# static

thoughts and research from global dis:connect


Neuer Abdruck mit den Grenzen des deutsch-englischen Abkommens
und den Ergebnissen der letzten Stanleyschen Reise.

gd:c

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# editorial

Burcu Dogramaci

The Black-Lives-Matter movement also led to the destruction of monuments that still commemorate those involved in colonisation and slavery. At the same time, this iconoclasm fundamentally calls sculptures into question as forms of permanent commemoration. Instead, other practices of dealing with history and remembering violent events have been reflected upon for some time. Bodies as repositories of memory or as mediating instances of remembrance can, on the one hand, appear less representative. Unlike memorials carved in stone or cast in bronze, performative projects can be interactive and appeal to a wide variety of communities. This is conveyed in an article in this issue of *static*.

As a fellow at the Käte Hamburger Research Centre global dis:connect, artist Franziska Windolf examined Munich as a city of migration and exile, a place of departure and a destination for diverse migration movements. It's important to explore the memories of artistic exiles for contemporary post-migrant urban societies and to emphasise a plural, living memory of the forgotten, often repressed histories of the city. Windolf developed the *Memory Person*, a performative monument that carried out various walks through Munich's Giesing district, which is characterised by migration. This was essentially about interacting with the residents, their own experiences and memories of migrants.

In her contribution to *static*, dance scholar Gabriele Klein takes a closer look at performing bodies in digital media. Instead of differentiating between analogue and digital presences in the sense


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of something that can be experienced, she attributes the ability to be touched by performances in digital settings: ‘Digital media have added a new facet to the understanding of presence: sensual co-presence’. This approach expands the global experience of theatre and dance with new possibilities for participation and emotional involvement – perhaps even in the sense of greater accessibility of time – and location-bound performances.

Christopher Balme’s contribution and his reflection on the term race and its dis:connected use in different societies and traditions is also about bodies and their perception: ‘Comparing *race* and *Rasse* demonstrates that, although the words are etymological siblings, their affective power is antithetical. In English *race* is on the one extreme a mobilising call for resegregation (‘embrace race’); in German the word is unequivocally pejorative’. This means that race is not a global concept, but experiences idiosyncratic appropriation.

Chiara di Carlo focuses on travelling actors (and thus also bodies) such as Christian pilgrims, examining how the image of the Turks and the Ottoman world changed in the 16th and 17th centuries as a result of experiences in the Holy Land. Stereotypical ideas and fears meet dis:connectively with actual encounters and produced reports and pictorial formulations, which were in turn received.

Matthias Leanza, on the other hand, looks at the German colonies from their temporal end and ponders the effects of these asymmetrical relationships (with Cameroon, for example) even after the end of the Wilhelmine Empire: ‘What influence do the ties and divides that shape imperial formations have after their downfall?’ This makes it clear that relationships do not end where historical and political breaches occur, but that we are dealing with ongoing reciprocal ties that continue into the present and beyond as, for example, in the form of restitution, compensation payments, the naming of places and so on.

The interrelation between people, architecture and environment is central to Siddharth Pandey’s contribution, which deals with construction in the mountainous landscape of the Indian Himalayas. Pandey’s essay is characterised by a melancholy tone, as the one who experiences the changes as a scholar and photographer (the photographs in his contribution are his own): ‘Thus, a “mountain home” in its prototypical sense necessarily implies a balance between the natural and cultural, an equilibrium that is now almost disappearing under the ill-conceived developments of modernity’. The contributions collected in static discuss the relationship between humans and their designed environment, between bodies and memory, the analogue and digital, the afterlife of history/histories and societies beyond their interruptions.

Burcu Dogramaci, April 2024


Fig. 01
***Burcu* Dogramaci**

Fig. 02 opposite
**Sabrina Moura with Yolanda Gutiérrez (left) and Burcu Dogramaci (right) at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, which housed Sabrina’s exhibition *Travelling Back*.**

# Art and artifice in dis: connec-ted locales


# ‘Not only cast steel or chiselled stone; people can be monuments too’: an exploration of the *Memory Person*

Cathrine Bublatzky &
Franziska Windolf

When we think of monuments, we think of statues, memories and events from the past. They are site-specific, solid, immobile. How can they represent cultural and collective memories that are remembered by many, often very differently, and that over time experience new readings? How can monuments installed by institutions, organisations and states speak to and for everybody?

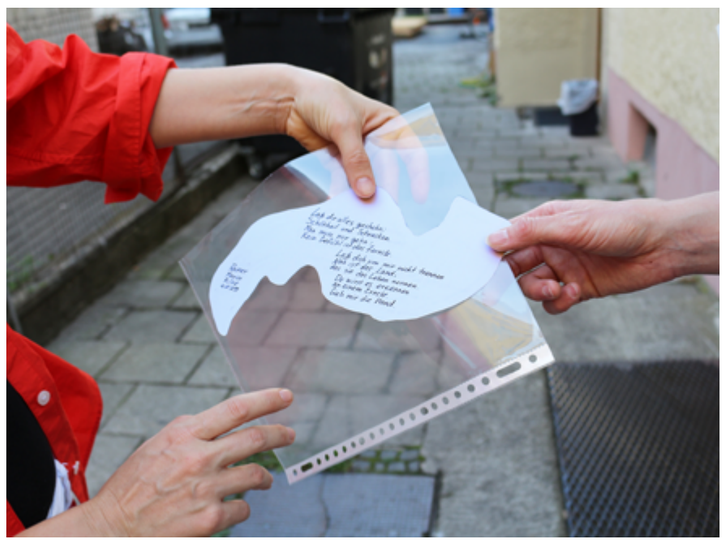
> *‘What bodies can do the creative work of memory? How can the actual labour of memory be foregrounded, its training, sharing and transmission?’*[1]

These questions are relevant to agents in the fields of memory studies and memory production, such as artists, cultural practitioners, institutions, governments and, most importantly, for various communities and people in their everyday lives.

> *‘[It] […] is on the ‘act’ of memory, […], inquiring into the processes of making, constructing, enacting, transforming, expressing, transmitting cultural memory through art and popular culture. […] The notion of ‘performing memory’ thus presupposes agency.’*[2]

1 Liedeke Plate and Anneke Smelik, *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 2013), 2ff.
2 Plate and Smelik, *Performing Memory*, 3.

Fig. 01
**© Leonid Hrytsak**



The *Memory Person* (they/them), ongoing since June 2023, by artist Franziska Windolf offers a common form of memory production. The *Memory Person* performed memory as 'an embodied and localised practice'[3] and was conceptualised in Munich during an artist residency at the Käte Hamburger Research Centre global dis:connect and in partnership with the ERC research project METROMOD (Relocating Modernism: Global Metropolises, Modern Art and Exile at LMU Munich).

In their joint exploration, anthropologist Cathrine Bublatzky and artist Franziska Windolf explore how the *Memory Person* represented a striking tension between the concepts of memory, monument and performance.

## A performative monument

The *Memory Person* strolled through the Giesing quarter, a former workers' district in southeast Munich. The *Memory Person* was enacted by different persons and embodied a variety of identities, genders and agencies. They were strikingly dressed, carrying several commemorative objects and memorabilia on their body. Each object has its own history, producers and memories. At the heart of the public artwork were ongoing and dynamic encounters between the *Memory Person* and passers-by, their lively and personal interactions, their shared stories and memories. The *Memory Person* was dedicated to creative people who have migrated or are living in exile, and anyone can participate.

> *Not only cast steel or chiselled stone; people can be monuments too.*[4]

The *Memory Person* challenges the idea of 'performing memory'.[5] As a performative monument, they work with what anthropologists call the agency of humans 'to create and construct their own reality' and to 'collectively [...] shape themselves in their behaviours and beliefs'.[6] Performing the *Memory Person* entailed an uninterrupted metamorphosis in which their 'form' keeps changing. Their performances merged practices of collecting, storing and re-narrating, all resulting in a changing monument.

> *The public artwork becomes and operates as a performance based on the material interaction and dialogue with people in the streets.*

Those who encountered the *Memory Person* are diverse. Some have long lived in Munich, some have moved from other countries, others have migrated or even fled war and other crises in their

3 Plate and Smelik, *Performing Memory*, 5.
4 Sebastian Adler, Spectator of the performance, 24 June 2023.
5 Plate and Smelik, *Performing Memory*, 7.
6 Plate and Smelik, *Performing Memory*, 7.

←
Fig. 02, 03 top
**© Leonid Hrytsak**
Fig. 04, middle left
**© Leonid Hrytsak**
Fig. 05, middle right
**© Mathias Reitz**
Fig. 06, 07, bottom
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↑
Fig. 08, top
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Fig. 09, bottom
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home countries. All have memories, often not shared with wider publics, as they are intimate and personal, sometimes even traumatic and frightening.

> *The Memory Person is a living monument that does not represent a particular memory or hegemonic narrative. They produce a host of memories of differently shared pasts in cities like Munich, shaped by migration and mobility.*

## A nomadic plinth celebrating diversity

The *Memory Person* is a practical invention. Due to the lack of publicly accessible knowledge about creative migrants, exiles and their work in greater Munich, memories and biographies have to be actively sought out in order to become visible.

> *As a living monument, the Memory Person stimulates an interplay of creative expressions and reflections. The collection of memories and memorabilia, and their endowment to people is open-ended.*

The web of relationships between the memorabilia changed with each new contribution. The *Memory Person* decentralises and mediates whilst connecting shared memories with people.

This flexible and responsive artistic form is open to renegotiation and emergent values. Their sharing and (re-)telling is on display, mediating memory culture as a lively, contested practice.

> *The Memory Person and their counterparts became 'facilitators, knowledge producers, hosts and vision seekers'.*[7]

The *Memory Person* as a performative monument is alive and constantly 'becoming'.

> *But what is actually remembered in such unforeseen encounters?*

7 Vera Hofmann et al., *Commoning Art – Die transformativen Potenziale von Commons in der Kunst* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2022), 34.

Fig. 10, 11 top left and middle
**© Leonid Hrytsak**
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Fig. 13, 15 bottom left and right
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Fig. 14, bottom middle
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Fig. 16 top left
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Fig. 20, 21 bottom middle and right
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## Encountering the *Memory Person*

Often, curiosity and eye contact sparked the encounter with the *Memory Person*. Their colourful, unconventional appearance, which defies stereotypical assumptions about a carnival or the Oktoberfest, attracted attention and made people wonder what the *Memory Person* is all about. Once they grasped the goal of the performance, many started to talk about their connections to Giesing and other residents, artists and migrants. They refered to creative people and places. Upon a second, deeper encounter, they contributed a personal commemorative piece as a fragment of their memory.

> *The creativity of the monument is very broad and includes music, tinkering, crafting, knitting, cooking, graffiti, etc.*

Thus, the *Memory Person* addressed as many people as possible. Their objective was to raise awareness of the lack of memorials for migrants and creative people in the neighbourhood. Everyone was invited to celebrate and honour the creativity and work of past and present exiles and migrants by participating.

The initial performances of the *Memory Person* in June and July 2023 were a curated city walk to sites of exile in Giesing, revealing their continued relevance with a pre-selected audience. The spectators accompanied the *Memory Person* and witnessed their encounters and interactions with passers-by. Participants were invited to carry the memorabilia with the *Memory Person* and to contribute a wish for a future monument, a memory or memento of a creative migrant who once lived or moved to Giesing.

The performances in August and September 2023 were more frequent, focussing only on encounters with residents and passers-by. The route through the district was more improvised, with time and space to revisit people and businesses, play table-tennis, etc. On these occasions, the *Memory Person* collected memorabilia and commemorative articles devoted to creative exiles and migrants from anyone who wanted to commemorate.

How the *Memory Person* embodies the monument and interactions with participants in the artwork is shaped by three elements:

1. The *Memory Person* opens encounters by approaching passers-by during a curated city-walk (June/July 2023) whilst strolling through the neighbourhood without a pre-selected audience (August/September 2023);
2. Alternating subject positions between the *Memory Person* and passers-by/audience;
3. Evolving artwork when the artwork is relationally produced with participants.

All three registers played out in each *Memory Person* performance. But the performances in June/July 2023 were less dynamic and open, as the *Memory Person* held a fixed position as the 'guide' to explain and share knowledge during the curated walk. The material contributions to the performative monument were largely predetermined (written notes on textile/foam rubber prepared by the artist).

> *The evolution of the artwork is produced more 'with' than 'by' the participants.*

By contrast, the performances in August/September 2023 provided more space for give and take, including returning moments and memorabilia. Due to the spontaneity of the encounters, the *Memory Person* and the passers-by had more freedom to participate and exchange objects.

## Ethics of dialogue / 'commoning'

'Commoning' refers to art that is produced with, not by, the participants. The *Memory Person* is the formation and interplay of relationships and their material effects that shape social space and animate memory cultures.

> *'The wider challenge here is that of finding new ways of understanding forms of being-in-common that refuse or exceed the logic of identity, state, and subject. In other words: how to be in common without creating a community?'*[8]

If 'commoning' is when people in a community or neighbourhood become equal in sharing their diverse memories, how does the prescribed content balance with individual conceptions of the monument?

> *The more reciprocal insights, the more equitable the dialogue and the more shared reflections and relationships can emerge.*

Individual identities and property rights don't apply, as is evident in the 'materiality' and 'objecthood' of the performative monument. The focus lies on togetherness and the common production of a new monument, whilst the particularities of each person involved gain space to express themselves.

> *'It is a collective productive resource that is antithetical to property, whether "public" or "private"'.*[9]

8 Harry Walker, 'Equality without equivalence: an anthropology of the common', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 26, no. 1 (2020): 148, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.13183.

9 Walker, 'Equality without equivalence: an anthropology of the common', 147.


The monument belongs to no one, though the objects the monument comprises signify belonging, which inheres in 'commoning'.

## *Amanat*

All memorabilia engender the dialogues. They resemble *amanat*, which is a Persian word meaning something that one gives to another person as a custodian. This requires awareness and trust – a sense of the reciprocal capacity and will to build a meaningful relationship.

> *The object becomes a signifier of a shared moment of remembrance and a common (emotional) value that represents other things such as the conversation, a memory, a loss or a personal or communal journey.*

The *amanat* contributes and 'transforms' the world, memories, exile and identification.

The emerging performative monument becomes a common gift to creative exiles and society from all participants.

> *The different materialities of the performative monument speak for the coexistence of different voices and situations to which the artwork responds or is created within.*

Fig. 22 top left
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Fig. 23, top right
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Fig. 24, 25 bottom
**© Mathias Reitz**



The silver brooches, for example, are given away, so they should be as durable as possible. The *Memory Person* provides a platform for (re)composing and (re)evaluating the objects. Objects converse with each other and provide a 'language' for often ineffable stories. There is no definite way of 'reading' them.

> *Diversity is the core of the performative monument, representing an anti-hierarchical, even decolonising understanding of what the Memory Person as a 'living monument' embodies.*

The actual labour that needs to be done when underrepresented/invisible knowledge is sought out emerges. Contrasting the glorious surfaces of conventional monuments, the *Memory Person* allows for the contradictions, detours and failures that occur when people are building relationships. The *Memory Person* responds to recent decolonial debates and demands for monuments and statues of a contested, colonial past to fall.

> *The past is created by and about participants' voices. The Memory Person performs it without repeating it.*

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Fig. 26
**© Milena Wojhan**

# Digital Stages. Sensual co-presence in hybrid performances

Gabriele Klein

Cultural globalisation since the 1990s would not have been possible without the transition from analogue to digital communication. Digital, global, real-time communication, made possible by smartphones and social media, has created what cultural scientist Felix Stalder calls a 'culture of digitality'.[1] In contrast to the more technical concept of digitalisation, digitality is a concept from cultural studies and the social sciences that grasps the interconnections of the analogue and the digital and identifies them as the main characteristics of culture. Digitality thus refers to a cultural phenomenon of the globalised contemporary society, which both ties in with existing habits of media communication – writing letters or telephoning – as well as decisively changing everyday lives in terms of how people communicate with each other and inform themselves. While digitalisation has made global communication possible for almost everyone who has access to digital devices, it is the digitality of culture that has changed the quality of communication and with it the modes of perception and experience worldwide. Everyday activities – whether eating together, sex, sport, care, work, art appreciation – are increasingly taking place in an 'onlife', as the Italian philosopher Floridi calls the interweaving of the digital and the analogue.[2] And this 'onlife' also characterises the performing arts.

1 Felix Stalder, *Kultur der Digitalität* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016).
2 Katharina Liebsch and I have tried to illustrate and theorise this in our book. This text builds on the argument there. See: Gabriele Klein and Katharina Liebsch, *Ferne Körper: Berührung im digitalen Alltag*, Reclam. Denkraum, (Ditzingen: Reclam Denkraum, 2022).

