

ARTYKUŁY RECENZYJNE I RECENZJE

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Colonising Poland's Historiography. Concerning Lenny A. Ureña Valerio's Breakthrough Study*

Abstrakt: Niniejszy artykuł ocenia naukowy debiut prof. Lenny A. Ureña Valerio w szerszym kontekście istniejącej literatury z obszaru studiów postkolonialnych. Recenzent zwraca uwagę na przełomowy w swoim zakresie charakter omawianej książki, która jako jedna z pierwszych wskazuje na fakt, iż niemiecka ekspansja imperialna na ziemiach polskich w latach 1840–1920 była ściśle powiązana z działaniami Rzeszy w Afryce.

Słowa kluczowe: studia postkolonialne, Afryka, zabór pruski, nauki rasowe.

Abstract: The present article assesses Prof. Lenny A. Ureña Valerio scholarly debut in a broader context of the present literature in the post-colonial field. The reviewer pays attention to the breakthrough nature of the analysed book which is one of the first to indicate the fact that the German imperial expansion into the Polish lands in 1840–1920 was closely related to the German colonial enterprise in Africa.

Keywords: post-colonial studies, Africa, Prussian partition, racial sciences.

In recent years, historians and anthropologists have investigated the Polish past through a post-colonial lens, drawing from a trending field emphasising the cultural and social legacy of colonialism and imperialism in places where

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these phenomena took place or are believed to have taken place. As a result, post-colonial studies of Poland have covered a wide range of topics, from what some call Polish ‘colonialism’ in Ukraine before World War II to the imagination of brotherhood between Poland and the ‘Third World’ during the communist period.¹ In German historiography, moreover, the position of Polish and Jewish subjects of Imperial and Nazi Germany has been timidly likened to the plight of Africans under European domination.² Uniting all of these works is the conviction that maritime expansion, or at least the Orientalist discourse that accompanied it, transformed the web of relations between different national, religious and social groups in Poland. In addition to these post-colonial approaches, Polish episodes such as the expedition of Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński to Cameroon (1884–85) have been studied in considerable depth in Poland.³ Likewise, the coverage of the most directly ‘colonial’ Polish interactions in Africa, namely the 1930s projects of the Maritime and Colonial League (*Liga Morska i Kolonialna*) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been quite comprehensive in Polish literature, albeit conservative in methodology.⁴ In contrast, English-language studies seem to dismiss Polish colonial aspirations as indicative of nothing but nationalism and anti-Semitism, with the latter referring to the role that Jews were made to play in some of them.⁵

In her debut monograph, *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities*, Lenny A. Ureña Valerio, assistant director of the Center for Latin American Studies

¹ *From Sovietology to Postcoloniality: Poland and Ukraine from a Postcolonial Perspective*, ed. J. Korek (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2007, Södertörn Academic Studies 32); A.F. Kola, *Socjalistyczny postkolonializm: rekonsolidacja pamięci* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2018).

² K.L. Kopp, *Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012); A. Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa. Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

³ T. Bohajedyn, ‘Sen o kolonii, czyli polsko-niemiecka rywalizacja w Kamerunie 1884–1885’, *Elewator*, 18, no. 4 (2016), 58–62; B. Franczyk, ‘Europejskie losy afrykańskiej wyspy – stacja na Mondoleh w źródłach historycznych’, *Ex Africa Semper Aliquid Novi*, 4 (2017), 56–73; M. Jarnecki, *Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński (1861–1896): z Kalisza do Kamerunu* (Kalisz: Kaliskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 2017).

⁴ T. Białas, *Liga Morska i Kolonialna 1930–1939* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Morskie, 1983); Z. Bujkiewicz, *Aspiracje kolonialne w polityce zagranicznej Polski* (Zielona Góra: Lubuskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1998); P. Puchalski, ‘Polityka kolonialna międzywojennej Polski w świetle źródeł krajowych i zagranicznych: nowe spojrzenie (1918–1945)’, *Res Gestae*, 7 (2018), 68–121.

