

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

This book traces the importance of the United States for German colonialism from the late eighteenth century to 1945, focusing on American westward expansion and racial politics. Jens-Uwe Guettel argues that, from the late eighteenth century onward, ideas of colonial expansion played a very important role in liberal, enlightened, and progressive circles in Germany, which, in turn, looked across the Atlantic to the liberal-democratic United States for inspiration and concrete examples. In the early years of the twentieth century, this America-inspired and -influenced imperial liberalism dominated German colonial discourse and practice. Yet following this pre-1914 peak of liberal political influence on the administration and governance of Germany's colonies, the expansionist ideas embraced by Germany's far right after the country's defeat in World War I had little or no connection with the German Empire's liberal imperialist tradition. *German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945* therefore shows that, for example, Nazi plans for the settlement of conquered Eastern European territories were not directly linked to pre-1914 transatlantic exchanges concerning race and expansionism.

Jens-Uwe Guettel is Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and Religious Studies at the Pennsylvania State University.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States,  
1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States,  
1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

# German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

JENS-UWE GUETTEL

*The Pennsylvania State University*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107024694](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107024694)

© Jens-Uwe Guettel 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Guettel, Jens-Uwe, 1974–

German expansionism, imperial liberalism and the United States, 1776–1945 /  
Jens-Uwe Guettel, Pennsylvania State University.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-02469-4

1. Germany – Territorial expansion. 2. United States – Territorial expansion. 3. Germany – Colonies – History. 4. Germany – Relations – United States. 5. United States – Relations – Germany. 6. Imperialism – History. 7. Race – Political aspects – Germany – History. 8. Political culture – Germany – History. 9. Liberalism – Germany – History.

10. Germany – Politics and government. I. Title.

DD1 I8.5.G84 2013

325'.343-dc23 2012036770

ISBN 978-1-107-02469-4 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page vii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	ix
Introduction	I
<i>The Great War and the Question of German     Historical Continuities</i>	18
<i>Liberalism, Imperialism, and Imperial Liberalism</i>	27
<i>A Note on Sources</i>	41
1 Soil, Liberty, and Blood: Germans and American Westward Expansion Before 1871	43
<i>Freedom and Empire</i>	44
<i>Progress, Social Control, Land, and Race</i>	55
<i>Visions of Unity and American Colonies</i>	69
2 From Theory to Practice: German Colonialism and American Westward Expansion before World War I	79
<i>Nineteenth-Century German Colonial Discourse,     Indians, and American Expansion</i>	82
<i>Expansion and Empire: Indians, America, and     German Colonial Discourse after 1866</i>	87
<i>Native Americans, American Expansion, and German     Southwest Africa</i>	111
3 The American South and Racial Segregation in the German Colonies	127
	v

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi

Contents

	<i>Racial Segregation in German Colonial Practice and Metropolitan Discourse, 1905–1914</i>	130
	<i>“So that he doesn’t become slothful”: The United States, Racial Control, and German Colonialism</i>	133
	<i>Jim Crow and Mixed-Race Marriage Bans in the German Colonies from 1905 to 1912</i>	140
	<i>Jim Crow in Berlin: Parliamentary Miscegenation Debates, the RKA, and the American South</i>	145
	<i>A Liberal American Solution?</i>	151
4	<i>America, Race, and German Expansionism from the Great War to 1945</i>	161
	<i>German Liberals and the United States during the 1920s</i>	175
	<i>“Yes, yes, America, you’re better off. But, please, keep your benevolence to yourself”: Nazi Expansionism and America</i>	182
	<i>Against “Liberalist” Imperialism: Nazi Lebensraum Visions as Antiliberalism and Anticolonialism</i>	189
	<i>“The United States under a Jewish Dictatorship” – Nazi Anti-Americanism after 1933</i>	197
	<i>From the American West to the German East?</i>	207
	<i>Conclusion: Imperial Liberalism, Nazi Expansionism, and the Continuities of German History</i>	217
	<i>Bibliography</i>	233
	<i>Index</i>	265

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States,  
1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Acknowledgments

It would have been impossible for me to complete this book without the help and scholarly advice of many supporters. First, I would like to thank my dissertation advisor Jon Butler for letting me conceive of the beginnings of this project under his supervision, although, ultimately, my topic had little to do with his own research. I would also like to thank Frank Turner, who is missed, and Ute Frevert for their input and criticism. In addition, I wish to thank Ben Kiernan and Benjamin Madley. Their interest in my research shaped the argumentative trajectory of my work once it came to the task of revising the dissertation. In respect to the latter undertaking I cannot thank Andrew Zimmerman enough for his support and engagement with my work. I would also like to thank Erik Grimmer-Solem and Bradley Naranch for reading portions of the manuscript, and Lora Wildenthal for her kind comments on parts of this project that, ultimately, have become the basis for a separate article and new project.

I am also deeply indebted to my mother, Sigrid Güttel, for her tireless research assistance. Although I live in the United States, far from German archival materials, I could always rely on her willingness to go to various archives in Berlin and seek out the documents I needed. I was thus able to engage in archival research, even when I could not be in the archives myself. She was even willing to transcribe Wilhelm Solf's handwriting for me,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

viii

*Acknowledgments*

which was quite a task. The same holds true for my mother-in-law, Sarah Paulu Boittin. Her patient and repeated editing of the text has ironed out many Germanisms, grammatical mistakes, and rhetorical imprecisions. The book would not be what it is without her. I also wish to thank Peter Prüfert, who is missed, and Waltraut Prüfert for helping me to find the book's cover image.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my partner Jennifer Anne Boittin. Without her piercing criticism, scholarly input and advice, and willingness to repeatedly help me edit my writing, this book would not exist. I cannot thank her enough.



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Abbreviations

BArch	Bundesarchiv Berlin/Koblenz (German Federal Archives Berlin/Koblenz)
DDP	Deutsche Demokratische Partei (German Democratic Party, 1918–30)
DFP	Deutsche Fortschrittspartei (German Progressive Party, 1861–84)
DVP	Deutsche Volkspartei (German People's Party, 1918–33)
FSVP	Freisinnige Volkspartei (Liberal People's Party, 1893–1910)
FVP	Fortschrittliche Volkspartei (Progressive People's Party, 1910–18)
GEA	German East Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi)
GSWA	German Southwest Africa (Namibia)
NLP	Nationalliberale Partei (National-Liberal Party, 1867–1918)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National-Socialist German Workers' Party, 1920–45)
<i>Reichstagsdebatte</i>	<i>Verhandlungen des Reichstages / Stenographische Berichte / Anlagen. Berlin: 1871–1939</i>

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02469-4 - German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945

Jens-Uwe Guettel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

*Abbreviations*

RKA	Reichskolonialamt (Imperial Colonial Department, 1907–19)
RKA-B	Reichskolonialabteilung (Imperial Colonial Office, 1890–1907. Part of the Foreign Office until 1907)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social-Democratic Party of Germany, 1875–)