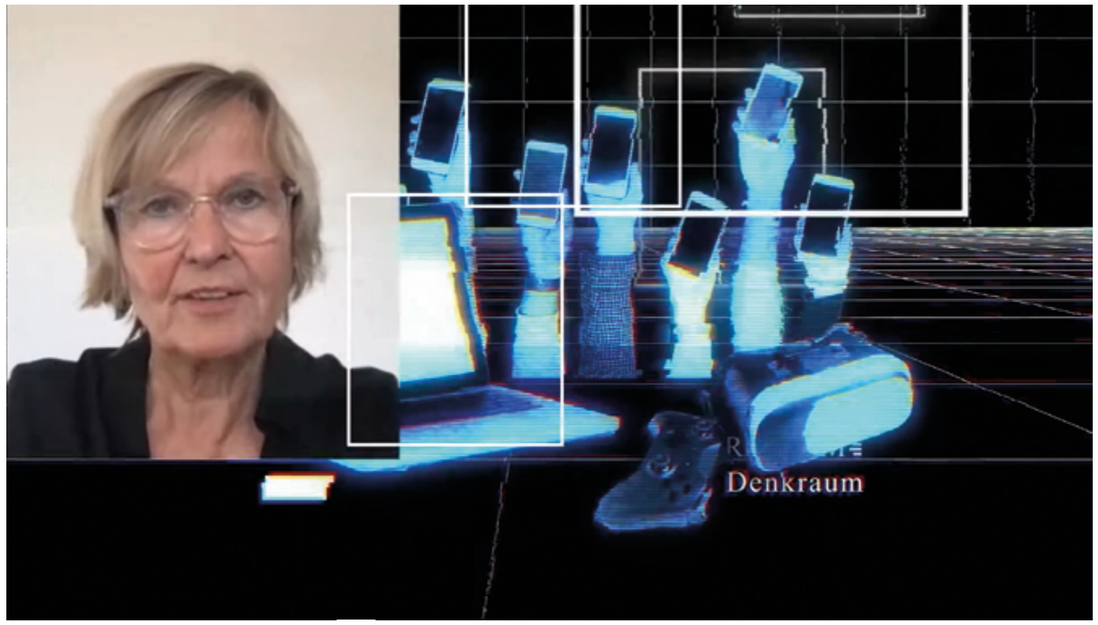


Fig. 1
**Gabriele Klein in a still from 'Ferner Körper. Berührung im digitalen Alltag'. Germany, 2022. Video.** https://youtu.be/4kh3e6Vi6-s?feature=shared.

Debates in cultural studies and the social sciences tend to take digitalisation to imply a loss of proximity, trust, affection, devotion, etc. in a vein of cultural criticism, or as a euphoric expansion of global communication.

I advocate neither cultural pessimism nor naïve euphoria. Rather, I ask how 'onlife' has changed the perception of artistic stage performances.

The stage is the last bastion of the analogue. Co-presence, aura, event, unrepeatability are the central features theatre scholars use to distinguish theatre from other media. But what happens when either the audience is absent from the location of the performance, or the audience is sitting in the theatre but the performers are not on stage? Is it no longer possible to affect the audience? Is it no longer possible to be touched by a piece?

I argue that *touch – even in stage performances – is independent of physical presence*. This thesis diverges from some positions in theatre studies, but it is not new to media and film studies, having been often proposed. However, even media studies usually fail to answer the following question: what determines whether an audience is touched? I claim that this being touched happens *through the possibility and ability of sensual co-presence*. By sensual co-presence I mean an apprehension of sensing, feeling and experiencing, which certain media can induce.[3]

3 See Klein and Liebsch, *Ferne Körper*, 84–98.



## Stage performances in hybrid spaces

Stage art has always seen itself as a bulwark against digitality and virtuality. The theatre, unlike the cinema, is seen as a place of co-presence between performers and audience, and the performance as a unique event shared only among those present.

But this perspective had already begun to falter by the turn of the 20th century. Since then, the theatre has faced strong competition in the form of cinemas. In 1895, the first film ever was shown in the Wintergarten, a famous variety theatre in Berlin-Mitte, and the history of cinema – and with it the history of a global medium – began.

To this day, there remains controversy – intensified by pandemic-induced closures – about the social legitimacy of subsidising theatres as sites of bourgeois representational culture (still or again) in contrast to commercially operated cinemas and what distinguishes theatrical and cinematic experiences. Theatre scholars cite co-presence as one such distinction.[4] In the 2000s, German theatre scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte defended the particular mediality of theatre by emphasising the co-presence of actors and audience members, i.e. their physical presence in one place, as a special characteristic of theatre and deducing from this the uniqueness of the theatrical experience. She understands co-presence as an interaction where actors and spectators assemble in person in a specific place for a certain duration.[5] Fischer-Lichte understands co-presence as a basic condition for the possibility of affective contact with the audience. Since in cinema, television and the internet, audience and actors are not together in one place but scattered globally, according to Fischer-Lichte, they experience no co-presence and no affective connection can take place.

Her concept of co-presence has been repeatedly criticised. As media scholars have shown, being touched is just as possible via analogue and digital media as it is in the theatre. One can root for the main character in a TV movie, empathise with the worries and hardships of the protagonist in a novel, cry while listening to recorded music, get goose bumps or be reassured when a film ends happily. There is no need for both the actors and the audience to be present in the same place; physical co-presence is not a prerequisite for being touched.

Being touched takes place in the tension between sensing, feeling and experiencing, and it changes according to the mediality of the medium and its sensual perception. One is immersed in a novel or film through empathetic understanding and imagination,

4 Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Aesthetics of the Performative* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 38–74.
5 Fischer-Lichte, *Aesthetics of the Performative*, 47.

while at a dance performance one can feel the movements of the dancers and possibly even smell their sweat in the front rows. The choreographer Pina Bausch, for example, loved stages with water, earth and grass because these natural materials also exude unique scents.[6] So can you understand a digital presentation as a co-presentational theatre performance?

The Filipino choreographer and visual artist Eisa Jocson has addressed this question. Jocson took the pandemic as an opportunity to develop the piece 'Manila Zoo', which is the name of the actual zoo and botanical garden in Manila. Six performers are connected to the Mousonturm theatre in Frankfurt, Germany by a video chat. The audience is in the theatre. They show the audience the physical and psychological effects of the pandemic via tile images. They make clear that the consequences of the pandemic are distributed unevenly by class, gender, profession and age. At the same time, the piece deals with power and the economy of the gaze: it shows footage of sex work, the exploitation of performers in Asian Disney parks and the display of bodies and desires put into the picture. In doing so, through the medium of the video chat, the performance gets close to the audience's bodies in a way that would not have been possible in a stage performance.

## The liveness of global stage publics

It is an integral part of media history that media have not only brought about a globalisation of the public sphere, they have also promoted the formation of different, globally distributed media publics and increasingly fragmented the existence of the audience. For example, listening to music on demand is hardly new thanks to reproduction technologies such as shellac and vinyl

Fig. 2
**da:ns fest. 'World premiere of Manila Zoo 2021'. Singapore: National Gallery Singapore, 2022. Photograph. https://www.nationalgallery.sg/magazine/maria-labo-aswang-female-rage.**

6 Gabriele Klein, *Pina Bausch's Dance Theater: Company, Artistic Practices and Reception* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2024).



records, CDs, MP3s and streaming. Analogue media can include live broadcasts, making it possible to enjoy a classical-music concert via radio and to watch a play on television. But today, when stage performances are shown globally, it is via streaming services and cloud media libraries that stream in real time or minimally time-delayed. And unlike broadcasting, for example, where an indefinite number of recipients are connected live via a broadcasting system, users download these products individually and are connected directly to the server as clients.

Multimediality is the hallmark of digitality, which means that the respective media refer to each other. To grasp multimediality in the digital, media scholars Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin have introduced the term 'remediatisation'. They understand this to mean 'the representation of one medium in another medium'[7] and emphasise reciprocal dependencies of media on each other, insofar as they imitate, outdo or otherwise repeatedly reference each other, both establishing and simultaneously undermining the boundaries of individual media. In the course of this remediation, various audiences emerge who, scattered around the world, can follow a concert, an opera or a theatre and dance performance simultaneously. In addition to the audience present, there are other groups of spectators who attend live (remotely) via various media.

From this point of view, a live audience need not be physically present, only 'remotely present'. Accordingly, the media and art theorist Philip Auslander argued as early as the late 1990s in his book *Liveness*[8] that presence only acquires the aura of authenticity and genuineness through awareness of the simultaneous presence of other remote audiences. The physically co-present situation is therefore not fundamental; it is not the original form of social interaction that is then transmitted by media. Rather, what is 'authentic' in globalised media societies is first produced via media transmissions and then interpreted as genuine and auratic. This disrupts perception and induces uncertainty. Is the situation that one is observing real? And can what is communicated through the media be understood as a pure transmission of this reality? Or is it not rather the case that what is considered real is permeated with media?

## Global publics and the disruption of atmospheres

Given the media fragmentation of global publics, it comes as no surprise that attention in the performing arts and media and theatre studies has increasingly shifted to the audience, which has

7 Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 45.
8 Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London: Routledge, 2008).


its causes not only in the 'performative turn' and performance art, but also in the simultaneous incursion of the digital into stage arts.

It is no coincidence that this change of how we perceive audiences comes at a time when digital technologies continue to spread globally. As with performative projects, media users are no longer passive recipients but (inter)active participants. From the outset, they have greater scope to engage, because, unlike in the theatre, they can decide how to sit, for example, whether to interrupt their viewing, cook or iron while doing so, or comment on what they have seen in a chat. They are no longer bound to watch the action silently and to comment on it, if at all, only after the performance.

On-site audiences and remote audiences are each embedded in different configurations of emotional connection. Whether stage performances can impress and affect an audience depends on whether the play has aesthetic quality and the individual performance goes well, which no one can guarantee in advance. In addition, success depends on the individual habits of perception, viewing experience and knowledge of the audience.

Finally, on-site and remote performances differ in terms of the atmospheres in which the viewers find themselves, be it a theatre space, a cinema, in private or in public. This includes the fact that the routines and rituals of cinema, broadcast television and streaming audiences differ from those of audiences physically present at theatres, dance and opera performances.

What the spectators on site have in common is that the atmosphere is created communally, and each audience member follows a similar economy of attention. Their attention is focused, which is fundamentally different from the scattered attention of remote viewing, in which different things are perceived simultaneously and the event is brought into a different atmospheric situation, e.g. into one's own home and circle of friends.

Fig. 3
**blowUP media GmbH. 'Die 138qm Media Stage an der Reeperbahn in Hamburg'. 2021.**
**https://invidis.de/2021/02/dooh-media-stage-launcht-auf-der-reeperbahn**
**(Special thanks to Carolin Baumann)**

## Sensual co-presence

Events in the performing arts, which have historically been based on physical presence, have always been flanked by technical media such as radio, television, photography and film. Here, digital media mean an extension on the one hand and a fundamental change in the patterns of perception on the other. With digital media, there is a simultaneity of various audiences that does not function through physical presence, but through a feeling of being there or being gripped, imagining an atmosphere at the present time. The experience is thus not independent of time and place in the same way as, for example, reading a novel.

Digital media have added a new facet to the understanding of presence: sensual co-presence. Those who are present are co-present, regardless of whether they are on site or remote. The concept of co-presence has moved away from a clear definition of time and place towards a concept that foregrounds sensory perception in digital communication based on participation.

Sensual co-presence arises in a hybrid interplay between stage performance and media transmission. It is dependent neither on the simultaneous participation of the audience nor on their physical presence. Rather, sensory co-presence is based on the ability to immerse oneself in the situation with the senses, to understand what is seen with feeling and to imagine the atmosphere created in the play. This requires the ability to empathise with what is being transmitted. In order to develop these abilities in a globalised culture of digitality and to reflect on them, the performing arts provide spaces for critical experimentation.

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# Highland living and the evolving textures of architectural identity in the Himalayas

Siddharth Pandey

Ask anyone in India to quickly draw a ‘scenery’, and most people would intuitively scribble two or more triangles in the background signifying a mountain range, a thick bar of waterfall gushing from somewhere in between that suddenly transforms into a river, and finally, a single-story house with a pitched roof in the foreground, basking in its idyllic surroundings. This is despite the fact that most of the population does not dwell in the highlands but plains. Nor do contemporary buildings exhibit slanting roofs or one-floor plans as regularly as in the past. This ‘commonplace’, archetypal idea of a scenery for 1.4 billion people might articulate a nostalgic, even childish approach to how imagined landscapes are collectively framed. But therein lies its significance too. For such scenery effortlessly illustrates the notion of ‘ecology’ in its most elemental, etymological form.

As a portmanteau of the Greek words *oikos* (meaning ‘house’) and *logia* (meaning ‘study of’), ecology points to the study of human dwelling. Today, though we largely use the term for its ‘natural’ connotation, the original import of ecology prompts us to consider *both* human dwelling *and* the natural environment in essentially interlinked terms. So while the house of the scenery may seemingly occupy the centre stage, its roof also mirrors the *slope* of the background mountains, literally representing the ‘pinnacles’ of imagination (pun intended).

Architecture’s affinity with the natural environment becomes apparent early to people who grow up in the Himalayas, especially from observing the many ancient villages and small towns strewn

across the landscape. Historians of the Himalayas, like Chetan Singh and Aniket Alam, have argued that what sets traditional mountain societies apart from other subcontinental cultures is their considerable dependence on the natural topography.[1] While in the plains, owing to the land's flatness, one could build vast, multi-storied structures; in the hills, this feature must inevitably shift. With habitable spaces varying anywhere between 400 to 4000 meters above the sea level, the *physicality* of mountains has always played a decisive role in determining the materiality of human-made dwellings. Thus, a 'mountain home' in its prototypical sense necessarily implies a balance between the natural and cultural, an equilibrium that is now fast disappearing under the ill-conceived developments of modernity.

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The idea of 'dwelling' or 'home' is generally considered to be precious, even sacred, despite the fact it may mean different things to different people. Amply romanticised in culture since the beginnings of history and intrinsically linked to the notions of belonging and identity, home indexes the embodied ideals of comfort, safety and bonhomie. Homes *make* us as much as we make them. While the entity of the house is possibly the most obvious transmitter of home, the environment which the house finds itself in – a neighbourhood, a locality, a village, a town, a city, a landscape –contributes equally, if not more, to the character and ambience of home. Hilly regions generously and evocatively lend themselves to this aspect, because the outside and inside are always in conversation with each other. Views from one's windows matter as an essential part of the house itself, as does the last ray of the sun peeling away from the flank of a distant hill. In this way, the word pahaad (Hindi for mountains) routinely become synonymous with ghar (Hindi for home).

India being a largely tropical country dominated by plains, heights continue to define a much-loved and often-revered 'other'. Countless mountains and summits serve as homes of local gods and goddesses, and hill people themselves express great pride and satisfaction in the distinctiveness of their landscape. If the recent 'Happiness Surveys' of India's best states are anything to go by, then the regions bagging the top spots would only prove the link between mountain living and well-being further, given that they are located in the Himalayas.[2] Two ideas frequently characterise the popular perception of mountain life. One is the idealised image of dwelling in a salubrious, scenic setting. The other points to a 'toughness of spirit', a hallmark of all mountain societies, given the undulating terrains and demanding weather conditions that must be navigated daily. From a critical viewpoint, it is tempting to align the first image with the tourist gaze and the second with the 'actual life' of hill people. But while there is some truth in this opinion, the binary doesn't exist in absolute terms. Notwithstanding their hardships, hill people have long been aware of inhabiting a space that is vastly different from lowland cities, a space that invariably demands sensitive attunement towards nature, both aesthetically and work-wise. Such attunement doesn't only include the staple professions of agriculture, horticulture and pastoralism, but also the practices of architecture and spatial planning, which have evolved over many centuries *in concert* with the natural surroundings.

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Among the most well-known traditional building techniques in the Himalayas are the *Kath-Kuni*, *Koti Banal* and *Dhajji-Dewari* styles of the Middle Himalayas, as well as the mud-brick, slate-roof style of the Lower Himalayas. Both the *Kath-Kuni* and the *Koti-Banal* methods are variations of the Cator-and-Cribbage template, which have evolved over hundreds of years in the upper reaches of the mountains. In *Kath-Kuni*, which literally translates as 'wooden corner', alternate horizontal layers of stone and wooden beams are stacked together without any cementing materials to create long-lasting walls, which often support intricately carved overhanging balconies to let sunshine in. Similar to the *Kath-Kuni* is the *Koti-Banal* style, which derives its name from a village in the state of Uttarakhand. The only major exception here is that we sometimes find several vertical timber beams passing through the horizontal wooden beams for added fortification.

Tellingly, these templates were not only used for creating human dwellings but also shrines and shelters for gods, goddesses and cattle. And like most indigenous architecture, the buildings were made by the very people who lived in them or used them in some capacity. In both *Kath-Kuni* and *Koti-Banal*, the ground floor is reserved for cattle, the middle for fodder and the upper most for human habitation. Since it gets extremely cold during winters, the cattle can't be left outside but are drawn into the folds of the walls, and their flatulence and belching helps keep the overall structure warm. The lack of cement and the use of sockets for fixing stone and wood horizontally also ensures superb seismic resistance, given that the whole of the Himalayas lies in an earthquake-prone region.

In the lower and more sprawling valleys, we again witness a perfect synthesis of traditional human vision and environment. Here, the mud-bricked, slate-roofed building style evolves out of the rich presence of clay, slate and pine and bamboo trees. The whole process is contingent on natural forces. For instance,

1 See Chetan Singh, *Natural Premises: Ecology and Peasant Life in the Western Himalaya 1800–1950* (New Dehli: Oxford University Press, 1998); Aniket Alam, *Becoming India: Western Himalayas Under British Rule* (New Dehli: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

2 Reya Mehrotra, 'What makes Himachal Pradesh the happiest state in India', *The Week,* 23 April 2023, https://www.theweek.in/theweek/cover/2023/04/14/what-makes-himachal-pradesh-the-happiest-state-in-india.html#:~:text=It%2C%20therefore%2C%20comes%20as%20no,did%20so%20last%20year%2C%20too.

the bricks are made of a mixture of soil, sieved mud, water and straw, which is pugged with the help of an ox or cow over several days. Cow dung itself is a handy building material, as its ability to reduce the sun's harmful radiation allows it to be converted into a coating that is plastered all over the floor and walls. Along with this, a layer of neem and clove oil is applied to keep the termites away. The building techniques used for cattle residences (often placed along the courtyard) are the same as those used for humans. In the past, the low-raised floors above the cattle pens (otherwise used only for storing fodder) would doubly serve as shelters for nomadic pastoralists during their seasonal migrations from the higher Himalayas to the lower valleys.

