"the biopolitical discourse"—especially those on the political left—did not hold this view. While Geulen's study differs from some earlier works in expanding the circle of those considered to have contributed to "the racial discourse," it nonetheless with some frequency takes the views of members of völkisch and right-wing groups as characteristic of the expanded whole. This is true not only with respect to his claim of the central role of anti-Semitism, but also of his suggestion that those influenced by the biopolitical paradigm "imagined the nation in principle only as a community of fighters" ("*Kampfgemeinschaft*") (p. 38, and similarly on p. 367). This was one version of the biopolitical position, but, as Geulen's own discussion of the views of members of the Bund für Mutterschutz und Sexualreform makes clear, there were others (pp. 238–9). Second, the numerous studies of anti-Jewish prejudices in German society in this period, most of which are not cited in this book, provide little support for the suggestion that from the late 1870s anti-Jewish sentiment in Germany—and elsewhere in Europe—was based primarily on the influence of Darwin's ideas.

Geulen's book is an imaginative work of synthesis, an attempt to reconceptualize the nature of national feeling in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century. His claim that biological, and especially Darwinian, conceptions influenced the goals and national self-conceptions of many Germans clearly has merit. The analysis would have benefited from greater precision in the formulation of claims and in drawing connections between conclusions and evidence.

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Germany's Colonial Pasts. Edited by Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz, and Lora Wildenthal. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2005. Pp. xxi + 255. $45.00 ISBN 0-8032-4819-9.

This eclectic volume is essentially a *Festschrift* in honor of Susanne Zantop, who envisioned convening a workshop around the topic of German colonialism at Dartmouth in 2001. Because of her tragic and untimely death, that meeting never took place, but many of the scholars she asked to participate felt driven to continue the project in her honor, organizing a meeting of their own the following year and eventually producing this volume. The collection is thus a testament to the respect many scholars had for Zantop and her work, and it contains a number of excellent essays on various aspects of German colonialism, colonial legacies, and Germany's connections to the broader world. Some of the essays tie into Zantop's arguments about Germans' "colonial fantasies" in the age before the emergence of a German nation state, but the volume offers neither a strong critique

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nor a robust confirmation of her theses, nor is it organized to further a particular argument about the nature or importance of German colonialism.

The thirteen essays are arranged chronologically and divided into five thematic sections: Identifications of Self and Other; Orders of Colonial Regulation: Sex and Violence; Colonial Racism and Anti-Semitism; Nazi Visions of Africa; and Colonial Legacies: The Racialized Self. Reading the essays in this order, one is quickly drawn away from the broader, worldly interactions Zantop explored while she engaged German fantasies about taking part in the colonization of South America and toward a rather narrow kind of state-sponsored colonialism. That colonialism seems, despite Bradley Naranch's impressive essay on the *Auslandsdeutsche* before 1871, Kristin Kopp's provocative chapter on "colonial Poland," and Vanessa Agnew's contribution on comparative musicology in the Pacific, to be overwhelmingly about Africa, notions of race, and in the end, blackness as the signifier of greatest importance. It is surprising how little effort is made in this collection to differentiate European or German images of Africans, Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders or to draw out the multiplicity of Germany's colonial pasts and their respective legacies. While a few of the essays make much of the fact that the Germans' most abusive actions against their colonial subjects would be met and surpassed in their treatment of Europeans, notions of German "Self and Other" remain, for the most part, strikingly reductive and unitary categories in this volume. Much of that might have been resolved with a stronger editorial hand or an introductory essay that went beyond sketching out the contributors' respective arguments and some of their connections to Zantop's work. Without that stewardship, however, the reader is left to rely on the moving "Forward" by Sander Gilman to set out the volume's organizing principle, which, in his words, should be "to trace a particular version of the German Sonderweg" (p. x).

We do not learn from this volume, however, what was unique about the German colonial experience, and one gains little sense that there was a Sonderweg for scholars to trace out. Indeed at least one of the contributors, Pascal Grosse, warns scholars interested in pursuing that quest to engage it with great caution. Comparative history, he writes, has many pitfalls, not the least of which is that "the search for possible common denominators in a straightforward comparative approach simplifies the historical specificity of both phenomena" (p. 117). This, he argues, is one of the greatest problems that emerge with scholars' efforts to locate connections between German colonialism and National Socialism, and thus Grosse demands that we "dispose of the problematic logic of continuity or discontinuity that still organizes historical thinking on the topic." Instead, he implores us to recognize that "colonialism was less a prerequisite for the emergence of National Socialist racial politics than an expression of the same intellectual eugenicist model at an earlier time and in a different historical setting" (p. 129). Indeed, Grosse reminds us that

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"the crucial problem remains that there is no convincing evidence to date that German colonial rule differed from that of other colonial powers," and in fact the experience that seems to have mattered the most for the radicalization of the intellectual eugenicist model under National Socialism was not the possession of colonies, but the loss of those colonies at the end of World War I—a point that the contributions by Marcia Klotz, Robert Gordon, and Dennis Mahoney underscore.

