Einführung in die Weltstadt
Guiding Berliners to Cosmopolitanism, Imperialism, and Race, 1896-1900
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Abstract

After the founding of the German nation-state in 1871, millions of people from the German countryside moved to Berlin, ethnologists articulated a global geography of race through their studies of “native” people, and new cultures of print, advertising, and consumption positioned the city and its residents at the center of the globe. Together, these developments helped produce a Weltstadtgefühl, a sense or sensibility of the “global city” that was defined by its technological modernity, imperial centralization, and scientific categorization. In this period, race began to take on new cultural and scientific meanings; through popular media and mass exhibitions, it became a category that inflected the ways the city itself was conceived and portrayed. Grounded by a discussion of urban consumption, this thesis’ two case studies examine how the 1896 Colonial Exhibition’s Exhibition of Natives and the popular Berliner Morgenpost newspaper’s reporting on race used multiple strategies to guide new Berliners through the city. They were offered visions of Berlin that defined itself in terms of race, science, and empire.

This thesis traces some of the linkages between imperialism, the world expansion of German capital, human scientific networks, ethnological/anthropological ideas about race, educational institutions, and representations of the modern city. By examining narratives of Berlin, stories about ownership over the city and participation in its cosmopolitan grandeur, these analyses show some of the ways working class and white-collar Berliners were guided through the city and enlisted in the imperialist project. Both archives present real sites of popular interaction with ideas about race and imperialism; examining them offers an exciting opportunity to understand the actual circulation of racial ideas, intimately linked to nationalism and imperialism, as it occurred at the close of the nineteenth century in Germany’s capital. They help show that the spread of racial ideas happened not necessarily through didactic explanations of race, but rather, in and through stories and feelings about the exciting spectacle of Berlin and the wonders of being and becoming Berliner.
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Introduction

“Berlin, die jüngste der Reichshauptstädte, muß internationalen Cercle halten. [...] Berlin wird alte Vorutheile, die gegen das ehemalige wendische Fischerdorf bestehen, zerstreuen, es wird selbst die Reste seiner kleinbürgerlichen Vergangenheit abschütteln und sich als Weltstadt fühlen lernen.” (Emphasis added)
– Bruno Bucher, 1880

“[F]ür die meisten Berliner sind all Museen, all die herrlichen Kunst- und wissenschaftlichen Sammlungen, die unsere Weltstadt ihr eigen nennt, terra incognita, unerforschtes Land, wie für den Völkerkundigen annoch ein großer Theil Afrikas, des dunklen Erdtheils.”
– Adolf Heilborn, 1899

After the founding of the German nation-state in 1871, millions of people from the German countryside moved to Berlin, ethnologists articulated a global geography of race through their studies of “native” people, and new cultures of print, advertising, and consumption positioned the city and its residents at the center of the globe. Together, these developments helped produce a Weltstadtgefühl, a sense or sensibility of the “global city” that was defined by its technological modernity, imperial centralization, and scientific categorization. In this period, race began to take on new cultural and scientific meanings; through popular media and mass exhibitions, it became a category that inflected the ways the city itself was conceived and portrayed. Grounded by a discussion of urban consumption, this thesis’ two case studies examine how the 1896 Colonial Exhibition’s Exhibition of Natives and the popular Berliner Morgenpost newspaper’s reporting...

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1 “Berlin, the youngest of the imperial capital cities, must attain international circles…Berlin will dispel old prejudices against the former Wendish fishing village, shake off the remains of Berlin’s kleinbürgerlichen (petty bourgeois) past and learn how to feel like a Weltstadt” quoted in Alexander C.T. Geppert, “Weltstadt für einen Sommer: Die Berliner Gewerbeausstellung 1896 im europäischen Kontext.” in Mitteilungen Heft des Vereins für die Geschichte Berlins e.V. 1, no. 1 (2007).

2 “All of the museums—all of the great collections of art and science—that our World City calls her own are, for most Berliners, terra incognita, unexplored land, just as Africa, the dark continent, was to the ethnologist until now.” In “Spaziergaenge durch das Voelkerkunde-Museum I” Berliner Morgenpost, January 21, 1899.

3 In the early 1870s, German anthropologists organized the Schulstatistik, a national survey of German children’s physical features that sought to identify and categorize German races. That Statistik launched biological race into the mainstream. For more, see: Andrew Zimmerman, “Anti-Semitism as skill: Rudolf Virchow’s Schulstatistik and the racial composition of Germany” in Central European History 32, no. 4 (1999), 409-420.
on race used multiple strategies to guide new Berliners through the city. They were offered visions of Berlin that defined itself in terms of race, science, and empire.

New Berliners came to the capital in a period of widespread European urbanization. Across the continent, millions of people left small towns and agricultural communities for work in the “second industrial revolution.” Berlin, the capital of the new German Reich, became then the administrative and commercial center of the new and rapidly expanding state. By 1905, the metropolitan area had become home to around 3.5 million people, making it one of the most populous in the world. Large numbers of laborers worked in the growing industrial sector and white-collar office workers were employed by corporations and imperial and state government agencies. In addition to government bureaucracies, major chemical, engineering, and financial companies called Berlin their home. Driven in part by the desire to further extend business globally, imperial politics after 1883 pursued expanded German economic and political power beyond the European continent. The Reich began taking Schutzgebiete (Protectorates) in Africa, the South Pacific, and China; the booming metropolis Berlin sat at the center of this nascent (and short-lived) German Empire.

In Berlin, social and cultural forms began to radically change; for new urbanites, living and belonging in the city involved sustained encounters with images and notions of the nation, modernity, and empire. Large urban institutions (such as universities, corporations, governments, museums, and transit systems) structured and contained much of people’s active and working

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lives and the city began to take on a reputation as a major site for scientific innovation and economic modernization. In their newfound leisure time, Berliners enjoyed popular amusements and spectacles such as fairs, shopping, exhibitions, and relaxation. The notion of the urban spectacle is central to this thesis. At the end of the nineteenth century, Georg Simmel discussed the growing importance of such urban amusements, which he interpreted as outlets for workers to relax and take pleasure in the sights and sounds of the city, thereby compensating them for their monotonous labor, and normalizing their economic positions. Urban spectacles can be generally described as “public displays, including festivals and mega-events, that involve capitalist markets, sets of social relations, and flows of commodities, capital, technology, cultural forms and people across borders.” Such displays had educational and ideological dimensions; nineteenth century “spectacles” were major propaganda machines, they were “vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting” the power of the state as well as tools for educating its citizens.

The urban spectacle was not limited to mass events—it was perhaps most intimately experienced on a daily basis through the world of newsprint. The newspaper had already been an established source for bourgeois and upper class political and social news throughout the nineteenth century, but by the 1890s had become an essential feature of urban life, used by people of most classes. In this “word city,” as Berliners walked the streets, rode mass transit, worked in offices, or sat in parks, their worlds were saturated with texts. Newspapers mirrored

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6 Martina Hessler, ““Damned Always to Alter, But Never to Be”: Berlin’s Culture of Change Around 1900” in Levin et al., Urban Modernity, 167-204.
8 Kevin Fox Gotham, “Theorizing urban spectacles Festivals, tourism and the transformation of urban space” in City 9, no. 2, (July 2005), 226-227.
10 These spectacles were in their own ways “institutions of power” that helped build the imagined communities of the German nation and Berlin. For more see Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, (London and New York, NY: Verso Books, 2006); for more on “institutions of power,” see the section “Census, Map, Museum” (163-185).
the city itself, rendering and spreading images and ideologies of a Berlin characterized by fast-paced modernity. They were also key to the development of nationalism more generally. As individuals read newspapers, they could imagine other anonymous Germans or Berliners reading and sharing in the same spectacle, thereby collapsing readers’ sense of time and making possible imagined communities and solidarities that were represented in the newspapers. The newspaper, then, is one of the most important sites for examining the images and ideas that Berliners encountered, consumed and adopted in this period. Newspapers were not simply a dynamic force for sharing information but, like highly-organized mass exhibitions, they were also instruments of control whose lessons about the city worked to normalize and reproduce the conditions of power of the booming metropolis by staging a spectacle of urban variety and excitement to be consumed by readers. In this spectacular “word city,” Berliners began to imagine themselves as members of a modern, exciting, and urbane world.

After 1883, Berlin modernity was also shaped by its new status as the capital of an overseas empire. Unlike its European neighbors Britain, France, and the Netherlands, at its founding in 1871 the new German state had no global empire that could produce agricultural products to feed the metropole, produce raw materials for industrialization, or serve to extend German economic, social, and political interests abroad. For several decades German politicians and businesspeople debated the question of colonization. In 1883, the Reich adopted a policy of formal colonialism and made its first foray into state-led colonization. By 1914, the German Empire consisted of the Schutzgebiete in Togo, Cameroon, German Southwest Africa (Namibia),

12 Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 22-36.
13 Ibid.
14 Some advocated a policy of settler colonialism to provide alternative outlets for the millions of rural Germans emigrants who had been leaving Germany for places such as the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand. Others advocated a German colonial policy focused on economic colonization, seeking to produce raw materials and agricultural products in German-controlled colonies to compete with American agriculture and British imperial products and feed domestic consumption. See: W.D. Smith, “Prelude to Empire” in The German Colonial Empire (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 6-17.
German East Africa, New Guinea, Samoa, Tsingtao (China), and several other South Pacific island chains. Some low-level settler colonialism occurred in German Southwest Africa, although the population of settlers in the entire German Empire never numbered more than 24,000. And unlike its contemporaries, the German Empire never had great success in manufacturing, agriculture, or raw material industries in its colonies.

However, one highly successful German venture was science. German universities grew swiftly toward the end of the nineteenth century, helping make German scientific research the most prominent in Europe. Ethnologists and anthropologists (human scientists) from Berlin, used German and European imperial networks to carry out on-site research and also to build collections for domestic study and display in museums. Scientists took and received artifacts and colonial natives (and often their remains), which could be studied and displayed as educational tools in museums, exhibitions, and schools. In their efforts to map and comprehend human culture, history, and evolution in their totality, these scientists developed influential ideas about categorizing and characterizing human differences according to race.

Ethnologists and anthropologists used racial categories to make distinctions among the various “primitive” societies they studied. The notion of a Naturvolk or primitive people operated in a direct binary to Kulturvolk or civilized people, a category that both described and privileged Germans and which also came into popular use. Since the 1870s, race had become an important feature of discourses of German nationality. Domestically, racialized science was transmitted through multiple mechanisms and practices. In these early years of the German state,

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16 Ibid.
school children had begun to learn that they belonged to a particular Germanic race, characterized by certain physical features.\textsuperscript{19} Public school geography textbooks, for example, prioritized the \textit{Volk}, the racialized nation, in lessons on human difference and German particularity.\textsuperscript{20} Museums like Berlin’s \textit{Völkerkundemuseum} were points of entry for visitors into discourses of ethnology and scientized notions of race.

However, formal institutions were not the only sites of dissemination for these knowledges. Indeed, imperialism and racism were yoked in mass urban culture in Imperial Germany. Large exhibitions of live indigenous people, mostly from colonial settings, called \textit{Völkerschauen} (ethnographic exhibitions) were popular amusements enjoyed by Germans in their leisure time as early as the 1860s and have been noted for popularizing ethnological ideas about race among a mass urban audience.\textsuperscript{21} Visitors to such shows were often people with stable incomes who aspired toward some kind of social mobility; they sought to achieve new status through education and the adoption of bourgeois educated airs.\textsuperscript{22} Advertisements found all over the city, appearing in posters and packaging for many household and everyday products popularized images of colonial, mostly African, people that were coded with racial messages. Advertising brought together colonial bodies with cultures of consumption, helping popularize a "racial vision."\textsuperscript{23} Privately, many turn-of-the-century Germans reveled in humorous picture

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid. \\
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postcards, many of which depicted classic tropes about blackness such as the *Mohrenwäsche*\(^{24}\) and other racist depictions of non-dominant groups,\(^{25}\) helping spread and reinforce images of racial others among a relatively broad public. Children’s toys, games, and clubs helped shape the “colonial imaginary” through play and associations.\(^{26}\) Thus, over time, small moments of colonial education cultivated colonial and racial imaginaries, taught their audiences ways of thinking and feeling colonialism and race.

To better understand the development and spread of ideas about race in Imperial Germany, this thesis focuses on the intersection of urban consumer culture and ethnology between 1896 and 1900. It examines two related points of dissemination/entry for racial ideas: both are set in Berlin and both are characterized by appeals to a broad audience and use of modern images and technologies. Together, these analyses show the interlocking strategies used both by a mass exhibition and newspapers to guide readers ways of moving through, observing, and reading about the city.

Chapters one and two address the *Erste deutsche Kolonialausstellung* (First German Colonial Exhibition), which was held in Berlin’s Treptow district from May to October in 1896. The Colonial Exhibition and the larger Trade Exhibition of which it was a part were organized by Berlin businesspeople and industrialists pushing for an expanded German empire. They sought to provoke the working public to adopt imperialist politics. Over one hundred colonial natives were put on display along with supposedly authentic structures and landscapes in a kind of human zoo called the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* or Exhibition of Natives, where they


\(^{25}\) Many picture postcards in this period depicted classic tropes of greedy, feminized, weak, and conniving Jews. See *Hatemail* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013).

were viewed by over one million visitors. The *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* was organized into multiple tableaux of native life, with groups from specific German colonies performing supposedly authentic daily practices in front of a German audience. These performances sought to elicit from visitors a sense of the realness of the colonial tableaux and the cosmopolitan pleasure of viewing the global. An emblem of mass consumption, the Trade Exhibition thus produced opportunities for visitors to feel their own cosmopolitanism to its visitors, in the process selling them the German Empire and racial imaginaries.

