ABSTRACT

Title of Document: RACE AND MASS CONSUMPTION IN CONSUMER CULTURE: NATIONAL TRADEMARK ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS IN THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY, 1890-1930

Isabell Cserno, Doctor of Philosophy, 2008

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This dissertation examines how and why visual imagery in selected advertising material in the United States and Germany between 1890 and 1930 influenced the materialization of mass consumption as an important part of national culture. What emerges out of this study is a comparison of two different national environments that despite cultural differences relied on discourses on racialized identities to attract consumers and sell brand name products.

This dissertation proposes that in both countries, trade card series in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century helped establish visual elements as important communicators to mass consumers, especially by drawing on easily recognizable motifs of patriotic and racialized mythologization. By the turn of the nineteenth century, as newspaper and magazine advertising continued to grow, the visual compositions of advertisements continued to become more sophisticated in both narrative as well as stylistic composition. This work relies equally on scholarship from the traditional disciplines of history and art history, as well as from the growing

interdisciplinary work produced in American Studies, especially its subdivision of visual and material culture. The multidisciplinary methods of African American Studies and other related fields such as Black Diaspora Studies have shaped this dissertation's theoretical foundation of the complex processes of racialization.

This dissertation examines three brand name products that started using black trade characters as their trademarks: Aunt Jemima pancakes and Cream of Wheat in the United States, and Sarotti Chocolate in Germany. All three product campaigns emerge at a time of complex social and economic changes as both Germany and the United States evolved as powerful nation-states with colonial and imperialist politics.

# RACE AND MASS CONSUMPTION IN CONSUMER CULTURE: NATIONAL TRADEMARK ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS IN THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY, 1890-1930

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# Dedication

To my father Jan Cserno.

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I would like to thank my numerous mentors throughout the years of my educational journey for their unfaltering support: Prof. Berndt Ostendorf at the University of Munich, Associate Dean Dr. Johnetta Davis, University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), Associate Provost Dr. Cordell Black, UMCP, Graduate Program Director in American Studies Prof. Mary Corbin Sies, the members of my dissertation committee, Prof John Caughey, Prof. Elke Frederiksen, Prof. Jo Paoletti, and Prof. Nancy Struna, and especially my committee chair Prof. Bonnie Dill, whose patience, kindness, and expertise I have shamelessly exploited in the past eight years.

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My family, friends, and colleagues in the United States and in Germany have carried me through this process. I am especially indebted to my mother Mariana Cserno who always believed in me and my friends and colleagues Dr. Cheryl LaRoche and Raquel DeSouza for whose friendship I will be eternally grateful. To all my other friends who are teaching me to take it one day at a time, thank you.

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# Introduction

This dissertation contributes to the discussion on how mass consumption became a central aspect of national identities in the United States and Germany.[1] The increasing use of visual imagery in advertising, first in trade card series, then in newspapers and magazine ads, drew on circulating ideas of national myths, mainly myths of patriotic and racialized mythologization, to attract the attention of consumers. Black trade characters that served as trademarks are powerful examples for this development. I suggest that advertising's visual culture, especially in trade card series, printed ads, and product packages had a significant impact on the rise of mass consumption between 1890 and 1930. The reliance on visual elements in advertising materials was particularly important for trademarks to emerge as the dominant way of consumption. This dissertation, by utilizing a comparative approach in reviewing selected advertising materials from the United States and Germany, examines the role of visual culture and particularly racialized imagery in the process of building mass consumption as a central part of national identity in the U.S. and Germany between 1890 and 1930. I propose that visual imagery was an important factor in spreading mass consumption habits among consumers in the United States and Germany, often drawing on recognizable motifs in the visual representations. Many of the images used in trade card series between 1890 and 1910 focused on

[1] I am indebted to Charles McGovern's thorough discussion on the connection between consumption and citizenship in his recent monograph. McGovern's text provides a welcome addition to the canon of works on mass and consumer culture during this period because of its focus on the interplay between rhetorics of citizenship and consumers. By tracing the creation and evolution of the "consumer-citizen" between 1890 and 1945, it explains how discourses of citizenship and national identity started to be intertwined with a mass culture of consumption. See Charles McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

recreating certain legends about national cultures in both countries, such as the mythologization of national culture and the exotization of foreign and racial others. The magazine and newspaper advertising campaigns in the United States and product packaging in Germany from companies that started using black trade characters continued to draw on similar mythologized narratives of national cultures. Moreover, trade card series established "practices of looking," to borrow the term coined by Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright,[2] and persisted in the detailed visual design of the three advertising campaigns that relied on well-designed black trade characters: Aunt Jemima pancakes and Cream of Wheat in the United States, and Sarotti Chocolate in Germany.[3] Romanticizing Southern plantation lifestyle, the idyllic Norman-Rockwell-esque modern American ways of life, and the exoticization of consumption, respectively, were cultural elements that black trade characters of these three companies portrayed.

All three trade characters offer opportunities to examine the cultural crossroads of visual culture, cultural commodification, nation and empire building, and racial discourses. In different ways, all three trade characters engage the mytholgization of certain elements of cultural identities in the United States and Germany that helped establish mass consumption as an important part of national identity in both countries. The main mythologized narrative shared by all three trade

[2] Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, eds., *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[3] Ellen Gruber Garvey introduced the idea of trade cards as precursors for magazine advertising in her study of advertising material at the turn of the century: "As mass-circulated, advertising-supported magazines spread in the 1890s, they became the major medium of national advertising. But the readers of these magazines had already learned to interact with national advertising through another widely distributed medium: the colorful advertising card," Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 16.

characters is that of simple racial hierarchies and harmonious race relationships between blacks and whites. This is mostly achieved because all three trade characters are presented as servants or slaves. Trade cards, which I suggest are the precursors of modern trade characters, used national culture and cultural differences between various ethnic and racial groups to engage mass consumers. They offered escape fantasies into worlds of natural beauty and abundance, joyful and gay human interactions, and clear divisions of power between racial and ethnic groups. Trade characters continued this pattern and as symbols of national mass consumption became important icons of national identities, not so much as individual characters with whom (white) consumers could identify, but who would serve as their trusted and devoted servants and guides in an expanding world of rapid industrial development, changing consumption habits, and transforming social and cultural relationships.

As much as advertising bore on consumers and moved them and their culture to a consumer culture, I do not mean to suggest that this relationship was not an interactive one, i.e. that consumers were passive in these transformative processes. However, in this dissertation, my focus is mainly on the images of racial and exotic others, their production, and my suggested interpretation about their roles in making mass consumption part of national identities in the United States and Germany.

This dissertation is inspired by the extensive work on mass consumption at the turn of the nineteenth century done by U.S. cultural historians such as J.T. Lears, Roland Marchand, Susan Strasser, and others. Economic historian Alfred D. Chandler's thesis of the "second industrial revolution" in the late nineteenth century

explains the intensified growth of trademark products and the advertising industry during this period as part of the evolution of new managerial and clerical classes.[4] This work also relies on more recent scholarship by German historians such as Christiane Lamberty, Dirk Reinhardt, David Ciarlo, and others. In German historiography, critical conversations about mass consumption in the late 1800s and early 1900s have only recently focused on broader issues of cultural development. The secondary sources on both countries outline the development of mass consumption on a national level by the late 1800s. Arguably, the professional development of advertisement in the United States took place more speedily than in Germany. However, the recent scholarship on advertising as an important form of cultural expression clearly proves that German intellectuals and industrialists alike were well-informed about and experienced with different advertising methods, using American mechanisms of advertising as a basis for assessing and developing their own approaches.

Treating images and objects as carriers as well as constructors of cultural meaning has influenced the way that cultural historians and American Studies scholars view the past and present.[5] The interdisciplinary field of American Studies has been at the intellectual forefront of debates on the roles of visual and material

[4] Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution on American Business* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1977).

[5] The field of Material and Visual Culture Studies has generated a vast amount of scholarship. Debates have emerged that question the boundaries between material culture studies, visual culture studies, and art history. Mieke Bal's essay in the *Journal of Visual Culture*, for example, introduces several important questions about the contents and practices of the newly emerging field of visual culture studies, Mieke Bal, "Visual Essentialism and the Object of Visual Culture," *Journal of Visual Culture* 2, no. 1 (2003): 5-32. Several publication in the past decade have introduced the field of visual culture as related, but slightly separate from both material culture and art history, see Nicholas Mirzoeff, ed. *The Visual Culture Reader*, 2d ed. (London: Routledge, 2002); Nicholas Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999); Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey, eds. *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994); W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

culture and their meaning for everyday experiences.[6] In this dissertation, I do not wish to distinguish between material and visual culture. Rather, I apply an integrated approach that classifies material artifacts as visual objects. Recent works on empire and commodity culture by Mona Domosh, on the role of material and visual culture in formations of racialized identities by Psyche Williams-Forson, and on the impact of visual representations edited by Ulla Haselstein, Berndt Ostendorf, and Peter Schneck illustrate the significance of visual and material artifacts in American cultural studies and demonstrate such an integrated approach.[7] This dissertation is driven by the same concern for "the iconographic power and the poetics of the image – not as an exclusively and isolated phenomenon but […] as a visual and contextual event […]."[8]

The comparative approach in this dissertation is designed to investigate two different cultural locations with similar experiences around mass consumption, but with different concepts of racialization. Despite these differences, both cultures, as this dissertation shows, utilize racialized images at a time of nation- and empire-building to promote mass consumption, both via trade card series and trade

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[6] The following texts are considered to be "classical" texts of material culture studies: Jules David Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Simon J. Bronner, ed. *American Material Culture and Folklife: A Prologue and Dialogue* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1992); Thomas J. Schlereth, *Cultural History and Material Culture: Everyday Life, Landscapes, Museums* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); Robert B. St. George, ed., *Material Life in America* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988).

[7] Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Psyche Williams-Forson, *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Ulla Haselstein, Berndt Ostendorf, and Peter Schneck, eds., *Iconographies of Power: The Politics and Poetics of Visual Representation* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2003). See also the following anthologies for examples of discussions about visual and material culture, race, and transnationalism, globalization, and colonialism: Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, eds., *Multiculturalism, Postcolonialism, and Transnational Media* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003).

[8] Haselstein, Ostendorf, and Schneck, "Iconographies of Power: An Introductory Statement," in *Iconographies of Power,* 9.

characters. American Studies has recently also experienced a re-orientation to look at the role and position of United States culture in a global context. Former American Studies Association (ASA) president Sally Fisher Fishkin has invigorated a debate in the disciplines about the meaning of transnational studies for American Studies. Despite the various critical responses to her talk, it shows that "the transnational [is becoming] more central to American studies." [9]

The existence of American Studies departments and organizations overseas also shows that the intellectual engagement with US history and culture has played a significant role in a global context. Since its inception, American Studies has always been a productive field overseas. International American Studies organizations have been growing in the past twenty years and more years. This dissertation has been inspired by the creative work of many U.S. and non-U.S. scholars on transnational issues.[10] Related debates in fields such as Women's Studies and African American Studies about transnational and diasporic cultures inform the theoretical framework if this dissertation.[11] Although this dissertation does not examine the impact of the

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[9] Sally Fisher Fishkin, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies – Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, November 12, 2004," *American Quarterly*, 57, no. 1 (March 2005): 30.

[10] The following is a small selection of the relevant literature. See also Fishkin's essay that provides a comprehensive bibliography in the footnotes: Donald Pease and Robyn Wiegman, eds. *The Futures of American Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); John Carlos Rowe, *The New American Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Johnella Butler, ed. *From Color-Line to Borderlands: The Matrix of American Studies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); George Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); John Carlos Rowe, ed., *Post-Nationalist American Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Rob Kroes, ed. *Predecessors: Intellectual Lineage in American Studies* (Amsterdam: VU Press, 1999); Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). In addition, the journals *Comparative American Studies, Journal of American Studies, American Studies, American Quarterly*, and a variety of other national American Studies journal have published various special editions on transnationalism in American Studies, see Fishkin, "Crossroads of Culture."

[11] The following is a short selection of the vast literature touching upon transnational and diasporic frameworks: Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania

United States on German culture and vice versa, it is informed by the heightened intellectual awareness of American Studies scholars to topics that lie beyond the national boundaries.

My own training in American Studies in Germany as well as in the United States has placed me in a singular position to conduct the comparative work in my dissertation. In addition to fluency in both languages, German and English, a fluency in cultural knowledge has proven indispensable to this project. My interest in comparative work gas been fueled by growing up bi-culturally myself as the child of Slovak immigrants in Germany as well as by enrolling in American Studies at the University of Munich in 1996. From the beginning of my academic career in American Studies, I started studying U.S. culture with the eyes of an outsider, automatically comparing what I learned about U.S. American history and society with my knowledge about and experience of growing up in Germany.

While I was studying for an exam in U.S. history during my second semester in Munich, reading about the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman, a colleague of mine, who is half-Tanzanian and half-German, expressed his surprise that a white German was interested in black history. I was struck by his use of the term "white German." I had become familiar with the racial terminology of white and black in an American context, but had never thought to think about the implications for Germany. My colleague recommended a publication called *Farbe Bekennen*, translated into "Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out," published in German in

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Press, 2005); Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

1986, and translated into English in 1992. I started to become interested in the racial dynamics between blacks and whites in Germany and in comparing similarities and differences between the United States and Germany relating to my academic work in racial and ethnic studies, which I was embarking on in my last two years in Munich and have continued since coming to the United States in 1999. Early on, I remembered the figure of the Sarotti-Mohr[12] that I grew up with as soon as I started to think about the role of racial difference in Germany. As I started learning about U.S. products such as Aunt Jemima pancakes and Cream of Wheat, a comparative project that addresses similarities and differences in processes of racialization, the role of visual imagery, and cultural comparison emerged, resulting in this dissertation.

This dissertation contributes to the vast scholarship on the impact of material and visual culture on how visual and material artifacts shape people's lives. In turn, U.S. and German citizens also influenced their cultural realities by using such artifacts. However, in this dissertation, the focus is mostly on how such artifacts might have contributed to establishing mass consumption as part of modern lifestyles and identities by relying on imagery drawing on racialized narratives of some sort. What much of the historical literature on the nineteenth century suggests is that the nineteenth century expanded a visual awareness in cultural areas, leading to an explosion of visual materials across socio-economic boundaries by the late 1800s. In their introduction to the anthology *Exotica*, German historian Martin Geyer and Eckhart Hellmuth suggest that this increase in visual culture in Germany led to an

[12] Sarotti-Mohr is best translated with "Sarotti's moor" or "the moor of Sarotti." I will refer to the trade character as Sarotti-Mohr, keeping the German spelling of moor. When not referring to the icon as "Sarotti-Mohr," I will use the English word moor.

"addiction to the visual" and that it produced "visual curiosity."[13] Historical literature on the United States seems to suggest similar developments. In his work on Victorian America, Thomas J. Schlereth claims that "between 1876 and 1915, Americans experienced a fundamental transformation in the number, variety, complexity, and the use of the artifacts that they increasingly came to rely on" to create meaning in their everyday lives.[14] Visual images presented a large part of such artifacts.

One of the reasons why visual culture increased in influence and availability was the fact that new printing and reproduction technologies were being perfected. Technological innovations made it possible to reproduce images in larger quantities than before, so that masses of people began to have access to imagery. The result was that more and more people developed visual familiarity not only with their immediate surroundings, but also experienced locations that were previously inaccessible.

Advertising materials of the early twentieth century in the United States and Germany began to play an important part in creating collective memories that would connect consumers from various socio-economic, ethnic, and regional backgrounds with a common visual "culture" that depicted familiar national images and retold aspects of a national narrative. It is hard to measure the impact that images had on consumers, but the writings by academics and industrialists of that time as well as the abundant evidence of surviving visual material itself suggest that the selection of

[13] My translation, Martin Geyer and Eckhart Hellmuth, " 'Konsum konstruiert die Welt.' Überlegungen zum Thema 'Inszenierung und Konsum des Fremden' " in *Exotica: Konsum und Inszenierung des Fremnden im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hans-Peter Beyerdoerfer and Eckhart Hellmuth (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2003), xvi, xvii.
[14] Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America, 1776-1915* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), xv.

images may had an impact on the development of an overall concept of the nation-state.