Whether the early loss of their colonies was the critical watershed experience in the history of Germans' "imperialist imaginations," the essays in this volume make it clear that it has always been, and remains, quite easy for Germans and other Europeans to forget much of what took place under colonial regimes and to continue to narrate their experiences in colonial and postcolonial contexts in rather fantastic ways. Narrative strategies abound for shifting easily into romantic notions of exotic peoples and places and adopting tropes of non-Europeans who are in need of Western lessons about order and progress. Gordon and Mahoney's essay on the colonial cinema demonstrates how easily such narratives were constructed and received during the Weimar period, Kristin Kopp's contribution shows how quickly these narratives could be restructured to fit Eastern Europe, and Nina Berman's brilliant recontextualization of two autobiographical accounts of Kenyan-German marriages in the late twentieth century illustrates that such narratives continue to be uncritically harnessed in the present. Indeed, as Berman reminds us, it is easy, much too easy, to reduce conflict to racial animosity or cultural confusion, while it is frustratingly difficult for most historical actors, as well as the people who observe their lives or read their stories, to become cognizant of the circumstances created by the colonial (and other historical) contexts that continue to channel and shape the interactions of Europeans and non-Europeans within and outside Europe. Because people so seldom have the background to evaluate naïve narratives about intercultural interactions fully, Berman argues, they often draw on stereotypes to make sense of these narratives. She demonstrates this clearly with her analysis of contemporary texts and their reception, and one could easily extend her argument to the texts presented in this volume by Sara Lennox, Kopp, and others as well. That recognition, however, does little to help us out of the conundrum that people require historical knowledge in order to engage their own historicity, but that historical knowledge is not generally available or easily harnessed. As a result, the disturbing implication of Berman's essay is that most texts produced by laymen, because they are so far divorced from the "historical dimensions of the conflicts they seek to describe," will continue in the present, as they did in the past, to confirm existing clichés. Given that situation, one must ascribe great value to collections like this one and take to heart Grosse's call to shake off the "problematic logic of continuity and discontinuity" inherent in many scholarly narratives of German

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colonialism and focus greater energy on historicizing the conflicts of the present and the past.

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Technology and the Culture of Modernity in Britain and Germany 1890–1945. By Bernhard Rieger. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. Pp. x + 319. $90.00. ISBN 0-521-84528-9.

Bernhard Rieger has written a conceptually ambitious and substantively wide-ranging study of public discourses about technology in Britain and Germany from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Startlingly new and highly visible technological innovations, he argues, created a sense of dislocation and anxiety and contributed to a pervasive belief among contemporaries that they were living in a distinctly modern era. Technology created a problem of knowledge because few possessed the scientific and technological knowledge to understand such innovations as airships and transatlantic liners or to comprehend the effects of the knowledge produced by such innovations as film. Yet, technologically induced insecurity did not produce widespread opposition to technological innovation. Rather, despite ambivalence and an acute awareness of the physical as well as psychological and cultural risks that technological innovations brought, the lively public cultural discourse about technology promoted a cultural climate conducive to technological innovation in both countries throughout the period. Ambivalence and risk awareness were counterbalanced, indeed trumped by, an enthusiasm for such new "modern wonders" as the airplane and film. Social fantasies, which were open to varied political interpretations, both reflected the appeal of technological innovation and mobilized broad support behind it. Airplanes, airships, and gigantic passenger ships "... owed their prominence to widespread dreams and desires that transcended political and social positions and thus rallied support behind new technological devices across a fracture socio-political spectrum" (p. 157).

The book develops its argument thematically by focusing on three technological innovations, transatlantic passenger shipping, aviation, and film. Public debate is reconstructed from a wide array of sources, especially newspapers of all political persuasions and the numerous publications of ship, plane, and film producers, but includes as well the memoirs of pilots, the records of amateur film societies, and some very evocative visual representations and ads. The book provides much new information and arguments about everything from the experiences of and attitudes toward aviatrixes to the changing class

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