

Book Reviews

Edited by Marc Pierce

History

Terror Flyers: The Lynching of American Airmen in Nazi Germany.

By Kevin T. Hall. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2021. 370 pp. \$35.

Historical research on air power in the Second World War is robust, but historians have written comparatively little about U.S. airmen who crashed in Nazi-occupied territory. In fact, little is known about the experiences of those beaten or killed by Germans, violence termed *Lynchjustiz*. As the first book-length study of *Lynchjustiz* in Germany, *Terror Flyers* tells the story of American airmen during the final years of World War II. Forced to land or eject due to mechanical failure or anti-aircraft fire, these airmen survived their plane crash only to be mistreated and sometimes killed at the hand of German police, civilians, party or state officials, security forces, or military personnel.

In chapters one and five, author Kevin Hall recounts the stories of downed fliers who experienced *Lynchjustiz*. Hall explores in detail a sample of individuals who crashed throughout Germany and were subsequently beaten or killed. Hall analyzed whether the year (corresponding to war morale) or crash location resulted in differences in the treatment of downed airmen.

While recorded cases of *Lynchjustiz* began in 1943, violence in 1944 was most likely the result of state-sponsored propaganda. Chapters two and three investigate German propaganda and the history of *Lynchjustiz*. Hall explains that the terminology was purposefully used to direct attention to the United States' hypocrisy as it called for freedom and democracy while mistreating African Americans. "*Lynchjustiz* offered Nazi officials a way to fight Americans using 'American justice'" (15). Furthermore, a propaganda campaign

branding American airmen as “Terror Flyers” who targeted civilians and non-military targets also helped inspire violence.

Chapters four and six describe the post-war search for justice that took place in war crime trials. Hall unpacks the evidence presented at the trials, specifically analyzing who took part in the brutality. He discusses the reasons civilians and police provided when later questioned about perpetrating violence toward downed airmen and argues that propaganda combined with recent air raid damage incited mob violence toward airmen. By 1944, this hostility had become part of Germany’s total war. After the war, however, there were multiple challenges to prosecution since evidence, witnesses, and perpetrators were difficult to locate. While some perpetrators received prison sentences and a few were hanged for their crimes, most received light sentences commuted a few years later. In the conclusion, Hall discusses Germany’s recent reckoning with *Lynchjustiz*. In the early 2000s Germans established several local memorials to commemorate the deaths of U.S. airmen, denouncing the violence that previous generations had participated in.

While most literature on downed airmen focuses on their experience as prisoners of war, Hall’s background uniquely positioned him to think not only about downed airmen who were known victims of *Lynchjustiz* but the fate of those who are still missing in action. He also makes important contributions to this historiography in other ways. For instance, he provides more accurate statistics based on his historical research to update previously accepted *Lynchjustiz* numbers.

Hall conducted painstaking research in both German and U.S. archives compiling a selection of primary sources from German newspapers, war crime trials, Escape and Evasion reports, witness statements, and Missing Aircraft reports. He included numerous images in the book including political cartoons, maps, and photographs. Some of the documents and many of his statistics are part of the book’s appendices which cover more than one hundred pages. Despite the excellent research, the book appears disjointed at times – perhaps because it covers multiple aspects of *Lynchjustiz* from its origins to the use of propaganda against the United States to the perpetrators involved in the killings. While several chapters build on each other, the book reads like an edited volume rather than a monograph.

Terror Flyers is a fascinating study on a little known or understood aspect of the Second World War in Germany. Scholars and graduate students would benefit from reading it along with anyone interested in the experiences of airmen in World War II. Select chapters might also be assigned to upper-division undergraduate history courses.

Violent First Contact in Venezuela: Nikolaus Federmann's *Indian History*.
By Peter Hess. State College, PA: Penn State University Press, 2021. 136 pp.
\$26.95.

Peter Hess's *Violent First Contact in Venezuela* is a stellar addition to the Latin American Originals series of translations and analyses of primary source texts on colonial Latin America. Peter Hess takes Nikolaus Federmann's *Indian History* and translates it into English from the German edition (based on Spanish reports to the Council of the Indies). Unlike the other volumes in Latin American Originals, Hess takes only a single text for translation and inspection. This allows Hess to make a deeper examination of a singular narrative.

Published in 1557, Nikolaus Federmann's *Indianische Historia* is a fascinating narrative describing the German military commander's incursion into what is now Venezuela. Designed not only for classroom use but also for the use of scholars, this English translation is accompanied by a critical introduction that contextualizes Federmann's firsthand with a brief portrait of Federmann and the Wesley Company within the Spanish colonial system. This addition of this introduction allows for the use for any student looking to further explore the history of colonial Latin American.

Federmann explored Venezuela and Colombia as an agent of the Wesley Company, the only non-Iberian exploration company contracted by the Spanish Crown. Having gained the rights to colonize Venezuela from the Spanish Crown in 1528, the Welser merchant house of Augsburg, Germany, sent mercenaries, settlers, and miners to set up colonial structures in the New World including Federmann. Ultimately unprofitable, operations ceased in 1546 after two Welser officials were murdered. *Indian History* gives an account of Federmann's foray into the interior of Venezuela in 1530–31 displaying the first contact between Europeans and various indigenous tribes in South America. As expressed in Hess' choice of title, Federmann follows the same trend as other European explorers of the time; violent and completely sure of the righteousness of their mission and the superiority of their civilization.

In his introduction, Hess convincingly argues that Federmann's account is a *probanza de mertio* ("proof of merit") to defend his excursion's violent actions as well as giving his opinion on the capacities of the native tribes. In the account, Federmann explains in detail how a small cohort of European mercenaries was able to prevail against much larger indigenous groups as he "repeatedly stresses how advantageous horses were to him in battle, particularly in open fields" (19) and expresses the dire circumstances his campaign endured in the interior of Venezuela.

While the introduction was quite thorough, it would have been useful if Hess had expressly explained the translocal network of the early explorations by the Wesler Company. Germans from the same towns (Augsburg or Ulm) traveled together along kinship and business networks into the New World. Hess notes, but does not emphasize, the importance of localism of these networks for this 'German' company. Was this company truly 'German' or more of a Bavarian venture? How do the kinship network of the Ehinger family and the importance of Augsburg and Ulm as a source of labor factor into Federmann's account? While the acknowledgement of the transnational nature of the Welser Company was important, a further analysis of the local nature of this network would have been pertinent.

This work is a much-needed translation of the first account of a German in South America. The only detailed record of this incursion, Federmann's text adds a unique and important perspective to our understanding of first colonial contact on the Caribbean coast of South America. It provides insight into the first-contact dynamic, the techniques of subjugation and dominance, and the web of diverging interests among stakeholders. This volume will be a valuable resource for courses and for scholarship on conquest and colonialism in Latin America.

University of Iowa

Samuel Boucher

The American Army in Germany, 1918-1923: Success Against the Odds.

By Dean A. Nowowiejski. Lawrence, KS: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2021. 354 pp. \$49.95.

Nowowiejski describes his subject as an episode "lost to history" (1). For most Americans, post-war American occupation of Germany recalls the long Cold War occupation following World War II. Yet from 1918 to 1923, the American Army occupied a zone in the German Rhineland with a bridgehead at Coblenz. The American general who commanded these troops, Henry Tureman Allen, held a dual role in the occupation, serving also as the official American observer of the Inter-Allied Rhineland High Command (AIRHC) from 1920 to 1923. This was no mean accomplishment for Allen, as the Americans, who had not joined with its allies in the Treaty of Versailles, had no official role in the IARHC, even after the U.S. concluded a separate peace with Germany in 1921.