Another building technique, *Dhajji-Dewari*, is a variation of the wattle-and-daub template widespread all over Europe, Africa and other parts of Asia. Consisting of an infill of clay, stone and pine needles that form 'patched quilt walls' on an overall timber-caged framework, *Dhajji-Dewari* was popularised during the colonial times. Owing to its resemblance to Victorian Neo-Tudor style of building, the British era architects birthed numerous kinds of hybrid designs at the intersection of Himalayan and European aesthetics, which were again a fine blend of sturdiness, elegance and seismic resistance. All these building styles appeared to stem from the earth, so that instead of seeming like an *artificial* outcrop, they gave the impression of *growth* and natural continuity.

Fig. 1
**Siddarth Pandey. Hidimba Devi Temple, an example of 'Kath-Kuni' architecture in the Kullu Valley, Himachal Pradesh.**



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It was around three to four decades into Independence that hill societies first started experiencing a drastic change in their architectural ethos. Even as the inauguration of cement factories, high-rise structures and newer advancements in building technology ostensibly ushered in novel symbols of modern development, their indiscrete application across vastly varying geographies invariably augured trouble and imbalance. This was especially true for the Himalayan states, where no one had ever dwelled in buildings above a few stories high and devoid of local materials. After 1947, architecture and urban planning more than any other area of human concern couldn't come up with a robust, sustainable and widescale creative vision for itself, the disastrous consequences of which are felt to this day.

India's foremost writer on architecture, Gautam Bhatia, observes that in the Independence era, 'little has changed in Indian planning, urbanism, architecture or ways of thinking. No attempt has been made to define, in a common language, the kind of architecture we would like to live in'. He raises concern over 'the civic disorder of places confounded by squalid government construction, extravagant private commerce and mounting slums', and laments how, 'in the absence of an institutional culture, architecture can only be a private inconsequential activity. People

Fig. 2
**Siddarth Pandey. Mud and slate houses in the Kangra Valley, Himachal Pradesh.**

Fig. 3
**Siddarth Pandey. Cedar House, an example of 'Dhajji-Neo-Tudor' hybrid architecture in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.**

build on whim, day in and day out, adding personal appendages of construction to new or previous assemblies, adding to the jumbled mix'.[3] It is this 'jumbled mix' that overwhelmingly defines the built character of India, including the hills, where the majority of new buildings and city plans are indistinguishable from their lowland counterparts. Not only does this development quash the historical and visual sense of a mountainous terrain by contradicting its gradually-evolved ethos, it also fails in its promise of providing revolutionary alternatives to older ways of living.

Most modern structures erected in hilly terrains hardly guard against any kind of natural calamities, whether earthquakes or floods. In late 2022, the popular pilgrimage town of Joshimath in Uttarakhand hit the national headlines for precisely these reasons, where almost all the houses developed cracks due to the sinking ground they stood on, which was itself constituted of loose landslip-mud. Joshimath now lies at the brink of complete collapse. More recently, in July 2023, the state of Himachal Pradesh witnessed its most calamitous flash floods in collective memory, and among the colossal damage were the houses, roads and other public infrastructure that had been recklessly constructed in the flood plains and along shaky, felled slopes,

3 Gautam Bhatia, 'Without architecture', *Seminar*, no. 722 (2019). https://www.india-seminar.com/2019/722/722_gautam_bhatia.htm.



all within the last few decades. In another such example, many people complain of illnesses resulting out of the imprudent usage of cement and marble in the contemporary dwellings of the higher Himalayas, since they fail to insulate naturally against heat and cold earlier as do indigenously procured materials.

In May 2022, *Time Magazine* carried a cover story that drew attention to this relationship between climate and health. Titled *Western Architecture is Making India's Heatwaves Worse*, the piece shed light on how, after the economic liberalisation of the 1990s, a rapid shift away from climate-specific architecture started to define the Indian landscape, exacerbating the current climate crisis. The article rightly argued that the 'shift was partly aesthetic; developers favored the glassy skyscrapers and straight lines deemed prestigious in the U.S. or Europe, and young architects brought home ideas they learned while studying abroad'.[4] But the title of the piece was partially disingenuous as well, since it cunningly put the entire onus of Indian architectural failure on the West. For one, the heading didn't acknowledge that it was the Indian development model itself that approved of such 'new' ideas in the first place. Secondly, it also presented Western architecture through a monolithic lens, pitting it against the indigenously robust architecture of pre-Independent India, as if there was no indigenous architecture in the West. In truth, however, Western architectural templates have been mixed and merged with Indian styles for centuries, including within the Himalayas (the *Dhajji-Dewari* being one of many examples).

Thus, instead of apportioning the blame solely to Western models, it is crucial to nuance our language of criticism. Bhatia is again instructive here, for while finding flaws in the implementation of Western models on a foreign landscape, he simultaneously draws attention to the quality and context in which this change started taking place. 'Indian architecture's moral dilemma', he says, 'is in fact all the more cruel for ensuring that any and all forms of carefully cultivated Indian practices are quietly buried under the debris of second rate foreign images', the emphasis thus being on *quality* rather than *inspiration*. He adds that 'unfortunately, whenever European Modernism was practiced in [independent] India, the architect was building in exile; mainstream architecture's self-importance always fed on keeping the public in the dark', highlighting therefore the lack of building ideology's moral compunctions.[5] Put another way, an enabling, organic relationship between an independent public ethos and the practice of architecture never truly developed in independent India. This resulted in a strange skewing of creative and practical vision, to the extent that aggressive individualism became the order of the day. This is not to say that India hasn't produced

4 Ciara Nugent, 'Western architecture is making India's heatwaves worse', *Time*, 16 May 2022, https://time.com/6176998/india-heatwaves-western-architecture.
5 Bhatia, 'Without architecture'.

good architects in the postcolonial period. One has only to look at the inspiring works of world-renowned visionaries such as BV Doshi and Charles Correa, who have blended together a strong public sensibility with a sustainable Indian imagination. But given the largeness of the country, such examples are but a drop in the ocean, and Bhatia's remarks thus hold true for India in general.

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What is perhaps most tragic in the context of the Himalayas is the sheer indifference that has characterised the reception of public pleas and protests against such unscrupulous development. Despite the many voices in the region that have strongly stood against the barrage of shoddy novel projects, such endeavours have brazenly proceeded ahead. In the case of Joshimath, for instance, residents had started noticing cracks in their houses more than a year ago, before the crisis became a national headline. But every citizen intervention fell on deaf ears.[6] And as if the Joshimath crisis or the destructive flash floods weren't enough as cautionary events, the Supreme Court of India gave the greenlight in January 2024 to open all the formerly designated 'green areas' of Himachal Pradesh's capital Shimla for new construction.[7] This was done as part of the proposed 2041 Shimla Development Plan, under the pressure from the builders' lobby, which wields astonishing power over politicians, bureaucrats and the judiciary. When the highest judicial body of the country is unable to protect the last remaining forested land, what hope can we have from anyone else? To quote the Himalayan anthropologist-activist Lokesh Ohri,

> the [postcolonial] state itself suffers a deep entrenchment of corporate interests and contractor lobbies. Sane voices in the mountain states are in no position to voice their concern over 'development' policies doled out from the Centre, gratefully accepting, and implementing whatever is on offer. At the Centre, too, there is little effort to hear voices on the ground, the ones that could narrate the truth of the crumbling Himalayas. There is no realization that what works in the plain-based states of the country may not work in the mountains.[8]

Between such frustration and acceptance arises a 'disconnect' in every aspect of mountain life, a disconnect embodied most forcefully by architecture.

6 Kavita Upadhyay, 'How heavy, unplanned construction and complex geology is sinking Joshimath', *India Today*, 16 January 2023, https://www.indiatoday.in/news-analysis/story/how-heavy-unplanned-construction-complex-geology-sinking-joshimath-uttarakhand-2319530-2023-01-10.

7 Satya Prakash, 'Supreme Court upholds Shimla Development Plan – 'Vision 2041', sets aside National Green Tribunal order', *The Tribune*, 11 January 2024, https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/supreme-court-upholds-shimla-development-plan-–-vision-2041-sets-aside-national-green-tribunal-order-580368.

8 Lokesh Ohri, 'Joshimath collapse: Uttarakhand is on the brink', *The Indian Express*, 9 January 2023, https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/joshimath-collapse-uttarakhand-brink-8370295/.

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In his well-regarded 2006 work *The Architecture of Happiness*, the philosopher Alain de Botton explores the many ways in which architecture is directly and indirectly related to the sphere of human emotions and nature, not just functionality. In a beautifully crafted moral statement, de Botton observes that 'we owe it to the fields that our houses will not be the inferiors of the virgin land they have replaced. We owe it to the worms and the trees that the building we cover them with will stand as promises of the highest and most intelligent kinds of happiness'.[9] Likewise, we owe it to the Himalayas that the human endeavours we subject them to do not evolve as cruel forms of domination but rather as sensitive dialogues between the desires of men and the destiny of mountains.

9 Alain De Botton, *The Architecture of Happiness* (London: Penguin, 2006), 267.

Fig. 4
**Siddarth Pandey. Haphazard modern development in Mandi town, Himachal Pradesh.**

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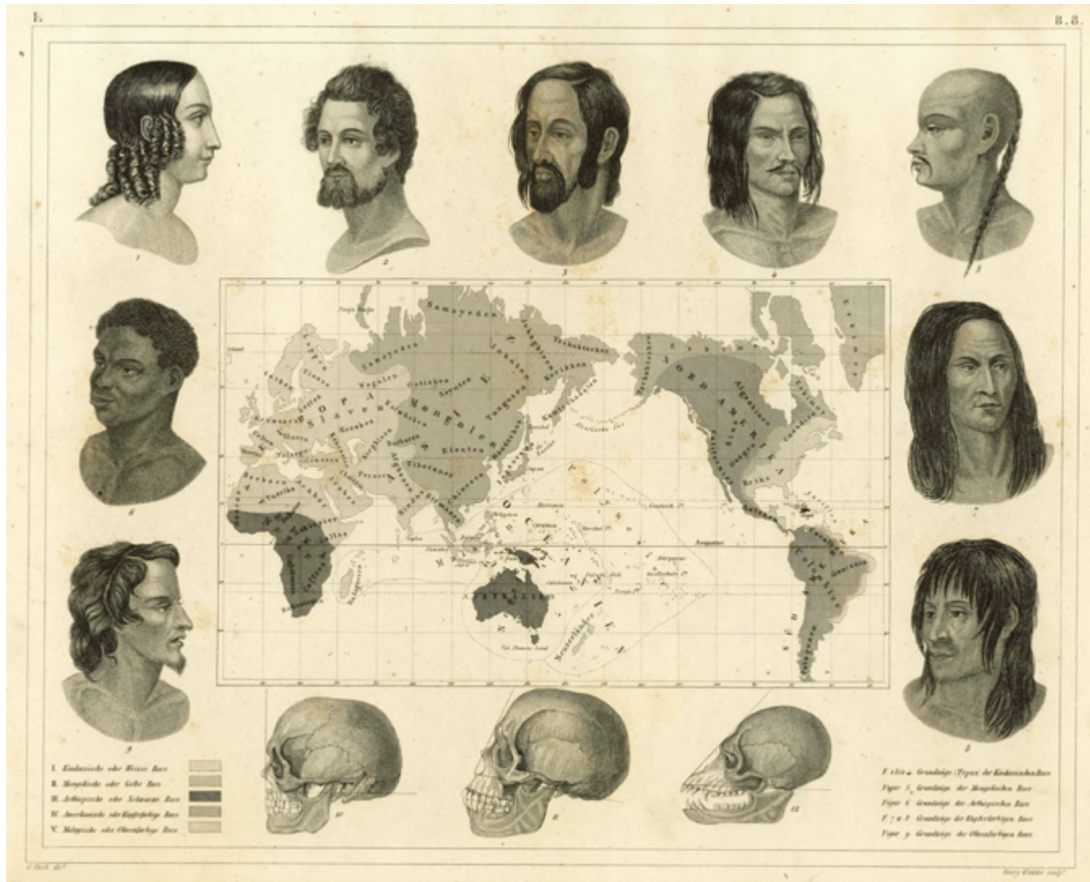
# Colonial hang-overs



## The uses of *race*: dis:connective perspectives

Christopher Balme



*'While, biologically speaking, the idea of individual human races with different origins is as farcical as the medieval belief that elves cause hiccups, the social reality of race is undeniable'.*
Henry Louis Gates Jr.[1]

The US Supreme Court decision to severely restrict affirmative action at two US universities generated strong reactions in the

Fig. 01
**A mid-19th century illustration of Blumenbach's five-part taxonomy with the addition of colour terminology. Note that the category 'Caucasian' extends well into the Indian subcontinent. Note also the spelling of the word *Race* in German. (Source: Johann Georg Heck, *Bilder-Atlas zum Conversations-Lexikon: Ikonographische Encyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*. Vol.1. Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1849, plate 43).**

1 Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Andrew Curran, 'We Need a New Language for Talking About Race', *The New York Times* (New York) 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/opinion/sunday/talking-about-race.html.

US. It was also widely reported in German media.[2] The core question was summarised in the ruling: 'Admission to each school can depend on a student's grades, recommendation letters, or extracurricular involvement. It can also depend on their race'.[3]

But how do you render the most important concept in the ruling – race – when the most appropriate German word, *Rasse*, is verboten? It is the 'R word' in German. How do you report on a ruling containing 'race' in various permutations – race-conscious, race-sensitive, etc. – over 800 times?

You find approximations, which always mean something different. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* opted for 'skin colour' (*Hautfarbe*), another paper used '*Abstammung*'[4] and a third (*Spiegel Online*) proposed *Ethnizität*.[5] So, depending on the paper you were reading, the ruling addressed admission practices that considered either skin colour, ancestry or ethnicity. The terms are different, but they are linked by putative biological determinants pertaining to applicants but beyond their control. For German readers unfamiliar with US universities, it sounded odd that skin colour was a criterion for admittance to one of the world's most famous universities.

My interest is less in the ruling than in looking at the word *race* from a dis:connective perspective. Although advocates of the term claim it is a 'global concept', it is in fact being kept alive by Anglosphere scholars and activists responding to local contexts.[6]

Globalisation does not just apply to transport, trade and economics but also to concepts. The refusal of the German-language media to use the German word for *race* indicates significant differences.

Is it not time to consign the English word *race* to the dustbin of our vocabulary, as is the case in German? Or is the German objection to its version an outlier explicable through its history, which needs to be realigned with US American usage? At a time when discriminatory language is so rifely policed, why is *race* still in circulation? The latter question has become the leitmotif of all critiques of the concept.[7] So why again? Put simply, *race* is also a problem of language use: it exists primarily in the speech act. Or, to paraphrase Henry Louis Gates, while the concept of race might be from the land of fairy tales, its uses create realities.

This essay is divided into three sections: firstly, a brief review of the state of the art in both languages. In part two, we will see how the word has largely disappeared from German. The third part of my paper will analyse language use, contrasting the performativity of the word in both languages. I propose a new linguistic category – affectives – to designate its function. Affectives are a special category of stand-alone words that have the force of speech acts without being embedded in propositional structures, like *race* and *Rasse*.

## The paradox of *race*

The paradox of the race concept dates at least to the 1940s. Put simply, and citing evolutionary biologist David Reich: 'In 1942, the anthropologist Ashley Montagu wrote *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*, arguing that race is a social concept and has no biological reality, and setting the tone for how anthropologists and many biologists have discussed this issue ever since'.[8] A similar critique was, however, published four years earlier by Magnus Hirschfeld in his book, *Racism*, which, although written in German, was first published in English and represents, if not the earliest, certainly the first thorough discussion of the term *racism*, which, deconstructs the biological precepts underlying race.[9]

Despite this lack of 'biological reality', the word continued to be used in everyday speech, official documents, censuses and opinion polls. Henry Louis Gates revisited the paradox in 2022

2 Fabian Fellmann, 'Historisches Urteil des Supreme Court', *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (Munich) 2023, 1.
3 Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College, No. 20-1199 1 (US District Court for the District of Massachusetts 29 June, 2023).
4 'US-Supreme Court lehnt positive Diskriminierung an Unis ab', *Austria Presse Agentur* (Vienna), 30 June 2023, https://science.apa.at/power-search/14090665902102260545.
5 Sven Scharf, 'Supreme Court untersagt Studentenauswahl anhand von Hautfarbe – und das sind die Folgen', *Der Spiegel*, 30 June 2023, https://www.spiegel.de/ausland/affirmative-action-supreme-court-urteil-zur-studierendenauswahl-in-den-usa-der-ueberblick-a-890969d3-6a7b-4cb6-bb91-fde0513c9f87.
6 The claim that 'race' is a 'global concept' is made, for example by German legal scholars Cengiz Barskanmaz, and Nahed Samour in their article Cengiz Barskanmaz and Nahed Samour, ‹Das Diskriminierungsverbot aufgrund der Rasse›, Maximilian Steinbeis ed. *Verfassungsblog: On Matters Constitutional*, Max Steinbeis Verfassungsblog gGmbH, 16 June 2020, https://doi.org/10.17176/20200616-124155-0, https://verfassungsblog.de/das-diskriminierungsverbot-aufgrund-der-rasse/.
7 The history of the term *race* has been written many times and most accounts reach similar conclusions. From isolated usage in European languages in the early modern period, the term solidifies into a 'scientific' taxonomy of the human species in the mid-18th century. For recent accounts, see George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Michael Keevak, *Becoming Yellow: A Short History of Racial Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). 'Theories of Race: An annotated anthology of essays on race, 1684–1900', 2023, https://www.theoriesofrace.com/. The most influential of the late-18th century taxonomies is that proposed by the German physical anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in his 1775 dissertation, *De Generis Humani Varietate*, which he continued to revise until the 1790s, when it was finally translated into German and other languages. Blumenbach proposed the five-part taxonomy Caucasian, Ethiopian, Mongolian, American, Malay that continues to be used today, although with a somewhat different nomenclature.
8 David Reich, *Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2018), 249.
9 Magnus Hirschfeld, *Racism*, ed. and trans. Eden Paul and Cedar Paul (London: Victor Gollancz, 1938). Hirschfeld's book makes the transition of racism from being a 'respectable' concept, at least in fascist circles, to an exclusively pejorative term. See Werner Sollors, *Ethnic Modernism* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 15.

in an op-ed for *The New York Times* entitled *We Need a New Language for Talking About Race*. Gates and his co-author Andrew S. Curran begin with an anecdote from the classroom:

> The other day, while teaching a lecture class, one of us mentioned in passing that the average African American, according to a 2014 paper, is about 24 percent European and less than 1 percent Native American. A student responded that these percentages were impossible to measure, since 'race is a social construction'.[10]

They continue: 'the fact that race is a social invention and not a biological reality cannot be repeated too much. However, while race is socially constructed, genetic mutations – biological records of ancestry – are not, and the distinction is a crucial one.'[11] Neither Gates and Curran, nor the authors of the article mentioned use the term *race*, the student just assumed that is what they were talking about.[12]

Their call for a new language of 'race' is predicated on the term *ancestry* – a shared genetic history that should be 'taught in our classrooms'. I want to remain with the student's phrase 'race is a social construction' as it is the standard definition of race today.