The third chapter builds on this consideration of racialized cosmopolitanism and its relationship to social and economic forms by examining a slice of Berliner newspaper culture from 1898-1900. It addresses the ways human scientific ideas about race moved through the *Berliner Morgenpost*, an important daily newspaper in Berlin. Stories about race were interwoven with the colorful and fast-paced spectacle of the city that newspaper coverage constructed in its potently ephemeral form and its focus on the bounty of the modern city.  It focuses in particular on a series written by the young Berliner ethnologist Adolf Heilborn and examines his 1899 general-audience series “Spaziergänge durch das Völkerkunde-Museum” ("Guided Walk through the Ethnological Museum") that led readers through the museum’s collections and explained racial particularities of African, South Pacific, and indigenous American cultures. Chapter three shows how the series linked cosmopolitanism to Berliner pride in making its case for ethnological and racial education. Newspapers thus wrote Berlin’s story about itself and race became part of that drama.

Both the *Kolonialausstellung*’s presentation of “authentic” nativeness and the newspaper’s rendering of racial science and difference track images of the city more broadly. Race as such does not appear to be the driving force or main character of this history. Rather, the

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Colonial Exhibition and the *Morgenpost*'s reporting on race science sketch a city that is itself
global, cosmopolitan, and highly modern. They address their wide audiences and seek to guide
the ways consumers navigated, viewed, and imagined the city. Representations of race and the
human sciences were not central to images of the city but were instead interwoven with a
capitalist-imperialist political culture. This culture’s spectacles, from their grandest form
exemplified by Colonial Exhibition to the ephemeral, daily excitement of the *Berliner Morgenpost*, offered consumers a vision of their city as cosmopolitan, modern, and educated.
Such spectacles enforced systems of urban and imperial economic relations wherein a wide
Berlin audience of school children, laborers, white collar office workers, and newspaper readers
was told time and again who they were and who they could aspire to be through representations
of and encounters with displays of race, empire, and the human sciences.
I. Navigating: Structuring visitor experiences in the *Erste Deutsche Kolonialausstellung, 1896*

The Great Berlin Trade Exhibition was a massive fair held at the edge of the rapidly expanding city from May through October 1896. In it, a huge variety of the technological innovations and products made in and by German companies were put on display for crowds of Berliners and tourists to visit and view.\(^{28}\) The Exhibition came about after years of debate and politicking on the part of industrialists and businesspeople who wanted to showcase Berlin as a grand and modern metropolis (in the vein of its contemporaries Paris, London, and Chicago) through a World’s Fair. As one advocate for a Berlin World’s Fair wrote in 1881\(^ {29}\), such a grand exhibition would “dispel old prejudices against the former Wendish fishing village, shake off the remains of the city’s *kleinbürgerlichen* (petty bourgeois) past and Berlin [would] learn how to feel like a *Weltstadt*” or “world city.”\(^ {30}\) While Berlin never hosted a World’s Fair, the *Große Berliner Gewerbeausstellung*, held in its stead, eventually took place in Treptower Park in southeastern Berlin. The Trade Exhibition saw around 7.4 million visitors pass through its gates,\(^ {31}\) and it made a lasting cultural and psychological impact on the city and its residents.\(^ {32}\) The

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\(^{29}\) The idea of a World’s Fair in Berlin was a controversial one, leading many prominent Berliners to take a side for or against. Berlin businesspeople and government elites—including the *Kaiser* himself—were engaged in a sometimes-heated debate about whether or not to host a World's Fair in the German capital city. The Emperor decided this question on his own, declaring in [year] an end to the question of the Fair. The *Kaiser*’s resistance to a World’s fair did not prevent city businesspeople and politicians from organizing the *Gewerbeausstellung*, a massive exhibition in the city that focused on all things relating to German modernity and Empire. See [Geppert, Crome]

\(^{30}\) Bruno Bucher quoted in Geppert, “Weltstadt für einen Sommer.” Original German, quoted in Geppert: “Berlin, die jüngste der Reichshauptstädte, muß internationalen Cercle halten. [...] Berlin wird alte Vorurtheile, die gegen das ehemalige wendische Fischerdorf bestehen, zerstreuen, es wird selbst die Reste seiner kleinbürgerlichen Vergangenheit abschütteln und sich als Weltstadt fühlen lernen.”


Gewerbeausstellung not only confirmed the city’s status as a nexus of industry, “culture,” global empire, trade, and politics but it also sought to shape images and popular feelings about Imperial Berlin as a Weltstadt and its inhabitants as cosmopolitan through guiding the ways visitors inhabited and navigated colonial spaces and viewed racially and colonially other bodies.

The theme of the Weltstadt or World City was not lost on visitors. Reflecting on his visit to the Gewerbeausstellung, German sociologist Georg Simmel wrote about of the Exhibition’s relationship to Berlin's emerging status as a Weltstadt. This he defined as a city in which the products of "the whole world" were brought together and consumed and where "the important styles of the present cultural world are put on display."33 The Weltstadt commands and contains the produce of the whole world. The wage laborers and white-collar bureaucrats that flooded Berlin in its late-nineteenth century population boom faced work-environments characterized by increasing specialization, "to a more frequent one-sidedness of function."34 This did not lead to a completely one-sided, boring life, however, because such workers were "compensated" for this monotony "by consumption and enjoyment through the growing pressure of heterogeneous impressions, and the ever faster and more colourful change of excitements."35 Urban amusements took on increasingly diverse forms and presented a panoply of "colourful change and excitement" to be enjoyed by visitors. If we take seriously Simmel’s argument that amusements like the Exhibition functioned in 1896 as a “compensation” for the monotony and

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Deutschland um die Welt (2004)
33 Georg Simmel, “The Berlin Trade Exhibition” in [complete citation]
34 Simmel, “The Berlin Trade Exhibition,” 120. In his 1903 essay “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” Simmel expands on the questions he discusses in 1896 regarding the Trade Exhibition. Describing the processes by which the “mental life” of modern urbanites is dominated and structured by the money economy and professional specialization. Amusements, a topic he covers in the 1896 article but not the later essay, constitute part of the “firmly fixed framework of time which transcends all subjective elements” (13). Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life” in Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, eds. The Blackwell City Reader, (Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 11-19.
35 Ibid., 120.
impersonality of the labor of the masses of industrial and office workers—that amusements complement and complete the mental lives of their popular consumers—then these events contained and produced ideological, economic, and political meaning. Visitors made meaning about their lives through moments of consuming that image of the Exhibition, and more broadly of the city, as containing “the totality of cultural production.” Simmel’s analysis is a direct response to the Trade Exhibition itself and, with its focus on amusements and the mental experiences of visitors, he helps open up a discussion of the Colonial Exhibition in terms of its ideological and “mental” effects on visitors. It sought to build a sense of urban (Berliner cosmopolitanism) and national (German modernity) community through the experience of viewing and responding to colonial architecture, environments, and bodies. Benedict Anderson has shown that the nation is a community “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail” in it, producing “a deep, horizontal comradeship” among various subordinate class levels, as is the case seen here. Moments of ideological, economic, and political meaning production at the Gewerbeausstellung constituted a major part of a nationalizing project.

This education was not a simple exercise in identity formation along the binaries of colonizer and colonized; rather, by examining the structuring elements of the Kolonialausstellung, it becomes clear that this imperial and racial education made meaning primarily through its presentation of Berlin itself. Through encounters produced in the Kolonialausstellung, visitors learned how to think of themselves as modern, cosmopolitan Berliners, a category that was illustrated in the contrast between racially “other” performers and

36 Ibid., 120.
37 Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities 7.
38 Ibid., 7.
39 There is a large amount of scholarship tracing German nationalism, including during the Imperial Period when the German state was still coming into its own.
their worlds on display on the one hand and the cosmopolitan feelings elicited in the experience of visiting and consuming the spectacle of authenticity.

The Educational Mission of the Colonial Exhibition

No component of the Trade Exhibition exemplified the centralization cultural production than the fair’s most popular attraction: the First German Colonial Exhibition. It was a semi-independent exposition organized by a group of Berlin “export firms,”

businesspeople, politicians, and employees of the Foreign Office’s colonial section, that sought to give the Trade Exhibition an international flavor and to popularize the German colonialist project. In the history of interactions between Germans and their colonial subjects, the 1896 Colonial Exhibition stands out as a significant event; it was a massive ethnological exhibition that recreated even colonial environments, brought them to the imperial capital, and put them on display for five months. Between 1.5 and 2 million visitors, representing a wide cross-section of Berlin residents, attended the Kolonialausstellung, making it the most-visited component of the Trade Exhibition.

From the outset, the Kolonialausstellung and its organizers sought to popularize colonialism and garner new support. Many of the personalities who were instrumental to the Exhibition’s success were associated with the influential German Colonial Society (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft), and built the Exhibition to promote their colonialist-economic message.

41 Geppert, Fleeting Cities, 48.
42 Among these organizers were many prominent colonialist figures, such as the Direktor of the German New-Guinea Company.
43 The Colonial Society or Kolonialgesellschaft represented the movement for colonization in Germany. It was formed in 1887 through the merger of two existing colonialist groups, the Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation and the Deutscher Kolonialverein. The Gesellschaft was a highly influential body, composed largely of middle class
The Colonial Society was the “dominant umbrella organization” of the colonial movement in Imperial Germany; it was especially influential in articulating a vision of Germany as a *Weltmacht* (world power) and pushing, alongside other colonialist lobbies, for the expansion of German military, especially maritime, power. The Society also published one of the few sources that documents the fair. In 1897, Gustav Meinecke, then the editor of the Colonial Society’s *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* (German Colonial Newspaper), edited *Deutschland und seine Kolonien im Jahre 1896: Amtlicher Bericht über die erste deutsche Colonial-Ausstellung.* This *Official Report* details the planning, structure, events, and effects of the Colonial Exhibition as well as then-contemporary scholarship and data on the geography, zoology, anthropology, and economics of German *Schutzgebiete.* The *Amtlicher Bericht* outlines the Exhibition’s four related goals: to publicize the successes of colonialism to the German public, to educate the masses “unaware” of colonialism and its benefits, to convince opponents of colonialism to change their positions, and to represent the German Empire as an internationally significant businessmen who sought to convince the public of the importance of colonial expansion. See: Short, *Magic Lantern Empire*, 9-10, 22-35.

47 *Deutschland und seine Kolonien im Jahre 1896: Amtlicher Bericht über die erste deutsche Kolonial-Ausstellung* is not exclusively about the Colonial Exhibition, although its opening chapters and the photographs of performers that fill dozens of pages in the *Bericht’s* appendix certainly deal with the event. Rather, it is, as editor Gustav Hermann Meinecke (1854-1903) wrote in the introduction, a book about German colonialization that seeks to give “an overview of what has been accomplished in the several years since [Germany] entered into colonial politics” (Meinecke 5; “Auf die Kolonialgeschichte der letzten Jahre einzugehen, liegt nicht in dem Rahmen dieses Buches, welches einen Ueberblick über das geben soll, was in den wenigen Jahren, seit wir Kolonialpolitik treiben, geleistet worden ist.”) The *Bericht* consists of multiple chapters. Some address components of the Exhibition while most of them detail German colonial holdings and their geographies, climates, inhabitants, and products. These sections were written by several authors, each of whom was a specialist. The editor, Gustav Meinecke, was a prominent colonialist writer and publisher (Bruckner 144), the publisher of the *Koloniales Jahrbuch* (Davis 165), and himself wrote large sections of the *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, especially relating to the Exhibition itself. Alongside detailed descriptions of the architecture and structure of the Exhibition are stories about its organizing and many images of the Exhibition and its performers.
imperial power. The heart of the Colonial Exhibition was the collection of over one hundred living colonial people occupying recreated “native” structures in the park. Additionally, the Kolonialausstellung featured exhibition halls with museum-like displays of artifacts from the German colonial empire. It staged exotic culture and racial difference as its primary instructional tool.

According to the Amtlicher Bericht, the Kolonialausstellung was a wild success: “by every measure and above all an enduring achievement.” In order to enter to Colonial Exhibition, visitors paid between thirty and fifty Pfennig in addition to the fifty Pfennig entrance fee to the larger fair. Among the masses of visitors were families, school children, cultural elites (such as members of the Colonial Society), laborers, and out-of-town visitors—mostly Germans. Of those visitors, two groups, albeit relatively small ones, illuminate the ways the Colonial Exhibition’s educational project functioned. All visitors likely learned something at the Exhibition, but, certain groups in particular were targets for the Ausstellung’s colonial and racial lessons. The largest single group of visitors identified by Meinecke is school children; at least 26,587 of them—not including those who attended the Ausstellung outside of school with their families—were given guided tours through the Exhibition with their school classes at no cost to themselves. Meinecke notes that the Exhibition would not be wasted on these youth as, according “to those familiar with children,” such “particularly exotic experiences leave strong

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49 Ibid., 355.
50 Geppert, Fleeting Cities, 46; In his essay on the Trade Exhibition Georg Simmel also notes this practice of purchasing entry into sub-exhibitions as part of the production of amusement at the Trade Exhibition. This practice made visitors, he argued, more attentive and involved, leading to a more pleasurable experience.
and lasting impressions.”

The Exhibition, then, actively targeted young audiences, bringing them into contact with exotic, colonial people in order to shape their long-term attitudes toward imperialism. These encounters were highly organized, structured by guided tours, and in the context of school visits. In addition to school children, Meinecke also reports that the *Kolonialausstellung* hosted laborers from several factories who “used the opportunity to educate themselves about colonial efforts.”