If it is true that "the successful termination of a war rests on achieving a lasting peace" (43), it was fortunate for the U.S. that General Henry Allen

was handpicked for this task by General Pershing, as he proved to be an ideal choice to command U.S. forces in Germany. A West Point graduate who had served in the American West and the Philippines before the Great War and commanded American troops on the battlefields of France, Allen was also most uniquely qualified to serve in a military-diplomatic post even in the face of “benign neglect of diplomatic guidance” (57).

While France saw itself at the end of the war as an undisputed conquering force, and viewed Germany as its defeated enemy, Allen saw German economic health and vitality as necessary to European stability (229). This placed Allen at loggerheads with his French counterpart Tirard, who was strongly encouraged by Marshal Foch and the French government to beat the Germans down at every opportunity. Since the Belgians generally backed the French positions, the British, seeking a more even-handed approach toward the Germans, sorely needed Allen’s support at the IARHC to carve out difficult solutions to a panoply of problems, especially the status of the Rhineland itself. While Allen saw no alternative to viewing the Rhineland as German territory, as it was under international law, the French did all they could to encourage a separatist movement. Meanwhile, the French and Belgians were more than eager to occupy the German industrial Ruhr region as a weak and embattled German government in Berlin was chronically slow to satisfy demands for reparations.

Guidance was largely lacking from the American side, and the desire to bring the troops home was ever-present. When the more isolationist Harding administration took over the presidency in 1921, the threatened end of American occupation placed even more pressure on Allen to retain his tenuous grip on a seat at the table. What clearly was advantageous to Allen was his character, his focus, his social bearing, and his native intelligence, marked by his fluency in both French and German. His innate sense of fairness in dealing with his interlocutors won their begrudging respect. Even General Tirard, whose goals were so often opposed, found Allen a congenial social host and a tough but fair adversary.

Allen, meanwhile, focused on well-chosen and clear imperatives: the enforcement of law, respect for property, and fairness (222). But even in these limited goals, Allen did not lack pushback, perhaps most notably from the U.S. Ambassador to France. None of these things could have been accomplished had Allen not been equally focused on his military role, striving to make his troops into a model of American military competence and pride. His training regimen included not only drill and ceremonies and extensive inspections and field training, but also daily equitation classes, and, above all, continued vocational and academic study by both officers and enlisted. These included daily lessons in French or German. Allen, who did not tol-

erate shoddy performance, was able to send any troops failing to meet the mark back to the States. But his men wanted to serve in Germany. In fact, in addition to obtaining a post with career stability, some 595 soldiers acquired marriage certificates for their chosen German war brides (199). For the officers, in a downsizing military, service in the occupation forces was like being assigned to an “island of officer culture, centered on the horse” (102). It was no fluke that Allen’s units consistently bested their European competition both on the drill field, in horsemanship, and in athletic competition.

For the enlisted, Allen’s plan to turn “illiterate farm boys to model citizens with international perspective” (197) met the ideals of progressive education more effectively, perhaps, than any other American institution of its time. Congressman John Tilson, in a letter to Secretary of War Weeks, describes them as an “ocular demonstration of the greater force behind it in America that adds weight and dignity to our representative” (77). Nowowiejski calls this achievement the “significant accomplishment of the Rhineland Occupation” (234).

This study is cogently presented and written, thoroughly documented, and gives praiseworthy treatment to a subject hitherto inadequately addressed. The text is enhanced by a judiciously selected collection of historic photographs depicting places and personages. The book is highly recommended for inclusion not only in academic and military libraries, but in serious general collections.

Longwood University

Geoffrey Orth

Germans in America: A Concise History.

By Walter D. Kamphoefner. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021. 310 pp. \$38.

German-Americans were the largest foreign-language group in the 19th century and yet, the last monograph on the subject is 46 years old (LaVern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* [Boston: Twayne, 1976]). The renowned historian Walter D. Kamphoefner presents a much-awaited synthesis on German migration to the U.S. Throughout, he tackles the complex questions of identity and language preservation, ethnic distinctiveness, and the (changing) relationship between German immigrants on the one hand and U.S. mainstream culture as well as other minorities on the other hand, especially Irish-Americans and African Americans.

The title of the book might be a little misleading, depending on one's definition of 'concise.' While this is indeed a rather short book, Kamphoefner presents a differentiated picture by emphasizing the local nature of the German-American experience that varied from state to state, from urban to rural, from the frontier to sprawling cities in the Midwest and on the East Coast. In twelve chapters and just over 300 pages (including brief notes on sources and an index), Kamphoefner moves chronologically from the colonial period to today, highlighting the ubiquity of chain migration, language persistence, transplanted skills and denominations. At the same time, he stresses cultures clashes that arose, for instance around the personal liberty to drink beer as opposed by the growing temperance movement. Kamphoefner breathes life into the diversity of German-American migration experiences through his extensive inclusion of first-hand sources such as letters, songs, newspapers, and personal family stories.

After tracing German migration to colonial and revolutionary America (Chapter 1), Kamphoefner discusses the sources and causes of 19th century emigration (Chapter 2). He argues against conventional histories, by discussing push factors other than the inheritance system in the German states such as rates of modernizing industry. Likewise, he points to studies of Hesse Kassel and Württemberg where bad wine years and high grain prices mostly drove emigration. In Chapter 3, Kamphoefner reiterates scholarly consensus by stressing the crucial role of immigrant letters over guidebooks, emigration societies, and agents for chain migration to the East Coast and the Midwest. Except for Texas, Germans avoided the South.

Beginning with Chapter 4, Kamphoefner zooms in on several sub-groups and topics. As Germans transplanted their denominations, they began an extensive network of parochial and public schools offering heritage language instruction that also led to cooperation with, e.g., Slavic immigrants. At the same time, for German Catholics tensions arose, both inward with their very own ethnicity and outward due to the dominance of the Irish.

The German-American press (Chapter 5) peaked in the 1890s and accounted for two-thirds of the foreign press, creating a "parallel society, linguistically speaking" (114). At the same time, as Kamphoefner rightly points out, it "played an ambivalent, Janus-faced role" (108). While preserving the mother tongue and promoting ethnic consciousness, the German-American press also educated immigrants in the American way of life with ethnic content beginning to decline by the end of the 19th century.

Only a decade prior, the U.S. census had tallied ethnic background and occupation for the first time (Chapter 6). Looking beyond the stereotypical image of the German farmer in the Midwest, Kamphoefner discusses Ger-

man-American industrialist and entrepreneurs who catered beyond the ethnic niche market. For instance, prominent German-American brewers such as Adolphus Busch and Eberhard Anheuser were not trained brewers but had received extensive business training. Kamphoefner skillfully invites the reader to reflect on the transfer process of “transplanted skills,” i.e., how to measure the contributions of Germany and the U.S.

In Chapter 7 Kamphoefner shows his impressive skills with deciphering census data when, for instance, analyzing ethnic endogamy (175f). Moreover, while acknowledging the patriarchal society, the author seeks to look beyond the *Kinder, Küche, Kirche, Kuhstall*-narrative through figures like the prominent female journalist Mathilde Franziska Anneke.

The following two chapters cover German-American’s involvement during the Civil War and their “marriage of convenience” (p. 216) with African Americans during Reconstruction. German-Americans, especially the 1848ers, were outspoken against slavery and one of the few critics in the South (the capture of secessionist state militia at Camp Jackson in Missouri and the Battle of the Nueces in Texas come to mind). Yet, as Kamphoefner convincingly argues nativism and temperance rather than ideology played the most crucial role for party alignment. In the end, German-Americans seem to have put their own agenda before anything else.

Regarding the German-American experience during World War I Kamphoefner makes a well-founded observation about previous scholarship: some scholars have taken the persecution narrative a little too far. German-Americans were not only victims but also perpetrators against their own. In a similar vein, name changes of German food such as sauerkraut have been overexaggerated in the past. While the most apparent impact was on language, with regard to the ethnic press and education this decline had been on its way since the turn of the century with the significant decrease of migration from Germany and subsequent generational change. While Kamphoefner presents very important nuances, what is most striking in this chapter is that it fails to explicitly mention how World War I brought down an entire industry precisely because of its German roots. World War I gave the final push for Prohibition and its success can only be understood in light of the “war at home.” In their fight against breweries, the temperance movement rode on the wave of anti-German hysteria.