Following the discussion of trade cards series and their role in providing a familiar visual language in consumer culture, the dissertation examines three trade characters as case studies of the relationship between visual culture, mass consumption, and national identity: in the United States, Aunt Jemima for Aunt Jemima pancakes and Rastus for Cream of Wheat, in Germany, the Sarotti-Mohr for Sarotti Chocolate.

Overall, this dissertation invites its readers to think about the connection of racialized stereotypes and developments of national identity between 1890 and 1930. During this period, magazine and newspaper advertising became a major form of popular culture. Newspaper and magazine advertising's forerunner, trade or advertising cards of the mid to late nineteenth century, first introduced nineteenth century consumers to visually stimulating and attractive images. Together, both forms helped facilitate the switch in consumption behavior, from consuming bulk products to consuming brand name products. Brand name products used distinct trademarks to promote their goods and distinguish them form their competitors' brands. Visual and material culture played a central role during this process. As material culture artifacts, trade cards and print advertisements offer a window into the way that consumers in this period were exposed to cultural narratives. Two common narratives emerge: the emphasis on national pride and the emphasis on exoticism of foreign culture. Racial stereotypes played an important role in both themes.

National and racial ideologies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Germany and the United States were affected by cultural ideas and beliefs circulated in advertising imagery, especially in trade mark design. The period between 1890 and 1930 witnessed a shift from customers purchasing merchandise to buying name brand products. This shift to brand name products caused customers to relate differently to the world of things, especially those available for personal consumption and to rely on the messages that advertising was communicating to the masses about advertised products. Trade characters became useful vehicles to facilitate this shift because of the readily identifiable values represented by these personable icons. Increasingly elaborate strategies in advertising developed, starting with trade card series and continuing with magazine and newspaper. In an interactive context of historical processes, in which consumers and advertising materials influenced each other, ads might be looked at as cultural agents of change from an economy dominated by local markets to a society in which economic exchange and mass consumption in expanding national networks became identical.

The dissertation discusses the importance of trade mark development in reaching a large mass of consumers through the visual representations of trade characters and through the cultural narratives that these images represented. In many cases, human trade characters lend their faces and bodies, and often their names, to market a particular product (or line of products) to the masses. Distinct advertising campaigns drawing on these powerful icons were at the core of creating successful brand products to generate a coherent and quickly recognizable image. The selected images in this dissertation represented readily identifiable cultural tropes of comfort

and intimacy, mostly through racialized imagery. Later chapters will discuss in more detail how some of these trademarks drew particularly on narratives of racial and national constructions by using black trade characters.

Three trade characters for food products (Rastus for Cream of Wheat, Aunt Jemima, and the Sarotti-Mohr) will be discussed in later chapters in more detail (chapters 3-5). All three trade characters are black, and all three have survived into the 21st century, with some minor changes. Aunt Jemima promotes a pancake brand that started out to sell a pancake mix and has since grown to selling syrup, frozen waffles, and other breakfast items. Rastus is the trademark for Cream of Wheat, a hot cereal. In Germany, the racialized trade character of the Sarotti chocolate company, the Sarotti Mohr, became a symbol for quality, yet affordable chocolate.

Part of the success of the products advertised via these trade characters can be linked to their easily recognizable racialized and gendered identities. The evolution of these trade characters between 1890 and 1930 was part of a larger attempt by many companies in the food industry to create particular recognizable products by evoking an array of sentiments and cultural memories. Trade card series in the 1890s and early 1900s are precursors to these trade characters. They lay the foundation for specific images among consumers that later on ensured loyalty to various products of a company, utilizing narratives of national culture and pride as well as exoticism and otherness (chapter 2).

Overall, the dissertation examines the influence of advertising, especially the visual aspects, between 1890 in 1930 in Germany and the United States on the production of meaning in both cultures. In both countries, the 40-year period between

1890 and 1930 witnessed numerous cultural, social, political, and economic changes. In this dissertation, the expressions of cultural identities through racial constructions as well as via national narratives in advertising media form the core of the analysis. Despite various differences, German and U.S. societies underwent similar changes regarding the role of advertising in mass culture and the rise of mass consumption during this period.[15] Advertising formed an important factor for cultural identity formation, by drawing on discourses widely circulated in popular culture, and affected the ways both countries imagined themselves as nation-states.[16] The increase in advertising and with it the intensification of visual stimuli in the material culture of commerce between 1890 and 1930 provide a fertile background against which to discuss the effect of racial constructions of identity and their implementation into the mundane world of consumer objects. At a time when people's relationships to the object world were changing because of changes in technology and industrialization, a change that is mirrored in advertising, the merging of racially and nationally exclusive ideologies and the perpetuation of colonial racial beliefs into the twentieth century become an important cultural phenomenon that also left its marks in commercial culture, especially in the visual imagery of advertising.[17]

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[15] A conference at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C., that resulted in the publication *Getting and Spending* in 1998, highlights the differences and similarities between U.S. and German consumer culture. The essays that address developments at the turn of the nineteenth century make a case for the increasingly important role that advertising played on both sides of the Atlantic, especially the United States and Germany, see Charles McGovern, Susan Strasser, and Stephen J. Whitfield, eds. *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[16] Charles McGovern, *Sold American*.

[17] Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire*; David Ciarlo, "Consuming Race, Envisioning Empire: Colonialism and German Mass Culture, 1887-1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2003); Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

In the context of severe social and cultural changes, the advent of consumer culture and its public face of advertising mirrors the cultural anxieties, desires, joys, and fears of German and U.S. citizens between 1890 and 1930.[18] Racial tensions have always been at the core of the American social and cultural fabric, and consumer culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflected racial and ethnic tensions about cultural and political citizenship of nonwhites and recent immigrants. Caricatures of ethnic and racial groups had become a common feature in all realms of popular culture, from political cartoons to vaudeville shows, from children's books to trade cards.[19] These images captured the ambivalent and shifting relationships towards a culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse population in the United States.

Advertising became an increasingly popular method to disseminate products among populations, something that would not have been possible without mass production and distribution or growing consumer markets in highly populated and industrialized areas. Among many things, it was an important and often overlooked stimulus in helping to prepare citizens of Western nation states to racially differentiate themselves from people perceived to be outside the Western boundaries of "civilization" and "industrial development" through the materials used for a variety of advertising campaigns, especially between the 1890 and 1910 (chapters 2 and 3).[20]

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[18] Peter Borscheid and Clemens Wischermann, eds. *Bilderwelt des Alltags. Werbung in der Konsumgesellschaft des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995); Jackson T. Lears, *Fables of Abundance A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).
[19]Hans-Peter Beyerdoerfer and Eckhart Hellmuth, eds., *Exotica*; Marilyn Maness Mehaffy, "Advertising Race/Raceing Advertising: The Feminine Consumer (-Nation), 1876-1900," *Signs* 23, no. 1 (Autumn 1997): 131-174.
[20] In *American Commodities in an Age of Empire,* Mona Domosh provides a detailed overview of the United States' "informal imperialism" of international trade starting in the mid-nineteenth century and spilling into the 20th century, laying the foundation for later cultural dominance in large parts of the world. Her focus is mainly on how selected U.S. manufacturers designed to sell their products in international markets and offers a thorough reading of "the United States and its business cultures

This was a phenomenon that took place with a wide range of products, but this dissertation focuses on selected campaigns by companies in the food industry, an industry that utilized advertising heavily to introduce a variety of suddenly widely available and pre-packaged products such as coffee, chocolate, and ready-to-go foods, examples of which are baking mixes and cereal blends.

The creation of advertising materials was not a haphazard process, but a well-thought through practice in which advertisers drew on their own cultural experiences and what they perceived to be the larger cultural knowledge of their audiences. The images used in advertising play a key role in this process. This becomes clear when examining the primary source material used for this dissertation. The training of spectators into mass consumers happened via an available iconography that relied on widely distributed social and cultural narratives about success, intimacy, comfort, and nostalgia. Professionals in the advertising world saw themselves as important actors in larger economic developments influenced by technological and industrial changes.[21] This development was by far not linear nor unilaterally accepted. The primary source material allows us to identify some conflicts about the increasing role of advertising in consumers' lives and to understand the reactions by advertising creators to address the overall changes in commercial culture. Visual materials in commercial culture were sometimes the source of conflict, such as the rising number of billboards in rural landscapes. Other times, they were the medium to ease

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[through] cultural representations produced by […] American international companies […] in relationship to the particular international experiences and cultures of these companies and the larger socio-economic context and ideological formations of turn-of-the-century America," 3-4.

[21] Stephen R. Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and its Creators* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before World War I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

consumers into new habits of consumption and purchasing. The visual representations of people, things, and places in ads were powerful and necessary elements to carry messages to consumers. The usage of visual imagery was especially important for the emerging trademarked products. In the face of competition, a company could distinguish itself from its competitors by employing an easily memorable and accessible cultural icon by which one's product would stand out in the sea of competition. In general, the visual world formed an essential aspect of the success, or lack of success, of advertising campaigns.

# Chapter 1: Brand names, Trademarks, and the Cultural Role of Advertising

## Introduction

This chapter discusses ways in which visual imagery in advertising increased the United States and Germany between 1890 and 1930 and, as I suggest, assisted the development of trademarks that contributed to the rise of modern mass consumption in the early twentieth century. This discussion is part of a larger historical discourse on how advertising expanded and became culturally and economically significant. The inexpensive availability of visual materials and their subsequent increasing use in advertising was a major factor in bringing this about. The growth if the advertising industry in the United States between 1890 and 1930 explained, in Richard Wightman Fox' and Jackson Lears' words, "how consumption became a cultural ideal, a hegemonic "way of seeing" in twentieth century America."[22] German historian Christine Lamberty, in her extensive analysis of advertising in Germany between 1890 and 1914, describes the growing advertising industry as an important factor for cultural change. Advertising, according to Lamberty, changed everyday life and provided mass consumers with new and more democratic consumption behaviors.[23] Advertising creators used advertisements to draw in consumers, extending the concept of mass consumption to vast numbers of people. The modernization of

[22] Richard Wightman Fox and Jackson T. Lears, "Introduction," in *The Culture of Consumption; Critical Essays in American History 1880-1980*, ed. ibid., (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), x.
[23] My translation, Christiane Lamberty, *Reklame in Deutschland 1890-1914. Wahrnehmung, Professionalisierung und Kritik der Wirtschaftswerbung*, Beiträge zur Verhaltensforschung, vol. 38 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot: 2000), 14.

lifestyles, the expansion of cities, and the growth of industrial production affected the advertising industry and shaped an environment that led to the rise of mass consumption.[24] The growth of urban areas, modern lifestyles that demanded different products and facilities such as department stores, and increasing mass production of merchandise through industrial development, among other historical processes, played out in and affected the development of advertising and consumer culture. The mass consumption of trademarked products became part of normal consumption behavior by the early twentieth century. I suggest that advertisements helped promote mass consumption as a national practice. Narratives of prosperity, abundance, and comfort, among others, were often drawn on.

This period witnessed a shift from customers purchasing general merchandise or bulk items to their seeking brand name products. The shift to brand name products affected a changed relationship between consumers and the items they purchased. Mass advertising between 1890 and 1930 introduced consumers to trademarks, often through the use of trade characters. U.S. and German trade card series in the 1890s and early 1900s were precursors to the use of trade characters. They laid the foundation for associating specific images with particular products. Subsequently,

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[24] For further discussion of the impact of advertising in the United States during this period, see: Lawrence Glickman, ed., *Consumer Society in American History: A Reader* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999); Charles McGovern, Susan Strasser, and Stephen J. Whitfield, eds. *Getting and Spending*; Jackson T. Lears, *Fables of Abundance*; Gary Cross, *Time and Money: The Making of Consumer Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); David M. Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago: University Press of Chicago, 1954). For further discussion on the impact of advertising in Germany during this period, see Christiane Lamberty, *Reklame in Deutschland 1890-1914*; Susanne Bäumler, ed. *Die Kunst zu Werben.: Das Jahrhundert der Reklame* (Ostfildern: Dumont Reiseverlag, 1996); Peter Borscheid and Clemens Wischermann, eds. *Bilderwelt des Alltags*; Dirk Reinhardt, *Von der Reklame zum Marketing. Geschichte der Wirtschaftswerbung in Deutschland* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993)

this association ensured consumer loyalty to various products of a company. Borrowing from Barbara Phillips' discussion about the cultural role of trade characters in the United States, I use the term trade character to refer to the images as based on "animate beings or animated objects [because it] implies a living personality [as its] focal point."[25] Ad creators, drawing on growing psychological knowledge utilized to create successful advertising, were very attentive to the visual appeal and design of advertising material, including magazine ads, packages, and other advertising media, resulting in careful constructions of trademark logos and characters.

**United States**

By the late nineteenth century and certainly the early twentieth, the practice of advertising started to refer exclusively to commercial publications, announcements, and other forms of public display. Advertising had been a social force shaping U.S. culture prior to 1890. By the end of the nineteenth century, advertising had been around for centuries, but its definition had changed over time. For a long time, advertising referred to any type of public announcement. Henry Sampson's work dating from 1875, for example, which is entitled *A history of advertising from the earliest times: illustrated by anecdotes, curious specimens and biographical notes*, talks about a variety of public announcements, from personal ads to official or

[25] According to Barbara Phillips, the term trade character lacks a unified definition among scholars studying advertising. Phillips reviews relevant literature review that deal with the cultural role of advertising in the United States. Barbara Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters and Their Role In American Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* 29, no. 4 (1996): 144.

governmental notices that were posted in public places.[26] By 1890, however, the term "advertisement" started to refer exclusively to the practice of promoting consumer goods in various forms of public culture, such as magazines, newspapers, or billboards.

As the advertising industry grew, brand name products became the major form of advertised merchandise. Between 1890 and 1930, brand name and trademark products developed into the dominant forms of products in U.S society and helped shape a nationally unified experience of consumption. A limited number of products enabled common consumption experiences that could unify a vast geographical area, spanning from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. Consumption became part of U.S. national identity.[27] In the early twentieth century, advertising as well as consumer-oriented groups widely used the concepts of citizenship and nationalism to promote their idea through visual imagery, as historian Charles McGovern indicates: "Perhaps the most powerful and significant connections between consumer products and American identity were forged through visual elements."[28]

Visual elements in advertising, as McGovern points out, were one important factor in linking products with national identity. Other forms of advertising played an important role in this as well. The mail order catalogue, pioneered by Montgomery Ward in 1872 and later picked up by Sears and others, connected vast and distant parts of the United States with each other. The mail order catalogues started out as

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[26] Henry Sampson, *A History of Advertising from the Earliest Times: Illustrated by Anecdotes, Curious Specimens and Biographical Notes* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875).
[27] "Adapting "American" ideals, cultural icons, traditions, and languages, [advertising professionals] framed consuming as the basis of a reconstituted modern citizenship," McGovern, 5.
[28] McGovern refers here mostly to "icons and figures of American heritage and government," but I will suggest in subsequent discussions that other visual icons, such a black trade characters, forged these connections as well, 109.

simple price lists. However, due to the increasing availability of inexpensive and improved visual design, they grew quickly to multiple-page and elaborately designed catalogues that allowed individuals in non-urban areas to participate in consumption without access to large department stores and an abundant selection in their local shops. In a speech to the Sphinx Club in 1917, Stanley Resor, the CEO of the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) Advertising Agency, referred to the mail order industry and its contribution "to raise the standard of living in farm districts" as one of many contributions of the American advertising industry. In fact, his speech is a compelling narrative not only for the fact that "in America, business is the dominant interest," but also because it draws a convincing picture of the American advertising industry as a vibrant, even necessary element for American business success in the twentieth century. [29]

Print advertising had been a feature in the U.S. newspaper landscape throughout the nineteenth century; however, magazine advertising began to become more and more important, especially after the 1890s. The last decade of the nineteenth century witnessed various technological improvements in the printing industry, including enhancements in printing color and black-and white images inexpensively through "the use of half-tone plates on typographic presses."[30] As a result, the magazine market grew, establishing weeklies such as *The Ladies Home*

[29] Stanley Resor, "What Cooperation should the Advertising Agent expect from the Newspaper Publisher?" *News Bulletin* no. 13 (January 17, 1917): 12, Newsletters, 1910-2005, J. Walter Thompson Archives.
[30] Frank Presbrey , *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1929), 359.