While these examples of school children and laborers do not represent a majority of total exhibition visitors, it is nonetheless telling that Meinecke includes these groups in his overview of the effects of the exhibition; targeting these audiences was crucial to shaping a generation of colonialist youth and laborers. Indeed, the Colonial Exhibition’s planners were intent on making the event appealing and educational to a wide, non-elite, audience.

The wide range of visitors was an important political target group. Even Social Democrats, traditionally critical of imperial expansion, noted that imperialism was prominent in popular German life. In January 1898, Social Democratic Party leader Eduard Bernstein wrote on the importance of imperialism to the politics of the masses. Alongside broadening the appeal of the party, Bernstein advocates continuing, even expanding, the German Empire—both as part of a “civilising mission” and as an effort to bring colonial agricultural production that would feed German people under German control. The Colonial Exhibition was poised to make a crucial intervention into the development of this political and social consciousness among its visitors. Meinecke’s record of their visits confirms that the Exhibition indeed hosted and likely

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52 Ibid., 355; “26 587 Schulkinder wurden durch die Ausstellung geführt, und wer da weiss, wie sehr bei der Jugend gewisse fremdartige Eindrücke haften bleiben, wird diesem Schritte seine Anerkennung nicht versagen.”

53 Ibid., “Auch die Arbeiter einiger Fabriken, welchen besondere Vergünstigungen zugesaft waren, benutzten diese Gelegenheit, sich über koloniale Bestrebungen zu unterrichten.”


56 Ibid., 170.

57 Ibid., 178-179.
shaped the attitudes of children and laboring Berliners through its staging of the exotic. The Kolonialausstellung offered one of the grandest and most-accessible opportunities for Germans in the metropole to encounter natives of the Empire’s colonies in nearly-“natural” settings.

Such encounters with colonized people, architecture, and objects produced empire, difference, and race for a large and broad audience. Like much of the recent scholarship on German urban, culture in the fin-de-siècle that seeks to understand the intersections of urban experience, culture, popular science and its notions of race, and the shaping of racial attitudes, it is clear that encounters such as those in the Colonial Exhibition were instructive to their audience. This process of education used multiple technologies and forms—architecture, visual representations, foreign bodies, and the presentation of cultural difference through those same bodies’ performances. The Colonial Exhibition was not simply one event in a history of successive encounters with between Berliners and colonial/racial others, but was more importantly a rich and important site for the imperial and racial education of the Reichskolonialhauptstadt—imperial capital city—residents. By foregrounding World's Fairs, cosmopolitanism, and the development of urban identities in this history of the Colonial Exhibition, it becomes clear that the racial and imperial education presented by the Kolonialausstellung was deeply connected to questions of the status of Berlin and its character as a “world city” or Weltstadt. The monumental Colonial Exhibition constructed a racialized cosmopolitanism that sought to elicit a modern, urbane, and racialized Berliner identity among its visitors.

58 For example, see: David Ciarlo, Advertising Empire and Jeff Bowersox, Raising Germans in the Age of Empire
59 Much of the recent scholarship on German racism and colonialism considers ideas about race in terms of national identity (for examples, see: Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer, eds. German Colonialism and National Identity. (New York: Routledge, 2011). Responding in part to this scholarship, Alexander Geppert has argued in his analysis of late nineteenth century exhibitions that “‘identity’ is a conceptually vague, highly charged and worn buzzword that is unsuitable for stringent historiographical analysis, and does not possess sufficient heuristic potential for describing and analyzing the complex repercussions and processes of consumption and appropriation”
The Colonial Exhibition’s form was not novel. It was based on the already-established practice of staging *Völkerschauen*, or commercial ethnographic shows that took place in many major European cities in the Age of Empire. These shows had many overlapping meanings for their various producers, performers, and visitors. Their “popular” audiences were the progressively better-educated and urbanizing working population. German *Völkerschauen* were events that combined popular entertainment and scientific education—two economic and social spheres increasingly open to the lower middle and working classes at the end of the century. *Völkerschauen* were often set up as “large-scale ethnographic displays with...replicated villages and imported animals” and offered exciting outings to the average working class family. Visitors took pleasure in the opportunity to view exotic people and customs. At such colonial *Völkerschauen* in Germany, non-specialist visitors viewed foreign human “specimens” as well as popular and important scientists who were, “as much a part of the show as the exotic people on display.” Visitors witnessed anthropologists and other specialists who become part of the spectacle. The professionals observed, measured, recorded, and generally studied the *Völkerschau*’s performers. Not just entertaining, the exhibitions were “site[s] in which the public was encouraged to acquire and practice the measured and rational gaze of the educated.”

Viewing the show developed practices of seeing and feeling urbane and educated; collecting knowledge of and cultivating a relationship toward colonial natives structured these amusing

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(Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 14). Here I take seriously Geppert’s critique of “identity,” especially “national identity,” as an analytical framework. His analysis is much broader than my own, taking into account the “intra-metropolitan, trans-European and even global competition” (14) that characterized the production and consumption of exhibitions in European capitals around 1900. While I do not maintain this same multi-city framework, the “site” of my analysis is similar to Geppert’s in its focus on the “making of meaning” (15) in the modern city, specifically the production of meaning about the city and its residents. This meaning—that is to say what Berlin is around 1900 (is it a *Weltstadt*, a “world city”?) and who its inhabitants see themselves as (are they modern, imperial cosmopolitans?)—is the focus of my thesis, specifically with a focus on “race” and the display of ethnographic and racial ideas and how they were mobilized to elicit certain “meaning” about Berlin and Berliners as worldly, cosmopolitan, and modern.

60 Bruckner, 131
61 Ibid., 138.
62 Ibid., 139.
experiences. These practices were continued in the *Kolonialausstellung*, with the largest-ever audience of a German *Völkerschau*.

**Navigating and Exploring the Spectacle**

![Figure 1: Uebersichtsplan zur schnellen Orientirung auf der Berliner Gewerbe-Ausstellung 1896 in Petra Crome, *Die Berliner Gewerbeausstellung*, Inside front cover image.](image)

The Colonial Exhibition functioned like other such fairs produced in Europe; it “became a forum in the metropole where colonial fantasies were fulfilled, colonial relations reproduced, colonial culture constructed and represented, and metropolitan culture itself shaped.”63 What were the strategies and mechanisms through which the exhibition exerted its influence on a mass of visitors that included the especially important target groups of school children and laborers? Accounts of actual visits to the Exhibition of Natives are not readily available; however, by

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examining evidence from the Colonial Exhibition regarding its planning, architecture, and performances it begins to become clear how the structure and practices of the Exhibition sought to shape the attitudes of actual visitors.

To show that the 1896 Colonial Exhibition was designed to appear to be something that it was not, namely accurate or authentic representations of native African and Pacific Islander communities, is a somewhat obvious point. Thus, the focus here is on the contours of the Exhibition of Natives’s various representations—something most of the literature concerning the Koloniausstellung tends to gloss over. In the end, by looking closely at specific instances in the exhibition such as its layout, verdant setting, and use of architecture, this analysis seeks to understand the way the Colonial Exhibition’s physical organization guided visitors through the display of authenticity and its educational consequences for visitors. The sense of real foreignness of the Koloniausstellung, of the exotic character of its displays and performers that was central to its educational and political success was not a chance effect; rather, great pains were taken to structure the Exhibition and its representations, to produce a sense of authenticity.64

Maps and images of the Colonial Exhibition display the ways space and its illustrated-representation actively shaped the experience of visitors or even those who encountered maps and descriptions elsewhere. Labeled with the names of various German colonial possessions, nestled in the woods of Treptower Park, maps and the Exhibition of Natives itself illustrated a kind of global colonial order in which they and their city came to contain and manage the entirety of the global empire, relating to the capital city’s position on a global imperial hierarchy.

Berliners did not have to visit the Koloniausstellung to encounter its colonialist

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64 By “affect of authenticity,” I, in line with Alexander Geppert, refer to the sense of realness, of the truth of an object experienced by its viewer/consumer.
message. The *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, a popular conservative newspaper with daily circulation well over a hundred thousand,⁶⁵ published a detailed map of the entire *Gewerbeausstellung*, thereby circulating cartographic representations of the Colonial Exhibition beyond the bounds of the park itself. Thus, the spectacle of the *Kolonialausstellung* began, for many visitors and Berliners, outside the fair’s own borders. In the highly-detailed, almost-animated *Lokal-Anzeiger* map, “Layout for Quick Orientation at the Great Trade Exhibition of Berlin 1896,” (Figure 1) the Colonial Exhibition takes up the lower-right corner of the image. Spread out along the Carp Pond and through wooded areas, the map displays illustrations of some of the structures and objects of the Colonial Exhibition: the “Holy House” of the Tarawai village, canoes, the grand entrance gate, small huts, and other installations. Interspersed among these illustrated structures and the wooded terrain and winding path connecting the various zones of the Colonial Exhibition are three names corresponding to some of the buildings and people on display in those areas, two of which were themselves German *Schutzgebiete*: “Südwest-Afrika,” “Ost-Afrika,” and “Neger-Dorf.” This quasi-pictorial map functions on several levels to instruct its user. First, it is an overview of/introduction to the entire exhibition; it presents itself as a would-be total guide to the spectacle of the Trade Exhibition that corrals the massive affair into a digestible and portable object. Thus the user is not faced with a dizzying and insurmountable project in visiting the Colonial Exhibition. Apart from the detailed and labeled illustrations of structures, the most prominent visual feature of the map is its focus on walkways. An Exhibition visitor could use the map’s detailed illustrations of the many intersecting paths connecting the various components of the Exhibitions as a reliable guide to navigating the park. Such a tool was instrumental in producing meaning for the Colonial Exhibition; it permitted visitors to easily orient themselves according to familiar conventions. In using the map and following its paths, visitors walked...  

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⁶⁵ Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin*, 72-75.
through the Exhibition as they would the streets of Berlin, using its detailed illustrations to guide their movements. Thus, the Exhibition was digestible and accessible to readers, despite the foreignness of its performers, architecture, and displays. Such maps brought visits to the Kolonialausstellung in line with habitual practices of moving through a rational, navigable city. “Layout for Quick Orientation” indicates the ways the Colonial Exhibition was integrated into the urban life of Berlin—it was not foreign or exotic, and the Exhibition capitalized on the coherence of its own structure and the city to make the visitor’s experience meaningful.

Zones named for their colony of origin suggested an association between the displays themselves with the reality of the colony represented in the park. By making the map and the experience portable and rational, these real examples of the “colonial” and the “wild” were tamed, fit into the rational and navigable imperial—now cosmopolitan—capital. These displays and the real places they purported to represent were integrated into Berlin itself, they indicated the city’s mastery over these places. Through the legibility and familiarity of the city, the tamed wild could be represented in both maps and the physical Ausstellung der Eingeborenen with its live performers. Thus, the colonial space was remade as national space, legible in maps that circulated through newspapers and visible in Treptower Park.

The Kolonialausstellung’s actual physical structures and layout were a potent source of meaning. The Colonial Exhibition maximized the landscape of its corner of the Treptower Park, hosting a series of “villages,” meant to recreate native settings from the German Schutzgebiete—along with performers from those same locales—and nestled in the “natural” setting of dense tree cover set alongside the large Carp Pond. They were connected by meandering paths on which visitors walked to see each Schutzgebiet in-person.

Within the 60,000 square meters of the Berlin Colonial Exhibition there were two general
categories of architecture and displays. The “wissenschaftlich-kommerzieller Teil” or scientific-commercial part of the Colonial Exhibition featured monumental exhibition halls (Figure 2).

These were in the southwestern portion of the Ausstellung, situated in the Vergnügungs-Park or Amusement Park, a zone of the Trade Exhibition that also housed events and buildings not associated with the Colonial Exhibition. Here, visitors could view small exhibits organized by individual companies and organizations, each with a colonial connection. Visitors encountered exotic taxidermied animals, plants, various colonial products like coffee, cocoa, rubber, and animal skins. These displays were organized like cluttered museums with glass cases, thematic displays, and, in general, artifacts from German Schutzgebiete.

Figure 2: “Übersichtsplan der Colonial-Ausstellung” in Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien.

The more important of the Colonial Exhibition’s displays was the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen or Exhibition of Natives. Connected to the scientific-commercial section by a footbridge, this popular Exhibition component was home to daily performances by Naturvölker or indigenous people, as well as scenes of “quotidian” life in purportedly authentic settings—in addition to being the actual residence of the performers during their time in Berlin. Regarding
this, the most successful component of the Kolonialausstellung, Meinecke writes that the “natives [who] naturally thrilled the majority of visitors produced the greatest interest, as the ‘Wild’ had never been so tangible and available as it was here.”

The Ausstellung der Eingeborene was, according to the Bericht, “in Germany, and one could even say in Europe, the first time that so many natives from the tropics, in such great numbers...lived here.” As the most popular of the Colonial Exhibition’s offerings, this “ethnological exhibition,” as Meinecke refers to the display of Eingeborene, was the primary site where visitors came into contact with the staging of the “wild” or the “native.” The architecture of this zone was central to making real the sensation of native authenticity that the exhibition projected.

In contrast to the monumental, technological, and explicitly-commercial character of the Wissenschaftlich-kommerzieller Teil, the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen was characterized by native-style architecture that was situated low to the ground and sported primitive features such as simple huts with roofs made from leaves. This contrast between the monumental and institutional architecture of the Scientific-Commercial section (as well as the grand styles of both the Trade Exhibition’s modern sections and the city itself) and the supposedly-native and simple architecture of the ethnological exhibition conveyed a juxtaposition of German modernity against colonial primitivism, a staging of racial difference.