The final chapter looks at German-Americans since the 1920s until today – with only 14 pages, the above mentioned “conciseness” of the book comes with strings attached. Arguably, the focus on the 19th century is justified as this was the high-water mark of German-American migration. In addition, the shorter treatment of the 20th and 21st century reflects existing research gaps. Much of the author’s conclusions on the perception of the rise of Hitler

or the reemergence of democratic West Germany is rather tentative (besides also leaving out any discussion of East Germany).

Similarly, German-American immigration during the 18th century is only given 16 pages. While the author addresses the major differences from 19th century immigration (e.g., more church than sect people and hence, politico-economic rather than religious reasons to migrate), a more extensive discussion of issues like the highly individualistic experience of indentured servitude is missing. Unless these were skilled laborers, indentured servants had little to no control over who might eventually buy their contracts, intensifying the social divide they were seeking to leave behind in the Old World.

Lastly, while each chapter can be read on its own, as they all draw on Kamphoefner's remarkable publication list, some chapters might have profited from a general introduction first, especially for an audience unfamiliar with the broader subject of transatlantic migration such as the various 19th century religious groups, Otto von Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, or white supremacist discourse. Furthermore, a more thorough editing process could have avoided several repetitions within each chapter.

These criticisms aside, Kamphoefner demonstrates unsurpassable in-depth knowledge and has presented a valuable and highly recommendable book, both for the general public and for undergraduate classes. Written by one of the leading German-American historians, *Germans in America. A Concise History* is the outgrowth of decades long scholarship on the subject, especially Kamphoefner's groundbreaking work on immigrant letters. The question is not if but only when a second edition will go to print, providing an opportunity to address some of the issues raised in addition to a hopefully longer referencing body.

University of Texas at Austin

Jana Weiß

Hessians: German Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War.

By Friedericke Baer. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. 520 pp. \$74.

A scholarly treatment of the experiences of the "Hessians" has long been a desideratum of historical research. Friedericke Baer's *Hessians German Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War* admirably fills that gap on any bookshelf. The information on the role of Britain's German auxiliaries collectively known as Hessians, though the troops were hired out by the rulers of Hessen-Kassel, Hessen-Hanau, Ansbach-Bayreuth, Waldeck, Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, and Anhalt-Zerbst, provided in some 385 pages of text and almost 2,000

footnotes is based on sound scholarship, highly informative and immensely readable, and enjoyable to the historically interested layperson as well as to the Revolutionary War specialist. The narrative is followed by six pages of unpublished, and ten pages of published, primary sources plus another twelve pages of secondary literature in English, German, and French, all of which should delight anyone who wants to dig deep into the activities of Hessians in, and their view of, the nascent United States between 1776 and 1783. That is the purpose of her book: based on rarely if ever before used unpublished sources Baer seeks to provide an overview and analysis of personal encounters of Hessian officers and soldiers, to show how they “experience and describe the war they fought in, the land they traversed, and the people they encountered” (4).

In fourteen chapters beginning with “Britain’s Decision to Hire German Auxiliaries” to chapters about recruitment and the transatlantic crossing (6-86), Baer chronologically follows the Hessians across the battlefields of the War of Independence. Even though hardly a military engagement, no matter how small, seems to have escaped her inquisitive eye, her focus is not on the battles themselves. The book is not a military history of Britain’s German auxiliaries in the War of Independence. The reader will search in vain for a discussion of who stood behind which tree firing at whom, how, when, and why. Military aspects of even major battles such as the Battle of Brandywine on 11 September 1777 barely receive a page or two (232-33). Baer is not a military historian, which unfortunately means that she tends to use military terms such as muskets, rifles, and guns interchangeably, when these are different items. There are a few similar mistakes, e.g., “many of the Loyalist troops under Porbeck’s and Clarke’s command were Blacks” (327). According to Todd Braisted, the country’s leading expert on Loyalist forces, recruiting armed Black soldiers into Provincial (Loyalist) units was strictly *verboten*. The Royal Deux-Ponts numbered barely 900 soldiers rather than “around 2,500” (337). More aggravating is that the book lacks maps, as many readers would probably appreciate some help locating Hubbardton, Cowpens, or Fort Bute.

One of the strongest points of the book is that Baer takes the reader into lesser-known areas of the conflict and even outside the boundaries of the nascent United States. Even a reader with a thorough grounding in the war will find something new in chapters 11 and 12, the war in the Spanish Borderlands and in Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia (280-350). It is here in particular that Baer succeeds in putting a human face to the sufferings and hardship of the war. Of the 853 men of the Knoblauch Regiment who served in Georgia and the Carolinas, 354 or 42% did not return to New York City. Only five had been killed 87 had deserted and 262 had died of diseases (348). More importantly, these men do not remain anonymous: whenever possible,

Baer in an enormous effort provides their names and biographical data.

As the reader follows the men and possibly as many as 1,000 women and children (60) through the war, their changing view of America quickly becomes apparent. Arriving in the conviction that the war would be over quickly, morale and good spirits quickly soured. Americans were an ungrateful people whose rebellion against their king Hessians found incomprehensible in view of the obvious wealth of the inhabitants. No aspect of life in Revolutionary America remains untouched. Hessians almost uniformly rejected slavery while their attitude towards Native Americans was more ambiguous. For most of them it remained a war waged in a country and in ways they did not understand. Within months of arrival many wanted nothing more than to go home again. By the Spring of 1778, Lieutenant Colonel Wurmb of the *Jäger*, however, was convinced that the war would continue as long as the Americans could raise even 1,000 men willing to continue the fight.

Which brings up a point that I would have liked to see discussed a bit more in depth. Baer asks many pertinent questions such as: Did the uninterrupted flow of Hessian recruits keep the war alive longer than it need to? (her answer is: yes) Or: Why do men enlist and why do men desert (67-71), and provides an impressive amount of data to support her conclusions. What seems to be missing is a more detailed discussion of why men fight, of soldiers' "Motivation in War" even *sans* an explicit discussion of the battles and military engagements. Fight the Hessians did, yet Ilya Berkovich's recent in-depth study of *The Experience of Common Soldiers in Old-Regime Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) is one of the very few pertinent titles not listed in the bibliography.

Such criticism notwithstanding, however, Baer's *Hessians* goes a very long way to help us not only learn about, and understand the role of, Britain's German auxiliaries in the Revolutionary War but about Revolutionary America itself. It is bound to become required reading for anyone interested in America's struggle for independence.

Holland, Michigan

Robert A. Selig

Memory Politics in The Shadow Of The New Cold War.

By Grzegorz Nycz. Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2022. 150 pp. \$99.99.

Grzegorz Nycz's thoroughly researched monograph presents an important analysis of evolving memory politics, especially in the aftermath of World War II and within the context of post-Cold War Europe. This timely

book sheds light on theoretical approaches to the study of memory (collective, social, and cultural) while providing national and international examples of how selective interpretations of the recent past are used as political tools to shape societal dialogues and inspire ideological shifts.

Setting the stage for his analysis, the first chapter explores the dimensions and frameworks of memory studies as an academic discipline. While this chapter focuses on post-Cold War debates in eastern Europe, Nycz eventually branches out to East Asia as any analysis of an emerging New Cold War must include China. He makes clear that a better understanding of memory politics may prove a powerful tool in explaining what inspires Russia's imperial post-Soviet policies under Putin, and why China's geopolitical posture under Jinping has changed in recent years.

