

broad diversity in the National Assembly, additional biographies would have strengthened the book. Conversely, the rationale for picking these two men was neither clear nor convincing.

The second part of the book, 'Political Concepts', is organized thematically around questions of revolutionary legitimacy, republican executive power, federalism and preserving order in freedom. The context is set by an overview of official relations between the National Assembly and the US government, which was the first foreign power to recognize Germany's new government. The American diplomats were personally enthused about the prospects for Germany, but careful not to burn bridges for rulers in Vienna and Berlin. Their support in Frankfurt was noted as symbolically important, but practically irrelevant, as exemplified by the fate of the steam-powered frigate the US sold to the new German navy that was delivered only after the government was defunct.

In arguments in the National Assembly, many speakers, following Edmund Burke, contrasted the legitimacy of the American Revolution that protected existing rights with the illegitimate and chaotic nature of the French Revolution. The American Revolution was described as an orderly, moderate transfer of power that projected some German liberals' goals for Germany onto an American screen. Others saw in the strong, but bounded, powers of the American president a model for a constitutional monarch with only a few thoughts given to the implications of a dynastic executive versus an elected one.

The most substantive engagement with American political theory and practice was related to the issue of federalism as an issue of vital importance to both countries. Mohl's own work was focused on this area, a strong example of Lerg extending her analysis into the thematic part of the book. Confusing debates over Germany as a *Bundesstaat* or a *Staatenbund* were clarified by reference to American solutions to these issues. It was instructive to note that as late as 1844, for example, the journalist Friedrich Murhard got a four-month prison sentence for writing about the usefulness and lack of a supreme court in a federal structure such as the German Confederation (p. 264).

Lerg's argument linking academic and political discourse about America succeeds in highlighting the political nature of academic research during the *Vormärz*. This study also usefully demonstrates the long-standing nature of debates about the transferability of democratic institutions and practices in Germany. While the focus only on the Frankfurt National Assembly in 1848 and 1849 is understandable, a study that more broadly followed these debates outside of the parliament would also be helpful and remains to be written.

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***Koloniale Begegnungen: Deutschland und Großbritannien als Imperialmächte in Afrika 1880–1914.* By Ulrike Lindner. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. 2011. 533 pp. €56.00 (paperback).**

Ulrike Lindner's ambitious and detailed study of German–British encounters in Africa represents an overdue foray into the under-researched field of 'trans-colonial' exchanges between imperial powers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Based on an impressive range of largely untapped archival sources, this work shifts the historiographical focus from national or comparative perspectives to a close view of individual and institutional contacts across colonial borders in East and South Africa. While the actors in Lindner's study are still predominantly white, male and European, the action is firmly grounded in two sets of neighbouring territories: German Southwest Africa and the Cape Colony (from 1910 the Union of South Africa), and German and British East Africa.

This 'less Euro-centric view' of the period before the First World War offers a unique perspective on German–British relations before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 (p. 467). As Lindner

shows through a series of illustrative episodes, the colonial relationship between the two powers diverged sharply from developments elsewhere. In contrast to the general build-up of international tensions between Germany and Great Britain after 1900, the exchanges of visitors, goods and ideas between their respective colonies in Africa bucked the trend and actually grew steadily right up to the start of violence in Europe. Lindner highlights the widespread view among colonial officials that the imperial project in Africa was, in the end, a joint project that united white Europeans and set them apart from the indigenous populations. This important colonial corrective to the conventional view of British–German relations on the eve of war is the most significant accomplishment of Lindner’s study.

Despite the emphasis on African colonialism as a field for European cooperation, Lindner does not neglect countervailing tendencies that always accompanied British–German collaboration. There existed, she argues, a ‘parallelism of national antagonisms and the effects of technological and economic globalization’ (p. 463). As members of a fairly inexperienced colonial power, German officials often felt the need to highlight their own achievements, especially when confronted with their dependence on British technologies of rule. This knee-jerk reaction by the colonial newcomer resulted in the over-emphasis of a ‘German style’ of colonial administration. Correspondingly, British officials occasionally failed to conceal their condescending view of German colonial efforts in Africa. The tensions became particularly apparent in the repeated attempts of German colonial governments to arrive at comprehensive regulations and laws. This included the infamous restrictions on, and ultimately the prohibition of, mixed marriages in Southwest Africa, which Lindner examines in a fresh analytical framework. British officials reacted with surprise and a certain lack of understanding to the apparent German need for complete solutions that tried to organize and control everything in intricate detail.

The perception of a shared mission remained nevertheless relatively untouched and ultimately overrode national differences before the First World War. As Lindner examines in unprecedented detail, the authorities in the Cape Colony looked with growing unease at the extremely violent and continuous attempts of the German colonial government to pacify Southwest Africa in the Herero and Nama Wars from 1904 to 1908. And yet, the German troops could always rely on vital provisions from the neighbouring colony and eventually even on British military support. Worries about stability in the region and the perceived importance of portraying a unified European presence to the indigenous Africans trumped all other concerns.