Visitors who wandered between these two sections of the Kolonialausstellung noted the marked difference between the civilized science of the one and the more wild character of the Eingeborene’s villages. In the case of the Ahnenhaus (Figure 3), for example, the structure was formed out of dried plants and housed

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67 Ibid., 43. Original German: “In der Kolonial-Ausstellung war es in Deutschland, ja man kann wohl sagen in Europa, zum erstenmal vorgekommen, dass Eingeborene aus den Tropen in so grosser Anzahl...hier gelebt haben.”


small wooden figurines. The *Tembe* huts that made up much of the African architecture in the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* had a distinctly exotic flair; they appear very simple, without ornamentation, and, at least according to photographs, sunburnt.\(^70\) The architectural styles of the Exhibition, the *Tembe* huts and the *Ahnenhaus*, came together with the pageantry of performers to produce a spectacle that could pass as representing the reality of native life in the colonies. As one scholar has remarked regarding a much later European colonial exhibition, “strategies of radical realism [were employed] to produce the illusion of authenticity for most visitors, a verisimilitude cemented by the presence of paid colonials.”\(^71\)

Architecture was not alone in producing the sense of authenticity that was central to the Colonial Exhibition. The authentic-seeming architecture would have been ineffective without the existing “natural” features of its corner of Treptower Park. Indeed, the park’s Carp Pond and its many trees played starring roles in setting the exhibition’s scene. These features framed all the architecture, performers, and objects of the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* with a lush, verdant setting that produced images of naturalness, transporting visitors to distant, watery, and wild places. One section of the Colonial Exhibition called the Tarawai Village was situated directly on the Carp Pond. This zone of the Exhibition featured a number of structures supposedly built according to the style of Tarawaian architecture. The main building among these was called the “Holy House” and stood at the “village’s” center. Imported tropical vegetation, including prominent palm trees visible in the images “Ahnenhaus” and “Das Dorf Tarawai” (Figure 4) supplemented the already lush and dense canopy of the park in spring and summer months, producing the effect of an almost-real colonial environment. Palms that stretched high in the air,

\(^70\) Gustav Meinckeke, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, 24.

as documented in the photographs “Ahnenaus” and “Das Dorf Tarawai” below, as well as the
dramatic ferns against which four African men pose in “Batanga mit Booten,” (Figure 5)
accentuated the foreignness and verisimilitude of the spectacle. Such structures, like the map
with its labeling and detailed paths discussed above, provided points of entry for visitors to
imagine themselves transported to another place while constantly reminded of their presence in
the modern city.
Figure 3: “Ahnens” in Meinecke, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, 17.
Figure 4: “Das Dorf Trawai (vom Karpenteich aus gescheu)” in Meinecke, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, 19.

Figure 5: “Batanga mit Booten” in Meinecke, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, 36.
The Carp Pond was one of the most prominent features of the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* and carried out an important function within the spectacle of authenticity. Upon entry visitors walked on paths with native structures on either side, set against and among dense vegetation. But, once they reached the center area of the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen*, the Carp Pond opened up before them in a rather majestic scene.\(^72\) The Dorf Tarawai was situated sprawling along the pond’s edge, filled with boats (which sometimes had actual performers rowing around\(^73\)). Visitors also had an impressive vista, in the background of which sat the tall structures of *Alt-Berlin*, another of the constituent fairs of the Trade Exhibition; it sought to recreate medieval Berlin with its architecture, clothing, and old-time feel.\(^74\) Viewed together, the Colonial Exhibition and *Alt-Berlin*, as well as another of the constituent exhibitions “Cairo,” made possible moments of transportation across time to multiple distant pasts—a linear one in the case of *Alt-Berlin* and a human cultural evolutionary one in the case of the *Kolonialausstellung*.\(^75\) All of these were contained and navigable in the *Weltstadt* Berlin’s present.

The Colonial Exhibition carried out its imperialist educational mission through the concerted use of native architectural styles, modern pathways and maps, and the lush setting of the densely wooded park set alongside the Carp Pond. It was a space that permitted its visitors a kind of time travel in which diverse scenes of technologically, evolutionarily, and historically distant places and people were brought together, accentuated by the primordial character of the park’s flora and

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\(^72\) Ibid., 23.
\(^73\) Ibid., 41.
\(^74\) Ibid., 23.
\(^75\) Ibid., 23.
water, and presented for the perusal of a visitor who consumed the spectacle already with an eye
toward the technological innovations of the city and its empire that were proudly displayed in the
remainder of the Trade Exhibition. The wildness and authenticity of the *Ausstellung der
Eingeborenen* went beyond architecture, natural setting, and reference to a chronology of racial
and civilizational progress; it was an entire scene produced in the Exhibition that staged
authenticity. In it, visitors could enact exploration into the African and Pacific Island unknown;
they could walk through the easily-navigable paths and take in the exotic wild of the displays
without threat of disease or retribution. Thus, the Colonial Exhibition guided readers to inhabit
and navigate their city in terms of exploration and colonization while never departing from
secure paths or leaving the city limits.
II. “Vor den Augen des Publikums”: Viewing Native Bodies and Imagining the Self at the Colonial Exhibition

In their five months of daily performance, the one hundred three African and Pacific Islander Eingeborene (natives) constituted the main attraction of the Colonial Exhibition. In their home countries, these Eingeborene, sometimes referred to as “guests” in Meinecke’s Amtlicher Bericht, had signed contracts with the local governing German officials, which formalized their employment with the Colonial Exhibition. In exchange for following the directions of the Colonial Exhibition management, the performers were given passage to Germany as well as a salary, provisions for health care, warm clothing, food, etc. These “guests” spent their days living in the view of visitors, their nights spent in the Ausstellung der Eingeborenens’s various huts and structures (Figures 1 and 2). Each day they staged performances of traditional cultural practices as well as a daily schedule of more mundane affairs. All of these practices took place, as the Amtlicher Bericht puts it, “vor den Augen des Publikums,” or before the eyes of the public. This focus on the audience’s viewing of the natives’ performances indicates the importance of visual experience at the Colonial Exhibition. The Amtlicher Bericht alternates between terms for the Exhibition’s public; at times, it employs the standard German term “Besucher,” meaning literally “visitor,” but also often uses the terms “Beschauer” and “Zuschauer,” both variations of the word “viewer” or “spectator,” to describe its visitors. The

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76 Contracts for performing in the metropole became sites for native contestation of the colonists’ power. Sierra Bruckner has written on the connection between these contracts to the network of ethnographic show impresarios and the established market for ethnological performers. She has noted the performers’ assertion of their own interests in this process, writing that: “[p]erformers in the 1896 German Colonial Exhibition even bartered with impresarios over fair salaries for the troupe, and German contemporaries often commented—usually with disapproval—on the entrepreneurial abilities of the cultural performers. In a few instances, indigenous elites who greed to perform in commercial ethnographic exhibitions did so in order to support their travel to Germany for diplomatic reasons. Such was the case in 1896 for the Herero chief Samuel Maherero, who met with Kaiser Wilhelm to discuss the fragile balance of power in German Southwest Africa.” see Sierra Bruckner in Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire ed. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 135.

77 Gustav Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien, 26-27.

78 Ibid., 44.
visual, these phrasings suggest, was a site where the serious work of the Exhibition took place. By structuring encounters with native bodies, the Colonial Exhibition sought to guide visitors’ visual experience toward particular points of interest, eliciting from them a range of responses that confirmed the logics of racial difference and imperial expansion.79

What is it that the native performers in fact did (which visitors saw) in the exhibition and how did these performances vor den Augen des Publikums guide their publics? The text of the Amtlicher Bericht describes in some detail various regular practices of food consumption and regular performances of dance and war rituals; it also features a number of photographs of supposedly quotidian scenes from the Colonial Exhibition. This archive records the ways the Colonial Exhibition brought visitors into contact with particular representations of cultural difference to which they respond as cosmopolitan viewers through the language of amazement, hygiene, interest, cleanliness, and race.

Some performances in the Kolonialausstellung, such as the Emperor’s opening-day address, large parades, and regular war dance performances, were grand and highly organized affairs.80 Most of the time, however, the Eingeborene were not participating in ritual dances or choreographed events in front of large crowds; rather, they spent a lot of their day milling about the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen. Much of this time spent in the view of the public revolved around food. In addition to a short section describing the culinary practices of the Eingeborene,

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79 The role of the visual and public spectacles such as the Kolonialausstellung that took place across Europe starting in the mid-nineteenth century has been discussed as a crucial mechanism for “inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power...throughout society.” See: Tony Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex” in The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader, ed. Vanessa R Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 118.

80 Of course, events such as these were crowd-pleasers and hosted large numbers of visitors. They were important and certainly common experiences of the Colonial Exhibition. While my analysis here of the more “mundane” performances at the Kolonialausstellung does not deal with these more outright spectacles, the experience of such crowded and energetic events cannot be overlooked in examining the effects of the Exhibition on Berlin and the Ausstellung’s visitors.
there are many images in the *Amtlicher Bericht* of performers at work preparing meals.\(^{81}\)

Cooking was carried out in the central public spaces of the Exhibition, surrounded by the recreated *Tembe* huts.\(^{82}\) They were given daily rations from which they made their food. The Colonial Exhibition’s organizers took pride in providing the performers with culturally appropriate foods rather than prepared meals. This daily practice began with the distribution of food. In the morning, each performer received tea with sugar alongside two rolls. At midday, each received a half pound of rice, or depending on preference, a pound of potatoes, as well as half a pound of meat. Some groups in the Exhibition received augmented meat rations for culturally specific reasons: the Maasai were given a pound of meat at midday while each Herero and Hottentot received two pounds. The Swahili performers also received slightly different rations; “as strict Muslims,” the *Bericht* writes, “the Swahili butchered their own lamb and poultry.”\(^{83}\) At six in the evening, all the performers received the same rice/potato ration as they did at midday as well as some butter and a variety of smoked fish. In the evening, each male performer also received a bottle of beer—the chiefs received two bottles—and a bit of rum. Some of the performers, the Maasai, Herero, and Hottentotten in particular, drank great quantities of milk—up to twelve liters in the course of a single day. The Togolese performers received corn, which they then milled with stones and cooked into a kind of mash.\(^{84}\) The extent to which these acts took place in general vor den Augen des Publikums is not entirely clear;

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\(^{82}\) Ibid.

\(^{83}\) Ibid. “Die Suaheli schlachteten als strenge Mohammedaner ihre Hammel und Geflügel selbst und assen infolgedessen hier kein Rindfleisch.” The *Amtlicher Bericht* details the halal butchering process. “Behind the *Tembe*”—out of public view—"the Swahili butchered their lamb and poultry. Using a sharp knife, they cut through the animal’s throat and let the blood drain out.” (Ibid., 33). “Hinter der Tembe schlachteten auch wohl die Suaheli ihre Hammel oder Geflügel. Mit scharfem Messer durchschnitten sie dem Tier den Hals und liessen das Blut ablaufen.”

\(^{84}\) Ibid., 44. The fine details of what was and was not prepared and/or consumed by performers goes on in more detail in the *Amtlicher Bericht*. 

however, given that the Exhibition opened its gates before three in the afternoon—the hour at which popular dances were often staged\textsuperscript{85}—it is fair to assume that, in fact, daily meals and food consumption in general were public acts.

![Image](https://example.com/image.png)

Figure 6: "Massai, auf dem Kochplatz Fleisch roestend." in Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien, 28.

Small acts of cooking, eating, and waiting were performances that helped compose the rhythm of daily life at the Colonial Exhibition. As the Amlitcher Bericht notes, cooking was left up to the Eingeborene themselves to do, in order to allow “the [performers] to maintain their native customs.”\textsuperscript{86} While there was a set food distribution schedule—Eingeborene received rations three times daily: in the morning, around noon, and at six in the evening—the performers did not eat exclusively at those times. Rather, as in the case of the Maasai, they spread their

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 13.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 44. “Bei der Ernährung der Eingeborenen war das Prinzip befolgt, die Leute möglichst in ihren heimischen Sitten zu belassen.” However, I believe the sentiment remains the intact.
rations out over the entire day. The Maasai performers’ practice of cutting meat into small pieces and roasting those morsels on a fire in full view of the public stood out as a regular kind of performance. In the photograph “Massai, auf dem Kochplatz Fleisch röstend,” five presumably Maasai performers are situated around an outdoor firepit where they are tending to meat roasting on spits over the flame. Laundry hangs suspended from a clothesline in the background, set against trees that run up to the walls of one of the clay Tembe huts. The three men in the photograph are bare-chested and the two women’s bodies are mostly covered. Each of the Maasai in the image looks in a different direction. Four of the five performers appear to be working, either preparing the food itself or arranging objects. The man seated on the far left of the photograph seems simply to be sitting contemplatively. Unlike some images in the *Amtlicher Bericht* that appear highly staged (although what in the *Kolonialausstellung* was not?), “Massai, auf dem Kochplatz Fleisch röstend” (Figure 6) purports to capture a placid, unspectacular moment. It displays these five Maasai traditionally dressed and tending to their meat while (perhaps) resting outside. Given its air of normalcy and the lack of obvious choreography, the photograph represents the performers’ mundane labor and records a scene out of their daily exhibition-lives.