*Journal* (LHJ) as important cultural forums.[31] Before the late 1800s, most advertising in newspapers and magazines centered on ads for specific local products, for patent medicines, and for local stores that could perform certain services. By the 1890s, the publishing industry grew due to the increasing popularity of these new magazines, such as *McClure's*, that were founded primarily to generate revenue through selling space for advertising.[32]

As production, distribution, and consumption changed, the advertising industry expanded. By the early twentieth century, independent advertising agencies, advertising departments in companies, and advertising sections of magazines and newspapers had created new professions, such as the copywriter.[33] This new group of white-collar professionals shaped the consumption behaviors of U.S. citizens. As economic historian James D. Norris points out: "In the period between 1865 and 1920, as the nation shifted form a rural-farming economy to an urban-manufacturing one, a major transformation also occurred in the behavior of American consumers. Nowhere is this transformation better illustrated than in the advertisements that appeared in popular magazines."[34] According to Norris, then, an analysis of the advertising industry and of advertisements themselves might give us some important insights into the behavior of the American consuming public. The general economic transformation at the turn of the nineteenth century and the emergence of the United States as a market-driven, capitalist consumer republic found their way into ads'

[31] For a detailed discussion about *The Ladies Home Journal*'s role in promoting mass consumption, see: Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995).
[32] Norris, 35-45.
[33] Fox, *The Mirror Makers*.
[34] Norris, xii.

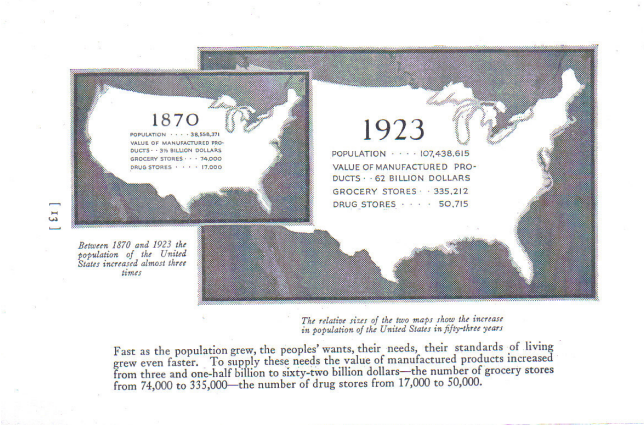
visual and textual messages, promising a new and more convenient way of life through new brand name products. For example, an ad for Gold Dust Twins' Washing Powder from July 1918 promises "time-saving uses" for cleaning dirty dishes.[35]

Economic changes were generated by technological innovations. The accessibility of modern technology for mass production and distribution culminated in the last decades of the nineteenth century and enabled the change from a predominantly agricultural to a largely industrial nation. Ruth Schwartz Cowan, in her survey book *A Social History of Technology,* describes the 50 years between 1870 and 1920 as an era in which the United States changed from a pre-industrial to an industrial nation because of developing networks of interdependence, which she terms "technological systems."[36] Cowan identifies five major networks that through interactions among each other led to the rise of industrialization in the United States: the telegraph, railroad, petroleum, telephone, and electric systems.

The massive rise of new technological systems occurred simultaneously to a drastic increase in the population, which was reflected in the total amount of manufactured goods. Changes in production patterns were accompanied by changes in the standard of living for individuals living in the United States. The growth of cities as well as the overall population affected the need for the mass manufacturing of consumption items such as food, clothing, etc. According to Cowan, "between 1860 and 1920, the population of the United States more than tripled (from 31 million

[35] "For National Time-Saving," Unkown publication (July 1918), Lightner Collection of Antique Advertisements, [1870s]-[2000s].
[36] Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *A Social History of American Technology* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997), 149-51.

to 106 million)."[37] Immigration in combination with a high natural birth rate was important components to this population explosion. An illustration that Stanley Resor used in his address to the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1924 also shows the drastic population increase that Cowan describes.




*News Bulletin* no. 13 (January 17, 1917),
Newsletters, 1910-2005. J. Walter Thompson Archives

By 1899, as Cowan states, "half of the nation's output was in manufactured goods and only a third was agricultural."[38] Considering that by 1869, about 53 percent of production in the United States was considered agricultural and only about a third of items produced were manufactured, the economic and social make-up of U.S. society had been transformed radically since the 1890s.

The increasing influence of advertising on consumers' choices was a gradual development and interconnected with changing circumstances in other areas of public life, such as the technological systems Ruth Schwartz Cowan referred to. The rapid transformations of these systems in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries grew out of gradual and steady changes in decades prior to 1880, as Cowan convincingly demonstrates in the first six chapters of her book, especially in her first

[37] Ibid., 168.
[38] Ibid., 165.

section on pre-industrial developments.[39] These changes in the industrial make-up over the past centuries led to modern industrialization and commercialization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and paved the way for advertising to become an important stimulus on cultural formations at the turn of the nineteenth century.

The rise of industrial production methods and the increasing number of mass-produced and distributed products of consumption affected all realms of manufacturing. It strongly affected the food industry, especially in those areas of food production dedicated to items that were not consumed in large amounts prior to the twentieth century. Instant breakfast products such as Cream of Wheat and pancake mixes such as Aunt Jemima were part of a larger development in the food industry. The increase of pre-packaged and pre-mixed items that would make life (and work) in the kitchen easier became increasingly popular. Advertising for food items increased in the late nineteenth century, largely because people started relying on pre-packaged food items that could no longer be produced in the household, or in quantities that could satisfy consumers' changing needs. In addition, as work spaces emerged that separated men and women from their immediate living spaces, or in other words, as the differentiation between public and private spaces became more and more pronounced, people started developing needs and desires for different products.

Food products were one of the most advertised products in the early twentieth century. In 1921, the Curtis Publishing Company published a book called *Leading*

[39] Cowan, "Part I: In the Beginning," and "Part II: Industrialization, Chapters 3-6," 1-148.

*Advertisers – 1920*.[40] Of the fifty leading companies in 1920, 11.5 belonged to the food merchandise group, followed by ten companies in toilet goods. The numbers were based on advertisements in thirty-six major publications, such as the *Saturday Evening Post, Ladies Home Journal* (LHJ)*, Cosmopolitan,* and a variety of other weeklies, women's magazines, and widely distributed farm journals. The comparison of total expenditure between the different groupings of advertised merchandise further illustrates the dominance of food advertising in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Food advertising alone, excluding candy, gum and beverages, amounted to more than 14 million dollars. The total expenditure for toilet goods, the runner up, only came up to a little over nine million dollars.

In fact, the food industry became an important part of the American industrial world. The library of the statistical department of the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) advertising agency, for example, acquired a variety of texts that were specifically about food consumption and, more particularly, the changes in food consumption in the past four or five decades. Of the 56 titles that were added to the library between July 1920 and March 1921, twelve titles dealt specifically with food and/or the food industry, such as *Care and Feeding of Children* by L. E. Holt and Raymond Pearl's *The Nation's Food.* Many of JWT's longstanding clients with large accounts were in the food industry.[41]

**U.S. Brand Name Products**

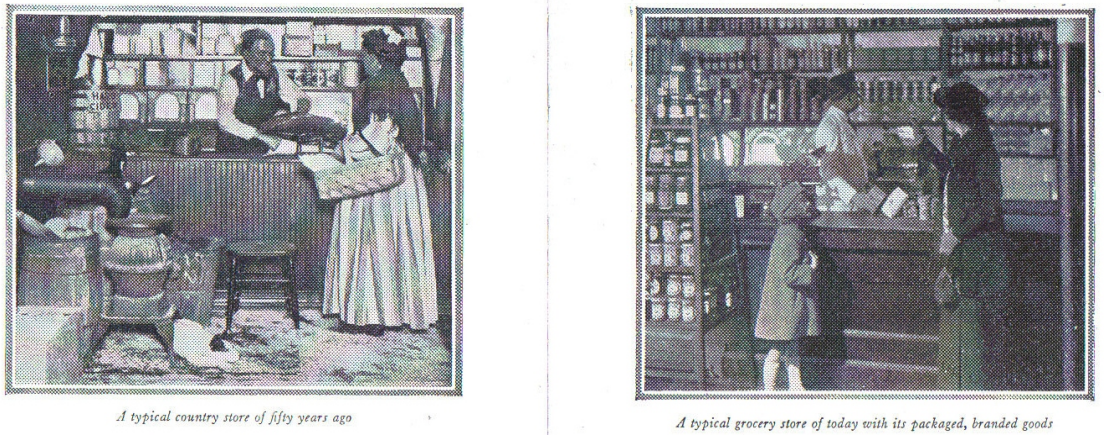
[40] The information from *Leading Advertisers – 1920* by the Curtis Publishing Company in summarized in a special edition of the *News Bulletin* no. 78 (May 14, 1921) dedicated to the information printed in the publication that might be relevant to JWT staff, Newsletters, 1910-2005, J. Walter Thompson Archives.
[41] Ibid.

Culturally, advertisements, increasingly for brand name products, were important elements in enabling the spread of mass consumption in US society. The rise of advertising as an industry by the 1890s was connected to changes in market distribution and, arguably, turned mass markets into a standard feature of most people's realities in the United States. Poster and print advertising as well as promotional events such as world fairs and exhibitions, direct mailings, and other attention grabbers spread the news of products to the masses, as Susan Strasser points out about U.S. consumer culture: "All these promotional tactics played distinct and complementary roles in the creation of the market and the adaptation of the distribution systems to branded mass-produced goods."[42] Again, the rise of advertising in the early twentieth century grew simultaneously with the "invention" and introduction of brand name, pre-packaged, and mass-produced consumer goods, often replacing items that had been traditionally purchased in local general stores in bulk or produced within the household. Further, strategically placed advertising mechanisms also promoted, in addition to products themselves, certain behaviors and ideals that, if not reinforcing the product itself, served to create demand for the advertised merchandise.

Consumer behavior changed as distribution structures adjusted to increasing demands. This change clearly manifested itself in the cultural landscape of grocery stores between 1890 and 1930.[43] In an address to a meeting of the Western Council of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Stanley Resor, in his role as the

[42] Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2004), 164.
[43] For further discussion see James M. Mayo, *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1993).

Association's President, reflected on the economic, social, and cultural changes in the past decades and their effects on the growing advertising industry. Throughout his talk, he used tables and picture to illustrate these changes, such as two pictures of typical grocery stores, one in the 1870s, the other around 1917:



*A typical country store of fifty years ago*

*A typical grocery store of today with its packaged, branded goods*

*News Bulletin* no. 13 (January 17, 1917),
Newsletters, 1910-2005. J. Walter Thompson Archives

> "In a store like this [1874 store], the consumer knew the proprietor. […] All the coffee, tea, sugar, flour, salt, mustard, etc. this grocer sold he scooped out of sacks, barrels, or small bins. They were unidentified bulk products whose quality depended on his judgment as a buyer. […] Today, brand identification enables both dealer and consumer to be absolutely certain of the quality of a product."[44]

Following Resor's logic, brand name products became guarantors for quality and value, and advertising provided the necessary link between producer and consumer for information about a product's merit and worth.

Advertising of brand name products turned into an expanding business. Corporations and industries with national distribution started to rely on magazine and newspaper advertising to make consumers aware of their products. In addition to street advertising – especially in larger cities – and public spectacles such as World

[44] Resor, 15, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

Fairs, which had been significant spaces in Victorian America to spread the existence of certain products and companies among the masses, newspaper and magazine advertising became an important source of information not only about cultural and political events, but also about lifestyle and consumption patterns. The Postal Act in 1879 made paper mail distribution an affordable option for printers and merchants and led to a commercial revolution of the printing industry. It also led to increasing distribution of mail order catalogues.[45] The advantage of the magazine or newspaper and the mail order catalogue was that it could reach people in urban and rural areas alike.

**Organization of the Advertising Industry in the United States**

As advertising became an integral part of industrial success, advertising professionals such as employees of New York's JWT ad agency deliberately used metaphors of mechanics and technology to describe the operations at the ad agency. Advertising experts in the United States described the ad industry as an important economic and cultural force. In the *News Bulletin* no. 20 from October 17, 1916, the article "The Machinery of our Business" is saturated with language that equates the processes of advertising to a well-oiled and well-functioning machine.[46] Advertising agencies had to fight against long-standing resentment towards advertising as an un-noble activity instead of a regular feature of business life. The article described the JWT agency as "a highly organized factory, composed out of many specialized

[45] David Blanke, "A Comparison of the Catalogs issued from Sears, Roebuck & Company and Montgomery Ward & Company1893-1906," *Essays in Economic and Business History* 12 (1994): 319-334.
[46] "The Machinery of Our Business," *News Bulletin* no. 20 (October 17, 1916), Newsletters, 1910-2005.

departments."[47] The analogy with a well-oiled factory was one that would be understood by a large number of people, since the imagery of large industrial factories was widely distributed in U.S. popular culture of the early twentieth century: "But on the whole, twentieth-century advertising iconography redefined the course of abundance from the fecund earth to the efficient factory."[48] The analogy with a factory also implied a level of hard work and professionalism that the business of advertising had lacked in the past. The various departments in the ad agency are referred to as a component "installed for the sure and expeditious transaction of our business."[49] Swiftness and professionalism are guaranteed, despite the absence of steel machines. The analogy of human labor in the ad agency with machine work known for precision, accuracy, and success indicates that these ad agents saw the need to sell themselves in this way. It illustrates their desire to describe themselves as participating in American industrialism, as measurable quantities for business success: "There is every indication that human transactions when considered en masse are subject to very definite laws in which environment probably plays a very great part."[50] In the eyes of JWT's ad agents, success of advertising campaign became a measurable quantity.