To resolve the paradox between a discredited biological definition and a mainstream culturalist understanding of the term, I asked Chat GPT what it/they thought about the paradox. The answer was characteristically nuanced:

> The concept of "race" has been discredited as a biological concept, but it still persists as a social construct with profound implications for people's lives and experiences. The term "race" is still widely used because it continues to be a powerful tool for social categorization and for understanding and explaining social inequalities and power relations. [13]

In other words, continued use of 'racial' categories and *race* to differentiate and discriminate gives meaning to people's identities. To understand how this use is itself aporetic, we need only look at the US Supreme Court ruling cited above. The court ruled on an action brought by the Students for Fair Admissions, Inc., which claimed that 'race-based' admissions policies at Harvard and the University of North Carolina contravened the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the US constitution.

The ruling accentuates the aporetic nature of race/racial wittingly and unwittingly. Wittingly, in the passages detailing the imprecision and contradictions in the universities' classifications:

> the universities measure the racial composition of their classes using the following categories: (1) Asian; (2) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; (3) Hispanic; (4) White; (5) African-American; and (6) Native American. (...) the categories are themselves imprecise in many ways. Some of them are plainly overbroad: by grouping together all Asian students, for instance, respondents are apparently uninterested in whether South Asian or East Asian students are adequately represented, so long as there is enough of one to compensate for a lack of the other. Meanwhile other racial categories, such as 'Hispanic,' are arbitrary or undefined.[14]

But the judgement also appears unwitting, applying the central term race over 800 times without defining it.[15]

Both the universities and the chief author of the ruling, Justice Roberts, apply the same arbitrary principle. Roberts reproaches the universities for using ill-defined taxonomic criteria: 'The universities' main response to these criticisms is, essentially, "trust us"'. This amounts to 'I know it when I see it' applied to race.[16] However, Roberts never questions the concept itself, only the subclassifications applied by the universities. Perhaps a more granular application of categories might have strengthened their case or, conversely, invalidated the classification system when too many subcategories were adjudicated. How would one distinguish South Asians from East Asians? There is a conflation of *definiendum* and *definiens*. There exists something called 'race', which is a category that universities should not apply when admitting students, but it needs no definition.

This ruling is symptomatic of the state of affairs in the anglophone world, in which the USA is perhaps most attached to the term, but it is applied throughout Anglosphere with little awareness of its paradoxical nature.

10 Gates Jr. and Curran, 'We Need a New Language'.
11 Gates Jr. and Curran, 'We Need a New Language'.
12 The article is: Katarzyna Bryc et al., 'The Genetic Ancestry of African Americans, Latinos, and European Americans across the United States', *American Journal of Human Genetics* 96, no. 1 (2015), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajhg.2014.11.010.
13 Text generated by ChatGPT, 12 November 2023, OpenAI, https://chat.openai.com.
14 *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 27.
15 But see J. Thomas's concurring view: 'race is a social construct; we may each identify as members of particular races for any number of reasons, having to do with our skin color, our heritage, or our cultural identity'. *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 47.
16 *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 26. This recalls Justice Stewart's famous test for pornography: 'I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description ["hard-core pornography"], and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it'. Jacobellis v. Ohio, 378 U.S. 184, 378 U.S. Supreme Court Opinions (U.S. Supreme Court 22 June, 1964).


Fig. 02
**Decline in the use of the word Rasse in German-language books. Source: Google ngram.**

In the UK, the term *ethnicity* has largely replaced *race* as the preferred term of differentiation. For example, when applying for a job, applicants are often requested to note their ethnic affiliations. While *ethnicity* is certainly more differentiated than *race* (Harvard identifies six 'races'), in its application it encounters the same problems as the latter as an administrative and bureaucratic category.

In order to give up the use of *race* like smoking, we need to turn to Germany, which has almost kicked the habit.

## The return of *Rasse*

The German word for race, *Rasse*, has largely disappeared from public discourse, except in reference to animals, where it means breed (Fig.4). No official document will ever ask about your *Rasse*, but certainly your religion, marital status and nationality (and your 'migration background', a euphemism for non-German descent). This disappearance is not linked to any significant semantic differences; in fact, *race* and *Rasse* both derive from the French term *race*.

The difference between use and reference matters here. As a historical term it is acceptable when used retrospectively (say for the Nazi period or South Africa under Apartheid). But on its own, *Rasse* has become a 'pejorative fiction', a term that has 'null extensionality', that lacks an empirical referent.[17] German-speakers once thought *Rassen* to exist, like dragons and unicorns, but the category has fallen out of reality.

The disappearance of *Rasse* has not been adequately described sociolinguistically, but the reasons are obvious. It is now a pejorative term; it is a 'bad word'. This sometimes confounds anglophones when translating race with *Rasse*, as suggested by a policy paper by the German Institute for Human Rights (GIHR): *'Und welcher Rasse gehörst du an'*? It also leads to the situation described above when German newspapers scrambled for 'good' words to report on the US Supreme Court ruling.

This disappearance was not decreed by the government but rather results from disuse. Consequently, the German Institute for Human Rights has sought to get the word removed from the German constitution and some other laws. The German *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) is the most prominent law that retains the word. Article 3(3) reads: 'No person shall be favoured or disfavoured because of sex, parentage, race, language, homeland and origin, faith or religious or political opinions'.[18]

According to the GIHR, this 'leads to an unresolvable contradiction':

> according to the current wording of the article, in the case of racial discrimination, those affected must claim to have been discriminated against on the basis of their 'race'; they must virtually classify themselves as belonging to a certain 'race' and are thus forced to use racist terminology. (...) even though the term 'race' is not open to any reasonable interpretation. Nor can it be, since any theory based on the existence of different human 'races' is inherently racist.[19]

The last days of the previous grand coalition (2018–2021) saw an attempt to change the wording through a cross-coalition alliance and replace *Rasse* with *racism*, but the Christian Democrats prevented it, claiming they needed 'more time' to think.[20]

Debate was framed by a discussion that produced an unusual coalition between lukewarm Christian Democrats, an emphatically opposed alt-right party and the 'progressive' left. Most puzzling

17 See Christopher Hom and Robert May, 'Pejoratives as Fiction', in *Bad Words: Philosophical Perspectives on Slurs*, ed. David Sosa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 108.

18 *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany*, trans. Christian Tomuschat et al. (Berlin: Federal Ministry of Justice, 19 December, 2022). https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_gg/englisch_gg.html#p0023. The original reads: 'Niemand darf wegen seines Geschlechtes, seiner Abstammung, seiner Rasse, seiner Sprache, seiner Heimat und Herkunft, seines Glaubens, seiner religiösen oder politischen Anschauungen benachteiligt oder bevorzugt werden'.

19 Hendrick Cremer, *"... und welcher Rasse gehören Sie an?" Zur Problematik des Begriffs "Rasse" in der Gesetzgebung*, Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (Berlin, 2009), 4. My translation.

20 Despite a commitment by the current coalition to replace *Rasse* with a formulation such as 'racist discrimination', the government announced in February 2024 that it would not proceed with the plan. The main reason cited was an objection by the Jewish Council whose president, Josef Schuster, argued that the word is a reminder of the persecution and murder of millions of people – 'primarily Jews'. Nevertheless, some individual states have removed the word from their constitutions. Vera Wolfskämpf, 'Wort "Rasse" bleibt doch im Grundgesetz', *tagesschau* (Berlin) 2024, https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/grundgesetz-rasse-begriff-100.html.

is the agreement between the left and extreme right. An example of the 'progressive' argument was published by two young legal scholars, Cengiz Barskanmaz from the Max Planck Institute for Anthropology in Halle and Nahed Samour, from the Humboldt University in Berlin:

> It is only through such a term [*Rasse*] that racism, i.e. discrimination on the basis of race, becomes nameable and addressable. The legal concept of race is a necessary instrument to be able to address racism (including anti-Semitism) in terms of anti-discrimination law [...] Erasing the term negates historical and contemporary inequalities and risks trivialising them. [...] This approach is part of Critical Race Theory, which is precisely a response to white jurisprudence [...]. Black legal scholars demand race as a central category of analysis.[21]

The authors argue that the concept of race is not only a legal term but is an important 'global concept' in the social sciences – a concept that in turn is used by jurisprudence. The authors resist attempts to 'blur' the distinction between 'race' and 'racism':

> Race is in the world, the socialisation of us all, the perception of this world, is racialised. Race does not exist, but it has an effect. [...] It would seem grotesque if, after the murder of George Floyd, *we told our US colleagues* that our lesson was to erase the discriminatory factor of race.[22]

So Germany should retain *Rasse*, at least in its legal documents, perhaps elsewhere, as a *Mahnmal* (memorial) to its history and to show solidarity with US colleagues. Ultimately, they argue for a stronger, more prominent representation of the word *Rasse*, which implies reintroducing it into public discourse.

Perhaps the key lies in these somewhat contradictory sentences: 'Race is in the world, the socialisation of us all, the perception of this world, is racialised' and 'Race does not exist, but it has an effect'. In English the first sentence is unremarkable: 'The perception of this world is racialised'. This is a standard statement of the 'race is a social construct' tradition. In German, however, the word *rassialisiert* creates a different effect. It sounds simultaneously neologistic – not (yet) part of everyday German

21 Barskanmaz and Samour, *Das Diskriminierungsverbot*. My translation. The German original reads: 'Rasse ist in der Welt, unser aller Sozialisierung, die Wahrnehmung dieser Welt, ist rassialisiert. Rasse gibt es nicht, aber sie wirkt'.
22 Barskanmaz and Samour, *Das Diskriminierungsverbot*. Emphasis added.



usage[23] – and anachronistically Nazi, as the Nazis created many compound words based on *Rasse*, which are today all pejorative. Its use in this text signals an attempt to introduce Critical Race Theory vocabulary into the German context, though its effect is either incomprehension or resistance. After decades of 're-education', which involved ridding German of Nazi vocabulary, it is challenging for many Germans to understand that Critical Race Theory advocates reactivating racial thinking and even resegregation in some institutional contexts.[24]

The second sentence – 'Race does not exist, but it has an effect' – is paradoxical. To make sense of it, we need the philosophy of language.

## Affectives

> *'the meaning of a word is its use in the language'*
> (Wittgenstein, §43 *Philosophical Investigations*)[25]

J.L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* is among the most influential philosophical texts of the 20th century. My argument is indebted to Austin, not because the words *race* or *Rasse* are performatives but because Austin's approach to language can help understand the paradox before us. This section asks what happens to a word when, on the one hand, embarrassment leads to its disuse, and on the other, it is used excessively despite an atrophied conceptual and scientific meaning. I argue that the word in both languages has the same status; it has become an 'affective'.

Similar to Austin's performatives, affectives are words that generate emotions. They are usually nouns, sometimes adjectives, seldom verbs. Their mere enunciation, often without the contextualisation of a sentence, can evoke strong emotions, focus administrative minds and even influence politics. In their stand-alone power, their emotional effect outweighs the semantic aspect. Yet there is no grammatical description of such words.

23 See, for example, Anna von Rath and Lucy Glasser, 'Zehn schweirig zu übersetzende Begriffe in Bezug auf Race', Goethe-Institut 2021, https://www.goethe.de/ins/us/de/kul/wir/22139756.html. The authors state that the word *rassialisiert* 'sounds strange in German. For a legal perspective, see Doris Liebscher, 'Rassialisierte Differenz im antirassistischen Rechtsstaat. Zu Genealogie und Verfasstheit von Rasse als gleichheitsrechtlicher Kategorie in Artikel 3 Absatz 3 Satz 1 Grundgesetz – und zu den Vorteilen einer postkategorialen Alternative', *Archiv des öffentlichen Rechts* 146 (2021): 87. More generally: Judith Froese and Daniel Thym, eds., *Grundgesetz und Rassismus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022).
24 An example is the movement 'EmbraceRace' (www.embracerace.org), which advocates even for young children to learn about racialised thinking. For this and many other examples, see Yascha Mounk, *The Identity Trap: A Story of Ideas and Power in Our Time* (New York: Penguin, 2023).
25 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), 20.

According to linguistic philosophy, affectives would belong to the category of 'expressives': words or statements that convey speakers' attitudes to a referent.

Affectives have perlocutionary force. Austin divides any speech act into three parts: locution (its meaning); illocution (the execution of an action by uttering the sentence); and perlocution 'the achieving of certain effects by saying something'.[26] Affectives are primarily perlocutionary because, in the case of race for example, the locutionary meaning is so unstable.

While *affective* as a noun is new, the class of words is not, even though they seem to be proliferating. Examples of old affectives include *blood*, *popery*, *liberty*, *fascism* and *communism*. New affectives might include *globalisation*, *neoliberal* and *capitalism* – the list is dynamic. It changes as words gain and lose emotive power. Censors have long implicitly recognised affectives' power in their lists of proscribed words.[27]

The growing number of one-letter words – the n-word, the p-word and I would like to add the r-word – testify to affectives' growing importance. One-letter words are extreme examples, words that dare not speak their names. And while all slurs are affectives, not all affectives are slurs.[28]

Affectives can necessarily stand alone. Just enunciating the word by itself will usually create its effect. Hence, they are closer to expletives than performatives, which require a sentence and the right conditions to function.

While one expects to encounter affectives in political contexts, a recent development that interests me in the discussion of race, is the use of affectives in scholarly-academic discourse, where they often masquerade as concepts. Or, more accurately, in academic contexts many terms are transitioning from concepts to affectives. A word like *colonialism* has reasonably clear conceptual boundaries for historians, but it is increasingly an affective among scholars. The same applies to *capitalism*: in certain contexts, its enunciation generates an affective, negative response.

There is also a trend towards double affectives to generate additional emotive power. An example would be the current use of

26 J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 120.

27 The late-18th century Habsburg theatre censor Franz Karl Hägelin compiled a list of words that were not permitted to be uttered on the stage under any circumstances. They included *tyrant*, *despotism*, *enlightenment*, *liberty* and *equality*, the latter two were considered to be particularly inflammatory. See Norbert Bachleitner, 'The Habsburg Monarchy', in *The Frightful Stage: Political Censorship of the Theater in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Robert Justin Goldstein (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 236.

28 See George Orwell: 'The word Fascism has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies "something not desirable."' George Orwell, 'Politics and the English Language (1946)', in *A Collection of Essays* (London: Harvest Books, 1981), 160.


*racial capitalism* or *settler colonialism*. These terms, because they are relatively new, have emerging conceptual boundaries. They are serious academic concepts but are increasingly used also as affectives to signal a history of injustice. Affectives position the user in a particular ideological context and often nudge the addressee to conform by force of emotive appeal or the desire to join a scholarly community.

Affectives can also happily accommodate antithetical meanings. The epithet *socialist* as a noun or adjective can be a badge of honour, especially for a British academic, while it functions as an invective in most US political contexts. What links the extremes is the word's affective appeal.

The German *Rasse* is an affective whose enunciation can cause discomfort, even embarrassment, rather than anger or outrage (the default affect of our times). As soon as a suffix or prefix is added, the word loses some affective force. *Rassis-mus* or *Rassen-politik* are not affectives because they contain a level of observation or abstraction than weakens the affective charge.

While *Rasse* is clearly an affective, *race* is still in transition. However, I argue that, while it is residually a concept in its redefinition as a social construct, *race* is used increasingly as an affective. This derives from its almost total synonymity with *racism*.

As the 2021 Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities in the UK makes clear, a discussion of the 'language of race', a subheading in the report, is in fact a discussion of racism; the two terms are

Fig. 03
**Cover of Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities.**

used interchangeably.[29] The granular analysis of social disparities in the report pinpoints ethnic not 'racial' categories, distinguishing Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi 'ethnicities' (and white ethnicities as well). The report also uses the qualifiers racial and ethnic interchangeably until they become synonyms. Even the title itself is ambiguous: is race a qualifier of disparities or is it a separate topic next to ethnic disparities? In this title race functions as an affective, while ethnic disparities constitute a proposition.

In academia, *race* usually references racism and discrimination. 'It's all about race' is a statement where the noun is an affective. The referent is, however, probably racism and discrimination, not the outdated taxonomic theory of differentiating the human species. However, the latter, the biological residue, as Stuart Hall argued, clings to the new meaning. The semantic instability of *race* is counteracted by its emotive signalling. Affectives are thus dynamic, gaining and losing emotive charge over time.

Within the category of affectives, *race*, unlike *Rasse*, is still a dual-use word, emotive and conceptual, whereby the conceptual aspect is paralysed by the paradox, as the underlying taxonomy has been discredited and the categories to which it ostensibly refers appear increasingly unfit for purpose. If analysing disparities in income, education or health outcomes is the object, then differentiation by ethnicity is the more precise analytical tool.

But are affectives speech acts? No and yes. In the precise technical sense defined by Austin and expanded by Searle, probably not because they lack the illocutionary component which depends on verbs. Affectives are speech acts, not in the individual utterance, but through the force of repetition. Paraphrasing John Searle: the aim is not to represent reality but to change reality by getting reality to match the content of the speech act, the representation.[30] The classic performative does this simply by uttering the right combination of words within a correct set of conventions.