Despite its brevity, chapter 2 offers valuable insights into issues of memory politics in the post-Cold War era. On one hand, western Europe's discourse continues to be influenced by Nazi era crimes while societies in eastern Europe are still confronting Stalinist legacies. On the other hand, a new global geopolitical arena sees the emergence of controversial memory policies in East Asia, which tries to come to terms with crimes committed by imperial Japan.

In the third and sixth chapter, Nycz narrows his focus to rising tensions in European memory politics, which are created by the expansion of NATO and the EU in the post-Cold War era, now including former Soviet-dominated countries. After the fall of the Soviet Union and with the reunification of Germany, European memory politics had to combine their approach of remembering the past by recognizing victims of the Nazi regime and Stalinist totalitarianism simultaneously. This attempt at a more wholistic remembrance culture was complicated by, among other things, the expulsion of Germans from eastern Europe after WWII and the collaboration of Ukraine with the Nazi regime.

Chapters four and five pay special attention to Russia's shifting national memory politics since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, with a focus on the Putin era, the annexation of Crimea, and the evolving Ukraine crisis. As the author illustrates, the New Cold War is inspired by a combination of post-Soviet imperial nostalgia, rising Russian nationalism, and a selective interpretation of history. Celebrations of the October Revolution see a decline, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact is ignored, the Great Patriotic War is increasingly emphasized, and Stalin returns as an icon of Russian identity.

In chapter seven, Grzegorz Nycz focuses his attention on Germany's struggles to come to terms with its past, with a special emphasis on the *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s, Richard von Weizsäcker's speech in 1985, and the Philipp Jenninger affair of 1988. Since Nycz's analysis overlooks recent developments in Germany's remembrance culture, which have been described in

works like Susan Neiman's *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2019), this chapter falls short.

In its final chapter, Nycz's book evaluates memory politics in the nuclear age, with a special emphasis on the 1994-95 controversy over the Enola Gay exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. *Enola Gay* was the B-29 bomber that dropped the first nuclear bomb of World War II on Hiroshima, Japan. Describing this atomic bombing with an appropriate narrative proved difficult as it displayed a deep rift between traditional and revisionist views of US history over the inclusion of victims of nuclear warfare. At the same time, Japan continues to struggle with its own memory policies in finding ways to both highlight the victims of two atomic bombings while accepting responsibility for war crimes committed during its imperial past.

Grzegorz Nycz's monograph unfortunately was not afforded the rigorous editorial review process it deserved, leaving the narrative at times convoluted and regrettably with typographical and grammatical errors. In addition, Nycz's book on global memory politics would have benefitted from a brief analysis of New Cold War arenas outside Europe, especially in Latin America (e.g., Venezuela) and Africa (e.g., Sudan). Still, there can be no doubt that this publication presents a highly valuable analysis of geopolitically inspired memory politics, especially at a time when we must make sense of crises in Ukraine, Taiwan, and elsewhere.

Valdosta State University

Michael G. Noll

The Great Disappearing Act: Germans in New York City, 1880-1930.

By Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2022. 225 pp. \$120 (cloth); \$29.95 (paperback).

In this tightly argued accounting of "the great disappearing act," Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson asks what happened to the Germans in New York City, who in the late nineteenth century were a visible and vital presence in the then third-largest German-speaking city in the world but by 1930 had almost completely vanished from public view and notice to the point that their place in the city's history and development was erased from public memory. The story of the Germans' "disappearance" in the United States is well known in its broadest features, with the aggressive Americanization programs and anti-"Hun" campaigns of World War I as the standard explanation for the demise of German America, but Ziegler-McPherson's deeply researched and detailed study offers a close-in case study of adaptation and assimilation that reveals a

more complicated and longer process whereby Germans “disappeared” over the half century that began with robust immigration and ended with the National Origins Acts of the 1920s restricting it.

Combing through German-language sources, especially newspapers, public records of all kinds (e.g., of property holdings), census manifests, city directories, business reports, and myriad other sources, Ziegler-McPherson reconstructs the world(s) the Germans made in New York City. Although many Germans were concentrated in a *Kleindeutschland* in lower Manhattan in the late nineteenth century, geography alone did not determine German-American identity and interests. What distinguished the German presence in New York City during its heyday was a self-confidence among German speakers about the value and character of their culture, which thrived especially in the various cultural-social organizations (*Vereine*) that defined German life and community in the city. Singing, shooting, mutual-benefit, and homeland societies, along with the churches, beer gardens, music halls, theaters, and many businesses catering to German-speakers’ needs, provided a rich social life where German was the lingua franca of public and private relationships and German culture the bond. To be sure, class, religion, national origin, and time of immigration divided German-speakers, and directed their participation in particular *Vereine*, and outmigration from lower Manhattan to other parts of the city dispersed German-speakers, especially upwardly mobile ones, to new “German” neighborhoods. But such variety and mobility did not keep German-speakers from coming together in response to major tragedies, such as the burning and sinking of the steamship the *General Slocum* in 1904, that cost the lives of 1,021 mostly German-speaking people (the largest loss of life in the city from a disaster until 9/11). Into the early twentieth century the continued immigration of German-speakers infused New York overall with Germanness and sustained the critical mass necessary to support and even invigorate German-American institutions and identity.

Out of this experience, Ziegler-McPherson argues, German-American intellectuals proffered an argument for assimilation that defined Americanism as an idea rooted in liberty and realized in good citizenship rather than one requiring cultural, lingual, and social assimilation. Thus, retaining German language, culture, and institutions – “being true to one’s ethnic heritage” (3) – made Germans “Americans” and promised to strengthen “America” altogether. On those terms Germans joined in American politics, economy, and social and cultural life.

World War I changed all that. The 100 percent Americanization of American wartime mobilization left no room for German (or any) deviations from demands for loyalty expressed by use of the English language, support for American wartime policies, and embrace of American (read

English-origin dominant) cultural values. In New York City, as elsewhere, German-Americans capitulated to the aggressive and persistent demands for conformity, retreating into private worlds where German was still spoken but giving up public expressions of Germanness, even to renaming people and organizations. The war also defined future identities among German speakers, with those who came to the United States after the war holding a more favorable view of the prewar German Empire and tending to support fascist and authoritarian groups more than those who had immigrated before the war.

But in the end, Ziegler-McPherson argues, the “disappearance” of Germans was incomplete, for aspects of their culture—especially foodways, music, holiday traditions, and educational innovations—had been adopted and adapted into the larger American culture. The irony of this process, Ziegler-McPherson suggests, is that as the dominant American culture became “Germanized,” over time it became more difficult, and one might add perhaps even less necessary, for German culture to survive on its own terms.

The extent to which German culture survived in attenuated and private contexts during the postwar period Ziegler-McPherson does not much explore. Nor does she provide a sustained comparative perspective to understand the uniqueness of the New York City experience during and after the war. But these are quibbles, for Ziegler-McPherson has provided a model of research and presentation to measure and understand the dynamics and directions of adaptation and assimilation that should invite and inform studies of Germans, and others, elsewhere.

Saint Joseph's University

Randall M. Miller

Amish and Moravian Studies

Serpent in the Garden: Amish Sexuality in a Changing World.

By James A. Cates. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020. 204 pp. \$39.95.

James Cates is a certified clinical psychologist in Northeast Indiana, who works closely with Amish clients and helping professionals that interact with the Amish. He has previously published *Serving the Amish: A Cultural Guide for Professionals* (2014), reviewed in volume 55 (2020) of this journal. Noting the underrepresentation of Amish sexuality in writings about them (ix), Cates offers personal anecdotes, as well as information garnered from his research

and professional work, and interviews with cultural informants and academic researchers specializing in the Amish, filtering these data through the lens of Queer Theory. Written for mainstream readers and practitioners (x), this book illuminates both Amish and mainstream constructions of sexuality and heteronormativity.