Visitors were keen observers of such non-monumental rituals. These moments of observation and evaluation elicited from visitors a sense of the difference of the *Eingeborene*. The *Amtlicher Bericht* reports that the Maasai foodways were observed by visitors who saw the “always nearly raw [meat], blackened by the fire” and felt that it “did not look particularly inviting, a fact that did not seem to affect the [Maasai’s] appetites.” Visitors were baffled by the Maasai’s willingness to eat such a thing. They witnessed native foodways and responded

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87 Ibid. “Dasselbe war stets fast noch roh und sah, vom Feuer geschwärzt, nicht besonders einladend aus, was jedoch ihrem Appetit keinen Abbruch zu thun schien”
negatively, even as the *Amtlicher Bericht* notes the general cleanliness of the entire operation. It goes on to report that, in fact, “oberflächlichen Beschauer” or superficial viewers—the general public—mostly did not see the preparation and consumption of food as terribly clean. In fact, the *Amtlicher Bericht* says, in the case of “the Maasai, their practices leave something to be desired in terms of our expectations.” This tableau, which elicited such strongly negative reactions, is not an abnormal, spontaneous expression of cultural particularity. Indeed, the Exhibition’s practice of allowing “the [performers] to maintain their native customs” when it came to food enabled and produced the very performance of nativeness, of the Maasai being seen as placid but repulsive people who eat charred meat from sticks.

If the image is on some level an accurate portrayal of the un-choreographed affairs of everyday life and labor in this human zoo, then the sense of quiet normalcy, earnest labor, and difference communicated through the tableau need to be read it terms of the Exhibition’s project more generally. Indeed, by not prescribing regular acts of eating, the Exhibition’s allowed for such culturally-specific culinary practices within the confines of the “African village.” The Exhibition thereby produced the conditions for the possibility of an unrelenting, un-choreographed performance. This specific example of the day-long practice of spreading out one to two pounds of meat per performer is one instance of the production of authenticity and a kind of mundane spectacle; it is at the very center of the visual work of the Exhibition.

Viewers were alienated by the Maasai’s supposed uncleanliness—racialized terms with which viewers came to understand the Maasai’s difference. Wrapped up in the visitors’ reactions of disgust toward the Maasai is a history of German nationalism in which Germans, starting in

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88 Ibid. “Im allgemeinen beobachteten alle bei der Zubereitung die grösste Sauberkeit, obwohl es für den oberflächlichen Beschauer oft nicht darnach aussah…bei den Massai manches nach unseren Begriffen zu wünschen übrigblieb.”

89 Ibid.
the late nineteenth century, came to link particular standards and ideas of public health and hygiene with national feelings. It is notable that the visitor reactions recorded by Meinecke have been rendered in terms of the relative cleanliness, and therefore acceptability and desirability of the Eingeborene, because it displays an instance of ideological alliance between the many hygiene exhibitions, public health campaigns (whose discourse linked hygiene, public health, and race), and technological advancements in infrastructure that had come to define, in part, urban life in Germany as well as the reception of colonized people at the end of the century. The norms of cleanliness and hygienic order, here, come to frame the ways viewers receive and articulate their responses to these colonized people. By planning and staging such unchoreographed encounters with a notably foreign cultural practice, the exhibition produced a powerfully instructive space where visitors did not need to be told about the uncleanness, laziness, or the “otherness” of the performers—they simply had to let themselves be baffled by the exotic and off-putting food practices in order to walk away from the encounter with negative attitudes, coded in the prevalent logics of race and hygiene, toward the African natives and

90 Berlin had hosted a Hygiene Exhibition in 1882/3, a grand spectacle not entirely unlike the Colonial Exhibition. That exhibition was one in a large series of such exhibitions that featured themes of public health and took place throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in German-speaking cities. For more on these, especially the 1882/3 exhibition, and their links to empire, race, and national identity, see: Eike Reichardt, “Health, ‘Race’ and Empire: Popular-Scientific Spectacles and National Identity in Imperial Germany, 1871-1914” (PhD diss., Stony Brook University, 2006). For a general discussion of the links between public health, race, and German national and political life, see Paul Weindling, Health, race, and German politics between national unification and Nazism, 1870-1945 (Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

91 For example, the Berlin sewage system was revolutionized in the 1870s, in part due to the work of the famous Berlin physician, politician, anthropologist and all-around polymath Rudolf Virchow. This development was essential in Berlin’s reputation (and reality) as a technologically and scientifically advanced city and was deeply linked to the discourses of hygiene and propriety. For more see the section “Berlin’s Sewage System” in Martina Hessler “‘Damned Always to Alter, But Never to Be’: Berlin’s Culture of Change Around 1900” in M. Levin, et al. Urban Modernity: Cultural Innovation in the Second Industrial Revolution (Cumberland, RI: MIT Press, 2010), 167-204.
Visitors certainly observed the various cultural practices on display—some of which were highly staged, some more “mundane”—and yet their eyes certainly wandered to other details of the spectacle. The unrelenting, unchoreographed rhythms of the performance framed viewers’ focus on the bodies of the Eingeborene, which became important points for visitor’s observation and imagination. This is unsurprising—obviously it was the natives in their bodies who performed the various practices that garnered audience interest. However, the moments in which visitors observed the physical features and dress of the Eingeborene were powerful ones—eliciting at times sexualized, at times imaginative, and in some cases frightening emotions from the Zuschauer.

Clothing, and the bodies of performers themselves were central to producing exotic and instructive tableaux. To create this realistic effect of the exotic colonial wild, the performances needed to convince their audience, thus highly detailed and realistic costumes were made to recreate the dress of native life. In addition to this concern for realistic representation, the Colonial Exhibition management worried that their performers would be unprepared for the German climate. They reasoned that the Eingeborene were unused to the cool German weather, thus requiring especially warm garments. As a consequence, organizers managed performers’ clothing down to the underwear. They provided specially made undergarments that could fit beneath performers’ otherwise traditional clothing, leaving the modern, warm pieces invisible to spectators.²

Dress, however, was not purely functional; rather, performers’ clothing came to have multiple effects on the Colonial Exhibition’s viewers. It confirmed, in some scenes in the

² Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien, 45. “Da eine derartige leichte Bekleidung für unser Klima durchaus unzureichend ist und man mit Recht Erkältungen befürchtete, so sorgte der Arbeitsausschuss sofort für Unterzeug, durch welches die ursprüngliche Originalität ihrer heimatlichen Tracht am wenigsten litt.”
Colonial Exhibition, a sense of foreign reality; tableaux of colonial subjects wearing full native dress surrounded by reproduced native architecture conferred verisimilitude onto the scene. For example, in the image “Suaheli mit Frau” (Figure 7), two African performers stand in front of one of the Tembe huts. The woman, stands on the left side of the photograph, wrapped in a patterned fabric covering her body between the neck and foot, save for her hands. She stands before the wall of the clay Tembe and faces the camera. Her Swahili companion is situated just right of center, in front of the steps leading up to the open door to the Tembe. Standing akimbo, the man’s right foot on the lower step, he is raised slightly above the woman whom he seems to observe as he balances a thin cane along his left side. He too is almost entirely covered, wearing a white fez and a body-length white robe. The Tembe door stands ajar behind them.93 The Amtlicher Bericht focuses on the Swahili and the beauty of their performance. “The Swahili,” it notes, “carried themselves tastefully and picturesquely.” Focusing on the interaction between their bodily shapes and clothing, the Bericht continues, “The symmetrically-formed, slim bodies of the men wrapped in the flowing, wrinkled shirts made of fine white material, the so-called Kanzu.”94 Describing the Swahili women, the Bericht writes that they “with their truly beautiful figures and kind, not-ignoble facial features, clothed themselves in a colorful fabric that gracefully draped down along the legs, while a loudly-colored shawl clothed their breasts.”95 These descriptions of graceful, natural beauty link the authentic clothing worn by the performers with their characters, staging the Swahili as (perhaps) noble and certainly beautiful. The tableau shown in the image—if it can communicate at all the sensation a spectator might have

93 Ibid., 27.
95 Ibid. “Die Damen dieser Gruppe der Eingeborenen, mitunter wirklich schöne Gestalten mit sympathischen und nicht unedlen Gesichtszügen, kleideten sich in ein buntes Tuch, das sich in graziösem Faltenwurf um den Unterkörper schlang, während die Brust ein Shawl von grellfarbigem Muster bedeckte.”
experienced—presents itself as a piece of Swahili reality, plucked from its native location and reassembled as if nothing had changed since its arrival in Treptower park. This presents a paradigmatic image of colonial nativeness, of daily life captured in the Colonial Exhibition. Such scenes showed their viewers what life in this or that Schutzgebiet really, supposedly, looked like. Simultaneously, by rendering the Swahili performers as noble, the exhibition made an important class and racial distinction. The Swahili are represented here as upper-class Africans. The Ausstellung der Eingeborenen, then, did not represent all its performers equally. It mapped social distinctions onto colonial people and bodies, indicating a class and racial hierarchy among the Africans themselves.96 This inter-African distinction between the almost-noble elites and the unclean Maasai who eat charred meat from sticks made these now-distinct groups into “a ‘sliding scale of humanity’, from the barbaric to the nearly civilized” thus embodying a “living demonstrations of evolutionary theory.”97 Thus, these moments of viewing allowed visitors to witness the physical reality of class, racial, and evolutionary differences, embodied in the performers themselves.

96 Ibid., 35.
97 Tony Bennett, *The Exhibitionary Complex*, 127. While Bennett points to such a display of evolutionary progress as a feature of American World’s Fairs, it seems clear that this instance of representing human evolution through stages of native performers’ cultural/racial particularities in fact occurred at the Berlin Colonial Exhibition as well.
Figure 7: "Suaheli mit Frau" in Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien, 27.
Strong, bare bodies, in addition to authentically clothed Eingeborene, were major features of the Exhibition of Natives. The photograph “Kameruner (Trommelsprache)” (Figure 8) showcases sexuality as instrumental to making the authentic nativeness of the performers. The popular “Drum Speech”—a crowd pleaser that featured groups of Cameroonian communicating complex messages involving series of commands and actions over wide distances exclusively through the drumbeats. In this photograph, three performers sit in the middle foreground of the image, set against tall leafy bushes along the Carp Pond’s shore. The man in the center of the trio is seated, playing the Cameroonian drum. On either side of the drummer stands a Cameroonian man, looking out over the water to the group’s Trommelsprache partners across the Carp Pond.

98 Meinecke, Deutschland und seine Kolonien, 34.
He is wearing a traditional skirt with his upper-body left uncovered. Like other images of *Eingeborene* published in the *Amtlicher Bericht*, “Trommelsprache” exaggerates the musculature of the performers. All three appear strong, the man on the right in particular glistens as he leans to his side, hands on either hip, showing off his broad frame and muscled figure. In the photograph “Batanga mit Booten,” four similarly-built African men, three of whom appear shirtless and glistening like the *Kameruner*, are set against a backdrop of dense foliage, all of them posing with or near the boats, showcasing their muscles as they look purposefully off into the distance. Sexuality, especially male sexuality, it seems, was an important performative component of the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen*. While perhaps suggestive, this was not pornography; rather, the Exhibition purposefully used some of its performers’ partially-nude forms to display and naturalize colonial sexuality. The glistening bodies of the men in the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* were at work, performing their unique and primitive local practices.99 The use and exaggeration of male sexuality and nudity was not novel; Berlin anthropologists have been noted for their interest in photographing nude models, especially men.100 Zimmerman has read this as “an attempt to reclassify the commodities and curiosities of the modern metropolis as natural scientific objects.”101 The naked body was an object for serious scientific consideration. Of course, the logics of human scientists and the experiences of non-specialist visitors were certainly divergent. In the dynamic space of the exhibition the body had multiple meanings, scientific and otherwise.

Dress and the lack thereof, the *Amtlicher Bericht*s record suggests, elicited multiple affective responses to the performers. These responses included not only feelings of curiosity

99 The commercial aspect of the Trade Exhibition never ceased; some Kolonialausstellung performers also commonly did “industrial” work performing their trades for the audience such as goldsmithing, leather working, and belt production. The Maasai and Camerooners, Meinecke notes, did not do this. The former “held it beneath their value to practice any trade” (37).
100 Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism*, 175.
101 Ibid.
about small acts and amazement at grandeur of the spectacle, but also of fright and disgust toward performers’ habits. The Maasai in particular were received as unclean, as *unheimlich* by Kolonialausstellung visitors; they were also encountered as frightening, unsettling characters. The Maasai were, according to the *Bericht* “the wildest and most powerful Volksstamm”\(^\text{102}\) or tribe of all the *Eingeborene*. Their performances were frightening and violent, exhibiting the tribe’s “desire for murder and rape.”\(^\text{103}\) As was the case generally, choreographed performances were not the only places where the Maasai performers made, according to the *Bericht*, the “most primitive impression” on viewers.\(^\text{104}\) While observing the Maasai, spectators witnessed “the great wildness of their disposition, the unrestrained desire for rape and war [that] manifested itself in full through their clothing.”\(^\text{105}\) In part, the *Bericht* is referring to the ornate piercings of the Maasai. These performers’ clothing was also recorded as unattractive; the men wore “only” fur coverings below the waist while the women were recorded as being “proud” of their jewelry. The bare bodies of the Maasai men and the intricate coverings of the women were not endearing or pleasant (at least for Meinecke and the *Amtlicher Bericht*); rather, the Maasai are recorded as on some level threatening. The *Bericht*’s language suggests that the exhibition treated these performers as typifying an image of frightening, proud, and savage natives.