Through repetition affectives can achieve similar perlocutionary effects. There are no such things as human races, plural, but uttering *race* enough times and with enough emotive force can will them back into existence. It is not that we know races when we see them, but we reify them by saying them.

29 *Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities: The Report, Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities* (London, 2021), https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities.

30 This is one of John Searle's arguments, referring to a class of facts, he terms institutional, which require speech acts to exist. See John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1995).

## Conclusion

The decline of race as a scientific-biological concept and its re-emergence as a social construct in the Anglosphere means that the latter understanding of the term is currently received wisdom. The word's semantic contradictions were adumbrated by Stuart Hall to the point where he suggests, in jest, to give up the term like smoking. This suggestion is no laughing matter in Germany where the word *Rasse* has largely disappeared from public discourse because it is intuitively recognised as a proscribed term. Its advocates reside at opposite ends of the political spectrum, where anti-racist activists and right-wing conservatives both support the word's retention in the German constitution, where it is rather an embarrassment.

The struggle over antithetical meaning(s) should end in semantic exhaustion, but this is not the case. *Race* is being used more than ever in the Anglosphere. Part of this 'success story' is due to sheer repetition; by using the word, we don't just naturalise it, we enable its continuing existence. However, today its use is primarily affective, not conceptual. Comparing *race* and *Rasse* demonstrates that, although the words are etymological siblings, their affective power is antithetical. In English *race* is on the one extreme a mobilising call for resegregation ('embrace race'); in German the word is unequivocally pejorative.

Such terms belong to a category termed here *affectives*. These words have the force of speech acts in their ability as stand-alone terms to generate emotions and even create communities of adherents and opponents. While affectives have always been used in politics from placards to pamphlets to censorship, the new situation is in academic discourse, where affect is rivalling or even displacing concept. When scholars write *race*, they are usually referencing discrimination, in which case *racism* is more precise. Using *race* in any other context is probably for affective, not analytical purposes. *Race* naturalises racism because it reasserts the word's biological traces.

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# The German colonial empire, seen from its end

Matthias Leanza

How do empires end? What influence do the ties and divides that shape imperial formations have after their downfall? And in what sense is the nation-state a legacy of empire rather than its negation? My essay ponders these questions using the example of German colonialism. It looks at the evolution of the German colonial empire from the 1880s in light of its sudden demise following World War I, arguing that the nation-state – in Germany and overseas – was among its most important legacies. However, the nation-state could only become a legacy of German colonialism because anticolonial activists failed to convert the overseas empire into a federated entity. The attempt at federal reform may have been futile, but it would have significantly altered the historical trajectories of all countries involved. Therefore, despite being an unlikely outcome, this counterfactual provides a contrast to assess what nation-states ultimately are – a product of decaying empires.

## Anticolonial federalism

On 27 June 1919, the day before Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles, Martin Dibobe (born Quane a Dibobe) submitted a petition to the German Colonial Office on behalf of the Duala

people in Cameroon.[1] This was not Dibobe's first interaction with the Berlin authorities. Born to a Duala chief in 1876, Dibobe had been in Germany for over two decades by that point.[2] He had come in 1896 to participate in a state-organised colonial exhibit at the Berlin Trade Fair, where 103 individuals from various German colonies were to present their ways of life to the public.[3] After the fair, some decided to stay and settle in Germany, including Dibobe. He completed vocational training and subsequently worked as a train driver for Berlin's urban rail and subway company. A fierce supporter of the November Revolution, Dibobe hoped to negotiate better terms for his people and extend the emergent republican order to the German colonies, all of which had been seized by the Entente Powers during the war. In June 1919, he organised a petition to the Weimar National Assembly with the support of 17 other members of the Duala community in Germany before turning to the Colonial Office again, as he had done on previous occasions.[4]

The list of demands was extensive, but they all revolved around one core issue: Cameroon and the other German colonies in Africa were to remain with Germany. The residents of those territories were to be treated as Germans with equal rights and duties, regardless of their race or ethnicity.[5] The petition proposed introducing the German civil code and judicial system, including the abolition of corporal punishment, indentured labour and all colonial laws enshrining racial segregation.[6] At the same time, Cameroon was to maintain some degree of autonomy from Germany's federal government – for example, by having three presidents of its own, each representing a different population group, and a separate tax fund – while obtaining permanent representation in the Reichstag.[7] As the primary liaison between the Duala diaspora in Germany and Cameroon, Dibobe seemed to be the natural candidate for this office. The German government would retain the right to appoint Cameroon's governor, who had

1 32-point petition to the Imperial Colonial Office in Berlin, personally submitted by Martin Dibobe together with Thomas Manga Akwa on June 27, 1899, BArch, R 1001/7220, 224–9. A reproduction can be found in Adolf Rüger, 'Imperialismus, Sozialformismus und antikoloniale demokratische Alternative: Zielvorstellungen von Afrikanern in Deutschland im Jahre 1919', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenchaft* 23, no. 7 (1975).
2 For a biographical sketch, see Eve Rosenhaft and Robbie Aitken, 'Martin Dibobe', in *Unbekannte Biographien: Afrikaner im deutschsprachigen Europa vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden (Berlin: Kai Homilius, 2008).
3 Anne Dreesbach, *Gezähmte Wilde: Die Zurschaustellung "exotischer Menschen" in Deutschland 1870–1940* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2005); George Steinmetz, 'Empire in Three Keys: Forging the Imperial Imaginary at the 1896 Berlin Trade Exhibition', *Thesis Eleven* 139, no. 1 (2017).
4 Stefan Gerbing, *Afrodeutscher Aktivismus: Interventionen von Kolonisierten am Wendepunkt der Dokolonisierung Deutschlands 1919* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 57–60; Andreas Eckert, *Die Duala und die Kolonialmächte: Eine Untersuchung zu Widerstand, Protest und Protonationalismus in Kamerun vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Münster: Lit, 1991), 216–25.
5 Points 1 and 20.
6 Points 2 t0 4.
7 Points 26, 27 and 31.


to ensure law and order in the territory.[8] However, the incumbent could be held accountable and even dismissed if the population expressed dissatisfaction with his performance. By contrast, all other public offices had to be occupied by people of African descent, thus establishing a permanent balance of power between the former metropole and the former colony. Although this proposal clearly distinguished between German citizens from Europe and German citizens from Africa, Dibobe left no doubt that the latter, too, were Germans in every sense of the word. 'Since we are Germans', he explained, 'we demand equality, even if in public life we are always referred to as foreigners. This misapprehension must be eliminated by the present government through public announcements'.[9]

8 Points 5, 7 and 15.
9 Point 20. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author.

Fig. 01
**Martin Dibobe as a train driver in Berlin. (Image: Historisches Archiv der BVG)**

These demands implied nothing less than the transformation of Germany's colonial empire into a multiracial and transregional federation, where being German and being African were fully compatible. The proposal demonstrated that decolonisation did not necessarily mean secession, as it did in anticolonial nationalism.[10] Instead, exit from empire could also involve attempts to reshape existing ties according to the principle of plurality. Dibobe represented a political stance best understood as anticolonial federalism, which combines elements of both connection and disconnection. Later generations of activists from various European colonies would adopt this stance independently of him, as it promised to reconcile equality with difference.[11]

The Minister for the Colonies, Johannes Bell, one of the envoys who signed the peace treaty in Versailles, even briefly mentioned the Dualas' petitions in the National Assembly.[12] But in the end, Dibobe's radical proposition for a postcolonial Africa, which was centred on federal integration rather than national independence, went unnoticed. In Bell's account, the loyal people of Cameroon simply preferred to share their fate with Germany, preferring to perish together than become French spoils of war.

## Double standards

Neither Dibobe's plea for a federal reorganisation of the German colonial empire nor the widespread desire among the German population to retain their imperial status, as voiced by Bell and many other officials, had any chance of success. Dibobe lost his job and tried to return to Cameroon with his German wife and two of her children from a previous marriage in 1921, but they only managed to travel as far as Monrovia, where he had relatives.[13] The pervasive rhetoric of national self-determination notwithstanding, the Entente Powers had no intention of abolishing colonial rule. Instead, self-determination became a justification for carving up the empires of the vanquished in Europe, while the overseas empires of the victors remained intact and even expanded through the mandate system.[14] When discussing the terms of the peace deal, one deputy of the National Assembly, the high-profile conservative Arthur von Posadowsky-Wehner, expressed his discontent as follows: 'There is so much talk among our enemies of the self-determination of peoples. Why doesn't England introduce this right to self-determination in Ireland? Why doesn't it introduce this principle in India? Well, one interprets things as one pleases'.[15]

The recurrent theme of national self-determination had arisen in the National Assembly's opening session in February 1919. Friedrich Ebert, the chairman of the Social Democratic Party, welcomed the elected deputies in his capacity as the head of the provisional government, particularly emphasising the female deputies present.[16] Although women remained underrepresented – only 37 of the 423 deputies were women – they participated for the first time in the legislative process, evidencing that the November Revolution had infixed the principle of popular sovereignty. Invoking US President Wilson's principles for the postwar order, Ebert maintained that the German people had earned favourable peace terms, including Germany's reinstatement as a colonial power. They were just as much victims of Prussian militarism as the countries against which the German Reich had waged war: 'The German people have fought for their right to self-determination at home; they cannot now cede it to the outside world'.[17]

Certainly, the victors had a different idea for Germany's future.[18] As the peace treaty stipulated, the occupied German colonies were to be administered as League of Nations mandates based on a concept of imperial guardianship, while the country's multiple border regions in Europe became part of neighbouring nation-states, some newly created.[19] This uneven application of self-determination followed the colour line, deepening the North–South divide in the global political system.

For Germany, this regulation entailed a double loss of empire, both in Europe and overseas, which was met with a politics of resentment. During the war, when state borders were fluid, Germany's imperial ambitions evolved into grandiose visions of hegemony over continental Europe and central Africa, but the war resulted in the opposite. Beyond being vanquished, the perceived relegation to an 'ordinary' nation-state without imperial

10 Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Naitonalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
11 Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); Frederick Cooper and Jane Burbank, *Post-Imperial Possibilities: Eurasia, Eurafrica, Afroasia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023).
12 'Proceedings of the German National Constituent Assembly, 96th Session', 330 (11 October 1919): 3023.
13 Robbie Aitken and Eve Rosenhaft, *Black Germany: The Making and Unmaking of a Diaspora Community, 1884–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 103, 07–08.
14 Robert Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917–1923* (London: Penguin, 2017); Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815 to the Present* (New York: Penguin, 2012), ch. 5–6.
15 'Proceedings of the German National Constituent Assembly, 40th Session', 327 (22 June 1919): 1122.
16 'Proceedings of the German National Constituent Assembly, 1st Session', 326 (6 February 1919): 1.
17 'Proceedings of the German National Constituent Assembly, 1st Session', 2.
18 Margaret MacMillan, *Peacemakers: Six Months that Changed the World* (London: John Murray, 2001), ch. 13–16.
19 See also Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

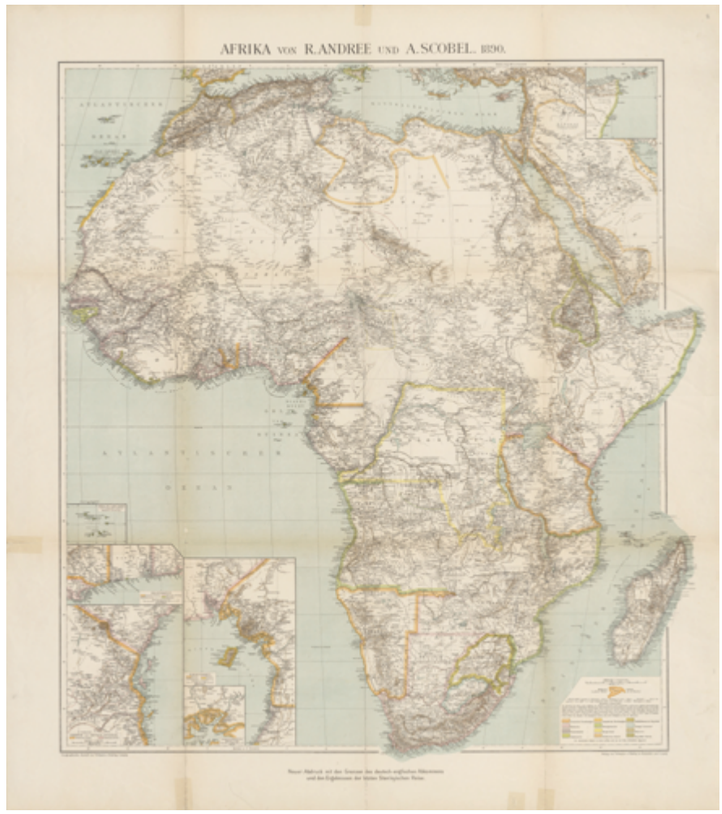
peripheries prompted deep resentment.[20] This sentiment is a desire for revenge despite, or because of, an inability to change the situation, giving birth to what Nietzsche called 'indignant pessimists'.[21] This affect is arguably what spurred the numerous protest rallies advocating for the return of the colonies in the run-up to the peace settlement, and it was clearly manifested in a revisionist discourse centred around the theme of the 'lie of colonial guilt'.[22] For the political campaigner Martin Hobohm, the loss of Germany's colonial empire amounted to nothing less than the confinement of the German people in Europe, cutting the country off from its global lifelines.[23]

## Spheres of influence

This view echoed a pervasive theme of colonialist discourse in Germany since the mid-19th century. Recalling Malthus, this discourse crystallised around the idea that colonial settlements represented a solution to overpopulation.[24] Emigration could help curb unchecked population growth, but it created its own problems – most notably, the loss of able-bodied men and women to competing nations. Expanding on Adolf Zehlicke's adaptation of Malthus to the German situation, Friedrich Fabri advocated in 1879 for the establishment of colonial settlements.[25] To this end, a national emigration office was to be established and convert emigrants into settlers.

However, the first impulse toward realising this idea came from voluntary associations, not from the state. The German Colonial Association, founded in 1882, soon emerged as the key player. It was conceived as a national umbrella organisation to coordinate various local initiatives. At the inaugural meeting in Frankfurt, the explorer and founding member Hermann von Maltzan explained that the previous associations were too local to affect the national consciousness and politics. That is why it had become imperative to create a nationwide umbrella organisation.[26] At the same time, Maltzan urged his fellow members to lower their expectations

20 Sean Andrew Wempe, *Revenants of the German Empire: Colonial Legacies, Imperialism, and the League of Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).
21 Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Nachgelassene Fragmente: Anfang 1888 bis Anfang Januar 1889', in *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, vol. 8.3, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972), 219.
22 There were at least 84 such rallies between December 1918 and March 1919, as documented in BArch, R 1001/7220, 262–72. The term 'lie of colonial guilt' was popularised by Heinrich Schnee, *Die Koloniale Schuldlüge* (Munich: Süddeutsche Monatshefte, 1924).
23 Martin Hobohm, *Wir brauchen Kolonien* (Berlin: Engelmann, 1918), 23..
24 Klaus J. Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit: Revolution – Depression – Expansion* (Freiburg: Atlantis, 1975), 135–44. See also Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany*, trans. Sorcha O'Hagan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
25 Freidrich Fabri, *Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien* (Gotha: Perthes, 1879), 86.
26 Hermann von Maltzan, *Rede des Freiherrn Hermann von Maltzan auf der constituierenden Generalversammlung des Deutschen Kolonialvereins zu Frankfurt am Main am 6. Dezember 1882* (Berlin: Julius Sittenfeld, 1882).




regarding the capabilities of such an entity. Establishing settler colonies was not yet viable. Fabri, who also attended the meeting, vehemently objected, arguing that only colonial settlements would forestall further population drain.[27] The statutes that the assembly eventually adopted, however, were unequivocal: in keeping with the founding call, they rejected the maximalist program of settler colonies and constrained the organisation's purpose to lobbying for trading colonies without participating in their establishment.[28]

Germany thus had a national lobby organisation promoting colonial expansion, but it had no colonies – something that only began to change thanks to a disparate group of political entrepreneurs.[29] In the early 1880s, various merchants and companies pushed for their ventures on the African coasts and in the Pacific to be protected by the German state. They hoped

27 Report in *Frankfurter Journal und Frankfurter Presse* on 6 December 1882, BArch, R 8023/253, 46.
28 Statutes of the German Colonial Association in Frankfurt, BArch, R 8023/253, 68–9.
29 For recent studies, see Kim Sebastian Todzi, *Unternehmen Weltaneignung: Der Woermann-Konzern und der deutsche Kolonialismus 1837–1916* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2023); Dietman Pieper, *Zucker, Schnaps und Nilpferdpeitsche: Wie Hanseatische Kaufleute Deutschland zur Kolonialherrschaft trieben* (Munich: Piper, 2023).

Fig. 02
**Andree, R. and A. Scobel. 'Karte von Afrika'. Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1890.**

for a competitive advantage over other businesses, as foreign investors would either have to pay heavy tariffs or be excluded from the market. These scattered, largely uncoordinated initiatives took place in an international environment where competing powers jealously monitored each other's expansion, which fuelled desires for territorial gains and fears of falling behind. The result was a self-reinforcing process of expansion that only halted when virtually all available territory had been claimed. The West Africa Conference of 1884–85 sought to regulate this process in its broad outlines, but expansion into the African interior and its piecemeal partition were organised in a decentralised manner through bilateral agreements.[30] The expansion into the Pacific followed a similar pattern.