The book consists of ten chapters, which fall into five sections. Chapter 1, “The Pilgrim Journey,” and Chapter 2, “Peculiar People: Queer Theory,” provide background information, introducing the Amish and Queer Theory, respectively. The author traces Amish history from its roots in the Protestant Reformation’s Anabaptist Movement and briefly describes Amish religious beliefs and practices, social structure, and cultural norms, noting in constructivist fashion that “virtually all of the unique aspects of Amish life that we observe are the result of problem solving and decision making designed to protect and preserve their values” (4). In the second chapter, Cates provides an overview of Queer Theory, which derives from the work of Michel Foucault and argues that identities and roles are socially constructed, the product of social discourse and interaction (24). Queer Theory is a “scientifically elegant” and “useful lens” to examine a collective culture in which spiritual power is aligned with gender roles, and cultural expectations and values steer people away from deviance and toward compliance with the Amish heteronormative (32-33).

Chapters three through six form the next section, describing Amish sexual behavior, gender roles, and intimacy. Chapter three, “The Birds and the Bees (and the Horses and the Cows): Learning about Sexuality,” describes how Amish formal and informal education teaches children about “divinely ordained gender roles and expectations for appropriate gender behavior” (39-40), including “hewing to procreation as the primary purpose of sexual activity” (48). Chapter four, “‘Knowing’ One Another: Ramifications of the Physical Act,” and Chapter five, “Gender Roles: Housework and Harvesting,” describe sexual and gender-role development in a collective community where “violating rules can only be divested by the support, understanding, and forgiveness of fellow Amish” (69). Cates focuses on *Rumspringa*, a brief period of relative freedom that begins at age sixteen and ends when young people either join the church (85% do so) or leave the community (57). While these adolescents may indulge in forbidden activities such as driving, wearing “English” clothing, smoking, alcohol, substance abuse, and sex, they engage in these activities within their communities, and any inappropriate activities must be confessed before baptism. As Cates notes, “*Rumspringa* participants never really leave the culture” (82). Chapter six, “Intimacy: The True Serpent in the Garden,” describes both broad-based and interpersonal intimacy. Broad-based intimacy performs important functions for the Amish,

such as ensuring group cohesion, creating a natural boundary to the mainstream, reinforcing obedience, and enforcing the patriarchal system of authority (93). This intimacy is reflected in smaller social groups like churches, friends, families, and married couples. Cates describes a “tightly bound community offering unfailing support across the lifespan.” However, the cost of this support is the requirement to “remain within the culture’s boundaries and expectations” (104).

Chapters seven through nine treat sexual deviance within Amish culture. Chapter seven, “Suffer Little Children: Child Sex Abuse,” illuminates a significant difference between Amish and mainstream culture. While the Amish abhor the mistreatment of children, they privilege forgiveness and the reintegration of sinners. They defer to the authority of the church and its power to bring perpetrators to repentance, which entitles them to forgiveness and reintegration into the community (113). Such reintegration can occur at the expense of victims, as the Amish resist removing children from abusive homes (116), and victims can feel obligated to acknowledge their roles in abuse to avoid rejection by family and community (118-19). Chapter eight, “Victorian’s Secret: Paraphilias and the Amish,” examines the Amish community’s “more expansive view” of paraphilias that arises from the restriction of sex to heterosexual procreative activity (136). Cates notes that Amish paraphilic practices can range from “sexual enhancements in marriage” to zoophilia, which is “sufficiently common” that it is not considered an extreme violation of norms (127). Finally, Chapter nine, “The Love That Won’t Shut Up: Sexual Minorities and the Amish” treats same-sex attraction, which presents a stark choice for the Amish. Pursuing same-sex attraction means renouncing the Amish heteronormativity and leaving the collective culture and its supports to embrace an individual sexual minority status and identity in the mainstream (153).

In his epilogue, “Rubbing Shoulders with Rahab: Emerging Views on Sexuality,” Cates summarizes how Amish heteronormativity functions according to “spiritual and cultural mandates” that serve as constant reminders that the Amish are “not of the world . . . that they are a peculiar people, separated from those who are godless” (156, 158). Yet, the increasingly permissive mainstream appears to be quietly undermining the Amish heteronormative, given the community’s creased use of cellphones, the internet, and other mainstream technology (157-58), women’s increasing power and freedom (157), and youth’s “under the radar” participation in mainstream practices, for instance, by “sporting” tattoos and genital piercings (159). Cates ends his discussion by pondering how the Amish heteronormative will develop as a result of these internal and external pressures. This book’s intriguing analysis is supplemented by appendices containing suggestions for further

reading, recommendations for professional interactions with the Amish, and a guide to other Plain groups. Cates' discussion of Amish sexuality is sensitively presented. It illuminates the sexual norms and practices of both the Amish and, in contrast, the mainstream. Using Queer Theory to expose the underlying cultural understandings that give rise to both sets of practices, Cates does much to bridge the divide between the two cultures and promote understanding and respect for a minority collective culture and its unique construction of sexual practices.

University of South Dakota

Carol A. Leibiger

The Letters of Mary Penry: A Single Moravian Woman in Early America.
Edited by Scott Paul Gordon. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018. 295 pp. \$84.95.

In *Letters of Mary Penry*, Scott Paul Gordon has collected, transcribed, and annotated over seventy letters that Mary Penry wrote between 1755 and 1804. While she undoubtedly wrote considerably more during her lifetime, these are the only extant letters the editor was able to locate in the Rhayader Museum and National Library of Wales, the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Duke University, the Winterthur collections, and Linden Hall, Lititz, PA. Twenty-six of the letters appeared previously in *The Moravian* between 1913 and 1915, but most of the letters are published here for the first time. All of the letters were written in English, except Letters 9 and 10 and her *Lebenslauf*, which were in German. The volume concludes with four appendices and a comprehensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

From her *Lebenslauf* or memoir in English and German in Appendix A and letters we learn about Mary Penry's life in her own words. She was born in Wales on November 12, 1735, and at the age of nine immigrated with her widowed mother to Philadelphia. Suffering from an abusive stepfather after her mother remarried, Penry found comfort among the Moravians in Philadelphia, and she and her mother became members of the church in 1756. Later that year, at the age of twenty-one she moved to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to live in the Single Sisters' House. In 1762 she moved to the Single Sister's House in Lititz, Pennsylvania, where her job was to keep the diary and the financial accounts of the Lititz single sisters' choir, serve as room supervisor, and to look after foreign visitors. To be able to communicate with

the other single sisters in the house, to participate in religious services, and to maintain the diary, Penry had to learn German. As a result of her knowledge of English and German Penry was asked to write letters for her colleagues, take care of business correspondence, and to serve the church as the translator of documents and reports in German for English-speaking members. She died on May 17, 1804.

Gordon introduces the letters with a well-documented and highly informative presentation that establishes the historical and social context for Penry's letters. These letters comprise her life's story and as such are personal in nature and were not meant to be read in public like the memoirs of Moravian men and women. Her letters cover topics ranging from spiritual concerns and especially her relationship with her Savior to everyday matters such as the price of food, rent, and land. Unlike other Moravian writers who avoided politics, Penry does not hesitate to comment on political news and events from outside of the settlement. Each letter includes the date and place the letter was written and identifies to whom it was addressed. Except for a few changes regarding line breaks, indentation, and punctuation, the letters are printed as closely to the original as possible and preserve Penry's idiosyncratic spelling and grammar. The letters are well annotated with cross-references to previous letters or appendices and notes that identify people, places, and titles; that explain expressions or terminology (e.g., "sensibility" in letters 22 and 63) mentioned in the letters; or that provide historical background.

Through Mary Penry's letters we are able to gain insight into the social and spiritual life as well as the innermost thoughts and feelings of a single woman in America during the last half of the eighteenth century. While most documents in Moravian archives were written by men, Penry's letters constitute one of the few examples of epistolary writing by an American woman. The letters also give us a glimpse of what life was like in the German settlement of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, when it was still closed to non-Moravians. Historians of early American history will welcome this collection of letters, and we are indebted to the editor for locating and making them available in this volume.