The licit sexuality of barechested African performers, and the visitor’s permissible voyeurism, drew connections between prevalent practices of viewing and idealizing colonial sexuality (also a feature of *Völkerschauen* more generally), images of barbaric savagery, notions of native simplicity, and the promise—represented by the strong work-ready bodies of the male performers—of colonized labor. Thus, the performers, especially the Africans, were part of

\(^{102}\) Meinecke, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, 37.
\(^{103}\) Ibid.
\(^{104}\) Ibid., 30.
\(^{105}\) Ibid. “Die ganze Wildheit ihres Naturells, die ungezügelte Raub- und Kriegslust kamen in ihrer Kleidung voll zur Geltung.”
larger discourses and ideologies of social and racial evolution and white supremacy. While the *Amtlicher Bericht* makes only a handful of explicit references to race, the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* and its performances appeared at a time when images of race and racial difference, of Africans and black people in particular, flooded German public and popular visual culture. African faces, bodies, and general *difference* could be found on countless posters, wrappings, picture postcards, and colonially-connected merchandise more generally.\(^{106}\) References to *Volksstamm* and the class and racial hierarchies within the exhibition itself incorporated both the language and the structures of scientific racism that organized the globe according to distinct biological-cultural races. The performances of native African-ness were necessarily linked to notions of race and empire in a “politics of exclusion”\(^{107}\) and exploitation that characterized the constellation of ideas about difference, geography, and relative human value that were prevalent at the time of the *Erste Deutsche Kolonialausstellung*.\(^{108}\)

Thus, ways the *Eingeborene* were framed and viewed as native, distinctly “other” people, completed the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen*: its design, politics, and aims as well as its architectural, technical and performative features were united in a single project. Ultimately, the display of African and Pacific colonial people in the *Ausstellung der Eingeborenen* must be considered within the context of the Trade Exhibition, which celebrated a particular vision of Berlin as a modern, cosmopolitan *Weltstadt*. Self-consciously an educational project, the highly popular *Kolonialausstellung* produced a spectacular, affectively rich experience that brought German visitors in contact with real colonial bodies and life for the first time. Through the


\(^{108}\) Ibid.
coordination of sexualized and exotic bodies, “realistic” native architecture and objects, the verdant and watery landscape of Treptower Park, and the cross-temporal references and comparisons between neighboring exhibitions—Alt-Berlin, Kairo, and the industrial achievements on display in the Gewerbeausstellung—the Colonial Exhibition produced highly organized and designed tableaux of authentic native lives of German colonial subjects that visitors could peruse and consume as they would any other object or event in their modern city.

If authenticity, the presence of “the global” in the heart of Berlin, were the Colonial Exhibition’s products targeting a broad audience, what did these experiences do? To return to Simmel's analysis of the mental life of the city dweller in this moment, in his argument about the Trade Exhibition, "amusement" and the "colourful change of excitements”—the pleasure of visiting the Exhibition—compensated laborers and workers for their "monotonous role in the division of labour."109 Excitement, spectacle, diversion: all formed part of the regimented and productive lives of these Arbeiter. Eduard Bernstein’s discussion of social imperialism indicates the success of such “amusements” in bringing about not only a continuation of the Berlin work cycle (the moving back and forth between labor and relaxation) but also a popular vested interest in the German imperial project. The nation and imperialism had become indispensable to any successful Social Democratic politics—certainly the politics of many of the exhibition’s visitors. As participants in the political and cultural life of the German nation, Social Democratic interests merged, at least in part, with imperial interests.110 The Colonial Exhibition, through its staging of colonial “realities” and its production of colonial authenticity, shows the forward march of a social imperialism that brought urban laborers and workers into its project.

The Kolonialausstellung serves as an example of this process of making meaning about

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109 Simmel, “The Berlin Trade Exhibition,” 120.
110 Bernstein, Evolutionary Socialism, 170-1.
the Weltstadt Berlin; it shows a wide, economically-diverse audience being educated and brought into imperialism. This process of becoming imperialist involved a kind of racialized self-imagination of Berlin and Berliners as worldly and cosmopolitan. Like the gadgets and innovations of the exhibition halls exuding technological modernity in the other zones of the Gewerbeausstellung, the Colonial Exhibition sold imperialism and racial hierarchy to its audience. This process was not a simple exchange in which one party offered a product and the other acquired it; rather, the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen, produced an intricate spectacle through which visitors could come to view themselves as cosmopolitan, as inhabitants of an emerging and globally significant Weltstadt. This “identity”—or perhaps more a disposition, a practice or habit of viewing and imagining—operated through the assertion of both the authenticity of the object (Naturvölker, their daily and exotic lives) and its foreignness (the distance, spatially and temporally, between the landscapes, lives, and lifeways of the places and people on display and the city of Berlin). This foreignness was amplified by the proximity of neighboring exhibitions, against which the Colonial Exhibition was juxtaposed. The authentic tableaux of native life, then, were an instrumental part of complex processes of global trade and empire. By examining the production of meaning about the Weltstadt through the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen, it becomes evident that small performances of “authenticity” sought to shape the subjectivities of visitors, allowing them to feel cosmopolitan, to naturalize their position in a global hierarchy of racial difference and to enable the further expansion and elaboration of imperialist politics, economics, oppressions, and social formations.

III. Word City/World City: Reading Race and Becoming Berliner in the Morgenpost, 1898-1901

John Timm liked Berlin so much he couldn’t help but come back—even after he had been kicked
out of the city for bad behavior. On November 2, 1898, the Berliner Morgenpost, a daily newspaper recently founded by the prominent Ullstein publishing family, printed a short piece describing Timm’s encounter with Berlin law enforcement. “A savage, who did not belong to the better peoples,” reads the article’s opening, “was, in the person of the negro John Timm of Kingston, brought before the criminal division of the First State Court [of Berlin].” Timm, a black man from the West Indies regularly came in conflict with the city’s civil authorities. Troublemaking had already led to his expulsion from Germany once before, then under the name of John Brown—according to the Morgenpost’s coverage. In order to return to the city, Timm allegedly falsified identity documents, giving himself a new alias. He was charged with nine cases of Urkundenfälschung (falsification of personal identity documents) in autumn 1898. In the end, it is unclear what happened to John Timm; the Morgenpost did not, it seems, report on the outcome of the trial.

This chapter, by focusing on mass-mediated stories that discuss race, considers ways that the category came to be staged within the dominant culture of reading that characterized daily life in turn of the century Berlin. Building on chapters one and two, which showed the ways spatial and visual encounters structured feelings about race and imperialism, this chapter considers how newspapers guided Berliners to think racially through reading reports on human sciences and presentations of cosmopolitan Berlin and Berliners.

112 Ibid.
The minor drama that was Timm’s November 2 story illustrates the discursive construction of the spectacular city in Imperial Berlin newspapers. The affair is representative of the newspaper public’s fascination with criminality, with the underbelly of the city, and with the legal system—an endless succession of small and large dramas. The “theater of color and emotion”\textsuperscript{113} of the urban spectacle mobilized multiple images and story-types to effect its work: prostitution, scandal, technological innovation, crime. Such representations of the city harnessed excitement, variety, and the idea of metropolitan life’s constant motion to “elide conditions of life in the metropolis,”\textsuperscript{114} which were characterized by the growing dominance of industry, capital, and consumption. The urban menagerie that was constructed through newspapers used stories like Timm’s in a process that obscured the classed and coercive dynamics of city life. Timm’s story tells only a small piece of the tale of consumer culture’s development; with its opening words “[a] savage,” referring to the troublemaking “Neger” John Timm, the article indicates race as a crucial dimension to that story. Like technology and scandal, race, was an important feature of newspaper culture in Imperial Berlin; Timm’s story illustrates the ways newspapers linked race, criminality, and social imperialism in the construction of the urban spectacle.

The publicly-unresolved case of Timm and its coverage is a rich opening to an examination of the status of race in imperial Berlin around the turn of the century. This brief article was not unusual; the \textit{Morgenpost}s’s pages were dotted with references to race in updates on racial scientific advancements and detailed pieces on ethnology and racial particularity. Print media, especially newspapers, saturated the daily lives of millions of Berliners. Newspapers helped newcomers to Berlin, many of them recently arrived from the countryside, situate

\textsuperscript{113} Fritzsch, \textit{Reading Berlin 1900}, 138.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 138.
themselves in and understand their city. Navigating and surviving the crowded and often precarious metropolis was enabled by fluent and regular use of the printed word, especially with newspapers.\footnote{Ibid., 2.} In analyzing these widespread practices of newspaper reading in Berlin, Peter Fritzsche has described turn of the century Berlin as a “word city,” a term that refers to “the accumulation of small bits and rich streams of text that saturated the twentieth-century city, guided and misguided its inhabitants, and...fashioned the nature of metropolitan experience.”\footnote{Ibid., 1.} While he shows the power of the spectacle of the “word city” and the importance of newspapers, he does not explore the ways they reported on race and imperialism. By examining this treatment of race, with an eye toward the imperial scientific networks in which anthropological and popular notions of race were assembled, the role of newspapers in the dissemination and adoption of racial ideas becomes clear. This is not a story simply about race; it is about the ways Berliners’ urban lives, stories about the city, its people, politics, science, culture, and the larger world were rendered in and mediated by newspapers and the ways that process of learning about the city and urban identity through newspapers helped energize a particular imperial, industrial, and political project.

The \textit{Berliner Morgenpost}’s regular section “Populäre Wissenschaft” (“Popular Science”) reported on human and racial sciences. The newspaper covered race outside that column as well, including one extensive series of articles written by the young Berliner ethnologist and physician Adolf Heilborn about the Ethnological Museum of Berlin (\textit{Völkerkundemuseum}). Published between January 21 and February 16, 1899, these articles describe in detail some of the artifacts and displays in the museum, guiding readers through the African, Pacific Island, and American collections. “Spaziergänge durch das Völkerkundemuseum,” as the series was called in German,
records some of the ways human scientific ideas about the world, its people, and racial difference also operated as a terrain on which the idea of Berlin, the idea of the Weltstadt or World City, and questions about how to comport oneself as a Berliner, played themselves out. His writing shows overlapping tendencies in advocating and constructing the proper world city, negotiating the fantastic, exciting “word city” and the grand, self-consciously imperial capital. Heilborn linked being “Berliner” to the erudition of ethnology and the grandeur of the Ethnological Museum. The Morgenpost coverage of race, including Heilborn’s series, indicates that learning race in fin-de-siècle Berlin involved more than simply a process of “othering” and exclusion; the newspaper helped bring race into the “word city,” including it in the spectacle of Berlin.

By the turn of the century, almost everyone could take part in newspaper culture. Of course, not all Berliners read the same newspapers. There were numerous publications, some of which had broad reach. Ullstein’s Morgenpost, founded in late summer 1898, swiftly rose to popularity, overtaking its earliest and largest competitor, August Scherl’s conservative Beliner Lokal-Anzeiger. The Morgenpost built an audience somewhere in the middle of the political spectrum, with slightly liberal leanings. Ullstein’s flagship newspaper catered to the semi-professional middle class, many of the recent immigrants to city. Like most dailies, the Morgenpost front page was dominated by political coverage, including the global imperial, national, and local to varying degrees. As one moved further into the paper, the Morgenpost presented more in-depth local reporting, crime reports, tips for the house and home, the

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117 This is where I locate one of the primary connections between the Kolonialausstellung and representations of race, empire, Berlin, and urbanity in newspaper coverage during the same period.

118 As Fritzsche notes, by 1914 there were over 4000 newspapers published in the country (Fritzsche Reading Berlin 1900, 53). According to Kurt Koszyk, the major Berlin newspapers had much larger reach than the capital city itself; they were distributed and read widely throughout Germany. See: Kurt Koszyk, Deutsche Presse im 19. Jahrhundert: Geschichte der deutschen Presse Teil II (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1966) 265.

119 Other major newspapers were the Lokal-Anzeiger, a similarly “popular” newspaper but far more conservative than the Morgenpost. The Tageblatt und Handels-Zeitung and the Vossische Zeitungs were mainstays of the liberal bourgeois journalism while Vorwärts was the successful newspaper wing of the Social Democratic party.
occasional *feuilleton*, and smaller sections on more specific topics. Shopping was a major feature of the newspaper; advertisements were printed on nearly every sheet of the *Morgenpost* and each edition included at least one page—and often multiple pages—fully covered in advertisements. Science was one of the regularly discussed in the *Morgenpost*, often around the middle of the daily edition. The column “Populäre Wissenschaft” (“Popular Science”) generally printed between one and five brief articles discussing scientific development, studies, predictions, reflections of note. Many of these articles discussed anthropology, geography, Social Darwinism, craniology, etc.—broadly conceived as the constellation of human sciences from which a great deal of racial science and doctrine flowed.¹²⁰ By examining “Populaere Wissenschaft,” it becomes clear that newspapers too played a part in articulating and spreading racial knowledge.

