



INTRODUCTION

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This volume, as its title implies, initially developed out of the editors' interest in dis/continuities within Imperial Germany's cultural narratives of race and their correspondence and perhaps correlation to events in political history—particularly to the oft-cited national caesuras of 1871, 1918, 1933, and 1945. This interest subsequently broadened to a theoretical reconsideration of race as an intricate component of cultural narratives. If caesuras in political history, such as the formation of national unity and independence or the loss of colonies, indeed affect racial narratives, what does this tell us about the seeming fixity of a scientific category? What does it say about the relationship between the cultural and the biological as well as the national and the transnational in narratives of race?

Race is obviously not a German brainchild, yet the German iterations have been widely considered the product of a largely national evolution, inherently and fundamentally different from racial narratives originating from other national contexts. While this is true for actual events, such as particular policies and atrocities, it is far less clear for ideas and narratives. Is a colonial trope of black beauty in German discourse, for example, quintessentially German, and if so, what are the implications of such a national attribution in the theoretical conception of race? Is the German idealization of Aboriginal Australians specifically German or is it comparable to international constructions of Australian Aboriginality? If race supersedes national border, how then can it be analyzed in a spatial frame? At which other level—global, transnational, or regional seem to be the obvious alternatives—can the concept be examined? This volume points out the global nature of racial narratives and does not juxtapose the national with the transnational. It shows the ways in which racial narratives were quintessentially cultural and thus able to be nationalized without losing their regional or transnational character. This book suggests that the approach to these questions is not one of either-or, but that the national, local, transnational, cultural, and biological were intermingled and resulted in conceptions of race

that were simultaneously rigid and adaptable. Race could align with the national, strengthen it, all while being transnational in origin.

Race has never been confined to the realm of intellectual ideas but exerted veritable influence on social and political action. With the development and establishment of the natural sciences begun in the Enlightenment, biological ideas of human races became the basis for national politics, a process that Ivan Hannaford has called the “racialization of the West” (1996: 185). Race informed a wide spectrum of processes of social ordering from democratic participation to the point of lethal destruction without losing momentum. As Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic argue, racial stereotypes have been historically malleable and pandered to changing political and economic demands (2001: 8). Race was thus imbued with a range of connotations in differing political, historical, and national settings. The presumed changes in narratives and conceptions of race imply a strong level of persistence and tenaciousness of the concept of race as such.

This volume illustrates that the concept has been not only a central but a persistent sociopolitical category, easily adaptable to changing political and cultural settings without curtailing its exclusionary and often hierarchical nature in sociopolitical ordering. Indeed its dynamic character can be considered one of the central reasons for the endurance of racial thought. Racial thought, we argue, evinced continuity between the Wilhelmine and National Socialist era in the sense that processes of racialization remained central parameters of cultural narratives. Race, in other words, mattered greatly in these periods. Yet while these narratives transcended political caesura, they were also informed by political changes and thus reimagined and repositioned. As the chapters in this book illustrate, racial narratives about colonized peoples continued to be hierarchical and essentialist while being reinterpreted with the value judgments inherent to changing political demands, as in the singular example of the establishment and loss of the German colonies. The end of World War I resulted in increasingly idealized narratives of colonized peoples. These persisted through the National Socialist era and were remodeled in accordance to its polity—Papuan peoples, for example, were first recast as Germany’s allied friends after 1918 and then conveniently aligned with National Socialism after 1933 (Haag 2014: 149).

This book eschews defining race as a necessarily biological and physical entity and seeks, in Robert Miles’s sense, to deconstruct it to expose the different processes of racialization (1993: 49). It analyzes the different modes in which race came into being; it iterated, changed, and was conceived of in different times and spaces. Uli Linke argues that in

German discourses, racial attributes were based less on physical difference than imaginings of blood typology (1997: 560). Although ideas of blood-based difference did not preclude the attribution of physical signifiers, race assumed a greater variety of forms than construed physical difference. Thus the editors understand race as a sociohistorical construct established in intersecting modes by reference to cultural perceptions of, *inter alia*, gender, sexuality, national affiliations, class, and dis/ability (Hill Collins and Andersen 2004; Camp 2004: 6–7, 22; Theweleit 1980; Mosse 1985: 36, 42; Jarman 2012: 90–91). As Volker Zimmermann’s chapter shows, what race was understood to be (or not to be) was a product of complex cultural narratives, and not necessarily preconditioned.

We understand cultural narratives as ideas thought to be commonly shared (Hoggart 1972; Hall 1996: 2)—hence a “culture of race” that manifested differently by different agents in academia, popular culture, literature, legal and political domains, and religious circles, among others. The dynamic interplay between these agents in re-creating ideas of race constituted what we suggest to be read as narratives, that is, tales of social entities that were explicated—for all their fixity—as historically grown. Ulrich Charpa’s contribution analyzes the origin stories of (Aryan) races that were legitimated with recourse to ancestral tales of ancient birth and common provenance. Cultural narratives were immersed in power relations—hence discursive in a Foucauldian sense—but also specifically historical and at the same time provisional, or, in Mark Currie’s sense, less retrospective than prospective tales that re-created spaces in the present (2007). These narratives seem to have naturalized race as a stable category juxtaposing in-groups with out-groups. Yet, while racial narratives could take such oppositional direction, especially when asymmetrical power relations attributed racial signifiers, they were often multidimensional and contradictory (JanMohamed 1985: 63). To elucidate this multidimensional and contradictory character, this collection presents a wide spectrum of instances of racial formation—from popular culture and history to scientific and legal domains.