Thus, the European powers carved out their spheres of influence. Of course, this was not a new phenomenon, as a debate among legal scholars and political scientists around 1900 quickly established.[31] The spheres, however, were comparatively small and gave rise to a patchwork of territorial claims. The imperial periphery could no longer be integrated into overarching hemispheres as in earlier times when far fewer powers were involved. Initially, these spheres were only defined near coastlines, while the hinterlands remained open as frontiers for potential expansion. Yet even after the borders had been settled, which in some cases took until the 1900s, these territories were far from evenly integrated. When the German Reich took them over from private companies and gradually established colonial states, they displayed a pronounced core–periphery structure.[32] The reach of the colonial administration was limited to a core that faded into an active military frontier, pushing gradually into the hinterland. In virtually all colonies, some regions remained beyond colonial authorities' control, often where local communities had already formed their own states. These regions represented an internal exterior, located within the sphere of influence but outside the colonial state.

This layered governance architecture informed how the victors of World War I redistributed the German colonies as mandated territories among themselves. For instance, the East African kingdoms of Burundi and Rwanda, administered by the Germans on the model of indirect rule, were transferred to Belgium, while Tanganyika fell under British control. It is nonetheless remarkable how enduring the borders of the originally established spheres of influence have proven. Even a century later, around three-

30 Norbert Berthold Wagner, *Die deutschen Schutzgebiete: Erwerb, Organisation und Verlust aus juristischer Sicht* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002), 172–74.
31 Martin Hasenjäger, *Der völkerrechtliche Begriff der "Interessensphäre" und des "Hinterlandes" im System der außereuropäischen Gebietserwerbungen* (Greifswald: Kunike, 1907); Andreas Weissmüller, *"Die Interessensphären:" Eine kolonialrechtliche Studie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung von Deutschland* (Würzburg: Boegler, 1908).
32 For example, see Giorgio Miescher, *Namibia's Red Line: The History of a Veterinary and Settlement Border* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).


quarters of the land borders established under German rule persist today.[33] Together with the borders changed in the interwar period, they represent the fault lines along which the colonial empires disintegrated in the decolonisation that followed World War II, leaving territorial fragments behind that underlay postcolonial nation building.[34]

## In the public eye

The colonial empire also left a lasting imprint on the metropole and its political system. As already indicated, the loss of Germany's status as a colonial power coincided with an internal reorganisation that transformed the country into a republic. Max Weber, who was directly involved in the preparation of the

33 For more information, see *African Boundaries: A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopaedia*, ed. Ian Brownlie and Ian R. Burns (London: C. Hurst & Co, 1979).
34 Jörg Fisch, *The Right of Self-Determination of Peoples: The Domestication of an Illusion*, trans. Anita Mage (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 203–17.

Fig. 03
**'Die deutsche und englische Interessensphäre an der Ostküste von Afrika'. Munich: Franz Moises, 1889.**

draft constitution by the Ministry of the Interior, suggested as early as December 1918 replacing the office of the Kaiser with a democratically elected president.[35] As a political official, the president's job was to counterbalance the bureaucracy with its rational, legal orientation and bring an element of charismatic leadership into the state machinery. If Weber had had his way, the new constitution would have omitted the federalist aspects of the German state altogether. But he was well aware that such a radical change had no chance for political reasons – the Entente Powers would never allow it.[36]

Nevertheless, the constitution endowed the Reich president with far-reaching powers. These included the right to dissolve the Reichstag and the prerogative to appoint the government, which consisted of the chancellor and his ministers.[37] However, as the central organ of the legislative branch, the Reichstag could hold the government accountable and even withdraw its confidence, while the Federal Council (*Reichsrat*), the representation of the states on the national level, maintained a back seat in the political process.[38]

This power-sharing arrangement was the result of developments that had been underway for several decades by that point, developments that had been fuelled by Germany's overseas expansion. It is true that the German colonies were mainly governed by ordinances and decrees, rather than by proper law, which made it easy to circumvent parliament with its legislative powers.[39] In addition, decisions regarding the overseas empire were at the discretion of the Kaiser, who, on behalf of the Reich, exercised sovereignty (*Schutzgewalt*) over the colonies, officially referred to as protectorates (*Schutzgebiete*).[40] This meant the Kaiser alone could decide on spending the revenues generated by the colonies, but this was precisely the problem. The colonies' inability to support themselves financially gave the Reichstag a powerful lever. Because this situation was not expected to change, the Reich leadership decided early on to show goodwill and involve the Reichstag in determining the overall colonial budget, not just the subsidies.[41] Thus, the national parliament drew strength from the financial weakness of the overseas empire.

Each year, from January to March, parliament transformed into a public forum where representatives from various parties ruminated on Germany's colonial affairs. The spokesperson of the Reichstag's Budget Commission, Ludwig Bamberger, set the tone in 1891. As was to become customary in future budget debates, he briefly addressed some technical issues before moving on to an hour-long assessment of the colonial policy.[42] The head of the Colonial Department in the Foreign Office, the legal expert Paul Kayser, responded right away, making some corrections and explaining his department's policy.[43]

Although the Reich leadership could usually secure majorities for its budget proposals, the Reichstag showered it with criticism during the legislative process. Each party used the colonial issue to raise its profile.[44] Above all, however, they collectively created a counterpart – the government – whose members had to explain themselves to the public. A particularly strong catalyst for this development were the countless cases of violent misconduct by colonial officials that impelled the government to act.[45] For example, Kayser maintained in 1893 that no abuse of office across the colonies had ever come to his attention.[46] The Reichstag made sure that this would soon change. In early 1894, the Social Democrats placed some hippo whips and other instruments of torture on display in the Reichstag building, explaining that they had come directly from Cameroon.[47] Just the day before, August Bebel had raised the brutal flogging of the wives of Dahomey soldiers ordered by Cameroon's deputy governor, Heinrich Leist.[48] Reich Chancellor Caprivi, who attended the session, felt compelled to react and rejected the allegations against Leist.[49] However, his refusal to take responsibility elicited criticism, even from the conservative parties, recalibrating expectations regarding the accountability of senior government officials.[50] Tensions peaked in 1906 when the Reichstag denied additional funds for the contentious war against Herero and Nama in South West Africa. In a bold move, the government dissolved parliament,

35 Max Weber, 'Aufzeichnung über die Verhandlungen im Reichsamt des Innern über die Grundzüge des der verfassungsgebenden deutschen Nationalversammlung vorzulegenden Verfassungsentwurfs vom 9. bix 12. Dezember 1918', in *Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Wolfgang Schwentker, vol. 16: Zur Neuordnung Deutschlands, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988), 56–90; Weber, 'Deutschlands künftige Staatsform', 98–146.
36 Weber, 'Aufzeichnung über die Verhandlungen', 57.
37 Ernst Rudolf Huber, *Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte seit 1789, vol. 6: Die Weimarer Reichsverfassung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1981), 307–28.
38 Huber, *Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte*, 349–89.
39 Harald Sippel, 'Recht und Gerichtsbarkeit', in *Die Deutschen und Ihre Kolonien: Ein Überblick*, ed. Horst Gründer and Hermann Hiery (Berlin: be.bra, 2018), 201–21; Wagner, *Die deutschen Schutzgebiete*, 304–06, 14–19. See also Marc Grohmann, *Exotische Verfassung: Die Kompetenzen des Reichstags für die deutschen Kolonien in Gesetzgebung und Staatsrechtswissenschaft des Kaiserreichs (1884–1914)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).
40 Wagner, *Die deutschen Schutzgebiete*, 273–82.
41 Grohmann, *Exotische Verfassung*, 70–76.
42 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 131st session', 118 (1 December 1891): 3172–78.
43 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 131st session', 3178–79.
44 Woodruff D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 143–50.
45 For a vivid case study, see Rebekka Habermas, *Skandal in Togo: Ein Kapitel deutscher Kolonialherrschaft* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 2016).
46 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 55th session', 128 (1 March 1893): 1346.
47 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 53rd session', 134 (19 February 1894): 1340. However, the instruments of punishment were laid out the previous Saturday, 17 February.
48 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 51st session', 134 (16 February 1894): 1294–95.
49 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 51st session', 1295.
50 'Proceedings of the Reichstag, 51st session', 1296.

asserting its constitutional dominance in this trial of strength.[51] But this incident also revealed the undeniable influence the Reichstag had gained over national politics. The colonial empire made no small contribution to this structural transformation, which bolstered a core institution of the emergent German nation-state. Its effects would outlast the colonial era, forming part of its enduring legacy.

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# Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the 16th–17th centuries: disconnectivities and the shaping of cultural imaginaries

Chiara Di Carlo

I want to show how pilgrimage to the Holy Land helped mitigate Europeans' fear of the Turks and the Ottoman world. Especially the accounts of the Holy Land produced between the 16th and 17th centuries are valuable testimonies that show us not only a real journey, but an inner journey as well. These accounts reveal how fragile the popular imaginary was, made up of the pilgrims' own fears, highlighting the dynamics of cultural disconnections and reconnections, especially between Italian-Christian and Ottoman-Islamic popular culture.

Starting with the European popular context, I will show the common imaginary of 'the Turk' and how pilgrimage, along with other factors, eased collective fears.

## The European imaginary

Between the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Christian defense of Vienna in 1683, the Turkish question was one of the most debated topics in European society. Thanks to the advent of movable-type printing, publicity, diaries and the *Itinera Terrae Sanctae* (i.e. pilgrims' travelogues) contained news about the Turkish world, culturally distant but geographically now at the gates of Christian Europe.[1]

1 Massimo Moretti, 'Dalle "pancacce" ai piatti. Percezioni e rappresentazioni del Turco nella cultura popolare del Cinquecento', in *Storie intrecciata. Rappresentazioni e conoscenza dell'Islam nell'Italia moderna*, ed. Serena Di Nepi (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2015), 131–32.


Fig. 01
**Giuseppe Maria Mitelli, *Compra Chi Vuole / Avisi Di Guerra / Carte Di Guerra / À Buon Mercato, À Due Bolognini / L'una*, 1684, Etching, 193x270, Gonnelli Firenze, sale 31 / grafica & libri, 29 October 2021, lot 17.**

From the 15th century, knowledge about Islam was increasing, especially under Pope Pius II (1458–1464), who encouraged the study of Muslims. According to the pope – and this view became common over the years – the success of Muhammad's religion was mainly due to the supposed licentiousness of the Turks' sexual mores, who were perceived as lustful and sodomites. This narrative aroused concern among European publics.[2] An example is found in *I cinque libri della legge, religione, et vita de' Turchi et della Corte, et d'alchune guerre del Gran Turcho* by Menavino. The author writes: 'The vice of lust is still present among Muslims, considering it a completely abominable behavior. According to their law, everyone is obliged to legitimately take a wife to eradicate this sin and all other forms of fornication. Women are so strongly tainted by the vice of sodomy that it is impossible for many of them to abstain from it. Since all are tainted by this stain, they do not punish each other and it is stated in their Quran that those who practice this vice are lost'.[3]

Europeans' images of the Turks were largely influenced by prints and news stories. A clear example is found in a graphic work by the Bolognese artist Giuseppe Maria Mitelli (fig.1). The print depicts passers-by, scandalised and frightened, fleeing, refusing to take in the news, as the seller holds a portrait of a man wearing a turban – an image that was widespread as early as the mid-16th century.[4]

2 Moretti, 'Dalle "pancacce" ai piatti', 136.
3 '*I vitio della Lussuria hanno anchora i mahomettani per cosa in tutto abominevole. Perché secondo la lor legge, tutti sono costretti di pigliar legittima sposa, per tor via questo peccato, et ogni altra fornicazione [...]. Conciosia che oltra le donne, sono molto imbrattati del vitio della sodomia; in modo tale, che non è possibile per alcuna via, se ne possano astenere. Et perché tutti sono macchiati di questa pece, fra loro non ne danno punitione, et hanno nel loro coran, che quelli che usano questo vitio, sono perduti*'. Giovanni Antonio Menavino, *I cinque libri della legge, religione, et vita de' Turchi: et della corte, & d'alcune guerre del Gran Turco* (Venice: Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1548). Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author.
4 Moretti, 'Dalle "pancacce" ai piatti', 139.

In Central Europe, more so than in Italy, images of the Turk were aimed at terrorising the people. In Germany, Erhard Schön's 16th-century engravings are among the crudest. One example is the woodcut depicting a fragment of the Turkish invasion of Hungary, where in the foreground a procession of Turkish soldiers is led by mounted officers holding spears with impaled heads (fig. 2).

*Contra Turcos* images and writings all had the same function: to question the reputation of the Sultan's government, falsely promoted as welcoming and tolerating Christian communities that had accepted his rule. The purpose was also to show the dangers of the Ottoman world through bloody scenes, grotesque portraits and tales of abuse.[5]

However, during the same period, the Church's anti-Turkish campaign was met with reactions beyond fear and irritation. Numerous Italian intellectuals, in an anticlerical attitude, wished for the arrival of the Turks. Niccolò Machiavelli is an example for this. In his historical-political writings, he expresses deep esteem for the sultan, while despising Christian propaganda that aimed to spread fear and misrepresent the Turk.[6]

## Pilgrimage and travel reports

The cultural and figurative context described up to this point represents the frame of reference for the pilgrims and those who read their travelogues. Despite the temporal and cultural distance,

5 There are numerous texts expressing negative views of the Turks, especially the writings of Bartholomew Georgijević. See: *Profetia de i Turchi, della loro rovina, o la conversione alla fede di Christo per forza della spada Christiana; Specchio de' lochi sacri di Terra Santa, che comprende quattro libretti, si come leggendo questo seguente foglio, potrai intendere.*
6 Niccolò Machiavelli, *Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli cittadino e segretario fiorentino*, vol. VIII (Florence: Piatti, 1813), 60.

Fig. 02
**Erhard Schön, Fragment of a broadside on the Turkish invasion of Hungary, 1532, print, 42.32 x 29.17, © The Trustees of the British Museum.**

the *Itinera ad Loca Sancta*[7] allows us to 're-enter' those lands thanks to another important aid: images. The writers were the same pilgrims who, between the 16th and 17th centuries, set out for spiritual reasons, but also for 'entrepreneurial'[8] and 'political' ones. Their reports often reflected what the powerful in Christendom expected to hear. Especially Bartholomeo Georgijević[9] spoke of the Holy Land as 'alienated and doomed, pervaded by dissensions and neglected by the principles of the Christian Republic, it is a barbarian land now under the rule of the Turks.'[10] He told of holy places in and around Jerusalem, sadly damaged by the 'infidels' who ruled and guarded it. He also tells of the terror they instilled in the traveller-pilgrims, who were forced to endure numerous restrictions. For example, they were confined to the monastery where they resided lest they be robbed or killed, and they were not allowed to possess any kind of weapon.[11] However, even this fear proved fallacious; some writers, such as Aquilante Rocchetta,[12] recounted that they had never seen or heard of pilgrims killed by the Turks,[13] thus proposing an alternative image.

7 Most of the books analysed here date from the 16th and 17th centuries. Some of the texts were covered in my 2019 dissertation as part of a project coordinated by Prof. Massimo Moretti (University of Rome La Sapienza) on reconstructing the image of the last Duke of Urbino, Francesco Maria II della Rovere through the study of his 'Libraria.'

8 Bernard von Breydenbach's Peregrinationes plays a fundamental role in the modern age, anticipating the volumes examined in the text. It is the first illustrated travel book, a mix of diary and guidebook, representing a path of culture and knowledge. Breydenbach's pilgrimage was selective, with a mystical experience complementing the primarily commercial purpose: an opportunity to bring his pamphlet to life. He set out intending to write a book on his return, to include illustrations that would reinforce the words, and hoping to have it published. That is, he grasped the possible outcomes (including commercial ones) of printing, bringing the painter Erhard Reuwich along to create the illustrations. Gabriella Bartolini and Giulio Caporali, *Peregrinationes. Un viaggiatore del Quattrocento* (Rome: Vecchiarelli, 1999), 12–18.

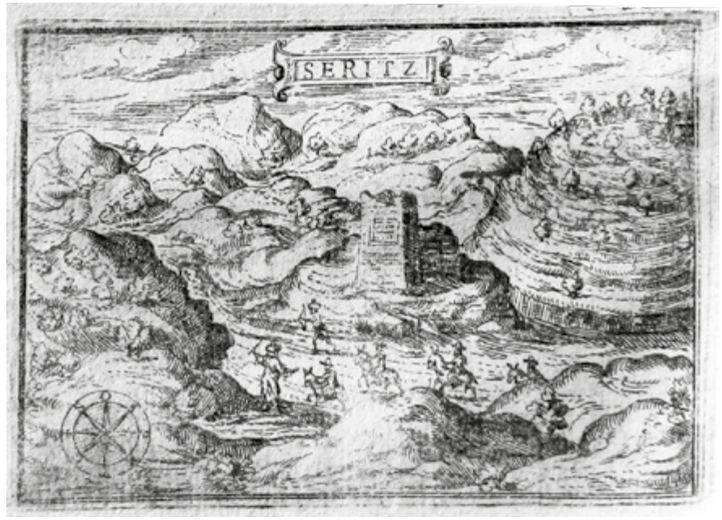
9 Georgijević was born in Croatia around 1505 and was captured by the Turks after the Battle of Mohács in 1526. He spent time in captivity, working as a farmer and shepherd, and escaped in 1535. In Rome from 1540 to 1560, he published works and received a modest pension as a 'humiliated'. The veracity of his experience as a prisoner and pilgrim is in doubt, as he may have imagined part of it.

10 *'Alienata e biasimata, abitata da discordia e negligenza dei principi della Repubblica Cristiana e terra di barbarie occupata dai Turchi.* '

11 Bartolomeo Georgijević, *Specchio de' lochi sacri di Terra Santa, che comprende quattro libretti, si come leggendo questo seguente foglio, potrai intendere* (Rome: Bolano, 1566).

12 Rocchetta, a Calabrian traveler, wrote a report about his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1598. This diary offers a detailed account of his experiences at holy sites, providing valuable information for future pilgrims.