**Covering Science in Berlin Newspapers: “Populäre Wissenschaft,” 1898-1901**

The dissemination of scientific knowledge through newspapers dates from the early years of the unified German state. A folder from the partial archives of the prominent scientific society the *Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie, und Urgunde* (the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology, and Prehistory) contains clippings beginning in the 1870s from papers like the venerated *Vossische Zeitung* and the upper middle class *Berliner Tageblatt*, among others.¹²¹ Their writing focused on the Society’s findings, as well as who was in attendance at its meetings, thus tracking the status of the *Gesellschaft* and its elite members. This pattern shifted by the late 1890s when the successful newspapers published regular sections which in one form or another reported on human sciences in more detail and with less concern for the professional

¹²⁰ There is large body of scholarship that illustrates the many points of transfer for scientific knowledge, especially human scientific and racial ideas that were developed in this period. See pages 9-14.
¹²¹ The Landesarchiv Berlin holds part of the Society’s archive. In it, one folder contains newspaper clippings whose older articles date to 1875. See “Zeitungsartikeln” in A Rep. 060-02, Nr. 04 (Folder 4) Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, Landesarchiv Berlin.
gossip that characterized earlier writing. The *Vossische Zeitung* had a daily “Kultur, Wissenschaft, und Literatur”—“Culture, Science, and Literature” section that occasionally published “scientific” updates alongside news about artists, writers, composers, and the cultural scene more generally. The *Tageblatt* published the section “Technical Review: Organ for Industry, Hygiene and Applied Science”\(^{122}\) while the *Lokal-Anzeiger*, like the *Vossische Zeitung*, merged art and science in its “Kunst und Wissenschaft” section.\(^{123}\)

Ullstein’s *Morgenpost* stands out for its regular publication of scientific news, especially on ethnological and anthropological topics, from its earliest publications in late summer 1898 through at least 1901.\(^{124}\) “Populäre Wissenschaft” was dedicated entirely to readable pieces on scientific research, publication, and discoveries. The *Morgenpost* took the popular in “popular science” seriously; unlike the *Vossische* and *Tageblatt* papers, and to a certain extent the successful *Lokal-Anzeiger*, the *Morgenpost* sought a wide and non-elite audience. A brief look at the advertisements that appeared regularly in the daily newspaper illustrates this fact.\(^{125}\) The *Morgenpost* and its advertisers targeted an audience of largely modest means; many of the advertisements regularly found in the newspaper’s early editions explicitly invoke class and thrift in making their cases to the readership.\(^{126}\) Among the many classified notices, would-be employers sought out working-class men and women for a range of work. These observations suggest the working and lower-middle class character of the newspaper’s target audience. Such

\(^{122}\) “Technische Rundschau: Organ für Industrie, Hygiene und angewandte Naturwissenschaften”

\(^{123}\) All these newspapers can be retrieved in microfilm and bound form the Zeitungsabteilung of the Stadtbibliothek zu Berlin: *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger* (2” Ztg 1957), *Berliner Tageblatt und Handels-Zeitung* (2” Ztg 1950), *Vossische Zeitung* (Ztg 1621).

\(^{124}\) The newspaper certainly continued its coverage of science after 1901, this date is only significant here because I did not look at later newspapers.

\(^{125}\) David Ciarlo has noted the importance of advertising in Imperial Germany for disseminating ideas about racial hierarchies and difference. See: David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

\(^{126}\) One ad for the nutritional supplement Tropon declared that one kilogram of it “has the same nutritional value as five kilos of beef or 200 eggs...and is around half as expensive as meat.” Other ads feature companies that claimed to trade in “elegant and affordable”# clothing or who are announcing huge going-out-of-business sales.
mass media, shaped “popular” ideas about the spectacular city that worked to obscure class difference and exploitation. The newspaper helped make the economy of laborers and white collar workers possible through classifieds, thereby helping people find jobs and participate in the commercial-industrial world. At the same time, the newspaper’s amusements offered a release, a way out of thinking about the monotony of labor through reading about the colorful and exciting city and world—and science. This successful newspaper’s writing on science must be read as instrumental to the construction of an urban ideology of consumption, labor, and difference.

On a surface level, the newspaper trafficked in scientifically-derived ideas of human difference in its regular coverage of global imperial politics. Yet, the Morgenpost disseminated racial scientific knowledge in more focused ways as well. Advertisements for Völkerschauen regularly sought to funnel readers to private ethnographic spectacles. Many pieces in “Populäre Wissenschaft” discussed ethnology, human sciences, and race and attempted to shape readers to believe the ideologies of race and difference. One November 3, 1898 “Populäre Wissenschaft” piece discusses developments in anthropology and the field of craniology or Schädellehre. It challenges previously-accepted craniological explanations of race and human character. The article translates an academic study into popularly legible scientific information. “Schädellehre” is positioned among the various Wissenschaften that, from different perspectives and using different sites of study, analyze and order natural phenomena. The article does not need to do work to convince the reader of phrenology’s position in the scientific world; the “scientific study of human races” is, in this article, an established and naturalized subject of scientific inquiry. Rarified terms such “dolichocephalic” and “brachycephalic” assure the reader

127 “Castan’s Panopticum. Die Sioux-Indianer sind da!”
128 “51 Verbrecherschädel,” in Berliner Morgenpost, November 3, 1898.
of the rigor of such a racialized study. While reviewing new challenges to craniology from the academy, this article ends by invoking Rudolf Virchow’s persistent use of craniology, noting that the famous politician/anthropologist/public intellectual focuses “a not-insignificant amount of his anthropological work on craniological measurements.” The article treats the identification of Menschenrassen, a logic of biologically differentiated races, as a self-evident fact that is already “bekannt” or known among the newspaper’s reading public.

One could not argue that these articles alone turned readers into Aryan supremacists. But, “Populäre Wissenschaft” operated also in the larger context of the “Word City,” where urban consumer culture developed and extended its power. Thus, the sustained presence of such writings on the Menschenwissenschaften in the Morgenpost, specifically with reference to race and imperialism as in Schädellehre, illustrates the importance of race in the construction of the spectacle of the “Word City.” Human difference fashioned, in part, the consumerist vision of the cosmopolitan World City. The human scientific mapping of racial difference was situated within a larger turn toward the construction of the proper (consuming and laboring) urban dweller.

“Spaziergänge” in die Weltstadt—Leading the Reader to the World City

In January and February, 1899, the twenty six year old Adolf Heilborn published a series of articles in the Berliner Morgenpost entitled “Spaziergänge durch das Völkerkunde-Museum” (“Guided Walks through the Ethnological Museum”). Heilborn was a Berliner physician, ethnologist, educator, and public speaker who wrote on ethnology and zoology. He began

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129 Glenn Penny has discussed the then-reigning consensus among German academic about the pluralism/legitimacy of races. For a brief overview, see the introduction his volume Worldly Provincialism (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2003).
130 In 1904, he gave a series of well-attended lectures to the German Colonial Society to instruct teachers and university students on the ethnological particularities of each German colony. One of Heilborn’s books is explicitly about German colonies and ethnology. Adolf Heilborn, Die deutschen Kolonien (Land und Leute) zehn Vorlesungen
publishing work in Berlin newspapers as a teenager and continued writing flaneur-esque pieces about the city through the 1920s.\textsuperscript{131}

His \textit{Spaziergänge} articles were oriented toward the \textit{Morgenpost}'s wide audience and offer introductions to his field. In these pieces, Heilborn led readers through the Berlin \textit{Völkerkundemuseum}'s (Ethnological Museum) collection of anthropological artifacts, explaining the objects and \textit{Rassen} on display to his audience. The series, which consists of six separate articles published over the course of two months, focused primarily on African, Pacific Island, and American indigenous peoples and their associated cultural artifacts on display in the museum. They move systematically through the museum displays, explaining one racial group after another.\textsuperscript{132} While it is not news that late-nineteenth century anthropologists theorized race, often embedded in imperial networks and relations, and that their writings functioned to disseminate that racial knowledge,\textsuperscript{133} the interesting point here is the way Heilborn’s articles presented ethnological ideas about race and advertised the Ethnological Museum to a popular newspaper reading audience in the language of cosmopolitan Berliner urbanity. Indeed, those feelings about the city—being both a worldly cosmopolitan and \textit{being} Berliner—feature as the key figures of his manifesto-like article. The January 21, 1899 “\textit{Spaziergänge}” introduction identifies and explicates its readers and their desires. It stages ethnology and the \textit{Völkerkundemuseum} as sites for the elaboration of urbanity and Berliner identity through the

\textsuperscript{131} Berlino-Illustrirte Zeitung (Das Wochenend-Magazin der Berliner Morgenpost), November 24, 2013.

\textsuperscript{132} Adolf Heilborn, “Spaziergänge durch das Völkerkunde-Museum” II-VI.

\textsuperscript{133} See: Ciarlo, \textit{Advertising Empire}, Bruckner, “Tingle-Tangle of Modernity,” Penny, \textit{Worldly Provincialism} and \textit{Objects of Culture}.  

linking of adventure and empire, the grand architecture of the metropolitan center, and the scientific discoveries and typologies of race-focused ethnology.

Heilborn did not try to reach every Berlin resident. Rather, he focused on young and recently-arrived working class and white collar Berliners. Among the many internal immigrants to the city—people who originated elsewhere in Germany and moved to the capital—were young bureaucrats working in the growing state and corporate apparatuses. Many of these white collar workers were women. The masses of working Berliners navigated the urban landscape largely through ubiquitous newsprint. Readers used the newspaper to learn about their city and their place in it—finding job opportunities, collecting tips to help them establish themselves. When Heilborn’s series appeared in the pages of the Morgenpost so too did a series titled “How do I become a Nurse?” The series, “reviewed opportunities for women in the garment district, the restaurant trade, and private households.” Heilborn’s series appeared within a newspaper culture in which texts function as guides to surviving and succeeding in the city, guides to becoming a fluent Berliner. Thus, Heilborn and his editors were aware of the audience they addressed. Heilborn’s readers, then, were likely young, professional, urbane, Berliners, a mixed-gender, and newspaper-dependent crowd reveling in the growth of the imperial capital.

Human scientific knowledge, Heilborn’s articles argued to his readers, was key to becoming Berliners. He uses on these readers’ pride in their new city to make a case for ethnology. He writes, “If they [Berliners] indeed visit a museum, it only usually occurs as a way to proudly show a curious uncle from another region or aunt from the countryside what we

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134 Fritzche notes the importance of a developing service economy around the turn of the century—between 27-35 per cent of whose workers were women. Fritzche writes, “[By] 1907 the service industry accounted for 11 percent of employed persons in Berlin and Charlottenburg (20 percent if civil servants are included), up from 8.5 (13) percent in 1895; of these, 27 (35.7) percent were women, a startling contrast to 19.6 (18) percent just twelve years earlier.” Peter Fritzche, Reading Berlin 1900 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 63.
135 Ibid.
136 Ibid.
Berliners have to display! These Berliners for whom the great museums are unexplored or unerforschtes Land are young; they may not have visited the Museum (and, Heilborn admits, they may not ever visit it), but in celebrating its impressive architecture and status, they celebrate themselves as citizens of the Weltstadt. These young people would take their out-of-town relatives to the museum “to show them, and with pride to show them, what [great things] we Berliners have!” According to Heilborn, these readers view their city, here embodied in the cutting-edge, grand imperial museum, with pride. Heilborn imagines them speaking of themselves in the first person plural “we.” This collective refers to the museum as their own—it belongs to them. In particular, it belongs to them as Berliners. Here, Heilborn articulates a sense of urban community and ownership that claims the museum and its grandeur as sites of pride.

However, Heilborn laments that, “[a]ll of the museums—all of the great collections of art and science—that our Weltstadt calls her own are, for most Berliners, terra incognita, unexplored land, just as Africa, the dark continent, was to the ethnologist until now.” Here, Heilborn plays with the imagery of darkness and the unexplored—the potentially colonized terra incognita. Berlin and its museums, like the contemporaneously conquered German Africa, become a site to be explored and conquered by Heilborn’s readers. The museum represents one of the conquerable, “dark places of the Earth,” but Heilborn also presents a different kind of dark space, albeit with a very different meaning. He notes that the audience is distracted by “das Dunkle,” the dark and seedy side of the modern city. Berliners, Heilborn argues, are intellectually and culturally unengaged, they overlook the modern World City in favor of its salacious sides. Half-jokingly he writes that the series’ title should have been, “Aus dem dunklen

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137 “Wenn [Berliner] je ein Museum betreten, so geschieht es gewöhnlich nur, um es einem wissbegierigen Onkel aus der Provinz, einer Tante vom Lande zu zeigen und mit Stolz zu zeigen: seht, was wir Berliner haben!” Emphasis added.

138 “zu zeigen und mit Stolz zu zeigen: seht, was wir Berliner haben!” Emphasis added.

139 „für die meisten Berliner sind all Museen, all die herrlichen Kunst- und wissenschaftlichen Sammlungen, die unsere Weltstadt ihr eigen nennt, terra incognita, unerforschtes Land, wie für den Völkerkundigen annoch ein großer Theil Afrikas, des dunklen Erdtheils.”
Berlin”—an allusion to the prominent Morgenpost section by the same name that focused on the social “underbelly” of Berlin: crime, prostitution, scandal. The “dunkle” or dark life of the city, he says, is the more appealing to Morgenpost readers than science and learning. These two dark places, he argues, are incompatible. In a hopeful turn towards progress, however, he offers a path toward the light, toward the knowledge of ethnology, the erudition of the museums, and the glory of the Weltstadt.

Ethnology, Heilborn argues, is cutting-edge knowledge, which he frames as both an under-studied, innovative science and an opportunity for readers explore. “Ethnology,” he writes, “is still too young...awareness of it has barely spread in the broader layers of society as they still lack the proper understanding of the great meaning/importance (Bedeutung) of this ‘Human Science.’” The young science has its own “hohe Bedeutung” or great meaning that needs to be spread among the “breite Schichten des Volkes” (“the broader classes of society”—the mass audience). In this evangelizing declaration, Heilborn links his science to the wellbeing of the Volk. This Volk or nation, Heilborn suggests, needs this science of “great importance,” thereby situating ethnology within a progress narrative of the forward march of the German people.