Scholarship on German history of race is highly complex, both regionally and thematically. The construction and often the persecution of European races, especially in iterations of anti-Semitism, have and continue to engage scholars. German attitudes toward non-European races, especially through the lens of retracing the reciprocal images of alterity and a German national self, have also been scrutinized, increasingly in studies on the former German colonies and German affiliation for particular areas like North America (e.g., Schmokel 1964; Zantop

1997; Berman 1998; Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox, and Zantop 1998; El-Tayeb 2001; Wildenthal 2001; Lutz 2002; Kundrus 2003; Campt 2004; Ames, Klotz, and Wildenthal 2005; Penny 2007; Steinmetz 2007; Graichen and Gründer 2007; Langbehn 2010; Perraudin and Zimmerer 2011; Rash 2011; Langbehn and Salama 2011; Rash 2012). These studies use the German nation as a central theoretical framework for explaining the development of race, and the German history of race as exceptional. As George Williamson argues in his work on the longing for myth in Germany, German mythology drew on a fusion of Protestant, classic, and ancient Germanic traditions in its development of a specifically German connotation of race (2004: 3–4, 18). Sara Eigen and Mark Larimore’s edited volume *The German Invention of Race* (2006) also returns to the nation as a central parameter in its conception of the formation of race in Germany as decidedly different from other national contexts. Michael Hau’s monograph on hygienic culture detects a specifically German trait of racial ideas as expressed in the *Lebensreformbewegung* (2003). Moreover, these three studies state that, particularly for German authors of the nineteenth century, human difference was not necessarily racialized and point out that some authors rejected the very concept of race. This implies a contrast between earlier concepts of culture and later paradigms of biology (race).

An assessment of the development of nationalism and race in Germany in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries is inextricable from the movement of conservatism. German nationalism was promoted in response to the Napoleonic invasions, drawing on the revolutionary idea of replacing individual states and their ruling dynasties with a unified Germany.

Scholarship of German history is often defined by its focus on National Socialism and the so-called Third Reich. Beginning with the canonical studies of Fritz Stern (1961) and Georg Mosse (1981), a common point of departure has been the sense of a “politics of cultural despair” coupled with a particularly German reactionary romanticism, which presaged and perhaps enabled the development of National Socialism. In combination with the generally acknowledged lag in unification and industrialization (albeit the latter only up to the late nineteenth century), this consensus describes the *Sonderweg* hypothesis, which Geoff Eley has dismissed as the “backwardness syndrome” (2003: 129). Eley describes this hypothesis as a determinist teleologist approach of causality, which seeks to situate the origins of National Socialism somewhere in the nineteenth century, when Germany supposedly strayed from the “normal” western European liberal democratic evolution (1991: 209). His definition of fascism as “a qualitative

departure from previous conservative practice, which is negatively defined against liberalism, social democracy and communism or any creed that seems to elevate difference, division and conflict over the essential unity of the race-people as the organizing principle of political life" (2003: 132) illustrates the centrality of race to sociocultural political process and polity development.

This volume rejects as inherently flawed the concepts of the *Sonderweg* and of "reactionary modernism" proposed in such scholarship as Jeffery Herf's benchmark *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (1986). Herf casts Romanticism and technology in opposition to one another, ultimately suggesting that technology was usually rejected by those of reactionary political persuasion and wholeheartedly accepted by liberals, democrats, and socialists. Enmeshed with Herf's "reactionary modernism" is the debate over whether the proponents of *völkisch* nationalism and National Socialism were essentially antimodern, anti-Enlightenment, and antitechnology, seeking only to turn back the clock, even while embracing some facets of modernity, or whether they were active modernizers themselves. The debate on the disparity between a linear, chronological historical development and the thematization of rupture in cultural criticism and history leaves these questions unanswered. In 1935, Ernst Bloch identified the potential tension within fascism, between the "affirmation of capitalism through its intensive rationalization of industrialization on the one hand, and its rural, *völkisch*, and romantic anti-capitalism on the other" (in Rabinbach 1977: 13), prefiguring the debate over the relationship of the *völkisch* Nationalists and National Socialists to modernity.

Bloch's explanation of the appeal of the radical right presupposes the acceptance of the thesis that its visions were more than "mere ideology," and that they were searching for a "*Glaubensraum*," a space for belief in a better future (Rohkrämer 2007: 18). It is this space that the conservative members of the *Lebensreform* movements sought to fill with their ideology of a new social system grounded on aesthetics. Conservatism in Germany has usually been understood as backward looking, instead of an iteration of bourgeois modernism, which exists beyond the dialectic of left and right, modernism and antimodernism, and suggests an entirely alternative future. As Anson Rabinbach points out, Bloch argues that the "explosive tradition of mystical and romantic anti-capitalism was not merely composed of 'irrational' and archaic myths, but of dynamic components of the present" (1977: 6). Rabinbach explains Bloch's hopeful position: "For Bloch the past is a beacon within the present, it illuminates the horizon of that possibility which has not yet come fully into view, which has yet to be constructed.