⁵ P.N. Hehn, *A Low Dishonest Decade: The Great Powers, Eastern Europe, and the Economic Origins of World War II, 1930–1941* (New York–London: Continuum, 2002), p. 69; T. Hunczak, ‘Polish Colonial Ambitions in the Inter-War Period’, *Slavic Review*, 26, no. 4 (1967), 648–56; J. Marcus, *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939* (Berlin–New York–Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1983), p. 393; T. Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), pp. 18, 198.

at the University of Florida, undertakes the task of drawing from and mediating between the approaches mentioned above and literature to examine the influence of ‘race science’ on ‘the making of Polishness on the fringes of the German Empire’ between 1840 and 1920, to quote the subtitle. The full spectrum of arguments put forward in the book, which is based upon the Author’s doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Michigan in 2010,⁶ is hardly revealed by its title, however. Most explicitly, the monograph aims to excavate the interdependence between the German colonial enterprise in Africa and the subjugation of Prussian-Polish provinces in the ‘East’, especially the Grand Duchy of Poznań (Posen). Structuring the book around the medical aspect of Berlin’s ‘civilising mission’, Valerio demonstrates how the emergence of German ideas about racial and cultural superiority, especially concerning ‘contaminated’ foreign bodies, dovetailed both Prussia’s eastward territorial expansion and the continuing European conquest of Africa in the first half of the nineteenth century. By the 1890s, the same medicalised racial discourse that justified the introduction of the genocidal rule to German colonies in Africa also allowed for the passing of harsh anti-Polish measures in Prussia’s ‘East’. While drawing our attention to their common ideological origins, the Author (correctly) refrains from equating the two sets of policies, pointing to the much safer position of the Polish population that enjoyed civil liberties and leverage unavailable to Africans (p. 3). Still, what distinguishes this book from previous works that showed the “tensions of the empire”⁷ split between Africa and Poland is not only the tracing of these tensions back to the common ideological denominators but also the analysis of Polish reactions to subjugated status, including Polish colonial fantasies nested within the German and European imperial projects. Understandably, it is these nested fantasies that John J. Bukowczyk, the editor of the Polish and Polish-American Studies Series in which the book has been published, underlines as most intriguing in his preface.

Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities opens with an introduction that follows Bukowczyk’s preface and an acknowledgement section, in which the Author confirms that she aims to incorporate “Polish views into general debates about the management of diseases, race science and civilizing projects” (p. 1). Therefore, despite Valerio’s inadvertent contribution to the debate concerning the ‘Windhuk to Auschwitz’ thesis,⁸ I will mostly judge whether,

⁶ L.A. Ureña Valerio, ‘The Stakes of Empire: Colonial Fantasies, Civilizing Agendas, and Biopolitics in the Prussian-Polish Provinces, 1840–1914’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 2010).

⁷ See *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. F. Cooper, A.L. Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁸ For a comprehensive historiographical article outlining the debate around this thesis see T. Kühne, ‘Colonialism and the Holocaust: continuities, causations, and complexities’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 15, no. 3 (2013), 339–62.

in my opinion, she completes this self-appointed goal of integrating Polish responses to the medical and pseudo-scientific aspects of colonialism in the German imperial context. Besides, I will assess the Author's interpretation of Polish colonial encounters as producing domestic projects of economic modernisation and social transformation undertaken by institutions such as the Poznań Society of the Friends of Arts and Sciences (*Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk*) and the Society for Social Hygiene (*Towarzystwo Społeczno-Higieniczne*). In the meantime, however, I must take issue with the claim that during the communist period, there was a "sanitization of Polish complicity with colonial movements" (p. 5). It is true that Polish writers such as Ryszard Kapuściński distinguished Polish explorers from German 'imperialists' and subscribed to the Soviet project of winning the hearts of the decolonising 'Third World' (pp. 5–6).

