



European journal of American studies Reviews 2015-4

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/ejas/11160>
ISSN: 1991-9336

Publisher

European Association for American Studies

Electronic reference

Jeff Smith, « Cornelis A. van Minnen and Manfred Berg, eds. The U.S. South and Europe: Transatlantic Relations in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. New Directions in Southern History », *European journal of American studies* [Online], Reviews 2015-4, document 9, Online since 06 October 2015, connection on 01 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/ejas/11160>

This text was automatically generated on 1 May 2019.

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- 1 Originating at a 2011 conference at the Roosevelt Study Center in the Netherlands, the fourteen essays in this collection are an informative hybrid of region-specific American Studies and the currently fashionable “Atlanticist” or hemispheric / transnational approaches. The periods covered range from the era of Tocqueville and other European observers of antebellum America to the age of civil rights and decolonization in the late twentieth century.

² By and large, the essays deal with the experiences of travelers, visitors and exiles from one region to the other, or with the reception of Southern cultural products and ideas in Europe or vice-versa. For instance, in “The German Forty-Eighters’ Critique of the U.S. South, 1850-1861,” Daniel Nagel considers the influence of German socialists, frustrated in their efforts to revolutionize Europe in 1848, as they took up refuge in America, promoting “Young Hegelian” republicanism and eventually helping shape the antislavery movement and the nascent Republican Party. Don H. Doyle, in “Slavery or Independence: The

Confederate Dilemma in Europe,” tells a tale of equal and opposite frustration: Tasked with winning British or French backing for Confederate independence, southern agents sent abroad during the Civil War found – in spite of the European powers’ geopolitical interest in dealing a blow to the rising United States – that the tide of popular antislavery sentiment in Europe had them overmatched.

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Moving from the actual Civil War itself to its representation, Melvyn Stokes, in “Europeans Interpret the American South of the Civil War Era: How British and French Critics Received *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Gone With the Wind* (1939),” usefully frames the crucial period between the world wars by examining the receptions given to two epics of an earlier great conflict, noting how these differed in countries whose own racial experiences were unlike not just America’s but each other’s. Interestingly, Stokes informs us that because wartime censorship denied them actual newsreels, British audiences fell back on *The Birth of a Nation* to gain a sense of what the combat then in progress on the Western Front might look like. And again emphasizing differences in the national experiences of race, Clive Webb’s “Britain, the American South, and the Wide Civil Rights Movement” analyzes the difficulties that British civil-rights campaigners had in copying their American counterparts’ movement-building success – though imported techniques of nonviolent protest did find homes in the British antinuclear and anti-apartheid campaigns. Ironically, Webb writes, the parallel outreach of white supremacists to the UK went somewhere better, revivifying segregationist arguments and rhetoric that were losing traction in America, and injecting these into British politics and “the higher levels of British intellectual life” (257).

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There is much of value in these and other essays in this volume, which is recommended for students both of the American South and of Euro-American relations.

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