Much of the internal communication in the JWT corporate offices reflects the desire and probably the need to standardize business procedures in an ever-growing advertising business: to stress the modern nature of advertising agents in the early twentieth century. This reflected larger societal developments. The introduction of

[47]: Ibid., 3.
[48] Lears., 18.
[49] "The Machinery of Our Business," 5.
[50] Ibid., 6.

assembly lines and work practices based on scientific management, also know as Taylorism, expedited the production and distribution process.[51] New products that without industrial innovations would have not been possible were introduced to an evolving mass market of consumption in the United States, which had grown parallel to the changes in U.S. industry and business. In a letter to Jim Young of the JWT Cincinnati office, Stanley Resor discusses his staff's request to standardize certain business procedures. As Resor points out, the company had been involved in creating a standardized inventory of their previous clients by creating "biographies of small accounts, or accounts that started from small beginnings, histories of each account, our list of world's largest or greatest, our list of successful coined names, and how we coined them, and a definite outline of all our facilities."[52]

The professional networks between manufactures, sellers, mass retailers, advertisers, and consumers that ensued out of the ever-growing mass markets in the early twentieth century were precarious constructions and underwent many changes in the early decades of the twentieth century. Legislation to control pricing and monopolization as well as standards for packaging requirement, lobbying groups on local and national levels with the various consumers' interests in minds, and professional associations of grocers and other groups were just a few elements out of many that shaped the network of production and consumption.[53] The role of branded or trademarked consumer goods, ever-increasing during the first three decades of the

[51] Robert Kanigel, *The One Best Way: Frederick Winslow Taylor and the Enigma of Efficiency* (New York: Viking, 1997).
[52], Stanley Resor to Jim Young, July 18, 1916, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[53] Although focused on post World War II U.S. consumer culture, Lizabeth Cohen's book contains several references and descriptions about the decades prior to World War II, Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption on Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003); see also William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-32* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

twentieth century, in this precarious mix is a crucial one. With it, advertising agencies or departments influenced and sustained the need and desire for certain products over others. As Strasser points out, progress became defined as "an abundance of consumer goods," an abundance which advertising supplied ad nauseam.[54]

**The Role of Images in U.S. Advertising**

Literature on advertising from the 1920s supports the general idea that images have a different effect on the consumer's minds than the text or copy in ads. In their publication *Better Advertising* in 1921, John Manly, an English Professor at the University of Chicago, and John Powell from the Holtzer-Cabot Electric Company in Chicago identify two types of advertising, "good will," "publicity," or *institutional* advertising and *direct* advertising. Imagery plays a crucial role in successfully reaching an audience for the former type of advertising, of which the principal object is "the making of an impression on the public consciousness, the association of a name with a special product, so that when the product is thought of, the name suggests itself to the memory, or *vice versa.*"[55]

The authors claim "achieving *notoriety*" for a product as a main goal for *institutional* advertising, and employment of visual imagery constituted a key element of that process. This type of advertising is not meant to induce the consumer to go out and buy the product immediately, but to start recognizing the brand name and the values attached to it. Basically, this type of advertising was designed to trigger the

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[54] Strasser, 285.
[55] John M. Manly and John A Powell, *Better Advertising: A Practical Manual of the Principles of Advertising, Embracing Institutional and Direct Advertising, Reason Why and Human Interest Copy, Elements of the Advertisement, and the Make-Up of Advertising Circulars and Folders* (Chicago: Frederick J. Drake & Co. Publishers, 1921): 16.

memory of consumers, since, as the authors continue to claim, "psychology has established the fact that visual images – pictures – have the highest memory value, in the same sense that they serve to recall to the mind the subject they advertise three times more readily than do words."[56] Pictorial advertising, as this type of advertising has also been referred to, meant to translate an idea or memorable emotion, such as comfort, to the consumer. The authors use the Cream of Wheat campaign and its increasing use of illustrations as an example of *institutional* advertising.

Visual representations played an important role in trademark design. The JWT Newsletter, dated from October 16, 1922, captures the discussion about the value of trade marks. A brief entry on the first one and a half pages of the newsletter paraphrases the thoughts by F. B. Knight, an assistant professor of psychology at the State University of Iowa. As Knight contends, the value of the trademark is to be recognized immediately and to stay in the consumer's memory, apart from aesthetic value: "[A trademark] need not be beautiful; it need only call to mind the goods it represents."[57]

Knight's findings suggest that the visual appeal of the trademark is stronger than the appeal of its copy: "These trade marks are not carried by surrounding advertising copy, but are known in and of themselves alone."[58] JWT's changes to the Cream of Wheat campaign in the 1920s, namely a move away from relying exclusively on the trademark to introducing more copy to ads in magazines and newspapers, opposed Knight's analysis and his concentration on the trademarks' visual appeal and will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4. Indeed, at the end of

[56] Ibid., 22.
[57] JWT Newsletter (October 16, 1922): 1, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[58] Ibid., 1.

the summary in the 1922 newsletter, a call for a critique of Knight's arguments by JWT staff is suggested and encouraged.

However, the opposition to Knight's findings – which were based on a rather small control group of 75 people and might be questionable in their applicability to a large part of the consuming public – by JWT staff did not mean that the agency was unaware of the appeal of illustrations and images. Just nine months before, in February, the *News Bulletin* ran an article by the New York City office's art director John T. De Vries about the necessity of advertising illustrations.[59] De Vries identifies a variety of important elements for effective illustrations, at the core of which stands simplicity in relaying its message "that will cause the sale of the product."[60] This particular element, as De Vries elaborates, makes the illustration different from a simple photograph. The illustration will highlight a particular element that carries the message to the consumer, be it through the expression on a person's face or the coloring of a symbol. De Vries seems to be adamant about illustrations needing to contain human beings, either, as he says, real people or fictitious characters. The use of people in illustrations created a link between the consumer and the product. It recreated an almost human relationship between the mass-produced product and the individual consumer via the proxy of human beings in advertising illustrations who served as salespersons for the products.

De Vries likens the human illustrations to the role of sales representatives: "Choosing the personalities for the pictures in your advertising copy is similar to

[59] John T. De Vries, "Eloquence in Advertising Illustration: Why it is necessary to have this element in order to "say it" emphatically and interestingly", *News Bulletin* (February 1922): 7-8, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[60] Ibid., 7.

choosing the salesmen who are to represent you in person."[61] The visual characters displayed in several forms of advertising became the human face and the emotional link between the consumer and the product. Representations of people embodied the human face of an otherwise anonymous, national company and served almost as substitutes for human contact between a nationally marketed product and an individual consumer. In the face of a growing consumer society, in which the individual became more and more isolated, consumers could find comfort in human representations in ads. These human illustrations became canvasses on which emotions and desires could be projected. They turned into personas with which one could either identify personally or build a fictional relationship. In this context, De Vries' comparison of these human illustrations not only with sales representatives, but also with actors or a cast in play, stresses the emotional appeal for consumers of visual representations.

Overall, De Vries's brief article stresses the fact that advertising agents in the early twentieth century, especially during the 1920s, were keenly aware of and adamant about the emotional appeal of advertising illustrations in particular and advertising in general to its consumers. As Knight states, the appeal of an illustration is an immediate one, one, as he writes, "that [the reader *or consumer*] will memorize and thereafter associate with [the advertiser's] particular message."[62] Thus, the direct line of communication via visual imagery had become an important factor in creating successful and efficient advertising campaigns in the 1920s.

[61] Ibid., 7.
[62] Ibid., 7.

The ongoing discussion about the effect of images among the JWT staff indicates that visual design played an important role in the advertising industry. The design of packages for these new brand name products also reflects the important role of visual imagery and the effect that a strategically placed and designed product could have on the consumer. Packages, on top of image in print ads, were another element of direct connection between mass-produced products and consumers. The packaging was an important aspect of the visual appeal in advertising campaigns for two reasons: because of the visual effect of the package itself, since it would remain around the house after being purchased, and because of the visual reproduction of the package in advertisements. Grocery stores, among them chain stores, not only started carrying pre-packaged food, but also started to prominently display these items in their stores. The advantage seemed clear, as an entry in the JWT Newsletter from June 17, 1916 points out. The prominent display of small and inexpensive pre-packaged boxes of food items such as crackers benefited the grocers as well as the producers. The small packages of the Uneeda Biscuit company, cheaply priced at five cents a piece, were shown off in elaborate aisle decorations, "pyramided in the center aisle making a pile that rises four feet from the floor;" these window displays were put on view in New York City stores as well as "in the windows of country stores in the Blue Ridge Mountains, miles from any Railroad." [63]

The successful presentation of food containers depended on appealing package designs. The bright colors of Uneeda Biscuit's five cents packages were apparently advantageous so that the products could be seen "through windows that are so dirty that were the color not good and strong, the packages would not be visible

[63] *News Bulletin* no. 4 (June 17, 1916): 6, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

at all."[64] Advertising agents were keenly aware of the power and necessity of product placement and arrangement of their food products in stores, both for their own clients' merchandise as well as that of their competitors. However important newspaper and magazine advertising might be, especially for products sold in a competitive mass market, advertising was a complex network. Greatly placed newspaper advertising was almost useless if the product was sold in an unappealing package and displayed in unnoticeable locations in a store.

The design, size, and composition of a package represented an important part of the advertising process. Again, many ads in the early twentieth century featured one or more versions of the finally packaged product in addition to whatever illustration and copy was used. The package itself really served as an advertisement, as Frederick O. Perkins, a JWT representative from the New York office observes: "The package is the advertisement carried through the retail store direct to the consumer."[65]

**Trademarks in the United States**

As Stanley Resor pointed out in his address to the American Association of Advertising cited earlier in this chapter, a large role in the rapid development of advertising as an important producer of cultural meaning as well as economic structures is the development of mass-produced trademark items. Consumers started to not just simply buy coffee, but to ask for Maxwell House Coffee. By presenting commonly recognizable visual motifs and reassuring messages, advertisements

[64] Ibid., 6.
[65] Frederick O. Perkins, "Packages," *News Bulletin* (April 1922): 11, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

became a way to alleviate anxieties about the larger cultural transformations and to communicate possible advantages of the shift to an industrial society based on mass consumption. It also gave consumers a language and imagination to understand the changes in consumption patterns, namely the switch from using bulk items to using pre-packaged and nationally distributed products, many of which were not part of people's established consumption patterns. Trademarks that communicated dependability and reliability were particularly successful, such as cooks and servants. The Gold Dust Twins for Fairbanks soap, the servant girl, "La Belle Chocolatiere," for Baker's Cocoa and Chocolate, and Betty Crocker are examples of such trade characters as well as Aunt Jemima, Rastus, the black cook for Cream of Wheat, and the Sarotti-Mohr, the trademark of the German chocolate manufacturer Sarotti, all three of which are discussed in more detail in chapters three to five. The use of human representation proved particularly effective in trademark design.

In 1929, Frank Presbrey defines trade characters as "human-interest trade-marks."[66] In her recent article on trade characters, Barbara Phillips points out the importance of trade characters for building brand name identity among a large pool of consumers.[67] Trade characters have not been a central issue of discussion in research projects about advertising and popular culture, mistakenly so, as Phillips asserts. Trade characters play an important role in advertising because of "their ability to form a bond between the product, the package, and the advertising."[68] Phillips identifies four "areas of contention" that are crucial to the study of trade characters and their significance in popular culture: "animate versus non-animate characters,

[66] Frank Presbrey, 382.
[67] Barbara J. Phillips, 143–145.
[68] Ibid., 147

non-trademark versus trademarked characters, fictional versus real characters, and trade versus celebrity characters."[69] Phillips' research indicates that most trade characters are also trademarks, although not every trade character represents one brand exclusively. Maximum benefit of a trade character, however, as Phillips stresses, can depend on how easily recognizable a trade character is, an effect that is enhanced if the trade character becomes the trade mark of the company or a line of products. The usefulness of a trade character lies in its immediate connotation with recognizable emotions and values to a large number of consumers: "A trade character's personality can fulfill two functions: it can give meaning to the brand by symbolizing its character, and it can lend emotional appeal to the brand by personifying the product [transferring] its own cultural meaning to what can be an otherwise meaningless product."[70]

In order for visual images in ads and on packages to be effective, advertising campaigns tended to draw on easily recognizable archetypes of cultural figures. In a publication from 1909, called "The J.W.T. Book; A Series of Talks on Advertising", 'good' advertising is described as follows: "Good advertising always has an *Idea for a foundation* [printed in red]. It is an accord with the fundamental facts of life. It is a product of Personality, but the Personality must be pretty well developed."[71] Personality of a product depended on a formula that the public could easily and quickly identify with, often using trade characters as facilitators carry this message. James Webb Young of JWT reflects on the usefulness of recognizable, often

[69] Ibid., 143.
[70] Ibid., 147-48.
[71] "The J.W.T. Book; A Series of Talks on Advertising" (1909), 3, Information Center Records, J. Walter Thompson Archives.

nostalgic values to attract consumers to certain products from one of the lectures he gave in 1934, entitled "Producing an Idea": "For constructions in the kaleidoscopic world in which we live, the more of the elements of that world which are stored in the pattern-making machine of the mind the more chance of increasing of producing more and striking ideas."[72] Effective advertising needed to reproduce or stimulate existing patterns in consumers' pattern-making machines of the mind, to use Young's colorful metaphor. He provided his audience with the example of the Aunt Jemima pancake mix campaign, for which he drew on old childhood memories about growing up in the South and listening to his father's stories (chapter 3). The desire of consumption in consumers was awakened by stimulating their cultural knowledge and appealing to their emotions via representations of cultural values in advertising materials.

**Germany**

Between 1890 and 1930, Germany experienced a variety of political shifts; however, consumer culture adapted to all these change. Similar to the United States, mass consumption became one dimension of German identity. The end of the Prussian-German war in the 1870s marked the founding of the German empire that unified formerly separate entities into a dominant political and cultural entity on the European continent. The loss of World War I, and many of the restrictions placed on Germany due to the Treaty of Versailles, created a difficult starting point for the newly formed Weimar Republic. Berlin became the center of the newly unified

[72] James Webb Young, "Producing an Idea," 70, Collection of James Webb Young's lectures in 1934, Chicago Office Records, J. Walter Thompson Archives.

empire, located in the middle of Prussia, and competed with other centers of culture and commerce such as Leipzig, Dresden, Munich, Cologne, and Hamburg. Regional identities played an important role in German cultural politics, of which advertising was a part, since "[t]he smaller German states, fearful of Prussian domination, saw cultural policy as an important area of autonomy, and as a counterweight to Berlin's hegemony."[73]

Often, the development of a consumer society in Germany is dated post World War I. In his study on the rise of consumption among the German population, political scientist Stefan Goch claims that a culture of regular consumption did not emerge until World War I, mainly because a standard of living that would have allowed steady and continuous participation in habitual consumption was only available to a small part of the population. The standard of living among the majority of the population simply did not allow an overarching consumer culture to arise before the 1920s.[74]

Literature on advertising prior to World War I, however, seems to suggest that the decades prior to 1919 already witnessed a shift towards an increasing culture of consumption. Recent scholarship has focused on an approach based on cultural history to examine the relationship between "commercial advertising" and "societal-

[73] Mathew Jeffries. "Imperial Germany: Cultural and Intellectual Trends," in *Nineteenth- century Germany: Politics, Culture, and Society 1780-1918*, ed. Paul Breuilly (London: Arnold, 2001), 231.
[74] Stefan Goch, "Aufstieg der Konsumgesellschaft – Niedergang der Milieus? Viele Fragen,"in *Der lange Weg in den Überfluss. Anfänge und Entwicklung der Konsumgesellschaft seit der Vormoderne*, ed. Michael Prinz (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2003): "Bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg kann nicht von einer dauerhaften und stabilen Verbesserung des Lebensstandards breiter Kreise der Bevölkerung gesprochen werden. Nur eine Minderheit verfügte über die Mittel, um jenseits der Grundbedürfnisse mehr oder weniger regelmässig "zu konsumieren" – dazu waren die Existenzbedingungen zu unsicher und karg," 87.

economic change."[75] In his introduction to the anthology *Bilderwelt des Alltags* ("The Visual World of Daily Life"), Clemens Wischermann points out that advertising became a critical cultural influence in German consumer culture around 1890, with the spread of brand name products.[76] Primary material such as Victor Mataja's *Die Reklame* ("Advertising") (1910) from the early twentieth century also suggests that mass consumption started to develop prior to World War I. Paul Ruben's edited and widely cited volume *Die Reklame: Ihre Kunst und Wissenschaft (Advertising: Its Art and Science)* from 1914 indicates that commercialization of public culture was underway before the age of the "Golden Twenties."[77] Advertising for consumer products, as the numerous articles in this volume suggest, had been a constant feature of early twentieth century German life. Prof. Robert Wuttke from Dresden, for example, describes that consumers had become increasingly sophisticated and demanding of a rich variety of all kinds of products over the past decades prior to the 1910s.[78]

Recent scholarship clearly indicates that advertising changed the social and cultural fabric in imperial and Weimar Germany. Christiane Lamberty's study of advertising in Germany between 1890 and 1914 illustrates some of the major

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[75] "Vielmehr verlangt Werbung nach unserer Auffassung nach einem kulturgeschichtlichen Ansatz, der das Verhältnis von kommerzieller Werbung und gesellschaftlich-wirtschaftlichem Wandel in den Blick nimmt," Clemens Wischermann, "Einleitung: Der kulturgeschichtliche Ort der Werbung," in *Bilderwelt des Alltags*, 8.