Koloniale Begegnungen illustrates in great detail how direct encounters between the two colonial powers played out on the ground. Lindner’s study distinguishes itself through the individual case studies that explore German–British cooperation on issues ranging from border security to the control and containment of epidemic diseases. While this approach allows the reader to delve deeply into the official and diplomatic exchanges between the colonies, it tends to limit the book’s historical vision to the views and opinions of high-level colonial bureaucrats. A detailed examination of how the indigenous population acted within this ‘trans-colonial’ dynamic would surely require an additional study of a similar scale. And yet, Lindner occasionally leaves the reader wanting more information, particularly after a number of tantalizing allusions to African attempts at exploiting the interstices of the different legal spheres between the German and British colonies.

After an introduction, Lindner’s study is divided into three parts: German–British ‘perceptions and interactions’ as colonial neighbours, ‘perceptions and cooperation’ during colonial conflicts and ‘racism in the colonies’. The different sections are rather loosely defined and their contents overlap. Lindner’s decision to relegate the discussion of racism to the end of the book turns out to be an unfortunate one. Her assertion that racist concepts ‘exercised an influence not to be underestimated’ (p. 298) is quite an understatement. Even in Lindner’s own analysis, it becomes evident that racism played a far more formative role. Virtually all of the colonial exchanges the study examines were marked by more or less explicit racist notions. The study would undoubtedly have benefited from a reorganization allocating the analysis of racism to the more prominent place it deserves.

With *Koloniale Begegnungen*, Ulrike Lindner shines light onto the immediate encounters between German and British officials in imperial Africa. Apart from adding another dimension to the history of German–British relations before the First World War, Lindner also manages to put the history of German colonialism and colonial cooperation into a wider international context that obviates the latent danger of yet another German (colonial) *Sonderweg*.

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***Der Kaiser und das Kino: Herrschaftsinszenierung, Populärkultur und Filmpropaganda im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter.* By Dominik Petzold. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh. 2012. 424 pp. €49.90 (hardback).**

Recent scholarship on the German Empire has focused less on its autocratic tendencies than on aspects of its ‘modern’, i.e., its liberal character and its potential for democratic development. The book under review here, Dominik Petzold’s thorough and well-structured study of William II’s media politics, a slightly modified version of his PhD dissertation defended at the Ludwig Maximilians University Munich in 2009, adds to this emerging picture of the *Kaiserreich*, outlined among others by historians Margaret Lavinia Anderson, Christopher Clark and Martin Kohlrausch. Petzold has studied how the German emperor used cinema for the political staging of his reign. He thus offers a fresh look at the close affinity between the new media and the traditional dynastic order. This at times symbiotic relation by no means went unnoticed at the turn of the nineteenth century but has until recently attracted surprisingly little attention from historians.

The book is divided into three main parts. Following an instructive introduction that explains the study’s central questions and the theoretical approach, the first part provides four well-researched chapters on different aspects of monarchical representations in early cinema. Petzold integrates the latest research on (documentary) film studies and film aesthetics into a broad historical picture of the emperor’s self-staging by analysing different film genres, their screenings, audiences and contents. Most of these films showed the emperor on similar occasions: at inaugural exercises of important ‘national’ monuments, attending military parades, or meeting other monarchs. Petzold reminds us that—in the reality of the early cinema—these film clips were parts of longer programmes that covered a variety of topics but were not necessarily a suitable setting for proper monarchical self-staging. The early film industry was a private business, which operated in international markets and was primarily interested in making profits. Providing patriotic images of the emperor was not the industry’s main ambition, therefore state control seemed indispensable.

Consequently, the second part of the book analyses how the ‘monarchic promotion films’ (originally a sarcastic term dating back to around 1900, denouncing William’s media strategy) were devised. They were the result of the emperor’s interest in technology, his personal vanity and strategic insights, coupled with economic considerations of some of the leading film companies. Petzold shows in detail how the court soon began tightly to control the production, but not distribution, of films in which the emperor was involved as early as the 1890s. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Kaiser and the institutions of the monarchy discovered that such films could be used to reach specific political objectives. William II engaged a personal filmmaker, and he explicitly staged some of his political appearances for the camera to reach out to millions of cinema-loving subjects, for example his journey to Jerusalem in 1898 or the inauguration of the reconstructed Malbork Castle in 1902. William used the latter occasion for a deliberately anti-Polish statement that announced the new course of an aggressive Germanization policy towards the Polish minorities in the eastern parts of Prussia, and he wished the new medium of film to spread this message throughout his country.

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