Nonetheless, Valerio does not provide evidence that any of the communist-era *historians*, whose relevant works she cites, examined the colonial 'benevolence' of Szolc-Rogoziński and others uncritically.⁹ Moreover, communists gladly exposed the 'imperialism' of the inter-war Piłsudskiite regime, exaggerating its oppression of minorities in the eastern borderlands to justify the postwar Soviet annexations and reducing Józef Beck's colonial aspirations in Africa to his 'great-power' (*mocarstwo*) ambitions, which allegedly made Warsaw blind to the German danger.¹⁰ If there was a historiographical 'bracketing' of Polish 'colonialism' only to the inter-war period, which itself is questionable, it amounted to a 'sanitisation' of individual explorers, not of the Polish complicity in Western 'capitalist' wrongdoing that preceded the communist takeover.

In the first out of the book's five chapters, the Author reveals the philosophical origins of German race science and demonstrates the role played therein by Prussia's eastward expansion and medical encounters between German physicians and Polish subjects. In line with the parameters of inquiry set

⁹ Some communist-era works on Szolc-Rogoziński are missing from the bibliography, including T. Dzierżykray-Rogalski, 'Anniversaire de l'expédition au Cameroun de Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński', *Africana Bulletin*, 18 (1973), 214–18; M. Zachorowska, J. Kamocki, *Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński: badania i kolekcja afrykańska z lat 1882 do 1890* (Kraków: Muzeum Etnograficzne, 1984). Moreover, there is also contemporary literature relating to Polish explorers whose exploits did not concern the German Empire but were colonial encounters nonetheless, for example *Ludy i kultury Australii i Oceanii: Bronisław Malinowski, 1884–1942*, ed. E. Pietraszek, B. Kopydłowska-Kaczorowska (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1988); L. Orłowski, *Maurycy August Beniowski* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, 1961).

¹⁰ One can clearly observe the simplistic communist association of the Piłsudskiites with nationalism, anti-Semitism, and colonial aspirations in the 1960 film *Bad Luck (Zezowate szczęście)* by Andrzej Munk. One scene of the film depicts supporters of the Camp of National Unity (*Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego*) and radical nationalists – the latter exclaiming 'Jews to Madagascar!' – as gradually blending into one crowd.

by Larry Wolff and Maria Todorova,¹¹ Valerio points to the imaginary lines that still-celebrated German intellectuals drew between ‘civilised’ Western Europe and the Polish lands east of Berlin and south of Königsberg. Gustav Freytag, the promoter of the derogatory term *polnische Wirtschaft* (Polish economy), attributed ‘German intelligence’ to the introduction of modern liberal finance to the ‘Slavonic tribes’, which was, in turn, a function of German overseas colonisation. In his travelogues, Georg Forster, on the other hand, exoticised ‘Polacks’ (*Polacken*) and Tahitians, but, while appreciating the latter as ‘noble savages’, he identified the former as European degenerates. Immanuel Kant, too, considered Poles as fallen Europeans, backward in terms of culture and national progress. It took physicians such as August Hirsch, however, to racialize Polish ‘backwardness’ in terms of the 1830s and 1840s typhus epidemics in Upper Silesia, with the ‘Slavic descent’ of its inhabitants blamed for the outbreaks of the disease. Ostensibly more concerned with ‘culture’ than ‘physiognomy’, progressive physician Rudolf Virchow argued for the uprooting of the Catholic Church from Polish-Prussian provinces and integrating Poles into the empire, blaming their religious beliefs and practices for poor hygiene and weak economic performance. Still, instead of Virchow’s prescriptions bettering the Polish position, they only worked to persuade the German state to view the source of the 1860s and 1870s cholera epidemics as distinctly ‘Polish’ and to add a medical dimension to the *Kulturkampf*. While tangential to the argument, Valerio’s observation that liberalism was distorted, if not damaging from the start, is quite revealing. At the same time, however, it is my impression that the analysis of the role of German racial, colonial and medical ideas in bringing about anti-Polish measures should have been summarised. While she does highlight the reactions of Poznań physicians Franciszek Chłapowski and Kazimierz Marcinkowski to German state policies, the Author only tackles Polish responses to German biopolitics later in the book, making the first chapter into an extended introduction.