13 'On this Voyage, we have rarely heard of Pilgrims being killed by Arab thieves or captured by Turks. On the contrary, at sea, the boats we pass belong to Turkish merchants who do not carry out acts of capture or theft. On the contrary, many times they provide us with assistance when we need it, supplying us with wood and water when there is a shortage'. Aquilante Rocchetta, *Peregrinatione di Terra Santa e d'altre provincie di Don Aquilante Rocchetta Cavaliere del Santissimo Sepolcro. Nella quale si descrive distintamente quella di Christo secondo gli Evangelisti* (Palermo: Alfonzo Dell'Isola, 1630).




Again, Georgijević regretted not only the cost of living, but also a kind of slavery due to the toll required to enter the Holy Places. Zuallart's[14] text contains an exemplary print, showing pilgrims stopped on their way to pay the fee (fig. 3).[15] However, the Croatian author's regret was the same felt by a Muslim pilgrim visiting Jerusalem in late 900 AD, when the Arab geographer Al-Muqaddasi recounted the disadvantages of visiting the city in Catholic hands. Among his complaints were the cost of living, the prices of public baths and hostels, and the oppressive vigilance of the guards at the city gates that curtailed trade.[16] 'Then again, how could it be otherwise,' Muquaddasi wonders, 'given the prevaricating manner in which Christians behaved in public places'.[17]

Among the difficulties pilgrims faced on arrival in the Holy Land were the language barrier and obstacles to their travel. The *Itinera Terrae Sanctae*, such as Zuallardo's, suggested getting an interpreter, often a local Christian who would also act as a guide and mediator. Some travellers even recommended hiring a Janissary (*Yeni Ceri*), a kind of bodyguard, to accompany them on the journey while also serving as an interpreter.

A crucial aspect of economic-cultural mediation concerned the 'rental' of animals and negotiations with the 'muccari'

14 Zuallart was born in 1541 in Ath, Belgium. After a trip to Germany and Italy with Philippe de Mérode, the latter suggested to Zuallart that he make a pilgrimage to Palestine to compile a guidebook on his return. With great will, Zuallart learned the art of drawing in a few months and was thus able to illustrate the story with realistic images, besting other works' figurative art and becoming very successful.

15 Jean Zuallart, *Il devotissimo viaggio di Gerusalemme fatto, & descritto in sei libri* (Rome: Francesco Zannetti and Giacomo Ruffinelli, 1587), 118.

16 Attilio Brilli, *Il grande racconto del viaggio in Italia. Itinerari di ieri per viaggiatori di oggi* (Bologna: Il mulino, 2019), 72,23.

17 Brilli, *Il grande racconto*.

Fig. 03
**Seritz in Jean Zuallart, *Il devotissimo viaggio di Gerusalemme*, print, 1586, 60x85. © Bibliotheca Terrae Sanctae. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0)**

(ar. *Mukari*).[18] Despite obvious difficulties, these were the first interactions with the native population, including, of course, the Turks.

Over the course of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, fear gradually faded as the pilgrims progressed through the narrative and the journey. This change is evident in the positive descriptions of Turk territories, as in the case of Ramla as described by Jean Zuallart. Giovanni Francesco Alcarotti,[19] recounting the beauty of Tripoli, also challenges his preconceived beliefs. His enthusiasm peaked in Jerusalem, a cosmopolitan city full of temples from different religions. The stories go beyond descriptions of the city, detailing local culture, including dishes, markets and practices such as tattooing. Initial forced interaction with the Turk turns into appreciation, with pilgrims praising the loyalty of the Janissaries as escorts: 'Although the Turks are enemies of our faith, they would rather be cut to pieces than allow mistreatment of those they protect and have in their custody'.[20]

The pilgrimage lasted years, allowing travellers to become accustomed to and integrated into the Turkish world. Especially Alcarotti's text, initially critical, changed perspective, recognising positive aspects in the people and cultures encountered. One example is the observations about how Muslims attended to Christian shrines and pilgrims' dwellings. The author also recalls a dinner he attended with Turkish officers from the local garrison: eating while sitting on a carpet, 'according to their custom', he was happy to converse with the guests and to learn how many places sacred to Christians were also sacred to Muslims.[21]

Upon returning, the experiences of each pilgrim-cum-writer became the experiences of each reader, each listener. Far more pilgrimage texts were in vernacular Italian than in Latin, which expanded their readership, and the images opened their contents even to the illiterate. The battle of Lepanto – when in 1571 the Holy League defeated 'the unbeatable Turk' – would further assuage the fear of an Ottoman invasion, but the encounters – as well as the clashes – in the Holy Land between pilgrims and Turks contributed to an image devoid of fears and preconceptions.

By reflecting on these texts, the experience of Christian pilgrims of the past can be contextualised, offering insights into a broader reflection on the confrontation between Christianity and the Islamic world and the intertwining of histories and cultures.

18 Lucia Rostagno, 'Pellegrini italiani a Gerusalemme in età ottomana: percorsi, esperienze, momenti d'incontro', *Oriente Moderno* 17, no. 1 (1998): 82.

19 Alcarotti, born in Novara in 1535, was a composer and organist. He spent much of his youth in Rome studying. Belonging to a wealthy family, he had the opportunity to visit Italy's major cities and made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1588. On his return he wrote a guidebook. See: Giovanni Francesco Alcarotti, *Del viaggio di Terra Santa. Da Venetia à Tripoli, di Soria* (Novara: Francesco Sesalli, 1596).

20 'Tutto che siano i Turchi, nemici di nostra fede, più tosto si lascerebbero tagliar a pezzi, che lasciar maltrattare quelli, che esse prendono in guardia e sotto la loro protezione'. Rocchetta, *Peregrinatione di Terra Santa*.

21 Rostagno, 'Pellegrini italiani', 99.

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# gd:c reports



# Bridging a gap: global knowledge production and its dis:connectivity A review of the gd:c annual conference 2023

Doğukan Akbaş & Peter Seeland

The writer Bernadette Mayer addresses the plurality of knowledge production by interweaving various novellas in her work *Story* (1968). 'All stories are at least not the same', she says. How can this plurality be grasped and explored? How does knowledge get transmitted and applied, and what (global) dynamics apply? Last year's annual conference, organized by Nikolai Brandes and Burcu Doğramaci of the Käte Hamburger Research Centre global dis:connect (gd:c), aimed to answer these questions. Combining notions of connectivity and disconnectivity in globalisation processes, the participants considered dis:connectivities in global knowledge production. Focusing on various forms of interruptions, absences, and detours in knowledge production, they sought a nuanced image to surpass the narrative of linear, boundless, uniform globalisation. The conference built on the previous year's method-oriented conference.[1] And by inviting artists and activists in addition to scholars, gd:c emphasised diversity and multidisciplinarity in knowledge production. The annual conference covered three themes: exploration, carriers, and challenges of knowledge and its production. A film screening and museum visits took the participants out of the conference room and stimulated them with exploratory media.

The conference kicked off with a screening of the film *Queer Gardening* (2022). In this documentary, the urban planner,

1 Peter Seeland, 'Looking back on global dis:connect's first annual conference: dis:connectivity in processes of globalisation: theories, methodologies, explorations', *static: thoughts and research from global dis:connect* 2, no. 1 (2023), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5282/static/41.

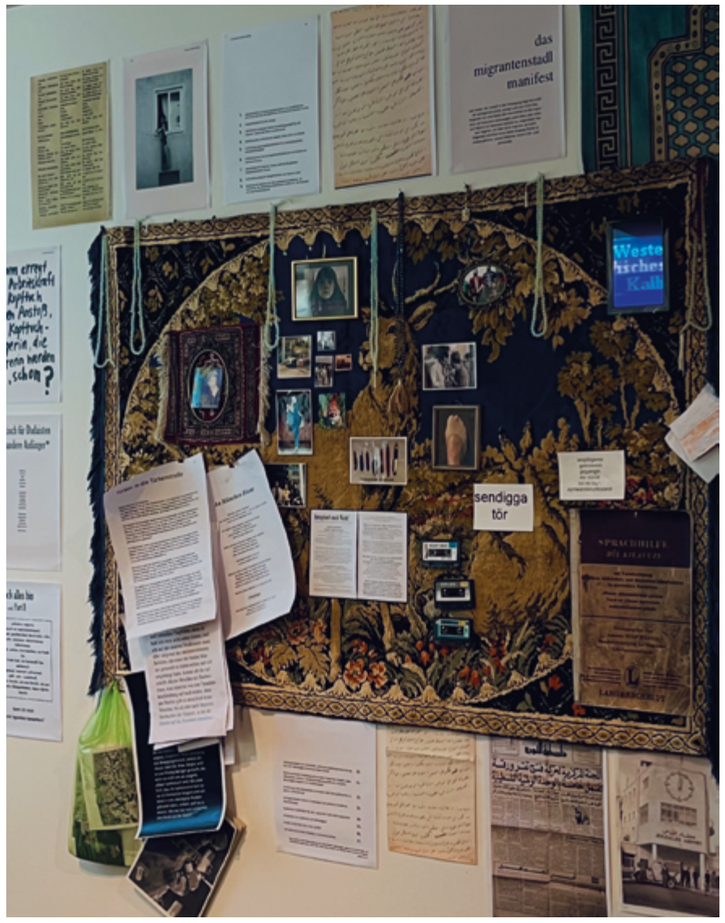

Fig. 01
**Starting point: Zu den Kinos — to the screening rooms.**
**Image: Doğukan Akbaş**

filmmaker and gardener Ella von der Haide (Munich) captures stories of queer individuals living in the USA through their individual experiences with gardening. The subjects expressed their resistance to the normative practice of gardening and the associated discrimination, which have traditionally been shaped by hetero-cis bias, through linguistic, etymological, spiritual and historical exploration of gardening. To rethink gardening from queer perspectives, not only in terms of societal norms but also as growing food and herbal medicines, was the primary goal of the documentary. Ecological knowledge, previously dominated by a heteronormative understanding of reproduction, can be reinterpreted and revised. Gardening can thus reflect queer identities as it creates and conveys queer knowledge.

The exiled writer and gender researcher Stella Nyanzi (Berlin) described challenges of queer knowledge production and started by defining herself as a knowledge producer. She emphasised her three identities: academic, poet and activist. Using visual activism, she focused on the criminalisation of knowledge production in Uganda and the resulting challenges of queer knowledge production. Uganda's anti-homosexual laws subject queer people to defamation by the press and (physical) violence by the public, robbing them of their senses of safety and dignity. Nyanzi, without seeking a conclusion, sought to prompt future research and activism with a few questions: how can knowledge producers deal with such challenges, and how can queer knowledge contribute to society as a whole? The historian Stephanie Zloch (Dresden) sees education as a central pillar of knowledge production and addressed the challenges associated with (global) migration, particularly focusing on the educational circumstances in Germany during the major migrations since 1945. She examined displaced persons, the post-war education system, language schools for migrants, Islamic education in Germany and 'foreigner classes' in German schools. Zloch investigated how knowledge can be recontextualised and synthesised into new forms through interruptions and detours, political debates and national interests.

From the labour migrants of the 19th and 20th centuries to the present day, Munich has long been a city of migration, as illustrated by a guided tour of the Münchener Stadtmuseum led by historian Simon Goeke (Munich). The sociologist and artist Tunay Önder, for example, created a mind map of migration experiences with her *Transtopischer Teppich* (2016).[2] The collaged objects blend migration culture, forming hybrids of German and Turkish languages and memory cultures, resulting in the emergence of terms such as *Migrantenstadl* (migrant town) and even a whole migration dictionary. Culture and knowledge change through migration and give rise to completely new forms.

2 Tunay Önder, *Transtropischer Teppich*, 2016, Carpet, paper, plastic, metal, digital material, 250 x 350 x 10 cm, Münchner Stadtmuseum, Sammlung Stadtkultur. https://sammlungonline.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de/objekt/kunstwerkcollage-transtopischer-teppich-10203686.




The historian Lucie Mbignie Nankena (Dschang) discussed intergenerational and global transfer of knowledge, using the example of traditional Cameroonian dances. A dance can embody knowledge and convey identity as well as cultural and factual knowledge, about life with nature and traditions.

Mariana Sadovska (Cologne) concluded the day with her concert-lecture on this idea of knowledge transfer through culture and tradition. With her research-based collection of folk songs from Ukraine, Sadovska helps preserve and transmit oral culture. Her concert, explicitly scheduled as part of the lecture section and not as a marginal event, guided the audience through the multicultural musical landscape of Ukraine, using her voice and harmonium. This landscape includes Jewish, Albanian, Greek and Swedish influences. The mostly polyphonic pieces metaphorically represent the diverse Ukrainian culture. The ongoing war lent Sadovska's connection of art and research particular relevance. Preserving and reviving knowledge through personal appropriation is her main goal.

Fig. 02
***Transtopischer Teppich*.**
**Image: Doğukan Akbaş**

The artist Lizza May David (Berlin) reported on her archive project in which she explores Philippine colonial history through photography. Western colonial powers created photo archives that only depicted their ideas and fantasies. Once these Western ideas had reached the Philippines, manifested in the photos and returned to Europe, David worked with them and sent her work back to Indonesia. This practice highlighted the global and dis:connective aspects of knowledge dynamics.

With her *Urban Bodies* projects the choreographer Yolanda Gutiérrez (Hamburg) connected to the theme of archiving. These projects are 'colonial city tours', in which choreographic performances, executed by David Valencia and Jana Baldovino, draw attention to the presence of colonisation in European cities and shape a decolonised future through dance. The body serves as a carrier of colonial experience, and the corporeality facilitates the production and transmission of knowledge about colonial history. Thus, she perceives the body as an archive of knowledge.

The writer Franz Dobler (Augsburg) guided the participants through the *Archiv 451* exhibition at the Haus der Kunst. The autonomous publishing archive is the knowledge repository of the Trikont publishing house, which played a central role in Munich's 1968 protests. As one of the first autonomous publishers in West Germany, it disseminated alternative perspectives on new social and ecological ideas in line with workers' movements according to Franz Dobler, who himself participated as a writer and activist in the later years of the publishing house. With its focus on decolonisation and anti-fascism, the publisher shaped knowledge on a societal level. The archive exhibited not only published books but also records and documents from the music label and publishing house.

The art historian Mona Schieren (Bremen) considered the physicality of knowledge through the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark's understanding of the body. In her project *Structuring the Self* (1988–89), Clark attempted to trigger memories in various people through physical touch and objects. She associates remembering, reviving and expanding knowledge with a transcendental physical knowledge experience. This means not only reading, learning and familiarising oneself with knowledge, but also physically experiencing and expanding it.

The corporeality of knowledge is palpable in *Non Aligned Movement* (2020) – a performance by artist Christian Gueremathchi. A black man with a black mask, who donned the airs and uniform of the Yugoslav president Josip Tito before divesting them through dance.[3]

3 Christian Gueremathchi, 'NAM – Non Aligned Movement teaser', digital video. ICK Dans Amsterdam et al., 2021. YouTube, 1:00. https://youtu.be/5dh991XPHFs.

The art historian Jasmina Tumbas (Buffalo) interpreted this performance as an Afro-European search for identity: the artist, originally from the former Yugoslavia, deconstructs Tito as a symbol of a racist, patriarchal and heteronormative society through his dancing body. Corporeality as a bearer and producer of knowledge can disrupt and reshape paradigms.

Ana Druwe (São Paulo) spoke on the institutional preservation and production of knowledge at the Casa do Povo cultural centre in São Paulo. Founded in 1946 by Jewish immigrants as a Holocaust memorial, Casa do Povo is a living monument, providing space for education, art, collective and social activities. Its diverse practices, fundamental openness and Nossa Voz – the in-house magazine – foster anti-fascism, intercultural dialogue and social understanding. 'Sharing the key to the building' is the motto signifying the trust and spirit of collaborative knowledge production among the house users.

The architect, theorist and activist Niloufar Tajeri (Berlin) also focused on buildings and the problems of architectural knowledge. Architecture directly and indirectly manifests various levels of knowledge in built space. So, who sees what in architecture, and how does it affect those who dwell therein? Using the example of current plans for Hermannplatz in Berlin, she revealed racist structures, potential exclusion and the importance of individual experience in architecture. Knowledge production does not end with construction – users and residents create knowledge within and with it. Architecture is an archive of knowledge that must become more aware of the challenge of including the people touched, affected and affiliated by and with it. 'At least everybody doesn't see the same in architecture', concludes Tajeri fittingly.

Fig. 03
**The poster session team in the gd:c library. Image: Doğukan Akbaş**

A poster session, organised by Doğukan Akbaş, Sophia Fischer and Peter Seeland, catalysed dialogue with young scholars. Chiara Di Carlo (Rome) spoke about pilgrimages to the Holy Land in the 16th century and dis:connectivities in transmitting knowledge (see her article in this issue). Yunting Xie (Uppsala) and Jie Yang (Munich) presented their research on global knowledge transfer in 20th-century China. Sabrina Herrmann (Kassel) discussed contemporary artistic attempts to resist gender-based human rights violations, examining how Mexican and Colombian artists raise awareness. Scott Blum-Woodland (Cambridge) treated the reception of Russian post-war literature in the UK in the late-20th century. Blum-Woodland forwarded the thesis that knowledge production is inevitably local and depends on societal (and national) connections.

The conference evinced a diverse, transdisciplinary and multi-perspective approach to knowledge production, without neglecting the common theme. Instantiating 'glocalisation',[4] we explored the global through local Munich. This conference fostered communication between the arts and sciences. Thus, it became a site of knowledge production itself. In lieu of a closing statement with concrete results, we proposed research questions, approaches, methods and topics for ongoing conversations. In a way, the conference concluded as it began, recalling the introductory quote by Bernadette Mayer: 'knowledge is never the same'. The conference pointed to a gap in the current academic discourse. Knowledge and its production must be analysed more intensively, more broadly and more inclusively. And dealing with this fact is a challenge that research must necessarily face.