[76] "Die Geschichte der Werbung begint daher in dieser Sicht im eigentlichen Sinnemit dem geschichtlichen Eintritt in die Konsumgesellschaft; zeitlich wird diese Zäsur zumeist in die Jahre um 1890 gelegt und mit dem anhaltenden Anstieg der Wohlstandsindikatoren und der Durchsetzung von Markenartiklen belegt," Clemens Wischermann, "Einleitung," 13.

[77] Paul Ruben, ed., *Die Rekame: Ihre Kunst und Wissenschaft* vol. 2 (Berlin: Hermann Paetel Verlag, 1914).

[78] Robert Wuttke, "Die Entwicklung der Handelsformen und der Reklame an der Hand der 'Illustrierten Zeitung'" in *Die Reklame: Ihre Kunst und Wissenschaft,* Paul Ruben, ed.: "[…] und immer ist der K äefer begehrlicher und anspruchsvoller geworden. Er verlangt eine reiche Auswahl von Waren aller Art und aller Preisunterschiede," 54.

influences that advertising had on the way that German people structured their private and public lives. Lamberty is less specific in defining a particular point in time that enabled mass consumption than Goch. Rather, her work, as well as much scholarship in the past five years, tends to locate the gradual shift to a culture shaped by consumption in the late nineteenth century.[79] Advertising changed old consumption patterns to a new and more democratic behavior of consumption. Victor Mataja, a well-known and respected expert on the nature of commercial advertising in early twentieth Germany, points out in his seminal piece on advertising in the 1920s that manufacturers played an important role in making advertising an important force in economic relations. His observation corresponds with the fact that German economic culture was transforming from one dominated by local trends to one where national forces and companies started dominating the economic scene more and more.[80]

In much of the literature on German advertising at the turn of the century, writers compared Germany with the United States. For example, Victor Mataja, in his widely distributed book on advertising, addresses the connection between the rise of advertising as an economic and cultural force and mail-order companies (*Versandhäuser)*. He points out that the mail order business enjoyed a larger success rate in the United States than Germany, mainly because of wide distances between the main offices of various production and distribution sites and a substantial number of the customers. As in most literature of this era, Mataja comments also on the higher sensibility for advertising that American customers possess. In other words, he points

[79] Christiane Lamberty, *Reklame in Deutschland 1890-1914.*, 14-21.
[80] For a brief overview of Germany's economic development, see: Frank B. Tipton, "The Economic Dimension in German History," in *Modern Germany Reconsidered, 1870-1945,* ed. Gordon Martel (London: Routledge, 1992).

out that U.S. consumers are more accepting of advertising for a variety of reasons, one of them being a higher distribution rate of magazines and newspapers than in Germany.[81]

**Brand Name Products in Germany**

Similar to the United States, German consumer culture also underwent changes in consumer behavior. Brand name products, often using distinct trademarks, increased in popularity between 1890 and 1930. Brand name products were not a new phenomenon by 1890; however, by the beginning of the twentieth century, they dominated the economic landscape in Germany. Mataja cites from a treatise on economic structures in the late nineteenth century German Empire published in 1897. The author of this work, Max Rieck points out that where customers formerly evaluated a product based on its qualities as a product, now customers purchase certain items based on the brand name, which is familiar to the average consumer because of advertising.[82] Rieck does not talk about individual customers, but about *Kaufleute* (merchants, meaning owners of smaller stores such as individual grocers) who would select products that they would feature in their stores based rather on the brand name of the product than necessarily the quality of it. They assumed that the popularity of a certain brand name because of its advertising would ensure a higher profit, since the individual customer would be more likely recognize the advertised product. Changes from a pre-industrial to an industrial nation paralleled the growth of

[81] Mataja, *Die Reklame*, *Eine Untersuchung überAnkündigungswesen und Werbetätigkeit im Geschäftsleben* (München: Drucken & Humblot, 1910): 308-321.
[82] Max Rieck, *Deutsche Kaiser und Deutsche Volksvermögen* (Leipzig 1897): 42, quoted in Victor Mataja, *Die Reklame*, 21.

the advertising industry in Germany. By the late nineteenth century, advertising was recognized as an important business practice.[83]

Rieck distinguishes between the former empirical knowledge that was needed to gauge the levels of quality of different products such as coffee or tea. Lifelong learning and experience are necessary to tell good coffee from bad coffee, whereas the distinction between different brand names takes only hours to acquire. It is so simple that even "a child can do it."[84] The degree of public exposure often determined the popularity and perception of quality, compared to the expert opinion of a connoisseur with years of experience in an economic system in which products are sold for what they are, not so much by who makes them. Advertising became an instrumental feature in creating and sustaining an economic system in which the exchange of goods is based on brand names, since it enables the quick communication of the image of quality to a large mass of people by simplistic messages through text and, even more effectively, through images.

**Responses to Increasing Advertising in Germany**

Mataja summarizes many voices in Germany that were critical of economic, social, and cultural changes that the increased usage of mass advertising seemed to embody. He describes the changed systems as an "automated distribution machine"

[83] The publications of various volumes on advertising in this time period suggests that advertising became part of customary business practice, examples of which are Rudolf Cronau, *Das Buch der Reklame. Geschichte, Wesen und Praxis der Reklame*. Ulm: Kommissionsverlag der Wohler'schen Buchhandlung, 1887, or Johannes Lemcke (P. Friesenhahn), *Handbuch der Reklame*. Berlin: Brockhaus, 1901. Correspondence of Ludwig Stollwerck, CEO of the Cologne based chocolate producer Stollwerck Schokolade, from the early 1900s also hints at the significance of developing varied and attention-grabbing advertising practices, Stollwerck AG Archives.

[84] Quoted in Mataja, Rieck: "An die Stelle der Warenkenntnis ist die Markenkenntinis getreten, und die verschafft sich jades Kind in wenigen Students, wenn es sein muss." (323).

(*Verteilungsmaschine)*, where the distributors or merchants just became an automatic link in a mechanized and seemingly soulless world.[85] The formerly careful consideration on the side of distributors or merchants that went into the process of purchasing certain merchandise had been replaced by automatic, almost programmed procedures that depended on the demands of the consumer, stimulated by public mass advertising.

In Germany, distrust towards the manipulative aspect of advertising remained part of cultural attitudes towards advertising into early twentieth century business culture. The distrust of the changing system expressed by distributors or merchants, as Mataja pointed out, and the various voices decrying the decline of cultural values due to increased advertising in a large variety of public spaces are just two examples. Many merchants and industrialists remained suspicious about the need for advertising their products in large national campaigns.

In fact, the increasing expansion of advertising into public spaces, urban as well as rural or suburban, was a sore spot in the eyes of many intellectuals and critics of advertising. In the introduction to Ruben's volume, Prof. Josef Kohler from Berlin suggests that modern advertising should stimulate the aesthetic needs of modern times.[86] However, critical voices about the aesthetic standards as well as the frequency of advertising, especially in public spaces, surfaced while Kohler and colleagues advocated for German advertising's aesthetic appeal.

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[85] Mataja, *Die Rekame*, "[Der Händler] ist also nicht mehr der Mann, der alles, was er kauft und verkauft, auf Grund seiner besseren Warenkenntnis beurteilt und als Vertreter seiner Brotherren, der Konsumenten, immer nur das Beste und Billigste an sich zu bringen trachtet, sondern er ist die reine Verteilungsmaschine geworden, die oben einnimmt und unten ausgibt." 342.

[86] Josef Kohler, "Vorwort", *Die Reklame*,v-vi. "Auch in der Reklame soll das starke ästhetische Bedürfnis unserer Zeit Anregung erfahren; und wer immer und immer wieder geschmackvolle Biler und Zeichen sieht, der wird mehr und mehr dazu geführt, das Hässliche zu verschmehen und das Bedeutungslose beiseite zu werfen," vi.

Prof. von Oechelhaeuser from Karlsruhe, who was affiliated with the Association for the preservation for historical monuments and protection for national culture (*Verein für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz*) wrote about sending a letter to all German chambers of commerce (*Handelskammern*) and commercial associations (*kaufmännische Vereine*) in Germany as well as in Austria. In this letter, he urged its readers to pay attention to the aesthetic values of advertising so that advertising will not pollute the natural landscape and built environment in which values of beauty and national pride are engrained.[87] He warns against exaggeration in advertising and calls to his audience's attention that all of them are participating in creating an aesthetic culture of their time.[88] Oechelhaeuser's primary concern was outdoor advertising, especially the advertising alongside railroad tracks, a practice that had become popular in Germany at the turn of the nineteenth century. The visual impact of advertising on a variety of settings reminds us that consumer culture, often described as an urban phenomenon, impacted the consuming public in all public and private spaces, urban, suburban, or rural.

However, during the 1920s, the resistance towards advertising seemed to wane slowly but steadily. Dr. Rudolf Seyffert, an academic and renowned expert on advertising, and author of several books about the trade, commented on the change in attitudes toward advertising and wrote in 1922 that just ten years ago, advertising seemed to be an area that was uninteresting to most businessmen.[89] Despite various

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[87] A. von Oechelhaeuser, "Auswüchse des Reklamewesens", *Die Reklame*, 1-40.
[88] Ibid., "An der ästhetischen Kultur unserer Zeit mitzuarbeiten, sollten alle Berufsstände wetteifern und sichdabei stets vergegenwärtigen, dass mit der Besserung offenkundiger Misstände überall der Anfang gemacht werden sollte," 3.
[89] „Noch vor 10 Jahren war die Reklame für viele Kaufleute ein Gebiet, mit dem sie nichts zu tun haben wollten und dadurch auch nichts zu tun hatten." Rudolf Seyffert, *Die Reklame des Kaufmanns* Sammlung Glöckners Handeslbücherei, v 33.34, 2nd ed. (1920). The quote is taken from an excerpt

critical voices about the cultural quality of advertising among German intellectuals, advertising had entered German industries and firmly established itself as a necessary apparatus of business practices by the 1920s. An article in a German confectioner's trade journal in 1923 refers to advertising as an "indispensable necessity" (*unumgängliche Notwendigkeit*).[90] The article continues to describe advertising as a most significant economic factor that has lead to a new area of commercial knowledge. Comparisons with the United States, common in most writing on advertising in 1920s trade magazines and publications, led the article to describe U.S. practices of commercial advertising as more advanced than in Germany, but also as more sensational.

**Organization of the German Advertising Industry**

In Germany, the role of ad agencies was less influential than in the United States; however, in both countries, mass advertising became a standard business practice. Efficient advertising became a necessity, and advertising agents and specialists in the United States and Germany alike were adamant to point out the essential place of their services if a manufacturer wanted to make a profit. Many German industrialists established departments within their own companies. Ludwig Stollwerck for example, CEO of the Stollwerck chocolate company, a leading chocolate manufacturer in Germany, remained heavily involved in decisions about

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printed in *Die Rekameliteratur: Monatsschrift* n 79 (October 10, 1922): found in a file in the German National Archive, NS 5 VI 14419, "Zeitungssammlung, Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF), Werbewesen, Werberat der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Allgemeines, Bd. 1, 1916-1928."

[90] The citation comes from a newspaper clipping from the trade magazine *Der Konfektionär* (*The Pastry Chef)* n 31/32 (April 21, 1923) found in a file in the German National Archive, NS 5 VI 14419, "Zeitungssammlung, Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF), Werbewesen, Werberat der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Allgemeines, Bd. 1, 1916-1928."

advertising layout and imagery. The lack of large advertising agencies in Germany did not mean that people working in the advertising business were not involved in professional activities. As historian Stefan Hass reminds us in his overview article on the development of commercial advertising in Germany, professionals in the advertising business started to organize themselves in professional associations and organizations and began to publish trade journals dedicated to various issues of the advertising trade as early as the 1890s.[91]

Expert practitioners of advertising expressed the impact of advertising on the public quite dramatically. Mataja describes the advertising industry as an enormous "news apparatus" (*mächtiger Nachrichtenapparat*) that informs the public about the efficiency and advantage of certain products. He emphasizes the constant outpouring of information via both imagery and the written word in modern advertising (*Wort und Bild*). The utilization of visual material played an important role in envisioning advertising strategies in German business in the early 1900s. Mataja continues that modern advertising was effective because it presented the advantages and necessities of modern life through the written word and imagery. Thus, trade marks, especially trade characters, had to mirror desires and experiences of their potential customers.[92]

**The Role of Images in Germany**

[91] Stefan Haas, "Sinndiskurs in der Konsumkultur. Die Geschichte der Wirtschaftswerbung von der ständischen bis zur postmodernen Gesellschaft," *Der lange weg in den Überfluss* (2003): "Werbetreibende schlossen sich zu ersten Berufsverbänden zusammen, die ersten Fachzeitschriften erschienen und gaben Möglichkeiten eines institutionalisierten Erfahrungsaustauschs und einer konstanten Entwicklung von Werbekonzepten [seit den 1890er Jahren]," 303.
[92] Victor Mataja, "Vorwort," Paul Ruben, ed., *Die Reklame: Ihre Kunst und Wissenschaft* (Berlin: Herman Paatel Verlag, 1914): viii-ix.

Advertising further assisted the overall economic transition to completely altered business practices of mass production while simultaneously turning into a medium of a new aesthetic.[93] As Lamberty suggests, the changes in advertising cannot be divorced from the larger processes of urbanization, industrialization, and modernization.[94] Lamberty's focus is rightfully concentrated on Berlin, which became a Mecca for artists and entrepreneurs in imperial Germany (1871-1918) as well as during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933), an era that Lamberty's study does not include. Janet Ward's work on Weimar culture *Weimar Surfaces* picks up where Lamberty ends.[95] Ward's study does not focus exclusively on advertising. Her work interrogates a general culture of display that came to define the highly aestheticized cultural expressions during the Weimar Republic, especially in its cultural center Berlin.