Stanford University

William E. Petig

Holy Experiment: The Warwick River Mennonite Colony 1897-1970.

By Jo Anne Kraus. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2021. 399 pp. \$34.99.

In the late nineteenth century, envoys from the Mennonite church made their way to the southern states to find suitable land for a new colony project. This “holy experiment”—settling Mennonites in the US South—was driven by the spiritual conviction that the church should take its witness into new regions and renew its faith through mental stimulation of fresh interests. Colonies were attempted in Tennessee, Georgia, Louisiana, Virginia, and by 1905, Texas. As these pious pioneers went into places where the Mennonite faith was unknown, the church feared the possibility that cultural forces in the new location could undermine Mennonites’ distinctive cultural norms and religious practice. Hence, the concept of the colony was introduced to help communities gain a conscious awareness of themselves as set apart from the local culture. The colony structure served as a religiously secure base when witnessing and ministering to a local population. The Mennonite publication, *Herald of Truth*, presented the vision of building colonies in the post-Civil War South and documented these efforts in the periodical to galvanize further interest among northern Mennonite congregants. In *Holy Experiment*, Jo Ann Kraus tells the story of one of these church experiments that took place in southeastern Virginia along the banks of the Warwick River. In 1897 Mennonite and Amish families from northern and western states purchased property on Virginia’s Lower Peninsula to follow the call of church planting and create a faith community committed to profitable farming and Christian service. They developed the depleted soils of the former Denbigh Plantation—roughly 1000 acres—into prosperous farmland and established new Mennonite congregations in the area. Kraus explores the history of the Warwick River Mennonite Colony which survived as the only Mennonite settlement planted in the American South at the turn of the last century.

The author encountered the colony’s history while engaging in genealogical research. She discovered that her great-grandparents’ biographies were inextricably connected to the founding of the Warwick River Mennonite Colony. As Kraus collected data from archived church documents, viewed family collections of personal letters and diaries, gained access to an oral history project conducted by church members in the 1970s, and read through self-published family histories and memoirs, she became familiar with the lesser-known stories behind the organization and life of the Mennonite cluster in Warwick County. She approached the archival material and the process of writing about these stories with a particular focus on physical and social challenges both within the group and between the group and the surrounding society. Her research questions pertain to the colonists’ experience as north-

ern pacifists in a Confederacy stronghold and to their efforts of maintaining rural self-sufficiency at a time and place marked by the nascency of urban industrialism.

Following a chronological order, *Holy Experiment* is divided into ten chapters, each of them addressing developmental stages and challenges of the (Amish) Mennonite pioneer settlement in southeastern Virginia. While the first chapter provides an account of the public attention to and preparatory planning for the new colony, chapters two and three depict the early settlers' struggle to cultivate the marshy lands, develop infrastructure, build a schoolhouse, and deal with the old-style southern culture. The author points to reasons that brought these settlers together and refers to faith traditions and shared struggles that bound them together. In chapter four, Kraus describes the harsh realities of the first decades of Warwick Colony. Readers receive a long list of names of people who moved to Warwick, created new lives for their families there, left the settlement after a brief period, or became long-time residents in the colony. Settlers assumed various occupations to counter the material poverty in the early years; hunger, accidents, and illnesses are outlined as well as the mutual support that helped colonists to weather together the seasoning time in this new environment. A prominent and highly complex figure, Bishop George R. Brunk I., dominates the early history of the settlement. Chapter 5 outlines Brunk's biography, his accomplishments at the colony, his objection to humanistic social philosophy, and his reliance on Christian fundamentalism as means to counter radical social changes brought about by industrialization.

The period of World Wars I and II is discussed in the following three chapters, focusing on external conflicts, e.g., patriotic hysteria in which Mennonites' opposition to military service was punished by American neighbors with public denunciation and other tactics of intimidation and coercion. Kraus also examines economic ventures during the recession and the beginning of Mennonite mission work in support of social service and evangelism. This mission outreach included programs directed at Jews and African Americans. The cross-cultural commitment of these mission efforts had mixed outcomes in terms of racial issues. Kraus reports that some of the Warwick Colony residents were determined to accept people of color in the family of Christ but the local customs and laws defined by Jim Crow went against it; others absorbed racist attitudes and regarded their own spiritual practices to be superior to those encountered in the Black communities. After World War II, as the colony celebrated fifty years on the southern peninsula of Virginia, the community began reaching out to Black neighbors and offered summer Bible schools for Black children. With the leadership of Nelson Burkholder and others, an interracial church became established at the Calvary Menno-

nite Church in nearby Newport News. The last two chapters document the colonists' involvement with the church that consisted largely of Black Americans by the early 1970s and has now become a vibrant African American congregation challenging the structural racism and cultural prejudice rooted in Mennonite white European background.

Kraus' historical narrative of Warwick Colony makes clear how the experience of regional Mennonite settlers intersects with the larger story of the Mennonite church in North America. It examines the ways in which Mennonites met the world around them and positioned themselves in the diverse cultural streams of the new and modern environment. *Holy Experiment* is written for a Mennonite-exclusive readership. Although the historical account is visualized by several images—largely old photographs of church leaders and groups, buildings, maps, and individual residents—the account remains a traditional Mennonite historiography with a conglomeration of names and familial/congregational relations that are reminiscent of a church chronicle. The narrative is mostly concerned with portraying colony leadership, its relationship with the local community and southern culture, and the efforts to create an economically and spiritually viable religious settlement. Thus, this historical account of Warwick River Mennonite Colony is a valuable resource for historians and those who are interested in seeking knowledge of the Mennonite past in southeastern Virginia and an understanding of the broader Mennonite denominational life.

University of Colorado – Boulder

Berit Jany

Reading Mennonite Writing: A Study in Minor Transnationalism.

By Robert Zacharias. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022. 266 pp. \$119.95.

Mennonite literary studies in North America is a small field facing a future of uncertain productivity. Some scholars believe that the field is in robust health, others fear that it approaches a major crisis or even extinction. The prognosis about the field's flourishing or disappearing future largely depends on the framing assumptions of Mennonite literature and a possible expansion of the field into new directions, genres, and communities. In his third book on Mennonite literary discourse, *Reading Mennonite Writing: A Study in Minor Transnationalism*, Robert Zacharias explores avenues of new productivity by reexamining the selective memory of the field's developmental model of literary history and offering a methodology that fosters an expansive vision of

Mennonite literary studies. In his reappraisal of critical narratives in the field, Zacharias questions the conventional literary history of Mennonite literature with Rudy Wiebe's novel *Peace Shall Destroy Many* (1962) as its *Urtext* and its emergence as an (ethnic) minority literature in the 1980s and '90s. He shifts away from a minority writing perspective that expects Mennonite literature to be exclusively produced by theological or ethnic Mennonite authors focusing mostly on Russian- or Swiss-Mennonite stories. Instead, he reconceptualizes Mennonite literary studies as a field of literary text that intersects with Mennonite concern, whether as a matter of character, setting, theology, theme, or authorial position. As he includes the analysis of underappreciated genres such as life writing, children's and young adults' literature, work by faith-based publishers and science fiction authors, he cautiously avoids an additive model. Rather, with his revisionary approach to Mennonite literary criticism, he proposes to widen the field's frame to fully recognize the range and vibrancy of writing by and about Mennonites.