(Global) knowledge production initially appeared to be an omnipresent concept in everyday life. We have all undergone an educational journey through school, university, work and our private lives, experiencing knowledge production first-hand. The term *knowledge production* immediately made us think of these institutional instances. While aware of significant differences on a(n) (inter)national level, awareness for the depth of these differences and the challenges evoked was not fully there. A mere glance at the conference programme showed that there is more to look at than just institutions. It provided us with a different approach to knowledge production and its underlying principles. A more out-of-the-box approach was necessary. It quickly became clear that this examination could only be successful from various perspectives across diverse disciplines, not limited to a lecture-type of examination. Historical assessments, musical performances and architectural considerations – all contributed to our awareness of the challenges of knowledge production and led to the outcome of our conference. We were especially

4 Robert Robertson, ‚Glokalisierung – Homogenität und Heterogenität in Raum und Zeit', in *Perspektiven der Weltgesellschaft*, ed. Ullrich Beck (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998).

impressed by the interdisciplinary collaboration of international researchers, ranging from facing political persecution for their research and the standing-up-for-justice we take for granted, to traveling through various regions experiencing war. It was their perspectives and personal stories that brought life to this conference.

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Fig. 04
**Happy and fulfilled: celebrating the conference in the gd:c gardens. Image: Doğukan Akbaş**

# Follo-
# wing
# fellows



## Alumna but not forgotten: an interview with Katarzyna Puzon

Fig. 01
**Katarzyna Puzon, Image: Iveta Rysava / PolasBerlin**

**When were at global dis:connect, and what did you work on while here?**

I was based at gd:c from July 2022 to June 2023, and my project was – and still is – concerned with scientific sound archives and how to deal with their legacy and ways of producing knowledge. Its focus and scope strongly resonate with my long-standing interest in temporality and the interplay of heritage, science and art, including in museums, exhibition spaces, urban sites and broader collaborative endeavours. The project is deeply rooted in my anthropological thinking, but it crosses disciplinary boundaries,

drawing on critical heritage studies, sound studies, history of science and STS approaches. And it has a practical bent.

**Where do you work now and are you still dealing with dis:connectivity?**

After my fellowship, I returned to Berlin. One of the projects I was involved in last autumn concerned communicating science through sound and exhibiting (spoken) language. This was in the framework of the Nach der Natur (After Nature) exhibition. I was invited to comment on it and write about its media section, together with a colleague who is a musicologist and with whom I have been in dialogue for years. In this particular case, dis:connectivity was rather absent (an intriguing figure of speech). However, I have always worked on paradoxes and contradictions, as many anthropologists do, which seems inevitable when one needs to engage intensively with other people while doing ethnographic fieldwork in a 'foreign' context. In many respects, dis:connectivity fits into the paradoxical paradigm that I develop in my work. Analytically speaking, I find it more productive to use this tool in my research on scientific sound archives than in, for example, my book on Beirut.

**What text – whether a book or article – have you read recently that particularly impressed you?**

I can't recall any text that has impressed me recently. Though I have been rereading Michail Bachtin's *The Dialogic Imagination* and rethinking his ideas of chronotope and polyphony.

**Which song could be the sound-track for your time at gdc?**

It is hard to pick just one piece, but it could be *Thunder Continues in the Aftermath* by Laurie Anderson & Kronos Quartet.

**Given the choice of anyone dead or alive, or even a fictional character, whom would you want as a dinner guest?**

I would love to have dinner with Ursula K. Le Guin, a writer who passed away in 2018. Her evocative thought experiments deftly transcend conventions and genres (even if she is commonly classified as a speculative fiction or science fiction writer), while engaging with social, political and environmental issues. We would most likely talk about 'what if', temporality and technology, and reflect on how 'the word for world is forest' (inspired by the title of one of her books). If gd:c could fulfill my request and arrange a dinner with her for me, that would be a nice treat. A séance might do the trick.

# Fellow travellers

## Ife Aboluwade

Ifeoluwa Aboluwade is a literary scholar with a background in imperial and literary history, early modern English theatre, critical digital humanities, (trans)cultural translation and adaptation, black diaspora studies, postcolonial literary criticism, and gender and intersectionality. She works at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and is a lecturer at the University of Bayreuth. Ifeoluwa has received many international awards and fellowships, such as Fulbright and DAAD scholarships, most recently receiving the Shakespeare Association of America-Folger Shakespeare Library Short Term Fellowship (2022/2023).

At gd:c, Ifeoluwa is investigating the histories, patterns and genealogies dis:connecting Shakespearean drama and early modern West Africa through the topoi of the trickster and warrior. Drawing on diverse texts, the project shows that comparing tricksters and warriors across both literary cultures engenders a deeper understanding of their historical and ongoing entanglements, recasting the significations and transcultural spectres that haunt Shakespeare. It also illuminates the tension between absence and presence of early modern English performances, especially in terms of race, gender and class.

## Roii Ball

Roii Ball is a social historian of 19th and 20th-century Germany and Central Europe and their colonial entanglements. He is a postdoctoral lead researcher at the Religion and Politics Cluster of Excellence at the University of Münster. Ball earned his PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2021 with a dissertation on the social dynamics and bureaucratic practices of German colonisation in the Polish provinces of Prussia before WWI (Advisor: David Sabean).

Roii's work focuses on family and kinship to explore histories of colonisation and their intersection with empire-making and nation-making. His research interests include the history of knowledge, the history of childhood, environmental history and digital history. He has held fellowships at the University of Cologne, the German Historical Institute in Warsaw and the Leibnitz Institute for European History in Mainz.

## Joël Glasman

Joël Glasman focuses on West and Central Africa in the 20th century, particularly colonialism, governmentality, humanitarianism and the production of power as framed by praxis theory and science and technology studies. His publications inquire into social classifications produced by state institutions, international governmentality and private corporations. He further engages with the theory of global history, global norms and colonialism. His last book, *Les humanités humanitaires. Manuel d'autodéfense à l'usage des volontaires* (2023), reflects on the practical use of the humanities.

Joël's project, *Empire of waste,* looks at imperialism as a *regime of waste* built on material exploitation and racial inequalities. Immobilisation, hiding and destruction of waste played a crucial role in imperial domination, as indicated by recent research on toxicity, waste dumping and radioactivity in Africa. It investigates two faces of the 'Empire of Waste'. First, it analyses French corporate strategies of externalisation of waste and pollution. Second, it scrutinises forms of *discard labour* used by colonial corporations: forced labour, *corvée*, prison labour, wage labour, informal labour and child labour.

## Michael Goebel

Michael Goebel is the Einstein Professor of Global History and co-director of the Frankreich-Zentrum at Freie Universität Berlin. He earned his Ph.D. from University College London (2006) and in 2018–21 was the Pierre du Bois Chair *Europe and the World* at the Geneva Graduate Institute. Originally an intellectual historian of Latin America, his 2015 book *Anti-Imperial Metropolis* awakened a growing interest in urban history and, more recently, social and economic history.
He is currently the principal investigator of the SNSF-funded project *Patchwork Cities*.

During his fellowship at gd:c, he's investigating the interrelationship between globalisation and inequality in Latin American and Southeast Asian port cities, particularly in the late-19th century. His key interest is how the global development of capitalism and imperialism intersected with local socio-economic transformations in urban space, focusing on the interplay between ethnicity, migration and real-estate markets. His research thus connects to scholarship about segregation, but seeks to expand its purview beyond its customary focus on the North Atlantic.

## Valeska Huber

Valeska is a professor at the University of Vienna. She has led an Emmy Noether Research Group and has been a fellow at the German Historical Institute London. She is particularly interested in the mutual interdependence of opening and closure. More specifically, she has worked on mobility and migration, on epidemics and international health policy, and on education and literacy training. She has authored *Channelling Mobilities: Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region* and co-edited *Global Publics: Their Power and their Limits*.

Valeska is currently focusing on global publics – their power, reach, and limits. During her fellowship at global dis:connect, she is writing a monograph about the 20th-century dream of universal literacy, tracing the *Each One Teach One* method propagated by US missionary Frank C. Laubach and applied around the globe from the Philippines to Cuba and Brazil.

## Judd Kinzley

Judd Kinzley is a professor of modern Chinese history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His research treats borderlands, materiality and natural resources. He is currently working on the transnational exchange of Chinese raw materials for cash, weapons and industrial goods during World War II. This work reveals the transnational networks that developed to finance, produce and transport such resources. These trans-Pacific networks channelled objects in both directions during the war and served as the blueprint of a new postwar international order.

Judd works in both Chinese and English, with experience researching in several archives in China, Taiwan, the United States and the United Kingdom.
Judd's project at gd:c focuses on the legacies of Allied wartime oil exports to China, and how they brought China, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, the United States and the European imperial powers together. Support of China's war effort through deliveries of petroleum products relied on the transformation of global petroleum infrastructures that had long connected petroleum-producing regions to imperial metropoles, mostly in Western Europe. Oil transports from Burma and Iran into China during the war served as a detour, an 'interruption' that bound the Middle East to the United States and East Asia, reshaping global energy flows.

## Yvonne Kleinmann

Yvonne Kleinmann is a professor of Eastern European history and director of the Aleksander Brückner Center for Polish Studies at Halle University. Her research focuses on Russian imperial history in comparative perspective, Jewish history of Eastern Europe and Polish history through the ages.
She is especially interested in the intersections between historiography, philology, ethnography and law. In her publications she has explored migrations, interreligious relations, urban history, legal history, anthropology and the history of knowledge.

In her gd:c project *Communicating Constitutions: A Cultural and Entangled History of Poland's Basic Orders,* she is analysing Polish constitutional history from the 14th century to the present from the angle of cultural history and (transnational) entanglement. The core question is how to narrate the constitutional history of a community with many political discontinuities and dependencies. Drawing on the example of Poland, the project offers new approaches to constitutional history from the perspectives of imperial history, biographical research, regional history, gender studies, law and literature.

## Matthias Leanza

Matthias Leanza is a historical sociologist specialising in empires, colonialism and nation-state formation and is a senior lecturer at the University of Basel. In 2017, his dissertation received the Erasmus Prize for the Liberal Arts and Sciences. In 2019, he joined the Postdoc Network of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF) at Bielefeld University. He was a visiting scholar at the Leibniz Center for Literary and Cultural Research in Berlin, the University of Virginia and the University of Michigan. In 2020, he co-founded the Historical Sociology Working Group in the German Sociological Association.

During his fellowship at global dis:connect, Matthias is completing his current book project on the legacy of German colonialism. Drawing on a wide range of sources from European and African archives, the study shows how and why the German overseas empire helped consolidate the nascent German nation-state. Germany soon lost its colonies, but their effects on the country persisted, leaving a complex legacy.

## Ayala Levin

Ayala Levin is an associate professor of architectural history at the University of California, Los Angeles. Ayala specialises in architecture and urban planning in postcolonial African states with interest in the production of architectural knowledge as part of north-south or south-south exchange. She authored *Architecture and Development: Israeli Construction in Sub Saharan Africa and the Settler Colonial Imagination* (Duke University Press 2022), and she co-edited *Architecture in Development: Systems and the Emergence of the Global South* (Routledge 2022).

At global dis:connect, Ayala is researching how U.S. planners sought to reorganise rural spaces in post-independence African states to curb urban migration. This project reframes conventional accounts of Third World urbanisation by directing attention to the entangled phenomenon of ruralisation, namely the modernisation of the countryside. It asks how the countryside was physically transformed to elevate standards of living, and how this transformation was employed to eradicate colonial precepts that associated modernity and social mobility exclusively with the city.




## David Motadel

David Motadel is an associate professor of international history at the LSE. A former Gates Scholar at Cambridge, he has held visiting positions at Harvard, Yale, Oxford, Sciences Po and the Sorbonne. His articles have been published in numerous academic journals, including *Past & Present, The American Historical Review* and the *Annales*. His reviews and essays on current affairs have appeared in *The New York Times, The Guardian, The New York Review of Books, The London Review of Books* and *The Times Literary Supplement*, among others. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

During his year at gd:c, David is working on a global history of Europe's empires around the Second World War, 1935–1948, exploring the history of the war in the imperial world, its impact on colonial subjects; the history of the colonial soldiers who fought in Europe's armies; the history of anti-colonial movements during the war, from the Viet Minh to the Quit India movement; and the war's impact on the end of empire and 20th-century world order. Drawing on multilingual literature and sources from five continents, the book provides a truly global view of the most cataclysmic conflict in human history.

## Günther Sandner

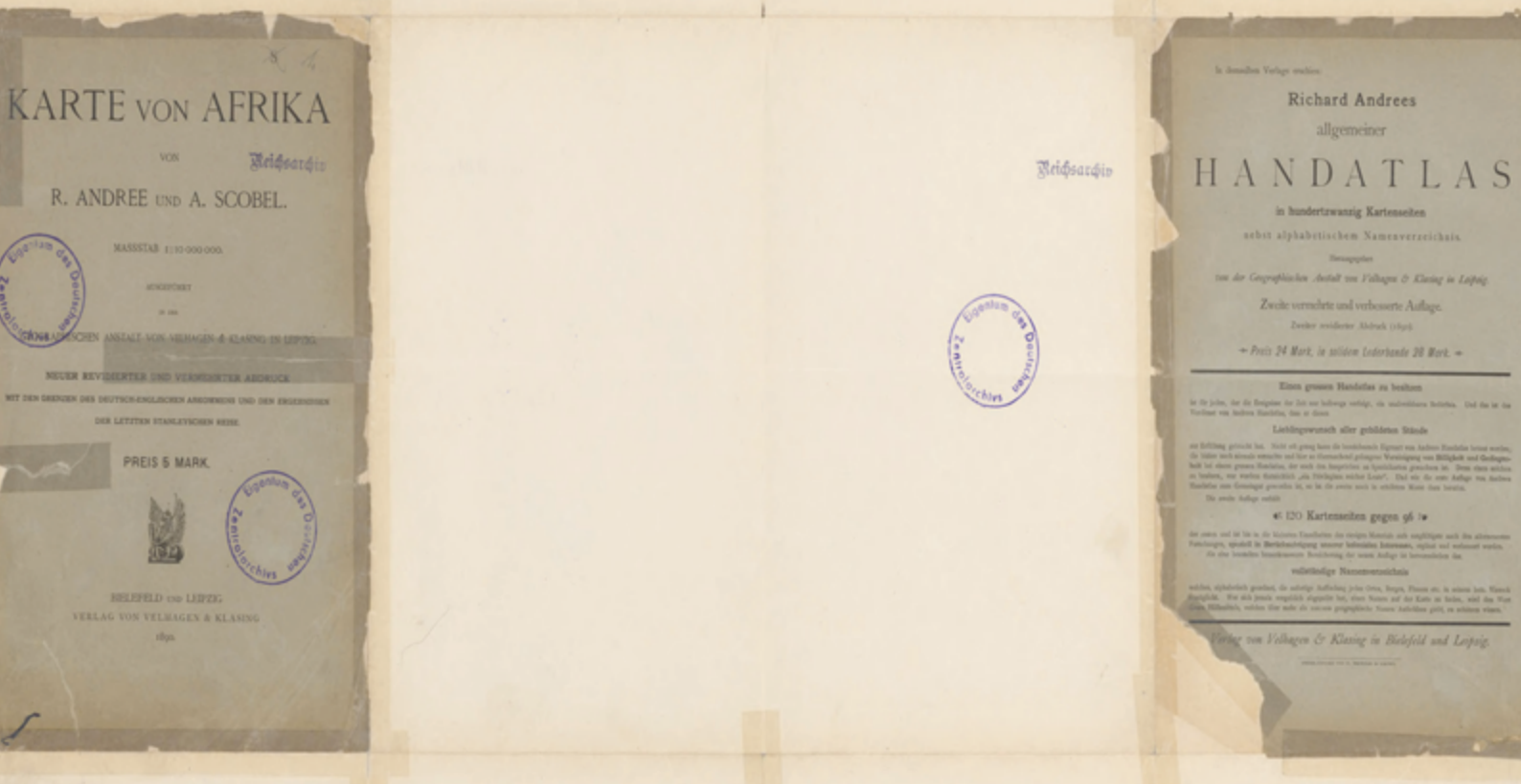
Günther Sandner is a political scientist and historian. He works as a research fellow at the Institute Vienna Circle (University of Vienna) and teaches civic education extramurally. His research includes the history of logical empiricism and Isotype. His recent publications include *Weltsprache ohne Worte. Rudolf Modley, Margaret Mead und das Glyphs-Projekt* (2022); *Logical Empiricism, Life Reform and the German Youth Movement* (ed. with Christian Damböck and Meike Werner. 2022); and *History and Legacy of Isotype* (with Christopher Burke, forthcoming 2023).

Günther's project, *Following Isotype: visual languages and universal symbols in the decades after 1945,* deals with projects that aimed to overcome the active absence of a universal language and to establish one with the help of pictures, graphics, symbols and pictograms. Its focus is on the 1950s and 1960s. Three visual language models that interacted with each other to varying degrees are examined as examples: Marie Neurath's *Isotype* (after Otto Neurath's death), Margaret Mead's and Rudolf Modley's *Glyphs* and Charles Bliss' *Semantography*.

## Camille Serchuk

Camille is a professor of art history at Southern Connecticut State University. She received her doctorate in art history from Yale in 1997, where she focused on images of medieval Paris. Since then, her research has focused primarily on the relationship between painting and mapmaking in late medieval and early modern Europe, with particular attention to the ways that artistic techniques and practices both enhanced and undermined the authority of cartography. The links between cartography and painting in 16th century France are also the subject of her recently completed book manuscript.

Her project, *Border Control: Cartography and its Frames in Early Modernity, 1500–1650,* explores how frames and border motifs animate early modern cartography and provide an interpretive lens for the mutable image of the world. Because knowledge of geography and sovereign boundaries were constantly in flux, frames enhanced the authority of maps that were almost immediately made obsolete by new exploration or conflict. As a new appraisal of the assertive role of the cartographic frame, the project will recuperate the agency of cartographic ornament, enhancing the legibility of early modern maps.

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