Ward's analysis of Weimar culture rests upon her critical category of 'surface.' Surface culture, as Ward defines it, consists of "cultural expressions" that by the turn of the twentieth century started "dominating […] social imagination."[96] She claims that Weimar culture possessed an unusual and heretofore not witnessed investment in surfaces across a variety of cultural expressions: "[The] manifestations [of mass cultural phenomena] are literal and conceptual expressions of *surface:* they promote external appearance to us in such arenas as architecture, advertising, film,

[93] "Die Reklame veränderte den Alltag. Sie machte das Massenpublikum zum Träger einer neuen (demokratischen) Konsumverhaltens, begleitete den Übergang zu völlig veränderten Geschäftsmethoden und wurde zum Medium einer neuen Ästhetik." Lamberty, 14.
[94] "Der Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland einsetzende Reklame-Boom is eingebunden in den säkuleren Prozess der Urbanisierung, Industrialisierung und Modernisierung," Lamberty, 21.
[95] Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).
[96] Ibid., p. 1.

and fashion."[97] Visual imagery in consumer culture played a critical role in the aesthetically oriented modern culture of Weimar Germany. Advertising, according to Ward, as well as the other expressions of cultural production listed above were integral components of this surface culture that popularized the economic and political processes of industrialization to the masses in Weimar Germany. The convergence of visual culture and emerging mass consumption in early twentieth century advertising in Germany represents a critical moment in German cultural history, building on the steady increase of advertising in popular landscapes, such as magazines, newspapers, public spaces, et al., witnessed since the late nineteenth century. Ward describes Weimar culture and its modernist aesthetic in combination with an increased sense of consumerist practices as a "consumerist spectacle of Weimar German visual modernity."[98]

Already in 1914, the link between print advertising in newspaper, magazines, other print media, and advertising in public places, such as billboards, advertising pillars (the notorious "Litfaßsäule"), and other outdoor spaces, captured the attention of advertising experts. Surface culture, despite its undoubtedly increased meaning in Weimar culture, as Ward successfully contends, has always been an integral part of advertising. In his article in 1914, Wuttke notes the triumph of advertising on the streets, its transfer from the newspapers and magazines to public spaces.[99]

Historian Stefan Haas points out that German advertising started to increasingly utilize visual imagery, moving away from the largely textual approach

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[97] Ibid., 1.
[98] Ibid., 8.
[99] :Wuttke, "Die Entwicklung der Handelsformen:" "Mit der Eroberung der Presse ist dehalb der Siegeslauf der modernen Reklame, wie wir ihn in England und Frankreich und später in Amerika sehen, nicht beendet. Aus dem Laden wird die Reklame auf die Strasse verlegt," in *Die Reklame*, 48.

prior to the latter half of the nineteenth century. The increase of visual material in advertising became possible through changes in image reproduction, largely the invention of lithography and other sophisticated printing techniques that enabled printers to reproduce colored as well as black-and-white images at less cost than before. Haas states that this increased visual quality of advertising marks an important transition in modernity, a transition from a primarily written to a more pronounced visual culture.[100]

The increasing number of famous artists and illustrators such as Lucien Bernhard and Julius Gipkens who found work in the ever-growing advertising industry speaks volumes about the refined visual awareness among ad creators and executives.[101] Industrialists overseeing their ad campaigns were also careful about the selection of visual imagery. Ludwig Stollwerck's extensive business correspondence reveals his deep level of personal involvement with the creation of advertising campaigns for Stollwerck chocolate. He corresponded regularly with artists, writers, and printers about various aspects of advertising issues concerning the company's products. He also created a board of artistic advisors to make decisions about layout and visual content of Stollwerck's famous trade card or collector's cards series.[102]

## Trademarks in Germany

[100] Ibid., "Mit [der Werbung] bildet sich ein entscheidender Bestandteil der Moderne im Übergang von einer primär schriftlichen zi einer tendeziell stärker visuellen Kultur," 64.
[101] For further discussion on individual artists and a general overview about German advertising illustrators, see Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany, 1890-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
[102] Ludwig Stollwerck's extensive records of business correspondence is part of the Stollwerck company archive, housed in the Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv in Cologne, Germany. The second chapter will delve into specific details about particular aspects of Stollwerck's remarks and writings about several trade card series.

As the nineteenth century drew towards its end, regulation of trademarks became indispensable. In the United States, the trademark protection act was passed as early as 1881 and expanded in 1905. The German trademark law was redesigned in 1893 to amend the original law from 1874. The draft for the German trademark law of 1893 illuminates the importance of clear guidelines for trademarks in a growing market of brand name products with increasing competition, especially in the food industry. Approximately a third of all trademark requests that were filed in the 1890s were related to food products.[103]

Paul Ruben, a well-known advertising expert in early twentieth century Germany, was adamant about the necessity of a "good" trademark, so that the specific product, via a distinct brand name and trademark, could become part of a consumers' subconscious, of their flesh and blood.[104] According to Ruben, the success of a company relied on being able to educate the public about distinguishing one's product from a similar item offered by competitors. He encouraged large as well as small companies to invest the time, money, and effort to create a distinctive trade mark ("Warenzeichen") to set their merchandise apart. It was imperative, according to Ruben, to imprint a "stamp of uniqueness" ("Stempel der Eigentümlichkeit") on one's product to ensure the commercial success of a product at times of increased economic

[103] "An der Benutzung des Zeichenschutzes ist am meisten betheiligt das Nahrungsmittelgewerbe mit etwa dem dritten Theil aller Zeichen; ihm folgt die Metallindustrie mit etwa dem sechsten Theil, die Textilindustrie mit etwa dem achten Theil der Zeichen. Alle übrigen Gewerbezweige treten dagegen erheblich zurück," 10, German National Archive, „Entwurf zum Gesetz zum Schutze der Warenbezeichnung vom 12.5.1894, R 131 259."

[104] Paul Ruben, "Die Bedeutung…" : "[D]er Wert der Reklame [wird] ins Unendliche gesteiger dadurch, dass mittels des Warenzeichens, um mich populär auszudriecken, dem Käufer die Bezeichnung in Fleisch und Blut übergeht," in ibid., ed., *Die Reklame*, 9.

competition. Ruben even goes so far as to proclaim advertising in general and trademarks in particular as pillars of the modern business world.[105]

The increasing visibility of trademarks in consumer culture, witnessed by the need for changes in the trademark law in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in both Germany and the United States, also speaks to the process of transformation that was taking place in how consumers related to products. Ruben cites advertising as both the cause for the popularity of these products, as well as the mechanism that generated the need to protect advertised brand names via the reformed trademark laws. He highlights the fact that the modernized version of trademark law in Germany in 1897, which was subsequently revised in 1905, enabled the economic boom experienced at the turn of the nineteenth century. Without these statutes, this growth would not have been possible, at least not with the marketing of brand name products, since each brand name would have been unprotected, leading to trade mark theft and the confusion of the customer.[106]

**Summary of Differences and Similarities between the United States and Germany**

The increase in trademark products and the parallel growth of visual elements in advertising represents a common ground in both the United States and Germany between 1890 and 1930. Both countries experienced a sharp population increase at the turn of the nineteenth century. U.S. population tripled during this period.[107]

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[105] Paul Ruben, "Die Bedeutung der Warenzeichen für die Reklame," *Die Reklame,* 1-17.
[106] Ibid., "Was würde wohl aus den Produkten Odol, Javol, aus Amol, Manoli, Garbaty geworden sein, wenn auch heute noch dieses rückständige Gesetz zu Recht bestände," 5.
[107] Cowan, *A Social History of American Technology,* 168.

According to the statistics that Resor used in his speech, U.S. population grew from 38,5558,377 to 107,438,615.[108] Germany also experienced a dramatic increase in population size. According to Tipton's article on Germany's economic development, "the German population nearly doubled from 35.3 million to 64.6 million between 1850 and 1910.[109] In both nations, industrial production shifted from small-scale, local markets to a nationally organized system. Modern aesthetics and lifestyles became part of popular culture, including advertising.

Many advertising experts and scholars in Germany and the United States alike have commented on the impact of advertising and its role in expanding consumer culture. Between 1890 and 1930, consumers became exposed to advertising campaigns for products that promised a more convenient life, be it easily replaceable and affordable rubber heels or breakfast foods that required only a minimal preparation time. People in early twentieth century Germany and the United States were exposed to images of steaming bowls of food, delicious cakes, accompanied by happy, successful, and attractive men and women, and enticing landscapes of luxury. These images were meant to lure them to consume in large quantities products which one or two generations before were only available to a small and affluent segments of the population, such as coffee and chocolate, or did not even exist, such as cars and numerous electrical appliances.

One of the major differences between the two nations concerns the professionalization and organization of the advertising industry. Advertising agencies started to develop during the Weimar Republic, and had existed on a smaller scale

[108] *News Bulletin* no. 13 (January 17, 1917), Newsletters, 1910-2005. J. Walter Thompson Archives.
[109] Tripton, "The Economic Dimension in German History," 213.

prior to the 1920s; however, many German companies relied on their own advertising departments rather than turning the entire advertising budget over to an outside agency. Professionalization of the advertising industry in Germany depended largely on the organizations of advertising artists and printers in trade-specific organizations, such as the German *Werkbund* ("German Work Federation").[110] The *Werkbund*, an organization of architects, designers, and industrialists founded in Munich in 1907, was instrumental in negotiating "the proper role of artists, craftsmen and designers in an age of machine mass production."[111] German advertising as a business stayed in the hands of a *Bildungselite* (educational elite), as the dominant participation of academics in discussions of advertising illustrates, and industrialists, often organized in genre-specific associations, such as the *Verbund Deutscher Schokoladenhersteller* ("association of German chocolate producers").[112] The major impulse to use advertising agencies as the major structure to organize the growing advertising industry came from the United States. After World War I, during the Weimar Republic, U.S. advertising agencies such as J. Walter Thompson began to open offices in major German cities and established the advertising agency as the central organization to structure mass advertising.[113]

Specific trademarks, often using trade characters, became a common business practice in turn-of-the-century U.S. and German cultures to distinguish one's product(s) from the competitors. The message delivered by the trademark had to be

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[110] For a detailed history of the organization, see Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund.*
[111] Jeffries, "Imperial Germany," 241.
[112] Most of the essays in Paul Ruben's publication on German advertising from 1914, for example, were written by professors at various German universities.
[113] Alexander Schug, "Wegbereiter der modernen Absatzwerbung in Deutschland: Advertising Agencies und die Amerkanisierung der deutschen Werbebranche in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *WerkstattGeschichte* n34 (2003): 29-52.

one that mass audiences could easily comprehend and decipher. Personalized trade characters made for particularly successful brand recognition and became messengers that could reach a wide audience. The visual appeal of trade characters, their careful visual design and representation, and their constant accessibility have made them into cultural icons, many of which still appeal to U.S. and German consumers in the 21st century. Printed ads, in connection with other advertising strategies, such as package and brand name designs, as well as other forms of public display, consistently promoted trademarked merchandise. Simultaneous to the shift to brand name products during this period, print ads in U.S. and German magazines and newspapers increased drastically.[114] Advertising industries in both countries recognized the importance of visual images for successful campaigns. In an expanding capitalist market with competing textual and visual messages about the quality of a specific product and brand, instant recognition guaranteed success. The visual appeal of packaging, advertisements in papers and magazines, and other materials used to catch the consumer's attention became increasingly important as brand name identification and the presentation of a recognizable and memorable product identity became standard features. U.S. and German advertising agents and executives, industrialists, artists, and academics participated in ongoing discussions about successful or "good" advertising, the reasons why certain ads worked better than others, and general debates about too much, or too little, advertising.

[114] For Germany, see Kirsten Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation, and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); for the United State, see Richard M. Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the* Century (London: Verso, 1996).

## Conclusion

The emergence of trademarks in the world of consumer goods had a tremendous impact on economic markets, social structures, and cultural constructions of identity. As nationwide markets emerged in the United States and Germany, dominated by products that were inaccessible and non-existent prior to the turn of the nineteenth century, trade characters became the salesmen and saleswomen for specific merchandise and also turned into carriers of cultural meanings of comfort, belonging, and national identification for mass consumers. Between 1890 and 1930, advertising industries in the United States and Germany turned into mechanized and highly orchestrated units that reproduced and co-created cultural meanings of race and nation in many complex ways.

Despite demographic and political differences, the emerging advertising industry facilitated the adjustment for consumer-citizens by providing images and texts that mass consumers were able to identify with. The following chapters will provide a more detailed discussion about how certain advertising campaigns and strategies helped U.S. and German consumers in similar ways to see consumption as a unifying national experience. While the United States was just recovering from a crisis of secession and had, to a certain extent, successfully resolved the issues that were tearing the country apart by the mid nineteenth century, Germany had achieved its long-sought unification as an empire in the center of Europe and was starting to establish itself as a power equal to other European empires. Both countries were actively involved in expanding territories overseas. Further, the United States was also faced with an increasing number of immigrants on both coasts. The finalized

settlement of the western regions created a nation that spanned more than 3,000 miles across the entire North American continent. As the twentieth century was progressing, it was successfully integrating territories, overseeing their transformation into states, and building a national empire not only within its boundaries, but also overseas. Configuring and applying racial and ethnic categories to national identities became more and more important theme or practice during this period for both countries.

Consumers in 1920s Germany and United States had grown accustomed to decoding visual imagery through a variety of different forms of advertising such as the poster or pamphlets. Visually developed trade characters built on the visual knowledge that consumers acquired through their exposure to trade cards (in the United States) and collector's cards (*sammelbilder*) (in Germany). During the nineteenth century, U.S. and German trade cards as well as other paper ephemera helped prepare a customer base for brand name recognition by issuing thematic series of collectable cards. These series facilitated the establishment of brand name identities in the late nineteenth century in both Germany and the United States. The highly stylized and visually sophisticated cards lay a foundation for consumers' viewing practices in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, especially of visual representations. These cards played an important role in facilitating advertising's role in shaping cultural formations of national identities and hierarchies based on race, as the following chapters discuss in more detail.

# Chapter 2: Building "Cultural Citizenship:" National Identity and Racialized Others in Advertising Trade Cards

## Introduction

With appealing images as their trademark, advertising trade cards paved the way for the dominant use of visual images in mass consumption in the modern era.[115] These cards, in a wide variety of sizes and designs, appeared throughout the nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century in both Germany and the United States. In this chapter, I discuss advertising trade cards that featured images on the front and text on the back, most of which were 2X5 inches in size.[116] I also focus my discussion specifically on trade cards that were produced in series. Such cards often displayed various aspects of national culture and highlighted cultural differences between various ethnic and racial groups.

Many trade cards series at the turn of the nineteenth century contained these two major themes. One theme stressed national pride, whereas the other emphasized

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[115] It is undeniable that visual culture blossomed in the time period often labeled "modernity" (roughly 1880s to 1930s), especially among those scholars and critics concerned with questions of art and literature. The emergence of moving pictures, for example, around the turn of the nineteenth century marked the transformation from an already highly visual entertainment structure full of vaudeville shows and similar leisure pursuits dependant on visual stimulation to one where visual reproductions became the main source of cultural diversion, see Peter Jelavich, " "Am I Allowed to Amuse Myself Here?": The German Bourgeoisie Confronts Early Film," *Germany at the Fin de Siecle: Culture, Politics, and Ideas*, Suzanne Marchand and David Lindenfeld, eds. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004): 227-249, David Holloway and John Beck, *American Visual Cultures* (London: Continuum Logo, 2005).

[116] Early trade cards contained mostly text, often the address of a grocer, distributor, or producing company, featuring little to no imagery. From the mid-nineteenth century, advertising trade cards appeared in a variety of shapes and forms, but the most common form was the rectangular shaped card.

the exoticism of foreign culture. Given the cultural developments in Germany and the United States between 1890 and 1930, it is not at all surprising that series with these focuses would develop during this time period. In the United States, imperialist expansion overseas and a preoccupation with racialized theories of cultural difference influenced the visual imagery in trade card series. In Germany, colonial politics and fixation on German national character and culture in a recently unified nation impacted the motifs in consumer culture. In the United States, racial stereotypes were used to justify imperialist expansion overseas as well as to limit immigration and to justify the second-class treatment of racial and ethnic groups. The Spanish-American War in 1898, the Philippine-American War 1899-1913, the building of the Panama Canal under US leadership, starting in 1904, and many other ventures established US imperialist politics in the global arena. The same era is also often described as the era of immigration regulation (1882-1924).[117] This time period witnessed the pseudo-scientific theories of eugenics and other racially exclusive philosophies that sought to provide explanatory models to justify racial segregation in progressive and modernist language.[118] Trade cards with national as well as imperial motifs offer a window into what Amy Kaplan has termed the "historically coterminous and mutually defining [process of ] United States nation-building and empire-building."[119] Hence, U.S. nation-building was motivated by racial ideologies that influenced the visual culture of trade card series and was reflected in trade cards through the recurring themes of national pride and foreign exoticism.

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[117] Ali Behdad, *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigrations and Cultural Identity in the United States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).
[118]: Ibid., 113.
[119] Amy Kaplan, " "Left Alone with America": The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., 17.

