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Jennifer Jenkins. *Provincial Modernity: Local Culture and Liberal Politics in Fin-de-Siècle Hamburg.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. 329 S. $52.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8014-4025-0.

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In Jennifer Jenkins's study of culture and civic liberalism in the former republican city-state of Hamburg, the towering figure of Alfred Lichtwark, much like the 1906 mammoth statue of Otto von Bismarck overlooking the harbor, dominates Hamburg at the turn of the twentieth century. Lichtwark, a native school teacher, art historian, prolific writer and speaker, and director of Hamburg's Art Museum, plays the most prominent role in Jenkins' study on redefining local culture in Hamburg. Within the city of Hamburg, Jenkins sees connections between three central themes: political liberalism, modernity, and local culture. Her work emphasizes the liberal impulses in cultural politics on a variety of levels within Hamburg's civic life, featuring the crucial roles of *Bildung* and locality. Focusing on aesthetic education and the art museum, Jenkins offers alternative views of *Heimat*, liberal activism, and modern culture in imperial Germany.

Hamburg, in the midst of demographic, economic, and political upheaval following its inclusion in the Empire, represents an excellent site to examine the interrelationship between new forms of public culture, German modernism, liberal suffrage deliberations, and new communal visions. Jenkins recognizes the state's repressive politics in citing Richard Evans' *Death in Hamburg* in her introduction, but disputes the death of liberalism in Hamburg.[1] She locates a lively and active liberalism in the city's cultural politics.

Jenkins describes Hamburg's political history in Chapter One, emphasizing the role of the *Buergerrecht* or the local citizenship in providing a context for her arguments on liberalism and suffrage. Focusing on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, she traces the meanings of *Buerger* and the legal codification of citizenship from the Principle Recess in 1712, to a moral and patriotic vision of citizenship fostered by civic and enlightened concerns during the mid to late 1700s, to a range of calls for citizenship and suffrage reform throughout the nineteenth century. This question was solved neither by the new constitution in 1860 nor the unification of Germany in 1871; in fact, Jenkins points out that the number of citizens shrank as the city's population rose. The redefinitions of suffrage (extension followed by restriction) at the turn of the century illustrates the contested notion of suffrage expansion which essentially meant "turning working people into citizens" (p. 37). According to Jenkins, a crucial element in this debate centered on the role of elites and institutions in transforming public life and shaping future citizens.

Following an overview of cultural life in Hamburg, Chapter Two introduces Lichtwark, his programs for the Art Museum, and their role in fostering *Bildung*. Jenkins identifies the ideal of aesthetic education as central

for "Hamburg's civic development and Germany's liberal national culture," since it "served as a foundation for ethical social education" (p. 49). She views Justus Brinckmann's Museum of Art and Industry and Lichtwark's Art Museum as public educational institutions (*Erziehungsanstalt*). Lichtwark sought to transform the museum from a private collection intended for the elites to a public institution committed to popularizing art education. Such cultural education was essential to his effort to educate consumers as a means of reforming *Lebenskultur* and revive local and regional culture necessary for an authentic and viable national community. Jenkins presents Lichtwark's program as a kind of cultural democratization in which aesthetic education would generate values and norms to knit the community together. The museum would thus form a central institution within Hamburg's web of sociability and social communication. Local museums, in Lichtwark's words, were charged with the "necessity of making citizens of the masses of new arrivals and their children" (p. 65). The educated middle class, according the Lichtwark, were the custodians of culture, responsible for preserving local traditions and acting as the "people's educators" in working class subcultures.

The following two chapters trace a range of activities among middle-class professionals and reformers, working-class intellectuals, and cross-class associations, motivated and inspired by Lichtwark's call to popularize aesthetic education. Jenkins places their efforts in the context of the growing popularity of the Social Democrats, as the reformers were worried about both the dangerous implications of the SPD's political strength and the material poverty evident in Hamburg's notorious working-class slums. She argues that the rise in the SPD's popularity actually generated divisions between Hamburg's middle classes, generally the "old society" merchant elites objected to the reformist-oriented professionals' effort to popularize culture and eventually expand suffrage. In reality, it was through the combined efforts of members of Hamburg's prominent families like Wilhelm Hertz and young university educated professionals like Walther Classen that the development of new programs occurred, like the People's Home, the Hamburg Home Library, and the Foundation for the Commemoration of German Poets. Jenkins illustrates how these programs–more than charitable endeavors–sought to build bridges to the working classes through popular education, in particular the inculcation of middle-class values and regional sensibilities. She argues in chapter 4 that Lichtwark's words also inspired new public cultural organizations among the lower middle class and working classes as evidenced in the Literary Society and the People's Theatre. Here elementary school teachers played a crucial role as a "conduit to Hamburg's working classes" (p. 120). As new cultural authorities, teachers along with writers, editors of small newspapers, and organizers of worker's educational associations, lectured on art, history, and literature, published their ideas and instructive life stories, and hosted literary readings, recitations, and community discussions all the while celebrating the civilizing force of *Bildung*.

