Fellow Tribesmen: The Image of Native Americans, National Identity and Nazi Ideology in Germany

Fellow Tribesmen: The Image of Native Americans, National Identity and Nazi Ideology in Germany. By Frank Usbeck. New York: Berghahn. 2015. 262 pp. $95.00/£60.00 (hardback).

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When National Socialists harnessed American Indians for ideological and practical purposes, they drew on a German tradition that stretched back into the romantic era. According to Frank Usbeck, however, their actions constituted a ‘distinctive and particularly bizarre phase in the longer tradition of German perceptions of (Native) Americans’ (p. 214). There were many contradictions in their appropriations: Nazi propagandists drew on the history and contemporary plight of indigenous people in North and South America to support and to oppose colonialism, to champion and condemn racial mixing and to use the fate of American Indians as inspirational examples of both annihilation and resistance. Usbeck’s deep analysis of that process will interest many scholars of the Nazi era, of race and of Germans’ relationships with non-Europeans.

The book’s introduction offers readers a primer...
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