A unified German empire and nation emerged in the 1870s out of the Franco-Prussian Wars and developed into an "official" colonial nation in the mid-1880s.[120] Racial and ethnic differentiation had played a role in nation-building in Germany before Germany colonized people of different racial groups in parts of Africa and Asia. Anne McClintock points to the racial attitudes and prejudices in nineteenth century consumer spectacles in Europe and especially in Great Britain. Advertising culture, as she continues, had been a main site for the manifestation of organized racism: "Imperial kitsch as consumer spectacle […] could package, market and distribute evolutionary racism on a hitherto unimaginable scale. No preexisting form of organized racism had been able to reach so large and so differentiated a mass of the populace."[121] Exotized otherness had been a common feature of eighteenth century court culture in various parts of the disconnected German empire, as many artifacts of material culture demonstrate.[122]

Advertising trade card series affected the multifaceted processes of building and defining national culture. Large numbers of consumers had access to the cards and their visual messages of promoting national culture and of exoticizing foreign culture. In Germany, trade cards were part of what Patricia Vertinsky calls an "appropriate vocabulary for the sense of difference" that modern German nationalism

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[120] The Berlin Congo Conference in 1884 and 1885 allotted several colonies to Germany, most of them on the African continent; however, Germany had been involved in colonial trade before becoming a colonial nation, and overseas imperialism has always played a significant role in German culture and economy. German colonies were located in present day Togo, Namibia, Tanzania, and Cameroon, see Susanne Zantrop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Duke, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

[121] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 209.

[122] Paintings, porcelain cups and plates, porcelain figurines, and other objects frequently featured images of non-Western groups. The exhibition catalog *Exotische Welten, Europäische Phantaisen* ("Exotic Worlds, European Phantasies") contains a number of articles that discuss various aspects of exotic motives in European art and material culture, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, ed., *Exotische Welten, Europäische Phantasien* (Stuttgart: Edition Kantz, 1987).

exploited to draw clear boundaries between self and other. In nineteenth century Germany, every aspects of culture contributed to the work of constructing the nation:

> The emergence of the modern state stimulated new imperatives to control and discipline the body as the idea of nationalism and the emerging concept of national identity became potent devices to define the boundaries between normality and deviancy, masculinity and femininity, health and sickness, beauty and ugliness, and to provide an appropriate vocabulary for the sense of difference."[123]

This quote points out the centrality of discursive formations around national identities, and consumer culture played an important role. It is for this reason that I read artifacts of material culture such as these advertising trade cards as expressions of "cultural citizenship." I draw on Arjun Appadurai's discussion of advertisements, including trade cards, as "a form of cultural representation of the virtues of capitalist lifestyle" in which he prioritizes the "image of sociality" that ads represent over the actual commodity or the product itself.[124] As such representations of cultural meaning, trade cards constructed cultural and social reality. Toby Miller defines cultural citizenship as "[concerning] the maintenance and development of cultural lineage through education, custom, language, and religion and the positive acknowledgment of difference in and by the mainstream."[125] Advertising trade cards series in Germany and the United States at the turn of the nineteenth century actively constructed cultural citizenship for mass consumers. Racialized national discourses permeated the visual culture of mass consumption. The patriotic symbolism and the

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[123] Patricia Vertinsky, "Body Matters: Race, Gender, and Perceptions of Physical Ability from Goethe to Weininger," Norbert Finzsch and Dietmar Schirmer, eds., *Identity and Intolerance: Nationalism, Racism, and Xenophobia in Germany and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 333.
[124] Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction," in *The Social Life of Things Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. ibid. (Cambridge: Camebridge University Press, 1986), 55-56.
[125] Toby Miller, "Introducing … Cultural Citizenship," *Social Text* 19, no. 4 (2001): 2.

imperial imagery of exotic locations and people translated the political ideologies of racial differentiation and nationalism into the realm of consumer culture. In both the United States and Germany between 1890 and 1930, racialized national ideologies supported both countries' political and economic expansion and found their way, as I suggest, into the visual culture of advertising. In order to advertise the quality of an item or a line of products, trade cards and other advertising materials relied on these cultural tropes and recognizable ideas to attract consumers.

Many of the widely used images on trade cards contained representations of people and places familiar to the developing narratives of national culture and pride in the United States and Germany. In the United States, card series that illustrated the conquest of Western lands and representations of the vastness of U.S. territory emphasized the concept of U.S. "manifest destiny." The idea of manifest destiny as a divine right of the United States had become an ideological tool to justify the necessity for U.S. geographical expansion on the North American continent. Politicians, religious leaders, and social reformers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century alike promoted ideas of advancing, often aggressively, Euro-American culture and lifestyles throughout the North American territories to bring civilization and wipe out forms of savagery associated with non WASPish cultural practices. [126]The cards always portray non-WASPish individuals, be they American Indians or African Americans, as savages or laborers. They never represent any refined aspects of cultural or social activities. Westward expansion on the North American continent

[126] WASP is the common abbreviation for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. It describes the cultural influence that is often perceived as one of the major impacts on U.S. culture. Often, WASPish cultural traditions are looked upon as the norm that U.S. societal standards should be judged upon, see Charles H. Anderson, *White Protestant Americans: From National Origins to Religious Group* (Englewood-Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970).

had become a metaphor for the victory of U.S. civilization. In his article on William "Buffalo Bill" F. Cody and his shows, Richard Slotkin discusses the impact of these "historical" reenactments of various key events in U.S. expansion. These shows, a very popular form of entertainment and public culture in the United States and abroad between 1883 and 1916, portrayed in a nostalgic and historically distorted manner several key characteristics of the American Empire, leading to what Slotkin calls its "mythologization."[127] Advertising trade cards series about U.S. states and territories participated in the same "mythologization" and enabled consumers to be part of this national enterprise in the safe confines of their homes.

In Germany, advertising trade card series focused on the historical quest for German unification in the context of a German empire that in the 1870s had finally become a reality. They also frequently displayed cultural achievements, ranging from composers and war heroes to the beauties of specific geographical landscapes. To supplement the celebration of national culture, trade card series also tended to emphasize cultural difference through an imperialistic lens, exposing consumers to the morals and habits of "others," implicitly stressing the cultural superiority of one's own culture. The portrayal of "others" depended on racial and ethnic stereotypes that had been widely circulated in popular cultures in both the United States and Germany in prior centuries.

As the previous chapter illustrates, advertising at the turn of the nineteenth century included a complex network of a variety of forms, many of which relied on visual representations and images. Not only print advertisements, posters, or

[127] Richard Slotkin, "Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" and the Mytholigization of the American Empire," *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, 164-181.

pamphlets served to promote products. Advertising cards were often inserted into packaged goods and became important carriers of advertising messages. Referred to as "collectors' cards"[128] in Germany, trade cards that were inserted into prepackaged goods were important and efficient means of marketing a product. Early twentieth century literature on advertising frequently mentions the effectiveness of these cards. Robert Wuttke, a contributor in the widely cited 1914 publication on German advertising *Die Reklame* ("Advertising"), describes these cards as particularly effective in attracting consumers' attention.[129] In connection with the messages transmitted in magazine ads, posters, and on packages, advertising trade cards were part of a complex network that contributed to the growth of mass consumption between 1890 and 1930.

Trade cards helped to facilitate the growth of consumer culture by paving the way for emerging trademark products. By the late nineteenth century, brand name products slowly began to dominate the world of mass consumption. Through trade cards, consumers learned to visually decode a world full of competing brand name products by reading the visual symbols associated with particular products. Trade cards prepared customers for the highly visual language of modern newspaper and magazine advertising as well as for the increasing usage of brand name products that were dependent on mass advertising. Extensive exposure to advertising trade cards in the mid to late 1800s had trained consumers to "read" images in a consumer world

[128] Another form of small advertising, which was more popular in Germany than in the United States, was the advertising stamp (*Reklamemarke*). Similar to the collectors' card, the advertising stamp featured images and the product name, sometimes even a little slogan, but the main appeal of these stamps was visual. Karl J. Galandauer, "Reklamemarken," *Die Reklame: Ihre Kunst und Wissenschaft,* Paul Ruben, ed. vol. 2 (Berlin: Hermann Paetel Verlag, 1914): 180-91.
[129] Robert Wuttke, "Die Entwicklung der Handelsformen:" "Die Form der Verpackung, die Beigabe von Bildern und Anzeigen dienen wirkungsvoll diesen Zwecken," 49.

that depended on visual stimulation. Prior to that time, local market structures flourished and dominated economic exchanges in the absence of a nationwide industrial system, which only began to develop by the early nineteenth century. As the century progressed, so did dependence on exceedingly large, nationwide industrial corporations. Such corporations started relying on the use of visual images to attract consumers to their products, first via trade cards, and subsequently via elaborate and discernible trademark design.

The widespread use of trade cards throughout the nineteenth century facilitated the transition from bulk items to brand products by preparing consumers to understand consumption in visual terms. Trade cards became effective cultural agents in shaping modern twentieth century consumer habits during the late 1800s and early 1900s, waning in popularity and use in the early decades of the twentieth century due to the increase in newspaper and magazine advertising.[130] Overall, the visual culture of late nineteenth century advertising trade cards laid a foundation for mass consumption in the early twentieth century that relied more and more on brand name products. Consumers became used to buying visually stimulating trademarks and relying on the messages that advertising was diffusing among the public about the quality of the product.

## Brief History of Advertising Trade Cards

[130] Most historians cite the end of the trade card's reign in the United States around the World Fair in Chicago in 1893, although trade cards continued to be produced and collected, but not in comparable numbers to prior decades. In Germany, the trade card, or *sammelbild* ("collector's card"), was still used into the 1930s.

Many companies started producing brand name products and had used trade cards to publicize their company's name as well as the name of specific products. The visual appeal of advertising materials in general and trade cards in particular contributed to the increasing role that they played in expanding consumer culture. Plainly put, "[p]ictures play an important part in advertising."[131] In his collection of antique advertisements, Floyd Clymers expresses the views of businesspeople and executives of that period about the role that trade cards played to promote products and services. He continues to talk about the "inherent attractive value" of images; images are able to "convey the impression to the eye instantly, [telling] the story at a glance."[132] Clymers addresses the use of "pretty women and bright children" specifically, but remains silent on pictures of racial and ethic minorities. It is interesting to note that he omits these motifs from his discussion, even though images of African American, American Indians, and other racial and ethnic groups abounded in nineteenth century trade cards. Clymers silence on these motifs suggests several different readings. One, that he preferred the images of children, flowers, and women and wished to stress these themes. Further, the visual representations of racial and ethnic caricatures were so prevalent in popular culture that they were barely worth mentioning. Lastly, such representations did not fit his idea of images of "inherent attractive value," suggesting that they might serve another purpose than that of aesthetic pleasure.[133]

Trade cards issued between 1890 and 1930 in Germany and the United States were extremely popular, inexpensive, and widely distributed. They, therefore, are the

[131] *Floyd Clymer's Scrapbook Early Advertising Art* (1955): 169
[132] Ibid., 169.
[133] Ibid., 171.

focus of my discussion. As John Dilg points out in his article on advertising trade cards, "ninety-eight percent of all trade cards are stock cards [and] were often printed in sets or series."[134] These cards could be purchased in large quantities from lithographers. Individual grocers and companies could imprint their address, individualized messages, or any other type of communication on the back of each card. Popular motifs, hence, could be used by a wide number of different companies or advertisers. The same trade cards could be used as advertisements for a variety of stores, products, and companies, as the private and public collections of trade cards attest. For example, at the Winterthur Museum, many of the same trade cards, especially smaller ones with flower ornaments, appear throughout the entire trade cards and labels collections with the names of sellers and producers of a variety of different items.[135]

The most striking feature of these trade cards was the picture on the front of the card. The visual element of trade cards had a significant impact on young consumers in particular. Scrapbooks that were made in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include a large number of trade cards as well as other commercial paper ephemera.[136] More organized forms of trade card collecting were facilitated by companies' development of albums in which trade cards could be systematically catalogued and displayed.

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[134] John Dilg, "The Advertising Trade Card: Form as an Analogues of the Content of Commerce: *The Ephemera Journal* 4 (1991): 1.
[135]. Box 2, Dept. & Dry Goods – Furniture, Trade cards and labels collections, ca. 1734 - ca. 1932, Manuscript Collection. Winterthur Library.
[136] The Winterthur Library holds a large variety of Victorian scrapbooks in its Manuscript Collection that range widely in content and quality. See also Garvey's monograph *The Adman in the Parlor*, which draws extensively on the collections at Winterthur.

The process of chromolithography made the mass distribution of printed pictures profitable for producers and generated high quality visual reproductions on the small advertising cards. The increased usage of chromolithographic techniques in both Germany and the United States throughout the 19th century helped consumers become accustomed to advertising as visually stimulating. A booklet published by the Trade Card Collector's Association describes the widespread availability of these cards in the following manner:

> [During the Victorian Era], advertising trade cards were free. Cards could be picked up from counters in most stores, or could be ordered by mail. In some cases, cards could even be gotten from promoters who strolled through cities handing them out on the streets!"[137]

A variety of paper ephemera at world fairs, industrial and commercial exhibitions, local grocers, and other public places trained the general public to identify specific products with certain images and slogans, which, in turn, relied on cultural values and ideas readily identifiable to a critical consumer mass. The practice of trade cards as business cards used by local grocers as well as during world fairs and exhibitions was a well-established practice by the late nineteenth century in both countries. As companies grew to become national leaders in their area of production, they began to use trade cards not only as giveaways to grocers and distributors, but also as an advertising medium to communicate directly with the customer. Arbuckle's coffee (United States) and the Liebig meat extract company (United States and Germany) inserted advertising cards into product packages. In the context of a rapidly changing world at the end of the nineteenth century, trade cards helped to organize mass

[137] Trade Card Collector's Association, *An Introductory Guide to Collecting Advertising Trade Cards*., (1994), 1.

consumption. By the late 1800s, U.S. and German citizens were being exposed to a world with increasing mass production and growing numbers of brand name products. Imagery of identifiable themes on advertising ephemera such as trade cards helped facilitate this transition.

The most detailed study so far dedicated specifically to the trade card is John Jay's volume on the nineteenth century trade card.[138] The monograph provides a thorough overview of the development of these cards and their role in consumer culture. In accordance with many other historians and trade card experts such as private collectors and archivists, trade cards in the United States were mainly a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. As the newspaper and magazine industry began to expand in the late 1800s, the shift to magazine and paper ads as the main form of mass advertising modified the trade card into a less significant means of advertising than in previous decades. As with most transitions, however, trade cards and magazine/paper ads coexisted into the twentieth century, although the popularity of the small cards decreased steadily as companies started to invest the majority of their advertising budgets into magazine and newspaper ads.

In the late nineteenth century, advertising targeted all consumers, but trade cards reached a part of the population that started to experience mass consumption as the standard economic practice: children. Via trade cards, the consumers of tomorrow were trained to utilize their visual capacities to distinguish between various products and brand names. During the late nineteenth century, children, especially girls, adapted a particular way of dealing with the visual and sometimes textual information

[138] Robert Jay, *The Trade Card in Nineteenth Century America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987).

in their creative play. They learned visual strategies of deciphering, understanding emotional content without many words or any at all, and relying on these messages to create meaning for themselves, important elements that advertisers were able to access and use for their newspaper and magazine campaigns in decades to come.