The second chapter discusses the “rise of bacteriology and germ theory” and how it “coincided with the [...] political establishment of the medical profession” (p. 53), and contributed to the medicalisation of German colonialism that became increasingly state-driven as a result. At the centre of the narrative is Robert Koch and the migration of his science between Poland and Africa, two major sites of his experiments. Although not the first person to discover contagion, it was Koch’s identification of comma bacillus and other bacteria in the 1880s and afterwards that disarmed contemporary anti-contagionists such as Virchow, who stressed the need for

¹¹ L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

the sanitation of ‘miasmatic’ localities and opposed ‘draconian’ measures to combat infectious diseases. Together with August Weissman’s theory of the continuity of the germplasm, according to which diseases and racial characteristics could not be altered, the germ theory swayed German elites to the possibility of ‘conquering’ tropical diseases and settling white colonists in Africa. Still, “the notion that diseases were not determined by climatic and geographic conditions but by ‘cosmopolitan’ bacteria did not translate into an equal treatment of populations” (p. 62). In fact, not only Africans but also Poles and Jews became viewed as walking contagions. Once again underlining trans-colonial interdependence, Valerio demonstrates that many imperialists, unconvinced that Germans could settle in the tropics, turned their attention to the ‘East’. She subsequently (but only in the last third of the chapter) discusses Polish responses to Koch’s scientific discoveries, which Polish physicians from Poznań accepted and claimed partly as their own after a Kraków Congress in 1884.

Moreover, the Author suggests that Poznań physicians themselves adopted a ‘paternalistic’ stance toward other partitions and lower social classes, possibly influenced by German colonial science (p. 70). Valerio, too preoccupied with explaining the relation between the germ theory and German colonialism, could have spent more time developing this claim, which would have strengthened the overarching thesis of the book. Instead, given that only one example of such ‘paternalistic’ discourse is quoted in the context of social class, the claim remains in the sphere of speculation whereas as much as half the section dealing with Polish responses seems redundant, especially the rather summarisable history of Polish medical journals.

The stakes of *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities* become somewhat clear again in the third chapter, as the ‘intersecting roads’ of European imperialism and Jewish, Polish and German ‘civilising’ agendas are discussed. It opens with an analysis of an extremely illuminating article from the *London Times* from 19 January 1904, in which a British journalist compares German colonising methods in Poland and South-West Africa on the brink of the Herero-Nama genocide, noting that Berlin’s overseas failures would dovetail failures in the ‘East’, as the empire adopts extremely coercive methods and refuses to integrate Boer settlers. Valerio consequently sets to examine the ‘political imagination’ (p. 78) that connected Prussian-Polish provinces to Africa, in particular Polish reactions to German colonialism. The juxtaposition of Robert Koch with Jan Czekanowski, a Polish anthropologist and participant in the expedition of the Duke of Mecklenburg to German East Africa (1907–08), seems logical for this aim. Czekanowski was implicit in the imperial production of ethnographic knowledge about the local Bantu while remaining critical of German colonialism which reminded him of the German treatment of his fellow Poles. Koch, on the other hand, was deployed to the tropics to secure the health of German livestock and native workforce.

He conducted experiments in concentration camps set up for indigenous tribesmen to find the right treatment for malaria and sleeping sickness. Nonetheless, the inclusion of Emin Pasha, an assimilated German Jew of Polish-Silesian extraction, does not quite fit this Polish-German dynamic. His story is an exciting episode of a cosmopolitan colonialist, Muslim convert and governor of the Egyptian Equatorial Province ultimately writing himself into the German imperial project. However, the fact that Poles criticised Pasha's exploits as acts of German imperialism (pp. 85–86) hardly warrants his place in the study. Still, the thematic integrity of the chapter is maintained as the Author discusses the colonial-inspired sanitary control stations on Prussia's eastern borders and the critical responses of Polish physicians such as Władysław Biegański and Heliodor Świącicki, which appealed to Christianity and the need to treat patients, not diseases.

