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Wulf D. Hund. *Wie die Deutschen weiß wurden: Kleine (Heimat) Geschichte des Rassismus.* Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2017. 212 pp. Ill. EUR 19,99, cloth, ISBN 978-3-476-04499-0.

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With his 2017 *Wie die Deutschen weiß wurden*, Wulf D. Hund, an emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Hamburg, offers a clear, concise, historical account of the centrality of race to German history and intellectual discourse. As the title indicates, the book is concerned with how German whiteness is constructed, not as a consistent or monolithic whole but rather as a gradual, fragmented, and contested exclusionary process that intersects with and is complicated by other forms of difference like ethnicity, class, or religion.

The book's subtitle provocatively dubs it a *(Heimat) Geschichte* of racism, clearly spelling out one of Hund's central arguments and pointing to one of the book's great strengths: it firmly centers its discussion of race, racism, whiteness, and white supremacy within German-speaking contexts as homegrown phenomena. Hund thus chooses not to avoid taboo words like "Rasse";[1] in this he deviates from the norm among German-speaking race scholars, but the choice not to avoid, anglicize, or put scare quotes around the word is clearly an attempt to underscore his point that race does not enter Germany through the Anglophone world or otherwise come from outside. Instead, he shows that German whiteness "hatte in einem langwierigen und komplizierten Prozess allererst erzeugt werden müssen. Denn von Natur aus gibt es weder Rassen noch Weiße. Die sind ideologische Kopfgeburten der europäischen Expansion und mit Hilfe kolonialer Gewalt zur Welt gekommen, ehe sie im 18. Jahrhundert von der Aufklärung systematisiert und zu wissenschaftlichen Kategorien gemacht wurden" (p. 6).

Roughly half the book is devoted to what might be called the prehistory of modern notions of race, the divisions and exclusions that fall short of the kind of systematic social, cultural, and biological approach that crystallizes in the eighteenth century. This section of the book contains chapters devoted to the figure of the "Kammermohr" in seventeenth-century court culture, which shows skin color as a marker of social difference more than biological difference and the growing connection between whiteness and wisdom (*Weißheit* and *Weisheit*); religious racism and its symbolic "Farbenlehre," where dark and light are markers of good and bad—of Christian and heathen—that don't always map neatly onto modern notions of race or ethnicity; a history of anti-Semitism that spans centuries, with Jews continually marked as other, though not always in physical, biological, or racial terms; and the representation of the Sinti and Roma peoples, which swings between the poles of racialized perception of them as foreign and criminal and as a romanticized illustration of a carefree existence.

The second half of the book tackles modern racism from the eighteenth century to the near-present, with chapters devoted to racial discourses of the Enlightenment, nineteenth-century colonialism and the popularization of racialized images and notions of whiteness, early twentieth-century debates about race and degeneration, Nazi Germany, and post-WWII efforts of Germans to "wash themselves white." At the heart of the volume is the chapter "Rassen© made in Germany;" its position at the center of the book mirrors the central role the European Enlightenment plays in laying the foundations for modern racism. It is in the Enlightenment, against the background of "Sklaverei, Kolonialismus und Kapitalismus und deren Beschönigung" (p. 81) that race becomes recognizable in its modern form—as an organized system of biological difference. Here Hund makes a convincing case for the German invention of race, as Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore termed it in their edited volume of the same name (2006), showing the formalization of the concept and its entrance into scientific and academic thought through debate and discourse from thinkers like Hegel, Herder, Kant, Soemmerring, Forster, and Meiners (to whom we are indebted for popularizing "Caucasian" as a generic term for white people).

In the nineteenth century, these foundations are built upon, as colonialism becomes part of German culture and whiteness is popularized through mass spectacles like ethnographic shows and colonial exhibitions and what Hund terms "Warenrassismus"—the use of racialized images in advertising campaigns (like those from Kaloderma soap and Sarotti chocolate). While Hund's argument is convincing and his examples are well chosen, he perhaps takes his own subtitle—***Heimatgeschichte***—too literally, giving short shrift to real, existing colonialism and thus glossing over the role of colonial violence and the legal system in concretizing and enforcing whiteness (as scholars such as Robbie Aitken, Pascal Grosse, and Jürgen Zimmerer document). Someone unfamiliar with the history of German colonialism might finish this chapter unable to even name Germany's overseas territories. In another chapter, early twentieth-century controversies like the Yellow Peril and the Black Horror on the Rhine—occurring against the backdrop of fears about degeneration tied to issues of class and status—demonstrate the unifying power of whiteness at a time when whiteness was nonetheless fragile and perforated. Hund also offers a nuanced discussion of race and whiteness in the Third Reich and the Nazi racial state, noting that notions of blood and "Rassenschande," fears of social contamination, and racism against nonwhites exist alongside the fact that concentration camps contained "zu einem großen Teil Menschen, die gemäß der Rassennomenklatur 'weiß' waren" (p. 135). The final chapter is a slightly fragmented account of postwar Germany's whitewashing. Here Hund jumps from topic to topic, referencing debates about so-called occupation babies and denazification; Turkey and the EU; white supremacist violence, such as the murder of Amadeo António Kiowa; and the existence of a "christliches Abendland." He also name-drops films like ***Quax in Afrika*** and ***Toxi*** and figures like Marie Nejar (a Black German who performed under the stage name Leila Negra) and the controversial Thilo Sarrazin, without discussing any of this in great detail. He nonetheless convincingly shows how "der politische Prozess des Weißwaschens wurde durch die Mobilisierung rassistischer Differenz unterstützt" (p. 153) and the long history of race and racialization in Germany is suppressed, which results in racist incidents in the present day tending to be dismissed as merely the product of ignorance rather than deep-seated structures. In spite of the Germans having been "international diskreditier[t]" (p. 153) after the Second World War and the events of the Holocaust, they nonetheless retained their whiteness and were able to obtain absolution in the form of a "Persilschein," the colloquial term for a denazification certificate.

It is perhaps not groundbreaking to observe, as Hund does, that German racism comes from the

"Mitte der Gesellschaft" (p. 163) or that "der alltägliche Rassismus ist in all seinen Formen Teil der deutschen Geschichte wie der deutschen Gegenwart" (p. 164), but Hund nonetheless makes an important contribution to the scholarship precisely because he has written an account of the long history of race, racism, and white supremacy in Germany that is both comprehensive and accessible to a nonspecialist audience. Each chapter begins with a color reproduction of an artwork that is analyzed in detail to illustrate the central point of the chapter. These short, jargon-free chapters can easily stand alone and be used in an undergraduate classroom. The real weakness of the book is its failure to meaningfully discuss the contributions of People of Color in Germany to understanding not only race and racism but also whiteness within and beyond the German context, such as those of Maisha-Maureen Auma, Grada Kilomba, and Peggy Piesche, who along with Susan Arndt published the book *Mythen, Masken und Subjekte: Kritische Weißseinsforschung in Deutschland* in 2005, the first German-language contribution to the field of critical whiteness studies. I would thus recommend that those who wish to make use of this work in the classroom supplement it with texts like Fatma Aydemir and Hengameh Yaghoobifarah's *Eure Heimat ist unser Albtraum* (2019), Mohamed Amjahid's *Unter Weißen* (2017), Tupoka Ogette's *exit Racism* (2017), or Noah Sow's *Deutschland Schwarz Weiß* (2008, updated edition 2018) that place the experiences of People of Color in Germany at the center of the critique.

Note

[1]. Note, for example, Reni Eddo-Lodge's *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* appears in German as *Warum ich nicht länger mit Weißen über Hautfarbe spreche.*

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