Tradition is not the handed-down relic of past generations, but an image of the future, which, though geographically located in a familiar landscape, points beyond the given" (ibid.: 7). In this position Bloch is not alone, but in the company of many conservative, so-called reactionary modernists in Germany. Rolf Peter Sieferle proposed a "descriptive notion of modernity" that considered everything that occurred after a certain point "modern," regardless of its outcome. Extending his argument to the limit, he even identifies mass extermination—i.e., Himmler's camps—as a modern process, which did not exist in pre-modern society by definition (Sieferle 1984).

Lest we be misunderstood, we do not wish to negate that racial ideas, having spread through the Western world, were differently received in varying locations (Glick 1988). Racial ideas certainly adapted to German contexts and developed national and regional peculiarities. However, we suggest a conceptually different approach to race—that is, to conceive of it not as a biogenetic category but more broadly as a set of narratives resulting from racialization. Racialization acts as a normative process that re-creates social entities, culture, and identities (Murji and Solomos 2005: 4; Breitenfellner and Kohn-Ley 1998; Martinot 2010). We consider the nation as *co-formative* with processes of racialization and as intrinsically enmeshed with constructions of race.

The appropriation of scientific ideas within cultural discourse was crucial to the development of new systems of racialization. The monistic philosopher and scientist Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919) popularized Charles Darwin's written work and his concept of evolution in Germany (Humble 2003: 109). Haeckel also espoused the morphology of Goethe in *Generelle Morphologie* (1866)—in which he coined the term "ecology"—*Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte* (1868), *Welträthsel* (1899), and *Die Lebenswunder* (1904), which were aimed at and well received by a large lay audience. Paul Gilroy proposes that these texts helped "conceptualize the state as an organism and to specify necessary connections between the nation and its dwelling area" (2000: 39), thus beginning or at least preparing the *Lebensraum* debate, which was easily linked by way of social Darwinism to eugenics. As Lara Day's chapter examines, the discussion around the body, evolution, eugenics, and racial theory was very widely represented in Wilhelmine popular discourse on the fine arts, literature, and philosophy. In this cross-disciplinary move, many ambiguities and doubts inherent in the concept's scientific origin were lost, or indeed resolved by the authorities in the individual disciplinary area, be it theology, philosophy, or the sciences. Kevin Repp suggests that "eugenics offered the possibility of reconciliation between science and humanism" (2000: 687) as a product

of ongoing debates over heredity, Darwinism, and improvement for all. To dismiss Wilhelmine racial discourse as pseudo-scientific and thus irrelevant, or to “segregate the participants of this debate into modern and anti-modern camps on the basis of their subsequent development rather than contemporary perceptions” (ibid.: 687), is to ignore their wider contemporary contexts.

This book does not endorse a national framework, which tries to explicate the development of race in Germany primarily through a national lens, or even a German *Sonderweg*, which assumes a teleological progression of German exceptionality to National Socialism. Instead, it posits that the nation did not create race and race did not create the nation, but that racialization produced images of race and nation that appeared as fundamentally German and hence established expressions of sociocultural reality. This reality is widely seen as a “negative” history, as the outcome of lethal destruction and epitome of the humane failings of modernity. Yet it is also occasionally read as having shown a liberal development at the popularization of Social Darwinian thought in the nineteenth century (Weindling 1991; Weikart 1993; Hawkins 1997: 132–133). As Russell Berman’s reference to German imperialism suggests, racial thought was more “humane” in the “liberal” era of the nineteenth century in Germany than in other European countries (1998: 15). Historians of German social anthropology have argued in a similar vein that racial ideas changed from a more liberal (i.e., culturally based) to a more exclusive (i.e., biologically based) understanding of race at the close of the nineteenth century. However, while scholarship has acknowledged the complexity and nonteleological character of racial thought in German history, the processes of racialization in culturally driven liberalism remain undertheorized. As Woodruf Smith asserts, German social anthropologists were initially influenced by ideas of liberalism and, partly in opposition to physical anthropology, increasingly focused on the study of human cultures. Human sameness, the underlying anthropological concept of cultural sciences, is cast in opposition to (physical) racialism. Although Smith acknowledges the racial hierarchies construed in cultural sciences, his study suggests that cultural racism seems to have borne less negative weight than biological racism:

Indeed, Ratzel (in theory, at any rate) was less of a racist than Virchow. Although allowing that racial features had some bearing on the adaptability of a migrating people to a new physical environment, Ratzel (like Boas) emphasized the adaptability of human physical features to the environment through natural selection. A *Volk* was a cultural, not a racial entity. Ratzel shared his era’s prejudices against some *existing* races (Africans, for instance). On the other hand, he had enormous respect for

the peoples of East Asia. And in the long run, he argued, racial factors did not matter very much. It was culture that counted. (1991: 147)