Zacharias turns to Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih's articulation of 'minor transnationalism' for guidance and inspiration on how to broaden contemporary Mennonite literary studies in North America. He attempts to show how 'minor literatures' (referring to the small size of the field, not its relevance) help to explore the diversity of the field's literary production. He divides his study into five chapters in which he presents a series of methodological experiments to investigate the field in several of its specificities. In chapter one, the experiment takes the form of a cross-sectional reading of every book published in a single year. Drawing on works by Franco Moretti and the digital humanities, the author attempts an adapted distant reading of all publications by and about Mennonites from 1986 as a means to estrange the teleological selectivity of conventional literary history that—as he argues—obscures the wider activities of the field during a key period in its emergence. As he probes writing that had been neglected by the canon-forming logic of traditional literary history, he brings attention to the importance of genre fiction in the field and encourages a reconsideration of the target audience of Mennonite writing.

Chapter two deals with a corollary experiment in which Zacharias engages in a longitudinal reading of a single Mennonite writing. He traces the publication of Dietrich Neufeld's diary, *Ein Tagebuch aus dem Reiche des Todestanzes/A Russian Dance of Death: Revolution and Civil War in the Ukraine*, across decades, countries, and languages. In addition to analyzing the diary's historical value and literary quality, the study offers a comparative reading of the text's numerous editions and (re)translations to better understand the function of autoethnography in the multicultural context. As Zacharias follows the circuitous publication of Neufeld's diary across more than half a

century, he argues for the importance of life writing as a genre that fostered the early field's emergence as minority literature.

In chapter three, the author focuses on a prominent strand of contemporary Mennonite writing in which he examines depictions of the 'Mennonite Thing,' a term he defined in his previous book, *After Identity*, as essentialized and decontextualized Mennonite identity markers that are readily commodified. Mennonite authors—as he exemplifies in his reading of selected Mennonite poetic works and a satirical website—continue to explore the Mennonite identity as one of their central concerns. These authors engage with the 'Mennonite Thing' through a variety of distancing gestures with which they reinforce notions of Mennonite cultural authenticity by disavowing conventional aspects of Mennonite identity. Although Zacharias presents an insightful analysis of the ironic function of identity in poems by Jeff Gundy and Julia Spicher Kasdorf, it is questionable why he draws on the theoretical framework of the 'Ethnic Thing' by the highly controversial theorist, Slavoj Žižek, to explain the concept of the 'Mennonite Thing' that had already been employed as terminology by Mennonite writers predating Žižek's work.

The following chapter pairs Canadian Mennonite Miriam Toews' novel *Irma Voth* with the film that inspired it, Mexican director Carlos Reygadas's *Silent Light*. In this study on transnationalism, Zacharias traces the points of connection and tension between the film and the novel to document the complexities of representing Mennonite cultural differences across media and beyond Canada and the United States. The author's reading of the novel as a strategic retort to the cinematic work is fascinating: Reygadas's exaggeration of the Mennonites' isolation as a form of fantasy is countered by Toews' contextualization of the community to its broader social and historical reality.

The final chapter concludes the study's close analysis by reading and comparing two recent pieces of fiction that share a common interest of complicating conventional notions of a Mennonite past and reinvesting in the ideals of Mennonite community. The two texts, Casey Plett's coming-of-age novel, *Little Fish*, and Sofia Samatar's science fiction novella, "Fallow," are representatives of genres—as Zacharias observes—that are fast becoming central to the field. Plett's debut novel depicts a trans-sexual Russian Mennonite's struggle of building her communities in contemporary Winnipeg and her efforts to explore her grandfather's possible trans identity. In Samatar's Afrofuturistic story, a young Mennonite activist launches a project to inscribe her racialized family's history within the heavily protected archive on their intergalactic colony. Both fictional writings are read as an appeal to reconsider the Mennonite past to enable the possibility of a broader, more inclusive future.

In his study, Zacharias acknowledges the current efforts to advance the critical conversation in the field to include transnational, racialized, and

queer Mennonite writing. Through his experimental approach and selection of readings, he has begun to pave the way for new channels of critical thought to engage with works in global, LGBTQ+, and postcolonial Mennonite writing. Underexamined genres such as documentary, children's literature, and speculative fiction receive attention in this research. *Reading Mennonite Writing* is a dense, rich study with a compelling and timely call for setting new directions in Mennonite literary criticism. The book will especially appeal to scholars of North American Mennonite literature and those working in the broader field of transnational literary studies.

University of Colorado – Boulder

Berit Jany

History of Literature, Music, Anthropology, and the Discipline

Zwischen den Kriegen, zwischen den Künsten: Ernst Krenek – “Beruf: Komponist und Schriftsteller.”

Von Rebecca Unterberger. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2019, 1010 Seiten, Euro 138.

Als einziges Kind deutsch-tschechischer Eltern wird Ernst Krenek im Jahre 1900 in Wien geboren. Seinen ersten Musikunterricht erhält er im Alter von 6 Jahren und versucht sich in Kompositionen. Der hochbegabte Junge wird von seinen kulturell interessierten Eltern kräftig gefördert und beginnt im Alter von 16 Jahren ein Musikstudium bei Franz Schreker, einem der bedeutendsten Opernkomponisten seiner Zeit. Nach dem Militärdienst und kurzem Philosophie-Studium folgt Krenek seinem Lehrer 1920 nach Berlin, wo er auf neuere, experimentierfreudige Komponisten stößt. Immer mehr wagt er sich in die freie Atonalität vor und steigt durch enorme Kreativität und unermüdliche Schaffenskraft bald zum Vorreiter der “Neuen Modernen” auf. Gleichzeitig komponiert er im Schubert-Stil und schreibt Opern. Für ein Jahr wird er der Ehemann der späteren Bildhauerin Anna Mahler, der Tochter Gustav Mahlers und seiner berüchtigten Frau Alma. Während seiner Zeit als Musikdramaturg in Kassel gelingt ihm mit der Oper “Jonny spielt auf” der Durchbruch. Die Rezeption ist überwältigend und hat ähnlichen Erfolg wie im Folgejahr Kurt Weills Dreigroschenoper. Jedoch wird das Werk mit zunehmendem Einfluss der Nationalsozialisten verpönt. In seiner nun folgenden romantischen Phase lässt er sich inspirieren von Komponisten wie Schubert und Puccini und schreibt weitere Opern. Mit seiner zweiten Ehefrau, der fünfzehn Jahre älteren deutschen Schauspielerin Berta Hermann, lässt

sich Krenek ab 1928 für 10 Jahre in Wien nieder, wo er Karl Kraus trifft, den er glühend verehrt. Bereits seit 1918 war er regelmäßiger Leser von Kraus' satirischer Zeitschrift *Die Fackel* und zog daraus Richtlinien für sein eigenes moralisches Verhalten, nämlich, dass er als den einzigen würdigen Ort in der Welt den Sitz zwischen allen Stühlen betrachte. Zurück in Wien, wendet er sich mit zunehmender Begeisterung der Zwölftonmusik zu. Er gründet die Musikzeitschrift *Dreiundzwanzig* und schreibt erste Kompositionen im Bereich der als "schwachköpfige Verirrung" betrachteten atonalen Musik. Nach der Machtübernahme der Nationalsozialisten 1933 werden Kreneks Werke als "entartete Kunst" angesehen und unterliegen in Deutschland einem Aufführungsverbot. Trotz gelegentlich geäußerter Sympathien für den Austrofaschismus sieht Krenek keine andere Möglichkeit, als nach dem "Anschluss" Österreichs an Nazi-Deutschland in die Vereinigten Staaten zu emigrieren. Anders als Kurt Weill, kann er hier seinen Lebensunterhalt nicht mit seinen Kompositionen bestreiten und verdingt sich daher als Musikdozent an verschiedenen Universitäten und Colleges. 1945 wird er amerikanischer Staatsbürger. Fünf Jahre später trennt er sich von seiner Frau und heiratet ein drittes, letztes Mal, die vierundzwanzig Jahre jüngere US-amerikanische Komponistin Gladys Nordenstrom. Zahlreiche Konzertauftritte und Gastdozenturen führen ihn über die Jahre kreuz und quer durch Amerika und nach Europa. Weiterhin interessiert an zeitgenössischen Kompositionstechniken und offen für alle Stilrichtungen, hält seine Schaffenskraft an und Krenek wird, als er schließlich 91-jährig in Kalifornien stirbt, ein Œuvre von mehr als 240 musikalischen Werken in wechselnden Stilen hinterlassen, darunter 9 Opern, Sinfonien, Chorwerke, Lieder, Ballettmusik und anderes. Er war als Komponist, Librettist, Musikschriftsteller, Dirigent, Pianist und Musikdozent tätig. Aber Musik ist nur eine Seite der Krenek-Medaille. Die andere ist die Schriftstellerei.