Teachers and *Bildung* combine with localism in the following chapter which examines *Heimatkunde* (study of the local place) as a pedagogical tool in aesthetic education. Jenkins explores the different meanings of *Heimat* in Hamburg, in particular its crucial role in generating the sense of community necessary for *Buergerrecht*. Far from preserving a conservative world-view, Jenkins argues, *Heimat* in Hamburg emphasized civics, urban culture, and productivity.[2] She emphasizes that local history, like art, became part of the public domain by the turn of the century. For instance, she traces the role of history in public schools, emphasizing a decisive turning point during the 1880s with the establishment of new teacher associations and practical innovative pedagogy in which teachers introduced their pupils, future Hamburgers, to local geography and culture through field trips and popular local histories.

The final three chapters continue to explore the importance of the local in defining modernity in both Hamburg as well as in imperial Germany. Chapter Six features Hamburg's Art Museum and Lichtwark's focus on capturing Hamburg's essence and character in three specific collections and in new commissions. Jenkins points out that Lichtwark had several goals located in his "Pictures from Hamburg" collection. He sought to preserve the memory of the city's natural and urban environment, to support local artists by providing commissions and exhibition space, to gain publicity for Hamburg as an artistic center within the *Reich*, and to teach Hamburg's public to see their city artistically. One result of these endeavors, argues Jenkins, is an "interesting mix of localism, modernism, Impressionism, and Heimat art" (p. 181). She illustrates the centrality of the Impressionist Max Liebermann's commissioned paintings of Hamburg to German modern art, and analyzes "Glimpses of Church Street" in detail. Painting the "atmosphere" of the city was a common project of both modernism and *Heimatkunst*, contends Jenkins. Presenting Hamburg's public with new visions of the city's unique natural and urban beauty was

key to Lichtwark's goal of aesthetic education.

Modern visions and local spaces continue to shape the two remaining chapters: the first features Lichtwark's efforts to unearth Hamburg's cultural heritage and the second explores Fritz Schumacher's efforts to modernize the city's traditions in urban planning and building. Lichtwark and his admirers in the Society of Hamburg Friends of Art sought to preserve and popularize the memory of local buildings and traditions through art forms, in sketches by local artists of old merchant halls and through new interpretations of the development of artistic traditions tending toward modernism in Hamburg. In a city that generally evaluated buildings based on functional rather than artistic or historical merit, Lichtwark successfully located lost artworks–Gothic masterpieces by local artists–from Hamburg's medieval churches long demolished and almost forgotten. He also rediscovered the north German Romantic artist Phillip Otto Runge, hailed as a native son, and argued that his use of light and color marked him as a proto-typical modernist. With Runge "late nineteenth-century modernism thus acquired local historical roots" (p. 257). Jenkins relates Fritz Schumacher's urban planning to Lichtwark's museum in a common quest to revive local cultural forms. She highlights Schumacher's vision of harmonious urbanity and view of urban planning as a tool for addressing the social problems of the modern city, as she analyzes his designs for the city park, the *Stadtpark* north of Winterhude. She presents his "people's park" as a communal space where all members of the city could contemplate nature, participate in sports, and commune together, and thereby advancing the larger project of aesthetic education; the park was "a kind of open air public school" (p. 274). Combining modern functional architectural principles with a revival of the red brick regional style, Schumacher sought to "modernize tradition" or symbolically refer to the past without blatant historicism. Like Lichtwark's goals for art, Schumacher's urban planning agenda, Jenkins claims, is based on a liberal political vision that sought "to reform the city at its core rather than at its edges" (p. 266).

The book is well written and solidly grounded in the city's archives and memoirs. Despite the red thread of *Bildung* and Lichtwark's aesthetic education that resurfaces in each chapter, however, the book seems like a combination of two studies. One of these examines associational efforts to popularize culture and education as part of a larger political agenda, and the other features individual efforts to redefine the city and promote modern sensibilities. How the matters discussed in the last three chapters resonate within the broader urban community and the ongoing political debates remains underdeveloped. Jenkins clearly states the issue: who speaks for culture in Hamburg? Jenkins also suggests that, although Lichtwark was an inspiration for many, his views and those of his supporters–especially on modernity–were contested in the public realm. Moreover, to what degree did his "civic discourse on art and the public good" (p. 296) tangibly relate to the suffrage debates and organized liberalism discussed at the beginning of this study? Did Lichtwark himself recognize his ideals of aesthetic education reflected in the city's public life? This intriguing book thus provokes many new questions about the relationship between local and modern culture, politics and education, tradition and urban reform.

This study offers several contributions to German imperial historiography, in particular a nuanced cultural understanding of *Heimat* and an alternative view of civic liberalism. In addition, Jenkins recognizes the commercialization of culture as a complex sub-theme that shaped both the anxieties of her liberal reformers and offered them new opportunities to reach a mass public. If reformers bemoaned the flood of cheap books, steamy stories, and mass entertainment, they also sought to find a niche for their edifying regional stories, public lectures, and instructive theater. As she points out, the lines between education and entertainment were hard to draw. Moreover, commercial venues could view reformist programs as competitors as in the case with the People's Theatre, so the market more than local police harassment led to its demise, as Jenkins suggests. Even Lichtwark needed to attract the general public into his museum before they could be touched by its art and visions of modern urban life.