The conceptual problems with this interpretation are manifold. First, the passage suggests that embracing cultural concepts rendered social anthropologists less racist than the more physically oriented anthropologists, because they, the argument runs, allowed the possibility of change. This understanding confuses racism with theories of race, ignoring the manifold effect of racism as a complex set of hierarchies. This interpretation posits that racial assimilation (which presupposed alteration) was implicitly less racist than biogenetic racism. The second major problem is the differentiation between culture and race, as if cultural views were not fundamentally entangled in racial views and vice versa. Pascal Grosse has argued that culture was conceived of in (German) colonial discourse as a fundamentally racialized category intended to secure white supremacy (2005: 121). Differentiations between biological and “cultural/social” conceptions of race overlook first the construction of nonmalleable hierarchies in both concepts and second the biologizing nature of race that predates the nineteenth century (Stoler 1995: 68). Imperial perceptions of culture were racialized and informed by biological and bodily scripting. Given the apparent understanding of culture as deracialized, Smith’s interpretation implies the view of a more lenient—that is, less racist—German discourse on colonized peoples. The third and perhaps gravest problem is the way the author balances Ratzel’s varied attitudes toward human groups: applying the undefined concept of “prejudice” (instead of racism), Smith reduces Ratzel’s racism to an attitude toward “Africans,” while he excludes his so-called respectful views. Alongside the dubious non-definition of “respectfulness” (and “East Asians”), the salient point here is the oppositional value judgment drawn between negative views (= “prejudices/racism”) and “good” or “free-of-racism” views (= “respectfulness”). Such oppositional views remain theoretically underdeveloped and oversimplify the complexity of racism, since “positive” views *are* racist views, just as the differentiation between cultural and biological racism represents a grave misjudgment of the basic principles of the ideology of racism. The theorization about the intricacies of racial representation should increase awareness of racism’s accommodation of idealizing views, but not produce the unraveling of the racist nature of metropolitan constructions of race.

The aforementioned is exemplary. Several historians of German anthropology have argued that by the end of the nineteenth century the discipline lost much of its liberal stance in conceiving race (Penny 2003:

2–3, 23, 32; Massin 1996: 79–154; Evans 2008: 87–108; Penny and Bunzl 2003: 1–30; Evans 2010: 8). Benoit Massin explains the liberal character of nineteenth-century German anthropology in three references: first, that Arthur de Gobineau’s racial theories were initially badly received in German anthropological circles; second, concepts of monogenism (i.e., the idea of a single human ancestry) prevailed at the beginning of the twentieth century; third, many liberal anthropologists tried to rebut the popular image of Indigenous peoples’ primitivity (1996: 81, 88). This reading results from a narrow understanding of racism as an expression of somatic difference. But conceptual differences in theory did not mean differences in racial hierarchies that, in construing racial hierarchy as a normative principle, fueled anthropological discourses worldwide (Anderson and Perrin 2008: 962–964; Freeman 2005: 42–69; Smedley 1993: 244–246; Marks 2008: 242–243.). The theorems of polygenism and monogenism rested on a hierarchical order informed by implicit (white) racial hierarchy and a racialization of culture. The “lenient” description of liberal anthropologists does not mean that the superior act of “knowing” the racialized subject would not disclose their racially superior positioning. Glenn Penny goes further still and juxtaposes the anti-Darwinian and cosmopolitan German anthropology of the nineteenth century with the “more” racist anthropology of the twentieth century. He argues that the former was characterized by humanist and liberal scholars who, he contends, were partly critical of German colonialism, while the latter was prone to colonialism: “Then, in the early twentieth century, central European ethnologists and anthropologists abandoned their cosmopolitan heritage. A narrowly nationalistic and increasingly racist orientation became dominant during the interwar years” (2008: 79–80). The author does not define racism and antiracism, though “well-intentioned” worldly attitudes appear to constitute the latter. Judging whether racial representations constituted racism simplifies the complexity of racism that rests on a web of generalization, hierarchy, and paternalism, which John Dixon and Mark Levine posit can accommodate “a blend of positive and negative feelings” (2012: 11). Penny’s statement unduly equates theory with social narrative, resulting in a narrow understanding of racism as biological hierarchy. The author’s theory also fails to explain the replication of racial scaling in nineteenth-century German anthropology. As Oliver Haag’s chapter shows, nineteenth-century German discourses, including anthropology, mirrored the low scaling of the most stigmatized Indigenous group in Darwinian and evolutionist discourse, Aboriginal Australians (Anderson and Perrin 2007). If nineteenth-century anthropologists were free of hierarchical scaling, how might their taxonomy

be explained? A theoretically more nuanced approach is necessary to understand the discourse of “positive” racial views in German history.

This ostensible paradigm shift in value attitudes of the German history of race—expanding with the scholarship of the history of German anthropology and German representations of Indigenous peoples—has major implications for this study, which considers a broad spectrum of annihilating and idealizing racial narratives. We argue that, conceptually, culture and race should be studied in tandem, and that “positivity” and “negativity” derive from the common concept of racialization, however different their practical results. Bringing together annihilating racism with idealizing or liberal racism increases understanding of the mechanism of racial thought, which served not as a politics of hatred alone, but also as idealization and self-identification, as Arne Offermanns’s analysis of Jewish-German nationalism shows. Especially the German adoption of specific non-European racial identities, as paradigmatically shown in what Hartmut Lutz terms *Indianthusiasm*, begs theorization of racial admiration (Lutz 2002; Sieg 2009; Usbeck 2012; Usbeck 2015).

