insider



Synopsis

A seminal work as melodious and haunting as the era it chronicles. First published in 1968, *Weimar Culture* is one of the masterworks of Peter Gay's distinguished career. A study of German culture between the two wars, the book brilliantly traces the rise of the artistic, literary, and musical culture that bloomed ever so briefly in the 1920s amid the chaos of Germany's tenuous post-World War I democracy, and crashed violently in the wake of Hitler's rise to power. Despite the ephemeral nature of the Weimar democracy, the influence of its culture was profound and far-reaching, ushering in a modern sensibility in the arts that dominated Western culture for most of the twentieth century. Vivid and eminently readable, *Weimar Culture* is the finest introduction for the casual reader and historian alike. 16 black and white illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Absorbing” [Peter Gay] has recaptured the spirit of this exciting decade and he provides a reliable guide to it. • - Walter Laqueur, *New York Times Book Review* “A virtuoso performance, not the least because it has captured, with the greatest possible economy, a culture whose origin and essence were closely intertwined with its politics.” • - Peter Jacobsohn, *The New Republic*

Peter Gay (1923–2015) was the author of more than twenty-five books, including the National Book Award winner *The Enlightenment*, the best-selling *Weimar Culture*, and the widely translated *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.

Fascinating insights into what gave rise to Weimar culture from a wide variety of perspectives: political, artistic, social, historical, significant individuals' influence, and underlying trends that laid the foundation for what was coming next. It is not deterministic, but instead indicates what could have been, and lost opportunities. Which makes those years feel like a tragedy - something that did not have to happen, but did due to inability of various leaders, parties and institutions to escape from the history that preceded it. The consequences of disaffected war veterans turning to violence, laying the foundation for Nazis to use that violence as a necessary precursor for usurping political processes was particularly unnerving. Was Weimar doomed from the start? Most likely. But not inevitable. The book would have benefited from more translation of German terms and quotes.

Known for his works on Freud, this reprint (which could be better printed) of the definitive history of the brief period of creativity and freedom between the World Wars, is concise, authoritative and as expertly crafted as one would expect from Peter Gay.

Bit too reliant on Freudian analogy and, unsurprisingly for a historian, more history than culture but decently written and quite broad in its perspective. A good entry into Weimar.

A classic. Didn't seem dated. Always glad to learn about Weimar.

Excellent perspective from a scholar who lived through those tumultuous times

Yes , the book more than met my expectations. But I'm much too old to write a review.! So also for the McElygoot book of which so far I have read about half. The other two I haven't yet opened

A classic monograph of cultural history.

I found this, as with Gay's other books, to be an extremely useful analysis. We tend to think of Weimar as the "new Periclean age" of Germany between the wars--rich in culture and artistic expression and experimentation. Gay does a very solid job of covering a number of topics in 145 pages. Among other subjects, Gay discusses expressionism; architecture (including Gropius and Bauhaus); the Warburg and Frankfurt Institutes; poetry and the German imagination; the rejection of politics during this period; the new realism in art, such as that of George Grosz (but no discussion of da-da); the "new objectivity"; youth movements; the impact of modernism; Heidegger and other

philosophers; and Spengler and history. Among the most interesting sections is one on the expressionist cinema. Gay concludes with a brief, yet suggestive, analysis of what went wrong with Weimar and why it came to be rejected by most Germans prior to WWII. Particularly important in this regard, was the legacy of Versailles which tarnished all that Weimar politically (and perhaps artistically) had been able to accomplish. First published in 1968, the book contains a valuable bibliography (up to that point) and an interesting appendix "A Short Political History of the Weimar Republic." Norton has produced a most pleasant paperback edition, with some very fine illustrations and graphics. Compact but abundant with insights for those interested in this period.

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