Jenkins amply points out that civic associations were central to Lichtwark's public endeavors and that the city's cultural institutions often began as modest citizen's clubs. Yet she seems to overemphasize the "newness" of their instructive cultural agendas. A greater continuity existed between the city's eighteenth-century associational life and sociability, and the late nineteenth-century popular pedagogy than Jenkins suggests. In the late-eighteenth century, numerous merchants, professionals, publicists, and writers were active urban reformers who tapped into the city's press and clubs to address and promote the role of local history and public memory, civic morality, and commercial culture in shaping a responsible *Buergertum* and urban community.[3] The late nineteenth-century associations moved beyond the traditional educated middle classes to include women (though

as Jenkins points out they were not entirely welcomed) and the lower classes, but the questions they posed were remarkably similar to those aired in Hamburg a century earlier. Eighteenth-century publicists, reformers and social moralists also believed in the instructive power of popular education and local historical traditions. What does this thread of continuity as well as the ruptures within it say about the city's civic culture?

The lack of attention to the Museum of Hamburg History (earlier the *Sammlung Hamburgischer Alterthuemer*) as a cultural institution in a study which features historical memory and notions of *Heimat* is surprising. Formally established later than Brinckmann's and Lichtwark's institutions, it sought to do much the same in collecting, reinterpreting, and recounting Hamburg's history, traditions, and place in the Empire.[4] Perhaps, as Jenkins argues, art moved from the private to the public realm only at the end of the nineteenth century, but not so history. Popular awareness of local history was evident in areas beyond school curriculum in the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century. The popular press and colloquial narratives in local almanacs and *Handbuecher*; civic festivals and parades; sermons and church memorial tablets; street names; and clubs like the *Verein fuer Hamburgische Geschichte*, the *Museumsverein*, and others kept local history in the public consciousness, especially following the Napoleonic Wars, the Great Fire in 1842, and the integration of the city into the Reich.[5] Indeed, the historical reinterpretation of the Hansa and a cultivation of a new Hanseatic identity was also central to popular history in nineteenth-century Hamburg.[6] As Jenkins affirms, popular interest in local history among Hamburgers was more concerned with redefining the city's present than uncovering an authentic past. The Museum of Hamburg History confirms one of Jenkins' most salient points, namely *Heimat* could find many meanings and representations in nineteenth-century Hamburg.

Notes:

[1]. Richard Evans, *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years, 1830-1910* (London: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[2]. Arguing that local tradition in Hamburg was cast in a varied and modernist form, Jenkins differentiates her work from other studies on nineteenth-century notions of Heimat. For instance Alon Confino, *The Nation as Local Metaphor: WÃ¼rttemburg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) focuses on dominate images of the local as they relate to the development of national consciousness. See H-German review of Confino at (`http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=20384917881357`).

[3]. Franklin Kopitzsche, *Grundzuege einer Sozialgeschichte der Aufklaerung in Hamburg und Altona* (Hamburg, 1990); Mary Lindemann, *Patriots and Paupers: Hamburg 1712-1830* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Anne Conrad, Arno Herzig, and Franklin Kopitzsche, eds., *Das Volk im Visier der Aufklaerung, Studien zur Popularisierung der Aufklaerung im spaeten 18. Jahrhundert* (Hannover, 1999); and my forthcoming book, *Place and Politics: Local Identity, Civic Culture, and German Nationalism in North Germany during the Revolutionary Era.*

[4]. Joergen Bracker, "Von der Sammlung Hamburgischer Alterthuemer zum Museum fÃ¼r Hamburgische Geschichte," in *Geschichte in Hamburg, Erforschen–Vermitteln–Bewahren, Festschrift zum hundertfuenfzigjaehrigen Bestehen des Vereins*, published in *Zeitschrift des Vereins fuer Hamburgische Geschichte*, 74/75 (1989), pp. 259-272, points to competition between the three museums. See also Birgit-Katharine Seemann, *Stadt, BÃ¼rgertum und Kultur: Kulturelle Entwicklung und Kulturpolitik in Hamburg von 1839 bis 1933 am Beispiel des Museumswesens* (Husum, 1998).

[5]. Sebastian Husen, *Vaterstaedtische Geschichte im republikanischen Stadtstaat, Studien zur Entwicklungen des Vereins fuer Hamburgische Geschichte* (Hamburg, 1999); Joist Grolle, *Hamburg und seine Historiker* (Hamburg, 1997); and Volker Plagemann, "Vaterstadt, Vaterland, schuetz Dich Gott mit starker Hand," Denkmaeler in Hamburg_ (Hamburg, 1986).

[6]. See Rainer Postel, "Treuhaendler und Erben: Das Nachleben der Hanse," in *Die Hanse. Lebens-wirklichkeit und Mythos* (Hamburg, 1989); and Maiken Umbach, "History and Federalism in the Age of the Nation State," in *German Federalism: Past, Present, Future*, ed. Maiken Umbach (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).