Theories of philosemitism offer analytical keys to decipher the racist current of idealizing imaginings (Edelstein 1982; Lassner and Trubowitz 2008: 7–9; Karp and Sutcliffe 2011a; Rubinstein and Rubinstein 1999; Kushner and Valman 2004). Coined in Germany in the 1880s, the term “philosemitism” initially indicated an opposition toward the hatred of Jewish people and was used to defame the opponents of anti-Semitism (Karp and Sutcliffe 2011b: 1; Levenson 2004: xii). Philosemitism is now largely understood as a set of actions and value-attitudes that do not form a calcified opposite to anti-Semitism, but instead draw upon similar mechanisms of processes of racialization. Zygmunt Bauman considers philosemitism and anti-Semitism different value directions of a repository of ambivalent images dubbed “allosemitism” (Bauman 1998: 143). This allosemitic repository is explicated as resting on constructions of Jewish essence and difference, thus constructions of a potentially racializing nature. Jonathan Judaken exposes that philosemitism, in its construction of “positive views of Jewishness,” produces a one-sided power relationship in defining Jewishness (2008: 27, 29). The power to ascribe the primordial essence of Jewishness rests with philosemitic discourse and manifests, we argue, much like metropolitan definitions of colonized subjects. These definitions, as David Theo Goldberg delineates, rest on the principle of tolerance that constituted a common practice of civilization in nineteenth-century colonial discourses (2004: 37). The act of tolerance equipped the colonizing power to redefine the nature and limits of the tolerated subject. With the consolidation

of European colonialism in late nineteenth century, views of colonial tolerance emerged. Gustav Jahoda has demonstrated that primitivism shifted increasingly from tropes of ferocious animalism to tolerated childlikeness, which cast the colonized subject as a semiotic object of colonial enterprise and parental guidance (1999: 85–87, 125, 145). The child-parent relation, reified in possessive form, was conferred upon the colonizer-colonized relation and replaced the previous constructs of outright animalism, no longer conducive to the economic exploitation of colonial work. Anthropophagy as a part of animalist imagery, the author argues, persisted but became less moralized than ridiculed and partly excused, thus tolerated. Additionally, German figures of anthropophagy, as Eva Bischoff argues, served the purpose of education and began to exhibit signs of partial tolerance (2011). Jan Nederveen Pieterse elaborates on the same shift from animalist to childlike savagery in European constructs of Africanism. Consolidated colonialism, the author argues, necessitated different images of tolerated servants to legitimize its rule (1990: 89). To govern colonized subjects, they first had to be tolerated, with the extent of toleration set by the colonizer.

Philosemitism as a practice of tolerance, we contend, suggests reading seemingly positive images of racialized Otherness not as a deracialized sign of worldly liberalism but rather an eminent practice of racialization and hegemony. As the instance of Indianthusiasm, as well as the partial idealization of African populations—such as the so-called Hamitic races—show, German and other colonial narratives of race tended to not only tolerate but also to idealize certain races in certain circumstances (Pugach 2012: 102–114; Hesse 1995: 115–118; Wilke 2006: 297; Gruesser 1992: 6–7; Waller 1976: 547–548; Coombes 1995: 66–67). As Sander Gilman asserts, philosemitism does not only rest on the superiority of tolerance but also on more inclusive constructions of idealization (2008: 83). Psychoanalytic theory conceives of idealization as a mechanism to develop one-dimensional positive views that accommodate complexity in the evaluation of an attitude object (Lerner and Van-Der Keshet 1995: 88–89). Idealization is understood as a narcissistic process that values objects by reference to traits perceived as “positive.” This construction preconditions cultural familiarity of that trait which, in Serge Moscovici’s sense, anchors the foreign object in socially familiar meaning (1984: 7–10, 29). Thus, the idealization of a culture is either the process of projecting familiar values onto a foreign culture or the identification of a lack or loss of such values in the familiar culture. The processes set the familiar culture as the parameter value and thus familiarize the foreign culture and insist that the familiar culture acts as the marker of normativity.

One trope of racial idealization, which Pablo Dominguez Andersen's chapter discusses, was the partial adoption of colonized and Indigenous identities. Masquerading and performing Indigenous identities in juvenile and adventure literature, for example by Karl May, were established elements of idealized German narratives of race (Carlson 2002). Scholarship on German–Indigenous American relations suggests a specifically national trait in conceiving Indigenous (North) Americans. Glenn Penny argues that German authors of the nineteenth century incorporated their affinity for North Americans into a broader concept of German anti-Americanism and a critique of modernity (2007: 145–146, 154). Barbara McCloskey suggests that figures of “traditionalist” North Americans fused with German nationalist ideals of antimaterialism and antimodernism (2007: 302, 312). The assumed naturalness of Indigenous North Americans, the argument runs, invited idealization. Susanne Zantop explains German interest in North Americans as exceptional in Europe. She suggests an assumed political bonding-produced idealization: the Germans, as victims of French imperialism, understood the defeat and political disunity as an elevation of Indigenous North Americans to a similar victim status (2002: 4–5). Christian Feest contends that identification with Indigenous North Americans constituted a European phenomenon (2002: 29, 31; 1999: 612), and rejects the existence of a specifically German exception.