The fourth chapter is the most cohesive, exploring what the Romantic slogan 'For Your Freedom and Ours' (*Za wolność waszą i naszą*) meant for three Polish explorers of Africa during the Positivist period: idealist Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński, Noble-winning writer Henryk Sienkiewicz and Lwów naturalist Antoni Jakubski. The Author argues that, while entertaining their own fantasies of a more 'benevolent' colonialism, "many Polish travelers identified themselves with the plight of the colonized and offered comments about their own colonial anxieties at home" (p. 118). Thus, she demonstrates that Szolc-Rogoziński and his Polish companions, Klemens Tomczek and Leopold Janikowski, depicted themselves as 'white brothers' coming to the Cameroons, not for economic profit but to uplift the indigenous people culturally in a manner allegedly more 'benevolent' than that of other Europeans; especially the Germans, whom they attempted to keep from acquiring the area as long as possible. In the process, they established the first momentary but autonomous Polish settlement in Africa. Valerio underlines, however, that, despite significant success in rallying the natives to their cause, Szolc-Rogoziński still subscribed to European 'civilising mission', bringing live black women for an exhibition in Poland. In a similar manner, Valerio analyses Sienkiewicz's coming-of-age novel *In Desert and Wilderness* (*W pustyni i w puszczy*, 1911) as well his *Letters from Africa* (*Listy z Afryki*, 1893) to highlight his implicit criticism of German colonialism and suggestion that a more noble Polish-Catholic colonisation was possible. Lastly, the section that deals with Jakubski likewise underlines his negative disposition toward the degeneration of European 'civilisation' in German East Africa following the Maji-Maji uprising and the destruction of indigenous cultures (still 'primitive' in his mind). This is the most thematically integral chapter of the entire study, focusing on the 'in-betweenness' of Polish colonial writers, and Valerio acknowledges the Polish anthropologists and ethnologists from whose work she has benefitted (p. 146). Nevertheless, an outstanding recognition should be given to Dorota Kielak, whose article, a chapter of a 2016 edited

volume that is not cited, makes similar if not the same arguments regarding Sienkiewicz's colonial ideology in *In Desert and Wilderness*.¹²

The final chapter of *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities* reveals another illuminating Polish-German colonial dynamic, suggesting that Prussia's expropriation and expulsion of Polish peasants, intended to make room for German settlers in the eastern provinces, precipitated a mass migration from all the three Polish partitions to South America, especially to the southern Brazilian state of Paraná. In turn, the Author points out the emergence of a strange alliance between German travel agencies, Brazilian statesmen and Polish nationalists for the creation of a 'New Poland' in Paraná, with peasants imagined as colonial pioneers. Nonetheless, it seems to me that, while the Polish colonial imagery concerning Paraná was certainly inspired by contemporary German fantasies, to emphasise Prussia's anti-Polish measures as the major driving force behind Polish emigration is to underestimate the endemic factors that existed in the Kingdom of Poland and Galicia and forced many peasants to succumb to the 'Brazilian fever'. Moreover, Polish public opinion did not unanimously support the channelling of peasant emigration to Paraná, as is demonstrated by recent English-language literature concerning Polish and international responses to 'white slavery'.¹³ Valerio also notes that colonial ideas about emigration influenced the National Democracy's ethnically exclusive definition of Polishness (p. 159), and later she notes that 'nationalists' only promoted mass emigration of national minorities such as Jews (p. 165). It is unclear, however, which group she means, since a couple of sentences later she uses the same term to describe supporters of peasant emigration such as Stanisław Kłobukowski and Józef Siemiradzki.¹⁴ It should also be noted that Valerio mentions the absence in Polish historiography of "the analysis of the relationship colonists had with the local communities, especially with natives and Afro-Brazilians" (p. 160) but does not entirely fill that gap herself.

¹² D. Kielak, 'Europejczyk w Afryce: *W pustyni i w puszczy* Henryka Sienkiewicza', in *Sienkiewicz dzisiaj: eseje o twórczości autora 'Trylogii'*, ed. K. Augustyniak (Warszawa: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2016), pp. 245–55.

¹³ N.M. Wingfield, 'Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople; "White Slavers" in Late Imperial Austria', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 20, no. 2 (2011), 291–311; K. Stauter-Halsted, "'A Generation of Monsters": Jews, Prostitution, and Racial Purity in the 1892 L'viv White Slavery Trial', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 38 (2007), 25–35; T. Zahra, 'Travel Agents on Trial: Policing Mobility in East Central Europe, 1889–1989', *Past & Present*, 223, no. 1 (2014), 161–93.