Before launching into his guided tours—whose explanations, he suggests, will be purely scientific and factual—Heilborn first identifies how not to visit the museum. In doing so, he recalls the voyeuristic practices of those reveling in the dark underbelly of the city. Here, he uses

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140 “Aus dem dunklen Berlin” translates to “From the Dark Berlin”; All Heilborn quotes hereafter are from Adolf Heilborn, “Spaziergaenge durch das Volkerkunde-Museum I” in Berliner Morgenpost, January 21, 1899. All translations are my own the original German text is cited in footnotes.
141 Indeed, the urban “underworld” was a powerful trope in Imperial Germany. For more on anxieties about criminality, sexuality, and the city in fin-de-siecle Berlin, see: Dorothy Rowe, Representing Berlin: Sexuality and the city in Imperial and Weimar Germany (Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), and Richard J. Evans, Tales From the German Underworld: Crime and Punishment in the Nineteenth Century, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
142 “die Völkerkunde ist ja auch noch zu jung...das Bewusstsein von ihr ist kaum noch in die breiteren Schichten des Volkes gedrungen, es fehlt noch an dem richtigen Verständnis der hohen Bedeutung dieser ‘Wissenschaft vom Menschen’”
the newspaper to direct spectators in more refined, scientific ways. Responding to the misuse of
the museum by lustful, prurient visitors, Heilborn describes the Ethnological Museum and
Völkerkunde more generally by recycling earlier museum ethnologists’ resistance to popular
representations of colonized artifacts and bodies. Since the museum’s 1886 opening, its
ethnographica were fiercely protected by their curators from inappropriate gazes.¹⁴³ These
scientists, “dismissed [the] culture of commodities and curiosities” that circulated ethnological
artifacts in the public, “as ‘mere voyeurism’ (bloße Schaulust).”¹⁴⁴ Scientists, especially those at
the Ethnological Museum, sought to manage encounters with their exhibits in a way that
distinguished them from popular ethnological spectacles.¹⁴⁵ Without invoking the term, Heilborn
also challenges the bloße Schaulust of those Berliners with interests in Naturvölker. He
distinguishes the museum’s science from that lower form of cultural knowledge present among
the young boys and men who were already museum visitors:

Who really goes there? At most it is adolescent rascals who have read “Lederstrumpf” (The
Leatherstocking Tales) and would like to see a “Tomahawk” or “Wigwam” or the famous
“Friedenspfeife” (Peace-pipe) in natura. Or, they gush about Wissmann [popular and now
controversial German colonial leader] and “Stanlein” [diminutive for Stanley, famous British
“explorer” in Africa] and want to see a “Kahnoë” [canoe?] or “Assegai.” Perhaps an adult finds
himself lost in the museum to see the “Nilpfedpeitsche” [Sjambok] from Chancellor Leist of
blessed memory or the “Pfandweiber” [this term seems to mean women given as payment in
colonial settings] wearing her paradisal costume.¹⁴⁶

Visitors interested in non-European or indigenous cultures could easily view the exhibits

¹⁴³ Zimmerman writes that these “objects [came to be] enmeshed in new interpretive struggles within the urban
culture of Berlin. To retain the bodies and possessions of the colonized for their science, anthropologists had to
prevent them from entering the popular European culture of exotic spectacles.” Andrew Zimmerman, Anthropology
and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 172.; These
spectacles, Bruckner argues, were both sites of voyeuristic entertainment and “site[s] in which the public was
couraged to acquire and practice the measured and rational gaze of the educated” (Bruckner, “Spectacles”, 139).
¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 172.
¹⁴⁵ Ibid.
¹⁴⁶ “Wer geht denn [zum Museum] hinein? Höchstens halbwüchsige Bengels, die eben ihren „Lederstrumpf“ gelesen
haben und um einmal solch „Tomahawk“ oder „Wigwam“ oder die berühmte „Friedenspfeife“ in natura sehen
möchten. Oder sie schwärmen für Wissmann und „Stanlein“ und wollen sich mal ein „Kahnoë“ oder
„Assegai“ anschauen. Vielleicht verliert sich auch einmal ein Erwachener dorthin, dem es die
„Nilpfedpeitsche“ des Kanzler Leist seligen Gedenkens oder die „Pfandweiber“ mit ihrem paradiesischen Kostüm
angethean haben.” For my source on Pfandweiber see “Wochenschau” in R. Schindler and E. Benedikt, Juristische
Blätter, Volume 23 (Vienna, Austria: Hofbuchdruckerei Carl Fromme, 1894), 531-2.
voyeuristically. Heilborn characterizes their desires in highly physical terms. The boys “want to see” pieces of legend, the older men “gush” over or “swarm” for their colonial heroes and “want to look at” weapons in person. He identifies these visitors’ interests as physical, arousing, and voyeuristic fantasies about Native Americans, war, and African women. Heilborn also notes the unscientific sources of their knowledge of Naturvölker: popular novels and reports of colonial drama. These dubious sources stand in contrast to the scientific artifacts on display taken from actual cultural contexts. Such contested, immature and sexualized moments of viewing run counter to the ideal put forth by Heilborn; they preclude the full development of an educated, worldly cosmopolitan city. He distinguishes the Museum’s current (and undesirable) visitors into categories. They are either “young rascals,” adolescent boys, who want to see real-world instantiations of stereotypical objects from the Leatherstocking Tales or they are adult men with prurient interests in indigenous weapons and exotic women. In either case, these visitors exercise the bloße Schaulust against which earlier ethnologists and Heilborn defined their work. Those visitors then also represent the antithesis, in age and interest, to Heilborn’s preferred audience, who, with the right instruction, might grasp the gravity of the Völkerkunde and who embody his Berliner ideal.

Turning back toward his audience, Heilborn’s characterizes the human sciences, the cutting edge knowledge, in terms of youth. He frames the series as an important introduction to the “jungste Kind der Wissenschaft…[die] ‘Wissenschaft der Menschen’” (“the youngest child of science…human science”). Ethnology is the “youngest” science, a “child,” that requires attention and needs help finding its way in the world. He refers to the science as “unerforschtes [unexplored] Land.” Heilborn thus maps images and rhetoric of colonial expansion onto the experience of visiting the Ethnological Museum; this child-like, “unexplored land,” the
monumental structure in the Königgrätzerstrasse, calls for caretaker-pioneers. Energized by the youth and vitality of the discipline, Heilborn’s manifesto seeks to activate a sympathetic readership by imagining his science in parallel terms to the unexplored land of imperial projects. He explicitly links ethnology to the “dark continent” of Africa, parts of which since 1883 had become subjects of German colonization. In this parallel, the article invites its readers to imagine, through their tour of the museum, playing or mimicking exploration and colonization. This colonial impulse is connected to Heilborn’s earlier discussion of the dark underbelly of the city. Indeed, his vision of colonial exploration extends to the city itself; the ideal, cosmopolitan Berlin is not only defined in terms of learning in the museum or discovering the actual places of the “dark continent” but invites readers to act out a kind of colonial exploration, thereby marking Berlin itself as a colonial space to be explored and understood through the cultivation of cosmopolitan practices and the purging of repugnant and inappropriate voyeurisms.

Heilborn makes explicit these connections between exploration, conquest, youth, science, and Völkerkunde in his discussion of the German overseas empire. The field of ethnology was dependent on European overseas empires from which museums like the Völkerkundemuseum and scientists took and received artifacts and “natives” (and often their remains) which scientists could study and display. He writes: “Fifteen years have just flown by since Germany joined the colonial powers through the acquisition of the Lüderitzer possessions in South West Africa.”

Here, Heilborn tracks German status as a colonial power. He notes both the youth of the German colonial project and the speed of its development. Germany did not just plod along for fifteen years, trying to compete with colonial powers. Instead, it flew through a decade and a half of colonization, swiftly joining the ranks of the other European empires. He notes that serious

147. “Gerade fünfzehn Jahre sind jetzt verflohen, dass Deutschland durch Erwerbung der Lüderitzschen Besitzungen in Südwest-Afrika in die Reihe der Kolonialmächte trat.”
interest in ethnology had developed only since Germany became a colonial power. This young empire (perhaps das jungste Kaiserreich) and this “jungste Kind der Wissenschaft” then parallel each other in their development. Recalling the linkage of the racialized Volk and ethnology, the parallel and mutually-constitutive lives of ethnology and German imperialism merge Berlin, ethnological knowledge, the Museum, and its ideal visitors.

Becoming a Berliner, Heilborn’s article argues, means valuing, celebrating, and linking the youth of the empire, its vanguard science (ethnology), exploration, and the excitement and opportunities of the expanding metropolis. By rejecting the “dunkle Berlin,” the dark sides of the city and their salacious practices, and opting, instead, to enter the museum and shepherd the young and innovative science forward, Heilborn offers a vision of Berlin identity and modernity centered on ethnology. These articles were a site for the dissemination of his and the museum’s global vision of geography, culture, and race; they sought to spread that knowledge among the “breite Schichten des Volkes,” the Morgenpost reading public. Heilborn’s articles do not simply trace the circulation of disciplinary, scientific knowledge housed in the Ethnological Museum as it moved beyond the collection’s physical borders, but they also display the interplay of urbanity and invocations of Berliner identity with this ethnological knowledge, shaping one another through their public circulation.

Human scientific ideas, especially racial ones, were common topics in the pages of the Berliner Morgenpost, a widely-circulated newspaper in Imperial Berlin that was read especially among young and recent immigrants to the city. As these active readers, often lower-middle class and white collar office workers, read stories about their city and their urban selves through the spectacle of “color and excitement” of the Morgenpost’s pages, they were offered many lessons
on the human sciences and the nature of racial difference. The newspaper’s writing, like the Colonial Exhibition, sought to manage the ways readers interacted with the city, their practices of viewing and exploring. Early in 1899, Adolf Heilborn, writing to the internal-immigrants that made up the much of the *Morgenpost* reading population, articulated a play on the spectacular imperial city. In it, he sought to redirect spectators’ vision, instructing them to view ethnographica and colonized bodies in particularly educated, scientific ways. Not unlike the maps of the 1896 Colonial Exhibition, Heilborn imagines the *Völkerkundemuseum*’s Africa, Pacific Islander, and indigenous American displays in terms of racial difference (and hierarchy), mimicking colonial exploration. By guiding imagined walks through these displays, he presented a strategy for coming to terms with the metropolis, for making it truly one’s home through viewing the monumental display of ethnological knowledge, taking pride in science, and cultivating the self through that education. Taken together, these examples of race and social imperialism as they played out in the pages of the *Berliner Morgenpost* help open up a serious consideration of how these subjects—so crucial to the history of Imperial Germany—operated in the period’s most important instruments of information technology. The staging of race and imperialism in newspapers offers a rich glimpse into one of the most potent educational and ideological tools in the *fin-de-siècle*. In addition to the “wildly” successful Colonial Exhibition, any examination of German racial imaginaries must take these newspapers into account.
Conclusion

Both the 1896 Colonial Exhibition and the Berliner Morgenpost’s coverage of race, racial sciences, and the Ethnological Museum occurred in a period of rapid governmental, commercial, and imperial expansion; the same was a period in which the German “nation” was being articulated and claimed by the state itself. Appeals to a cosmopolitan city, to a proud Berliner identity, and to global racial hierarchies can all be narrated as part of the turn toward nationalism that formally had begun with the founding of the new state in 1871. The imagined community of Germans began to take shape through information technologies like newsprint as well as mass, shared events such as the Kolonialausstellung. This thesis has tracked the importance of race and imperialism in these case studies, tracing some of the linkages among imperialism, the expansion of German capital throughout the world, human scientific scientists and networks, ethnological/anthropological ideas about race, educational institutions, and newspaper representations of the modern city. By producing narratives of Berlin, stories about ownership over the city and participation in its cosmopolitan grandeur, these examples show some of the ways working class and white-collar Berliners were enlisted in the imperialist project.

While this analysis is useful in probing the small yet fateful moments in the production of racial, national, and imperial imaginaries, they of course do not provide a total picture. In the case of the Kolonialausstellung—without question a major event in the history of German imperialism and nation-building—further research should seek out and examine first-hand accounts and reactions to the Ausstellung der Eingeborenen to move beyond the structures that guided visitors to understand how visitors themselves processed the experience. In the case of the newspapers, it would be valuable to examine popular scientific reporting beyond the Morgenpost, as well as in later years. This study focused solely on Morgenpost editions between
1898 and 1901—the newspaper continued publishing reports on human sciences and it would be useful to track the ways that coverage shifted along with the further racialization of the more-nationalist German ethnology from the first half of the twentieth century.

Those limitations aside, this thesis brings to the broader discussion of German imperialism and racism two new analyses. First, its close look at the Colonial Exhibition’s use of space, architecture, and bodies brings to light some of the crucial elements of the Exhibition’s affective work, the way its structure and performances elicited feelings of cosmopolitanism and difference from visitors. Second, the examination of the use of race and human sciences in Berlin newspapers around the turn of the century and the construction of ideal readers in Heilborn’s “Spaziergänge” series builds on the invocations of cosmopolitanism that were felt in the Kolonialausstellung, tracking the ways the Morgenpost made explicit the link between cosmopolitanism and urbane living with imperialism and racism. These archives both present real sites of popular interaction with ideas about race and imperialism; examining them offers an exciting opportunity to understand the circulation of racial ideas, intimately linked to nationalism and imperialism, as it occurred at the close of the nineteenth century in Germany’s national and imperial capital. Together, these analyses have shown the interlocking strategies used to guide Berliners through their city, directing their movements and eyes along paths that were rich with lessons on navigating colonial territory, viewing racially other bodies, and imagining the Weltstadt. Alongside the recent and innovative scholarship on Imperial Germany, the case studies presented here help show that the spread of racial ideas happened not necessarily through didactic explanations of race, but rather, and more insidiously, in and through stories and feelings about the exciting spectacle of Berlin and the wonders of being and becoming Berliner.
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