

Matthias Gretzschel. *Hamburg Süd 150 Years on the World's Oceans—The History of a Great Shipping Company*. Hamburg, Germany: Koehler im Maximilian Verlag GmbH & Co KG, www.koehler-books.de, 2021. 288 pp., illustrations, index. Euro 39,90 €, cloth; ISBN 978-3-7822-1505-3 (English edition), 978-7822-1394-3 (German edition).

Matthias Gretzschel's new book on the history of the Hamburg Süd is not only a visual feast for the reader, but a well-researched book published on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the shipping company originally established as Hamburg-Südamerikanische Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft (HSDG).

Today a part of A.P. Møller-Mærsk, the company was once a major German shipping line focusing exclusively on the South America trade throughout its history. It was particularly known for its modern-design ship classes like the 1960s Cap-San Class, an example of which, the *Cap San Diego*, is now a popular museum ship in Hamburg. Although Hamburg Süd never reached the size of the HAPAG or NDL companies, it is without any doubt one of the most historically important German shipping lines. A new book focusing on the more recent history of this company is especially welcome, since any previous comprehensive histories were published decades ago and are probably long out of print. Of course, there is Hans Jürgen Witthöft's 2008 book *Hamburg Süd – Eine Illustrierte Chronik der Ereignisse*, which might be the better book for the research-oriented historian, but even this book does not cover the most recent years, including the sale of the company to A.P. Møller-Mærsk that ended the history of Hamburg Süd as an independent actor on the global shipping stage.

Gretzschel organizes his book mainly chronologically, but also includes chapters on key characteristics that distinguished the Hamburg Süd from many other German and international shipping companies, such as the development of the reefer activities or the focus on combined passenger-cargo ships. This hybrid approach of a chronologically and thematically organized book is highly successful. It allows readers, on the one hand, to follow the development of the company through time, but on the other hand, to obtain highly detailed information on the developments and characteristics that made Hamburg Süd unique.

For example, the chapters on the combined cargo-passenger operations and the design of the ships showcase that Hamburg Süd did not follow the simple philosophy of the cheapest approach being the most economical, but that innovation in design and standards for passengers aboard cargo-ships could also contribute to the economic outcome. The company's cooperation with the well-known architect Cäsar Pinnau resulted in some of their ships

being considered as elegant as yachts.

The book is beautifully produced. It is not only lavishly illustrated with a huge number of black and white as well as full-colour illustrations, but these images are so well selected one can understand the main lines of the story even without reading the text. Many of the illustrations are reproduced in full-page or even double-page format. While this is appropriate for historic advertising posters for South American passenger services during the first half of the twentieth century as these posters are pieces of art, it might be questioned if photographs of a container on a semi-truck really requires three consecutive double-pages, with each double page presenting only one photograph.

Many books commemorating anniversaries of German companies tend to brush over the Nazi period and the relations between the respective company and the Nazi government and institutions with a quick and broad brush. Fortunately, this is not the case for *Hamburg Süd*. Gretzschel not only describes how the luxurious interior of *Cap Arcona* was used as a set for the filming of the infamous 1943 Nazi propaganda movie *Titanic*, he adds that *Hamburg Süd* was the company actually operating the ships of the Nazi organization *Deutsche Arbeitsfront*, even directly stating: “Business went well for *Hamburg Süd*, especially as its management had apparently no reservations about the new rulers” (112). During the Nazi period, *Hamburg Süd* came under control of the Oetker group, a company that was considered by many as a model National Socialist Company (114). While the influence of Rudolf Oetker might have prohibited or at least discouraged proper investigation into the history of the company during the Nazi period, this subject was taken seriously after Oetker’s death at age 90 in 2007, and Gretzschel’s book has benefitted from this research.

The concluding chapters on the years leading to and after the sale of the company to A.P. Møller-Mærsk are probably the only chapters where the author presents really new information. Unfortunately, parts of it read like something from the company’s public relations department. For example, stating that “In South America it is as well-known as Volkswagen, Allianz or Siemens” (215) is probably at least a slight exaggeration, especially away from the immediate coastal area. Nevertheless, this minor critique cannot distract from the fact that the book is one of the better festschriften written on the occasion of an anniversary in the maritime industries. As is customary from this publisher, the 288-page, large-format hard-cover book displays superior technical quality. While the reproduction quality of the colour illustrations is brilliant, many of the black and white reproductions are somewhat greyish leaving the reviewer wondering if this is a consequence of the printing process used for the book or the publisher following the wider trend to shy away from printing black as real black in photographs.

As a de-facto festschrift, I can recommend it to anybody with an interest in an easy-to-digest book about the 150-year history of a shipping company that was never among the prime actors in the market, but always a “great” shipping company. The original German title uses the term ‘groß’ which might refer to “great,” but also simply to “large,” which is true for the Hamburg Süd regardless of whether you agree with the adjective “great” or not. The lovely illustrations also make it a perfect “coffee-table” book. Would I recommend the book to fellow maritime historians? The answer is both yes and no. Due to the absence of a bibliography or footnotes, there are substantial limitations to using the book as a secondary source. Nevertheless, it is a solid overview of the history of a German shipping company that dominated the South America trade throughout most of its existence and that does not shy away from problematic aspects of that history. It provides accurate historical information about a shipping company that owned and/or operated many ships that remain prominent in public memory, whether recalling the catastrophe of a KDF-ship or visiting a memorable museum ship in the city of Hamburg.

The book is available in the original German edition as well as in an identical English edition published at the same time. Although this reviewer is a native German speaker, this review is based on the English edition, as this is the edition probably most relevant to the readers of this review. As expected for a book published on the occasion of the anniversary of an international shipping company, the English translation is of high quality, with only a few telltale instances where the reader might suspect that the book had not been originally published in English.

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Jean-Sébastien Guibert. *Mémoire de mer, océan de papiers. Naufrage, risque et fait maritime à la Guadeloupe (fin XVIIe-mi XIXe siècles)*. Bordeaux, FR: Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, www.pub-editions.fr, 2021. 328 pp., illustrations, tables, notes, tables, bibliography. Euros 35,00 €, paper; ISBN 979-10-300-0282-9.

D’entrée de jeu les objectifs de cet ouvrage sont clairs, puisqu’on aspire à y établir des relations entre histoire et archéologie sous-marine aux Petites-Antilles en utilisant l’exemple de la Guadeloupe. Il s’agit d’un exercice réussi démontrant l’importance des archives dans la localisation des épaves, leur provenance, leur cargaison, leurs équipages, leurs lieux de construction, leur tonnage, etc. La période couverte par l’étude s’étend de la fin du XVII^e jusqu’au milieu du XIX^e siècle. Pour mener sa démarche à bien, l’auteur