¹⁴ In fact, both Kłobukowski and Siemiradzki belonged to Roman Dmowski's National League (*Liga Narodowa*), which shows that right-wing nationalists did not adopt a uniform emigration policy. For a comprehensive study of Roman Dmowski's changing ideas about Polish emigration see M. Starczewski, 'Mrzonki racjonalnej kolonizacji w duchu narodowym: Roman Dmowski i polska emigracja do Brazylii', *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, 59, no. 2 (2015), 63–74.

In her conclusion, Valerio goes beyond a mere argument summary to underline the lasting effects of Polish-German colonial encounters in Europe and Africa. In particular, she stresses that, as Alfred Ploetz in his eugenicist movement directed against Slavs, Poznań physicians drew inspiration from German medical-colonial ideas. The Society to Combat Venereal Diseases (*Towarzystwo ku Zwalczeniu Zakaźnych Chorób Płciowych*), for example – transformed into the Society for Social Hygiene (*Towarzystwo Społeczno-Higieniczne*) in 1908 – is described as inspired by German eugenics, whereas the Catholic ‘pastoral medicine’ of Paweł Gantkowski as a specifically Polish offshoot of such eugenics. Moreover, Valerio suggests that Polish elite obsessions with the ‘nation in the village’ and ‘primordial’ landscapes,¹⁵ in particular the Tatra Mountains, was a local manifestation of a broader European ethnographic interest in the colonial ‘primitive’. Lastly, the Author points out the role of Polish physicians in the Greater Poland Uprising and, later, in independent Poland’s scientific and political life. These are all quite persuasive indications of the ways in which colonial interactions possibly influenced domestic politics in Poland. However, they still remain speculative and must be treated as mere guidelines for future research. For example, Valerio’s association of recreational ‘colonies’ (*kolonie*), or patriotic educational camps set up for children and adults, with colonial fantasies is intriguing but seems stretched and attaches too much importance to the linguistic similarity.¹⁶ In fact, one quality of *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities* is that its arguments often point to *correlation* as opposed to *causation*. For example, the racist application of Koch’s germ theory to the 1905 typhoid epidemic in Poznań, for which Germans blamed Poles, is deduced from the intellectual context of the time (pp. 101–02). While persuasive, this *modus operandi* can be strenuous for readers, especially in sections that analyse complicated and obscure medical theories.

The scope of *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities* is impressive. In the process of illuminating the Polish-German colonial dynamic, Valerio rescues many forgotten stories from the belly of the whale. These include the complicity of Koch and Jewish-German physician Paul Ehrlich in dangerous medical experiments in the colonies as well as Szolc-Rogoziński’s role in the delimitation of the British-German frontier in the Cameroons in the late 1880s. The rich scope of the book can also be confusing, however, especially as it does not follow a chronological timeline but instead leaps from one colonial encounter to the next. The decision to conclude the study with a series of

¹⁵ See K. Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

¹⁶ This is not to say that the multiple meanings of *kolonia* never resulted in colonial associations, as this was clearly the case when diaspora settlements were referred to as *kolonie* and imagined as political and economic outposts.

speculations concerning the domestic results of these encounters adds more historical material to the already complicated work. Furthermore, it is done at the expense of a brief but more comprehensive analysis of the numerous *international* ramifications that early Polish colonial explorations produced during the inter-war period, including the activities of the Maritime and Colonial League in Africa, the Polish government's relationship with Paraná and Czekanowski's contributions to colonial anthropology. Instead, this rich inter-war after-life of nested Polish colonial fantasies is reduced to a couple of occasional sentences that describe them as fleeting failures (pp. 146–47, 160).