Identification, we argue, needs to be conceived of in a theoretically broader context than national history. As Haag's chapter shows, national specificities, such as the loss of the German colonies, influenced the representation of racial narratives, yet without necessarily changing the nature of whitened racial dominance. The national fused with what Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Maryrose Casey, and Fiona Nicoll describe as transnational whiteness that evinced flexibility to maintain the unmarked norms of whitened hegemony (2008: ix). Racial idealization and the adoption of racialized identities in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German discourses must be contextualized within a wider framework of colonialism that related not only to the German colonies but to the quest for imperial dominance, as Haag's chapter outlines. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak proposes, the conversion of the (racial) Other into a self is an imperialist endeavor to strengthen the imperialist self by domesticating the Other (1985: 253). The identification with the racialized Other posed a one-sided project that inscribed whitened supremacy in the “adored” subject and thus neutralized its sovereignty, since the racialized Other was not supposed to adopt German identity. In fact the full adoption of European culture was met with harsh satire (black people with top hats cast as objects of derision; the

hateful trope of the *Hosenneger*). We theorize idealization in the context of colonial history and the German ambition of having a share in the imperial world order. This focus enables the understanding of idealization as a complex set of national demands in the transnational web of colonial domination. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have argued that “home” is not a given social space but a negotiation of “limited space” (1987: 311). The notion of a German share in the imperial world order is a product of such negotiation, in which idealization, however partial, was a means of gaining (imperial) space. Analyzing settler appropriations of Indigenous identity (called “indigenization”), Terrie Goldie argues that it bestowed settlers with a native identity in locations in which they were fundamentally nonindigenous (1988: 63). The process of indigenization connected the imperialist self with the immersive presence of a racially unwritten space into which nationalism could be inscribed. Through indigenization, the imperialist self could acquire imperial space, while neutralizing the presence of the racialized Other by refracting and absorbing its pieces into its national self. Idealization, we theorize, inscribed racial difference and white superiority into a system of indigenizing nationalism. The system of indigenizing nationalism thus rested on a deindigenization of other races.

This book shows that the idealization of racial out-groups was a complex process in which racial narratives were under constant transformation and reinvention. Racial narratives were not monolithic and not always of an annihilating nature. They could and did fuse with different factors, such as Indigeneity, colonial politics, and national identities, as this book’s chapters discuss. These narratives were often determined by changing political necessities and shifting identities in which conceptions of cultural space informed the formation of race. Cultural practice, this book shows, was not opposed to racialization. Race and culture formed a field of mutual influence that remained flexible toward political necessities, without ensuing dissolution of racial hegemonies. Instead, this volume argues that cultural narratives rendered the fixity of race more dynamic and adaptable to changing political conditions. Cultural narratives of race were of an “ambivalent consistency” and anticipated the future of race.



This book falls into four subsections organized along the aforementioned theoretical framework of the seeming persistency and transnational dynamics of racial narratives. The first section theorizes the structure and functioning of racial categories. Cultural narratives of

race evoke notions of immutability and permanence. One of the most visible examples of such notions of persistence is the narrative of origin, which marries cultural with biological conceptions of a people's provenience.

Applying the concept of mental mechanism, Ulrich Charpa's chapter presents a theoretical elaboration of origin metaphors. It discusses the link forged between racialist diachronics and synchronics to reexamine those historical phenomena commonly discussed in terms of "ideologies," "discourses," and "patterns of prejudice." Utilizing such diverse popular narratives as that of an Aryan race of Germanic peoples, the writings of Karl Penka, and the *Ahnenerbe's* interpretation of Bronze Age lurs, Charpa draws attention to the highly complex mental mechanisms determining the "origin mechanism." A mechanism, Charpa argues, consists of entities and processes organized to be productive in the racist's demarcation. The chapter explains the origin mechanism as two-dimensional: one dimension consists of ordinary racist synchronics, demarcating the "superior" Germans from "inferior" nations, while the other dimension are diachronics aimed at beliefs related to the origin of Germans. Charpa's delineation suggests that scholarly research on origins never leads to ultimate justified beliefs but to more complex and still open views on the ways in which an entity came into being.

Eva Blome's essay investigates the reciprocal influences of racial narratives in (popular) culture and the realms of biopolitics and science. She examines the alleged threat of "racial intermixture" (*Rassenmischung*) in early twentieth-century German colonial discourse, which supposedly endangered the German culture and nation. She explores the premise that this *Rassenmischung* endangered German culture, and by extension the nation, by discussing points of intersection between this discourse, colonial novels, and canonical texts. Blome's focus is the relationship between political and aesthetic concepts of miscegenation and the discussion of "interracial sexuality," which she identifies simultaneously as a threat to and precondition of the collective that lies at the crux of colonial strategies or power and narration. The chapter investigates intersections of these discourses visible in texts published between 1900 and 1930, which seem contrary only superficially. Arguing that literary concepts of purity and mixture cannot superficially be associated with racist eugenicist programs, Blome analyzes the echo of a figuration used in the biopolitical discourse within the context of poetological visions—and vice versa. The chapter shows that imperialist imagination of miscegenation in the colonial discourse of the German *Kaiserreich* between 1900 and 1915 operated as literary laboratories of racial inter-

mixture. Blome's chapter concludes that the relationship between the biopolitical and the cultural sphere functioned as a crucial element in the colonial and early postcolonial representation of races.