Bis zu dem Zeitpunkt, an dem er nicht mehr für das nationalsozialistische Deutschland publizieren durfte, war er journalistisch tätig, verfasste er Essays, Rezensionen und Reiseberichte für das Feuilleton der *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Auch für die *Wiener Zeitung* schrieb er über vielfältige Themen. Sein literarisches Hauptwerk ist eine zwischen 1942 und 1952 entstandene Autobiographie, die erst 1998 erstmals in deutscher Sprache erschien, unter dem Titel: *Im Atem der Zeit. Erinnerungen an die Moderne*. Dieser rund 1000 Seiten umfassende Rückblick unterscheidet sich allerdings insofern von anderen Exil-Biographien, als sie den Leser nach Ansicht von Rezensenten als einen besonders widersprüchlichen Autoren offenbaren – starke Kritik an den Nazis wechselt mit antisemitischen Zwischentönen ab, Krenek wird als arrogant und vulgär wahrgenommen, aber dennoch fesselnd in der

Erzählweise. Besonders erfolgreich war er als Verfasser musiktheoretischer Werke.

Mit diesem Komponisten und Schriftsteller hat sich die österreichische Germanistin Rebecca Unterberger befasst in einer Dissertation, die den Leser vor Achtung und Bewunderung verstummen lässt. Nicht nur ist der Umfang beeindruckend und herausfordernd (1010 Seiten), es ist kaum zu fassen, wie viele Quellen herangezogen wurden, um das Phänomen Krenek so tiefgreifend und breit gefächert wie möglich aus allen Winkeln zu beleuchten. Jede Seite wird begleitet von zahlreichen ausführlichen Fußnoten, die einen großen Anteil an diesem Buchkoloss haben. Dass das Werk in starker akademischer Nüchternheit verfasst und dabei trotzdem lesenswert und hochinteressant ist, hängt auch mit der exzellenten Kapitelanordnung und dem genialen Gemisch aus Eigeninterpretation der Autorin und Hinzuziehung der vielfältigsten Materialien zusammen. Dieses Buch-Kunstwerk verschafft einen Lesegenuss der besonderen Art.

West Bloomfield, Michigan

Susanna Piontek

German in the World: The Transnational and Global Contexts of German Studies.

Edited by James Hodkinson and Benedict Schofield: Camden House, 2020. 300 pp. \$90.

German in the World takes its place amongst a lengthy list of anthologies published since the late 1990s that seek to describe an identity for German studies appropriate for quickly evolving historical and academic contexts and to articulate their relevance for conversations that demand global and transnational perspectives. How do those who engage in German studies “define and evaluate a specifically German-language culture in such a global context” (1)? This volume emerged out of a series of meetings in the United Kingdom that began in 2013. None of the contributors are currently working at German-speaking universities. The subsequent seven years transformed the world’s relationship to globalism and to nationalism—waves of migration in 2015, Brexit, an America First foreign policy, and the rise of the AfD in Germany. The editors explicitly situate this volume in the context of this turning away from globalism, and they underscore the tension that permeates this undertaking in the current moment. How do German studies scholars thread the needle between their work on national traditions and their academic and

intellectual affinity for the transnational and the global? The editors respond that German studies should exist productively in this space. “Our volume as a whole argues that our area of study can and should exist precisely in a field of tension between a notion of the specific contributions made from within a linguistically bound notion of ‘German culture’ on the one hand, and the idea that all culture is and always was enmeshed within and overlapping with other cultures, on the other” (11).

The editors structure the anthology so that it reflects this tension. Part 1, “German in the World,” explores how German-language literature has engaged with the idea of world culture from Weimar Classicism to postcolonial concerns in contemporary German literature. Contributions in this section integrate analyses of the biggest names in the German canon with writers located on the periphery of that history. This combination “demonstrates how cultural and literary traditions can be opened out, become inclusive and diverse and afford expressive space to cultural producers ostensibly from outside those traditions” (21). In their opening essays, John Noyes and Ben Morgan reflect on Goethe’s exploration of the concepts of “Welt” and “Weltliteratur,” and Tobias Boes seeks out connections between Thomas Mann’s reflections on the notion of “Weltdeutschtum” in the work of Friedrich Schiller and Johann Fichte. The next three essays examine works that deconstruct the inherent connection of place, culture, language, and identity. Carol Tully explores nineteenth-century Germanophone travelogues that were written during travels to England and Wales. Frauke Matthes discusses Saša Stanišić’s 2014 novel *Vor dem Fest*. She highlights how the book’s reception reflects transformations in German literary culture. Stanišić, like a number of other contemporary German-language authors born outside of German-speaking Europe, does not choose to write about his history as a migrant. Likewise, he is not viewed as an outsider providing diversity to the German literary scene. Instead, Stanišić writes stories about Germans and about the German province that are praised because of the power of his narrative voice. Dirk Göttsche concludes this part of the book with a discussion of postcolonial studies in Germany and the ongoing engagement with postcolonial themes in contemporary German literature.

Part 2, “German in World Locales,” transitions from texts and writers to the ways in which the discipline itself is evolving outside of German-speaking Europe. Three essays in this section explore the educational journeys of German studies scholars who have lived and worked outside of German-speaking Europe. This transnational perspective points to possibilities and opportunities that emerge as the discipline maintains its focus on German studies while its practitioners position themselves as “productively transient and cultur-

ally hybrid.” Carlotta von Maltzan recounts the history of German studies in South Africa from its inception around 1830 until 1994 and examines the changes in German studies in post-apartheid South Africa. Her personal reflections on a career spent studying German literature in post-colonial Africa clearly illustrate the potential for transnational German studies to engage in relevant global conversations. In Kate Rigby’s highly reflective essay, she similarly documents the ways in which German studies can engage with critical global issues, in this case the environmental humanities. Finally, Sai Bhatawadekar reflects on the connections among the various stages of her own intellectual journey, first, as a scholar of German studies and then as a professor of Hindi-Urdu in the United States.

Part 3, “German Worlds beyond the Academy,” continues the movement away from traditional notions of the discipline as the focus shifts to the impact of German culture outside of the academy. James Hodgkinson opens this section with a reflection on responses to the Hafez-Goethe monument in Weimar. He demonstrates not only that German culture can remain relevant to contemporary conversations, but also that collaborations and exchanges with figures outside the academy enrich academic work. Benedict Schofield interviews theatre practitioners in the UK to explore the impact of German theatre on theatre in the United Kingdom and discovers that this impact, while it is not always evident, is alive and well. Emily Oliver looks at the BBC German Service during and after the Second World War and considers their strategic attempts to communicate with Germans. Through an analysis of letters written by German listeners, she is able to explore not only the ways in which the BBC chose to communicate with Germans, but also the reception BBC Germany received. In the anthology’s final essay, Uwe Schütte looks at the impact of German pop music when it goes global.

The anthology covers a broad span, from Goethe’s reflections on *Weltliteratur* to the transnational impact of Kraftwerk’s electronic pop music. The result is a series of readable essays that make a convincing pitch for the global relevance of a German studies that embraces an open concept of what it means to be German.