For the sake of keeping the length of this review in check, I allow myself to list additional comments as points: (1) There are at least three jarring Polish spelling mistakes in one paragraph (p. 42). (2) 'Rogoziński' is mentioned for the first time in chapter 3 (p. 86) but is only introduced in the following chapter. (3) Key studies of Polish emigration to South America are missing, including Edward Kołodziej's *Wychodźstwo zarobkowe z Polski 1918–1939*, in which the colonial dimension is noted.¹⁷ (4) Jan Czekanowski's *W głąb last Aruwimi* (1958) was published decades after the Mecklenburg expedition; the Author notes this but does not justify the choice not to use the original diary.¹⁸ (5) Outdated names of Polish archives are given in the bibliography, e.g. "Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu" (p. 248) – should be "Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu". (6) Polish titles are sometimes cited with spelling and grammatical errors, e.g. "Chwalba, Andrzej *Historia polski* [sic]" (p. 264), "Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawczy [sic]" (p. 235). (7) Gustaw Orlicz-Dreszer's *Program Ligi Morskiej i Kolonialnej* should not be included in scholarly works (p. 279). (8) *Liga Morska i Rzeczna* was renamed *Liga Morska i Kolonialna* in 1930, not 1928 (p. 239).

Notwithstanding minor deficiencies, *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities* is a tour-de-force of academic writing, with the narrative spanning three continents and making reference to a staggering amount of scholarship. It not only contributes to our understanding of the cross-pollination between the two vectors of the German Empire, namely Poland and Africa, but also excavates Polish responses to German and European imperial projects, which often took the form of nested colonial fantasies and affected Poland's domestic politics. As the first monograph-length study of Polish colonial encounters in the English language, the book marks a long-awaited 'colonial turn' in Polish historiography and should receive lasting applause for its scope, high academic quality and revolutionary approach.

¹⁷ E. Kołodziej, *Wychodźstwo zarobkowe z Polski 1918–1939. Studia nad polską polityką emigracyjną II Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1982).

¹⁸ J. Czekanowski, 'Dziennik wyprawy ekspedycji antropologiczno-etnologicznej do Afryki Środkowej w latach 1907–1909', Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (University of Warsaw Library), Gabinet Rękopisów, inv. no. 4933.

Kolonizowanie historiografii Polski. Uwagi na temat przełomowej książki Lenny A. Ureña Valerio

Recenzent uznaje książkę prof. Lenny A. Ureña Valerio za przełomową w zakresie analizy stosunków polsko-niemieckich w latach 1840–1920. Czerpiąc ze studiów postkolonialnych, tradycyjnie oscylujących wokół zjawisk występujących na terenach okupowanych niegdyś przez mocarstwa kolonialne w Afryce i Azji, dzieło traktuje o licznych związkach pomiędzy działaniami niemieckiej Rzeszy w afrykańskich koloniach a jej polityką wymierzoną w ludność polską i (w mniejszym stopniu) żydowską. Wspomniana zależność przedstawiona jest przez pryzmat nauk medycznych, których przedstawiciele przyczyniali się do urasowienia (*racialization*) mieszkańców zarówno Afryki, jak i pogranicza polsko-niemieckiego w kontekście chorób i epidemii. Jednocześnie dzieło omawia także polskie reakcje na “kolonialne” traktowanie przez Niemców, które przejawiały się często w postaci polskich wypraw kolonialnych do Afryki. Tym samym recenzowana książka jawi się jako pierwsze wyważone, anglojęzyczne studium o polskich lękach i ambicjach kolonialnych.

Summary

The reviewer regards Prof. Lenny A. Ureña Valerio's books as a breakthrough in the analysis of Polish-German relations in 1840–1920. Drawing on post-colonial studies, traditionally oscillating around the phenomena occurring in the territories formerly occupied by colonial powers in Africa and Asia, the book deals with the numerous connections between the enterprises of German Reich in African colonies and the German policy against its Polish and (to a lesser extent) Jewish subjects. The mentioned interdependence is presented through the lens of medical sciences whose representatives contributed to the racialisation of inhabitants both of Africa and the Polish-German borderland in the context of diseases and epidemics. At the same time, the book also discusses the Polish reactions to ‘colonial’ treatment by the Germans, which often manifested themselves in the form of Polish colonial expeditions to Africa. Thus, the reviewed book appears to be the first well-balanced English-language study on Polish colonial fears and ambitions.

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