The second section of this book highlights the construction of Germany's internal Other. Cultural narratives of race did not construe simplistic opposites between in-groups and out-groups, but evinced highly complex and at times conflicting formations of identity categories.

Arne Offermanns's chapter presents an analysis of the strongly assimilated German Jew, poet, and literary critic Ernst Lissauer (1882–1937) as an example of such intricate mechanisms of racialized identity formation. Before World War I, Lissauer occupied a public stance for total assimilation and participated in literary attempts to revitalize *Deutschtum*. Later, he reframed his goal as a synthesis of Germanness and Jewishness. Offermanns shows that Lissauer neither developed nor rediscovered his Jewish identity, but continued to defend himself against attempts to exclude him from Germanness in the face of increasing anti-Semitism. Simultaneously, he rejected Zionist criticism of his affiliation with German culture and the demands of anti-Semites and Zionists to accept what they called his Jewish nature. Over time, Lissauer emphasized that he “felt exclusively German.” Offermanns's thorough and careful investigation brings to light the ways in which Lissauer's notion of Germanness was rooted in culture and language. In both, there was room for the inclusion of ethnic minorities, and so, for Lissauer and others, this functioned as an alternative to a notion of Germanness based exclusively on race and blood.

Lukas Bormann's contribution examines the racial cultural narratives of the Jewish student Friedrich Samuel Blach's book, *Die Juden in Deutschland*, for traces of the impact of his colonial studies (*Kolonialwissenschaften*). The author compares Blach's consideration of Jewish “germanization” by participation in sports, social activities, and intermarriage—which the latter hoped might combine the best characteristics of Jewishness and Germanness—with the ideas of the Lutheran clergyman Hans Meiser. This chapter reveals the impact that racial theories enmeshed with German colonial studies had on the generation of young Christian and Jewish academics born around 1880, the year of the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*. Colonial studies students developed new cultural narratives based on theories of race and added their voices to the cultural debate of Jewish and Christian communities between 1910 and 1930, before the radical racial activism of the NSDAP dominated the cultural debate and the social lives of Germany, silencing both Blach and Meiser.

The third section engages with German constructions of the European Other, which were not only manifold but also equally complex, ranging from degradation to idealization.

Helen Roche's chapter maps the ways in which schematic narrative templates of race came to dominate intellectual and historical thought during the 1930s and 1940s. At the turn of the twentieth century, Roche explains, the idea that the destinies of races, nations, and empires were universal and biologically determined was held by a minority of racial theorists. However, within a few decades, such ideas came to dominate National Socialist thought and were propagated in ideological and educational material throughout the Third Reich. Drawing on a variety of examples drawn from these racial interpretations of history, concerning both the ancient and the modern world, Roche argues that this inculcation of a particular racial historical framework follows very closely the model of "schematic narrative templates" devised by the sociologist James Wertsch. His work shows that a crucial element to collective identity formation is provided by forcing historical occurrences to fit into a consistent, immutable narrative framework, which can then be used both to justify and legitimize the actions of the nation or ruling power. The chapter outlines that historical events, in relation to the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the Greek city-states, the workings of the British Empire, and the supposed mission of the Third Reich itself, were presented in a way that assumed the dominance of the Nazis' desired racial schematic narrative template, and which ultimately attempted to discredit all deviant, non-racially motivated interpretations of world history.

Volker Zimmermann's chapter elaborates on quantitative questions connected to a "racial" interpretation of crime in nineteenth-century Germany. It asks what crimes were presented by statistics as typical for the eastern provinces in comparison to other German regions, which circumstances might be responsible, and how influential the stereotype of a typically "Slavic" crime was in scientific and political discourses. The chapter begins by pointing out that in 1882 (in the first publication of official crime statistics of the German Empire) more people were convicted in the eastern parts of the Empire than elsewhere. The statistical bureau in Berlin assumed that the Polish population in these areas was responsible, while the German residents were understood to have less affinity for criminal activity. In the following years, a number of criminologists analyzed the possible connection between crime rate and the Polish population of Prussia. Zimmermann highlights the influence of Cesare Lombroso and his concept of "born criminals," on some authors, but points out that some scientists linked higher crime

rates primarily to social and economic problems and not to questions of “race” or “nationality.”

Johanna Gehmacher’s gender-based analysis of the German-nationalist women’s movements in Austria provides insights into the dynamics of racialized narratives in transnational settings. Beyond Germany, racial narratives were adapted to serve local and national ends. Gehmacher argues that while women’s rights activists enthusiastically embraced newly implemented women’s suffrage in 1918, the latter was rejected as indicative of the collapse of state and society. Political parties in Germany and Austria realized the political potential of the women’s vote in the electorate. With the single exception of the social democrats, however, political parties hesitated to integrate them into higher party offices. Female activists of the pre-war women’s movements who searched for political contexts to exercise their newly won rights did not meet a warm welcome. Gehmacher’s research exposes the ways in which German-nationalist women employed the racist ideology of *Volksgemeinschaft* (Community of the People) in two seemingly contradictory arguments: they used it to promote women’s equality and to pacify virulent gender conflicts. The author argues that this ambiguity is inherent to the concept, which arises from the mutually reinforcing cultural narratives and narratives of race. Gehmacher points out that the ostensible openness of the concept not only allowed for liberals and even former feminist activists to embrace the racist politics of nationalist parties, but provided an important background for the integration of former liberal German nationalists into National Socialist politics. This chapter demonstrates that the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft* gained its power from its inextricable combination of race and culture.

