



Reorienting Atlantic World Financial Capitalism: America and the German States

David Thomson (Sacred Heart University, CT, USA)

Tuesday, May 28, 2019
4-6 p.m. (c.t.)
P 207 (Philosophicum)



The story of transatlantic finance in the nineteenth century has often been one that fixates largely on a US-British binary. Capital flows between these two nations (increasingly centered around financial instruments pertaining to cotton) have been detailed at length in an array of monographs. While some historians have explored the power of Dutch financiers, especially as it pertained to American railroad stock, little attention has been paid to German financiers in nineteenth century specifically as it pertains to their increasing interest and interconnectedness with the United States. While partly down to a dearth of surviving primary source evidence, the importance and connections between German financiers and American counterparts helps to explain evolving notions of transatlantic finance but also in part the respective rise of these two economies as they eclipsed the British by the early twentieth century. What began as two economies

operating on the periphery of a dominant British financial network in the earlier part of the nineteenth century evolved by century's end. Finance played but one part in this narrative of American and German ascension, but the financing of debt is one window into this critical story of the nineteenth century.

David Thomson is a historian of the 19th century United States with a special focus on the history of capitalism in the Civil War era. Thomson received his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia and joined the faculty at Sacred Heart in the fall of 2016. He teaches both halves of the United States history survey as well as electives on the American Civil War, Reconstruction, American Capitalism, and United States Foreign Policy.