Lara Day’s chapter considers ongoing narratives of race, degeneracy, and deviance present in the German architect and critic Paul Schultze-Naumburg’s writings of the Wilhelmine and Weimar period. Its examination of his *Die Kultur des weiblichen Körpers als Grundlage der Frauenkleidung* of 1901 and *Kunst und Rasse* of 1926 questions the presumed homogeneity of the *entartete Kunst* discourse. It posits that the continuity visible in Schultze-Naumburg’s writing is indicative of a wider continuity of broader cultural parameters, tested and optimized in the so-called *Trutzgau* Weimar, before they became official National Socialist cultural politics and policy. His published work—37 books, over 230 articles, and countless lectures—ranging from art and architectural pedagogy, practice, and criticism to cultural and racial theory, made him one of the most widely read German authors of the first half of the twentieth century. Renowned during his lifetime, his racial and eugenic writing prompted his relegation in postwar German historiography,

which ignored his impact and central position in the cultural and architectural landscape of German modernism. This chapter examines his role as a specific cultural catalyst of radical nationalist and racist art and architectural history and theory, and traces his trajectory through Wilhelmine, Weimar, and National Socialist Germany. His idealistic vision of the German *Volkskörper* was constructed in opposition to and at the expense of “the other,” the non-Germans, who could not possibly measure up. This chapter traces the ways in which the development and introduction of these ideas shaped cultural criticism before and after 1933, to construct an aesthetic counterworld, which addressed dreams, desires, anxieties, and cultural and political criticism and was cast as a possible future waiting to be realized. In it, *Lebenskunst* and the fine arts were figured as palingenetic defenses against decadence and degeneration.

The fourth section makes inquiry into German constructions of the non-European Other that were neither simplistic nor opposite, but could evince radical dynamic and malleability.

Pablo Dominguez Andersen’s essay analyzes the public persona of Henny Porten, Germany’s first film star. To her contemporaries, Porten was *the* embodiment of an unambiguously white, German, and motherly femininity. In her films, the star represented a femininity characterized by its ability to suffer and endure the most tragic fate. By contextualizing Porten’s white stardom within contemporary racial discourses, the author seeks to uncover her persona’s understudied racial dimensions. Despite (or rather, because of) Germany’s sudden decolonization in 1918, Weimar popular culture was obsessed with racial difference. Against the widespread feeling of national crisis and racial decline, scientists like Carl Heinrich Stratz conceptualized white female beauty as an important biopolitical resource. In scientific as well as popular discourses, white film stars like Porten came to stand for Germany’s supposedly unabated racial superiority. Dominguez Andersen reads Porten’s staging as a white woman against the background of a perceived crisis of white hegemony during the 1920s. The chapter shows that in Porten’s films, Weimar blackface was simultaneously driven by desire for and aversion to the Black other. Weimar blackface was expressive of a widespread desire to incorporate valued characteristics associated with racial otherness into hegemonic white identity. Simultaneously, blackface performances like Porten’s ridiculed and denigrated Blackness. While Porten’s blackface act spoke of a widespread desire for racial difference, the article demonstrates that it ultimately served to perpetuate and reformulate existing racist stereotypes and hierarchies.

Oliver Haag's analysis focuses on German representations of Aboriginal Australians from the nineteenth century to the demise of National Socialism. Based on more than 150 publications stretching from the 1870s to 1945, his research investigates the changes in German narratives of Aboriginal people, particularly in widely read journals such as *Die Woche*, *Kolonie & Heimat*, and *Globus*. Haag compares Australian with German discourses of Aboriginal Australians, investigating, from transnational perspective, the influences of Australian narratives on German discourse and German specificities in imaging Aboriginal cultures. Based on international theories of evolutionism, Aboriginal Australians were placed at the bottom of the ladder of human development. The view of the "most primitive stone age people on earth" was a tenacious racist stereotype in the imagining of Aboriginal Australians around the world. This dehumanizing stereotype permeated German cultural narratives of Aboriginal Australians of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Not a single German publication revealed a trace of idealizing representation. This persisting representation changed suddenly in the mid-1920s, when one of the first articles idealized Aboriginal people as a beautiful, intelligent, and proud race. This idealization continued through the late 1920s and only intensified in the National Socialist era when Aboriginal Australians were celebrated as strong, intelligent, and racially pure. The "most primitive" race on earth was suddenly seen as a direct link to Germanic tribes, occasionally rendering Aboriginal Australians the allegorical "brother" race of the Germanic Aryans, the so-called Australian Aryans (*Australarier*). Haag's chapter elaborates on the reasons for this perceptible shift in racial perceptions, investigating both the influence that Australian debates exerted on German authors and the nature of (German) nationalism that resulted in cultural narratives of Aboriginal people, which were at times specifically German. Haag's research finds that the post-World War I narratives of regaining the former German colonies and rebutting reproaches of German colonial guilt primarily pandered to an increase of the idealization of Aboriginal Australians.

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