In her study of advertising between 1880 and 1910, Ellen Gruber Garvey discusses the role that trade cards played in the development of a mindset for mass consumption, especially among female consumers.[139] Her first chapter outlines in great detail how young girls in particular used trade cards for scrapbooks. Many young American girls from middle and upper class backgrounds used trade cards and other paper ephemera to create their own materials, arranging the items by color, shape, or narrative content. Garvey argues that the female customers of department stores in the early twentieth century, who relied on the abundant and colorful advertising in magazines about the new brand named and mass produced merchandise, learned their visual decoding skills through the practice of scrap booking.[140] Garvey describes participation in the new mass markets of consumption as involvement within a newly emerging national framework "in which people all over the country could recognize a reference to an advertising slogan or brand of store polish."[141]

Garvey constructs a compelling argument how the activity of scrap booking, followed by visits to department stores, facilitated consumers' experiences of new, mass produced brand name products. Trade cards assisted the integration of mass

[139] Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor.*
[140] "The readers of [mass-circulation advertising-supported] magazines had already learned to interact with national advertising through another widely distributed medium: the colorful advertising trade card of the 1880s," ibid., 16.
[141] Ibid., 18.

consumption and mass produced merchandise into people's personal lives. The emergence of a national consumer culture in trade cards, followed by magazine advertising, accompanied the purchase of trademarks produced for mass consumption and transported cultural narratives embedded in advertising material into people's homes: "Framing the cards within [scrapbooks] became another way for the cards to move into the national culture, and in which the national culture was replicated in each home. Advertising thereby became a familiar part of a national culture of the home."[142] Advertising, according to Garvey's findings, served as a facilitator of presenting national culture and identity to mass consumers. It is important to stress that although much of the advertising message was carried by text (especially easily recognizable slogans, as an earlier quote by Garvey stresses), imagery played a central role regarding the effectiveness of advertising media, especially the advertising trade card. The trade card steered customers through an increasingly complex system of consumer goods and helped them to navigate the emerging world of abundant mass produced and brand name products. The colorful allure of chromolithographed trade cards aided with the transition from purchasing behavior based on availability in local stores to consumption patterns that were influenced by nationwide advertising campaigns.

In Germany, trade cards or collector's cards, as the German term translates into English (*Sammelbild*), originated around the same time as in the United States. Cards for Liebig's *Fleisch-Extract*, which were also distributed in the United States, and for Stollwerck Chocolates were among the best-known cards among collectors in Germany of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Similar to Garvey's

[142] Ibid., 49.

findings about the middle-class status of the collectors in the United States, German cards were mostly collected by children of bourgeois culture (*bürgeliche Kultur*) as media historian Knut Hickethier points out.[143] The main consumers of German cards, like the majority of collectors in the United States, were children of middle and upper class background (*Bürgerkinder*) for whom these cards served as illustrations of bourgeois values, exotic landscapes, and national culture of highly educational merit. As Hickethier points out, the German creators of these cards were adamant about their educational mission.

Ute Gerhard's nuanced discussion of a variety of cultural artifacts, including literature and other forms of popular culture, alludes to the idea that visual symbolism plays a significant role in influencing national identities, especially their dependencies on specific idea about race.[144] Her discussion of Max Scheler's work *Der Genius des Krieges und der Deutsche Krieg,* published in 1915, reveals some important insights about the relevance of the World War I period. As Gerhard points out, Scheler clearly articulates the connections between war and emergence of what he calls the nations' "collective spiritual personality."[145] Scheler creates a conceptual language of understanding the abstract national idea as something tangible, the collective personality that manifests itself in visually symbolic material. Trade cards picked up on these effective mechanisms to reach the public's public memory.

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[143] "Die Werbebranche und die Konsumgüterindustrie haben bereits in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts das Sammelbild als Werbemittel und –insrument der Käuferbindung für sich entdeckt und weidlich ausgenutzt. […] Den Kindern eröffnete sich in diesen Bildern das Panorama bürgerlicher Kultur," Knut Hickethier, "Wundertüten, Überrschungseier, Sammelbilder: Medienverbund in der kommerziellen Kinderkultur," *Ästhetik und Kommunikation* 8, no. 27 (1977): 32.
[144] Ute Gerhard, "Discursive Constructions of National Stereotypes: Collective Imagination and Racist Concepts in Germany before World War I," Norbert Finzsch and Dietmar Schirmer, eds., *Identity and Intolerance: Nationalism, Racism, and Xenophobia in Germany and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 71-96.
[145] Ibid., 75.

Effectively placed, the national symbolism on trade cards and other venues of advertising created a bond of recognition and shared experience between the consumer and the product, leading to the ultimate goal of selling the product to more and more consumers, and as a byproduct fermenting certain ideas of nationalism, transferring them into non-politically related areas of public life. Consumer culture adopted these national narratives through visual elements in particular and assisted in disseminating nationalistic beliefs and ideas among the masses. Even if a consumer decided not to consume a particular product that utilized national symbols, the exposure of the underlying beliefs present in the imagery was still effective, even without the actual goal of consumption. Thus, consumption means more than the actual act of purchasing a product. In a broader sense, it also refers to the visual consumption of specific representations on a regular basis.

Gerhard makes a compelling argument to include visual elements in the analysis of discursive formations around nation and race. "It is often overlooked that [nationalist and racist concepts] regarded from various research angles as stereotypes, clichés, prejudicial schemes, or enemy images have a significant pictorial elements."[146] As various studies have shown, the rhetoric employed in various materials of nationalist propaganda employs visual representations to strengthen the message of national in- and exclusion. The images narrate in a more immediate way complex ideas and beliefs. Often, the message can be distorted and reduced to generalizations, stereotypes, and clichés, as Gerhard points out; however, the effectiveness of these often one-dimensional constructs can reach a large audience. In advertising, the maximizing of the ad material's message is a key to a successful

[146] Ibid., 73.

campaign, and hence, symbols that represent more complex and subtle ideas, boiled down to a simplistic visual representation are key elements.

The images and slogans on the trade cards expressed cultural values and ideas readily identifiable to the majority of mass consuming audiences in Germany and the United States. In his study of the nineteenth century trade card in the United States, John Jay identified the following five themes as the most popular: "patriotic imagery, the contrast between city and country, racial stereotypes, womanhood and the home, and […] children."[147] Two important symbols of patriotic sentiment in the second half of the 19th century on U.S. trade cards were: Columbia, a female allegorical figure representing the U.S., and Uncle Sam. In addition to these two obvious icons of patriotic and national sentiment, depictions of national landscapes and other images found their way into the popular paper ephemera.

**National Symbolism in Arbuckle's Coffee Trade Cards**

In his recent monograph *Sold American*, Charles McGovern conducts a thorough inquiry into the connections between the emerging industry of advertising and the rhetoric of national and patriotic sentiments. [148] He shows that during the early twentieth century, advertisers consciously employed references to national identity and belonging in advertising's language and visual imagery. Such symbols of national identity and celebrations of national pride that appear in consumer culture are by no means restricted to the newspaper advertising, which is the primary reference in

[147] Ibid., 61.
[148] Charles McGovern, *Sold American*.

McGovern's analysis. These kinds of representations were also apparent in nineteenth century trade cards. Similar to newspaper advertising, visual appeal played an important role in the success of these small paper ephemera. I also suggest that the trade cards were pioneers in taking advantage of visual images. Trade cards, through visual motifs of national identity and prior to newspaper advertising, appealed to customers, a practice that newspaper and magazine advertising was able to exploit and further develop.

By the late nineteenth century, U.S. companies such as Singer sewing machines and Arbuckle's coffee started producing thematically arranged trade cards series. In Germany, Liebig *Fleischextrakt* (meat extract), which also enjoyed tremendous popularity in the United States, and Stollwerck chocolate, among others, issued trade card series arranged by a variety of topics, ranging from fairy tales and bird species to national heroes and composers. To facilitate the collection of these series, several companies issued booklets or albums in which the cards could be formally collected. These albums were targeted predominantly towards young consumers and were meant to be educational. Arbuckle's, for example, distributed posters to promote its National Geographic or State Map trade card series. Local grocery store owners were encouraged to put such posters on display, encouraging customers to buy more Arbuckles' coffee and to collect those trade cards.


Poster, Arbuckle's Coffee, State Map series, ca. 1893.
Warshaw Collection

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Ariosa coffee, produced by the Arbuckle Coffee Company, became the most popular brand of coffee in the United States.[149] John Arbuckle, the company's founder, started packaging already roasted coffee in sealed one-pound packages. He was ridiculed for this practice by many of his contemporaries, largely because of the common practice by consumers of roasting their own coffee. However, the success of Arbuckle's coffee brands, especially the mass-produced Ariosa brand, established Arbuckle's coffee as one of the leading coffee sellers in early twentieth century U.S. consumer culture. In the 1890s, Arbuckle started mass-producing roasted, pre-sealed packages of Ariosa coffee, using "an assembly-like machinery which took coffee directly from the roasting hopper – filled, weighed, sealed, and labeled the packages."[150] Some attribute a good portion of the growth in popularity of Ariosa coffee to the company's successful advertising campaigns based around widespread dissemination of trade

[149] Francis L. Fugate, *Arbuckles: The Coffee that Won the West* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1994).
[150] Ibid., 30.

cards series.[151] Many U.S. coffee companies used trade card series to advertise their various brands:

> Several of the highly competitive coffee companies issued huge-numbered sets that treated educational subjects in a truly encyclopedic manner. The Arbuckle Coffee Company offered several fifty-card sets featuring topics such as animals, the history of the United States, and view from a trip around the world."[152]

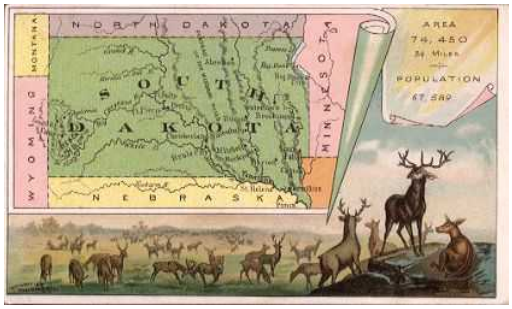
Among the most popular series was the "State Maps" series from 1889, which was reissued in 1915. The company also published an album in which the fifty cards could be collected. This "Arbuckle's Illustrated Atlas of the United States of America" was available as a mail order premium to customers. Arbuckle's also issued a similar series called "Pictorial History of the United States and Territories." This series, also consisting of fifty cards, was issued in 1892. Despite some similarities to the earlier State Maps series in terms of layout and images, all the cards in the "Pictorial History" series contain a detailed description of each state or territory on their back, in addition to an advertising message about Arbuckle's coffee.

Ariosa coffee became one of the leading coffee brands in the United States. The J. Walter Thompson (JWT) advertising agency took on Arbuckle's coffee as a client in 1912 and designed a campaign for a new line of coffee called "Yuban." Arbuckle's had already experienced success with its cheaper brand of Ariosa coffee, which was advertised by the trade card series, and wanted to expand into the market of premium coffees with a new brand. In a letter to a new client, one of the JWT vice presidents mentioned other successful campaigns, "Yuban" coffee among them, and describes Arbuckle's "Ariosa" brand as "the largest selling cheaper coffee in the

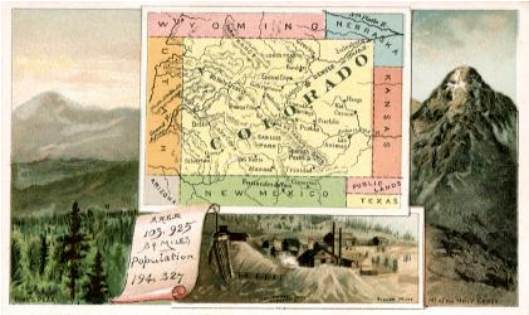
[151]Ibid., 117-137.
[152] Jay, *The Trade Card in Nineteenth-Century America*, 94.

United States."[153] The market success of Arbuckle's Ariosa coffee depended on a variety of factors, but the popularity and wide availability of the trade card series probably played an important role.

The 1889 State and Territories Maps series was a popular series. The original cards included information about Ariosa coffee, a list of all the states and territories included in this series, and a general description of this card series as "most interesting, instructive and artistic [that] affords an object lesson for both young and old."[154] The cards did not have any detailed text on the back explaining the imagery on front. The accompanying collector's album provided detailed texts about each state's or territory's history, geographical structure, population, and economy. Images on the cards stress characteristic features of each state and territory. The album series presents detailed visual images of states and territories located in the Western United States, emphasizing their geographical vastness. These images are accompanied by extensive textual descriptions in the album. Together, they combine to convey the grandeur and immensity of this part of the nation.




South Dakota Advertising Card, 1889
Warshaw Collection




Colorado Advertising Card, 1889
Warshaw Collection

[153] Letter to William Churchill, Sales manager, Corning Glass Works, on August 11th, 1916, Newsletter Collection 1916-1922, JWT Archives, Hartman Center, Duke University.
[154] Back of Ariosa trade card, 1889 State Maps series, Warshaw Collection, NMAH, Washington, D.C.

At a time when many territories were added as states, this trade card series provided a visual representation of a vast nation state and assisted consumers in imagining themselves as part of an expanding nation, reinforcing the ideas of a "manifest destiny" to populate the North American continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

The Southern states cards in this series communicated a different message. Many of the cards in this series feature depictions of African Americans, portrayed primarily as field workers.


Alabama Advertising Car, 1889
Warshaw Collection


Georgia Advertising Card, 1889
Warshaw Collection

Although slavery had been officially abolished by the time these trade cards were published, these images conjure up memories of enslaved blacks working in the fields, engaged in the production of food and vital raw materials. The reality, of course, at the turn of the nineteenth century was not far removed from these images, since the sharecropping system kept many black families in slavery-like relationships with white landowners. Additionally, the majority of blacks living in the south were engaged in agricultural work. By 1920, 36% of all black farmers in the South were

sharecroppers.[155] Representations of racial and ethnic minorities was a common component of these cards, and most often, these groups were portrayed in ways that reinforced widely held stereotypes. The 1892 series on the "Pictorial History of the United States" portrayed American Indians as aggressors towards European American settlers. Almost all of the cards of the Western states and territories had images that featured representations of American Indians, who, in most instances, were placed in conflict with European settlers. This one-sided view of American Indians fit the widely circulated racial stereotype of Native Americans as ruthless natives and played into the most European Americans' common fear of Indians as aggressors and blood-thirsty savages, such as in the cards portraying Utah and Iowa.


Iowa Advertising Card depicting a "Massacre by Sioux" (bottom), Warshaw Collection


Utah Advertising Card depicting "An the Indian Attack on an Immigrant Train" (right), Warshaw Collection

Another way these trade cards series linked their products to the idea of the nation was by using established iconography associated with patriotic and national sentiments. Creating a sense of national identification in customers by presenting their products as truly American, through language as well as visual imagery, companies tapped into a vast reservoir of cultural knowledge and associations. One

[155] Lee J. Alston and Kyle D. Kauffman, "Agricultural Chutes and Ladders: New Estimates of Sharecroppers, and 'True Tenants' in the South, 1900-1920," *Journal of Economic History* v57, n2 (1997): 464-475.

other coffee company, Chase & Sanborn, utilized this strategy not only in their imagery and language in print advertising, but also, similar to Arbuckle's trade card series, in other advertising ephemera. Chase & Sanborn was one of the most popular coffee merchants in the United States: "Chase & Sanborn is one of the oldest – they claim to be the oldest so let's give them credit for being one of the oldest coffee firms in the U. S.; their history goes back some 65 years."[156] Chase & Sanborn created a song book of patriotic songs called "Songs Of Our Country", featuring a large image of the Statue of Liberty that, looming over an artificial landscape with snow-covered mountains, rolling hills, and fields, recalled images of songs such as "America the Beautiful."


Chase & Sanborn, "Songs of Our Country" early 20th century
Lightner Collection of Antique Advertisements, [1870s]-[2000s]

This idealized natural scenery of the national landscape, void of industrialized machinery and people, represents the traditional republican setting of American's heartland, the seat of the American Spirit. The cover of the pamphlet almost represents a merging of urbanized America, represented by New York City's Statue

[156] Staff Meeting November 19, 1929, Staff Meeting Minutes Collection, 1927-1938, J. Walter Thompson Archives.

of Liberty, and the pristine landscape of nature. It contains the imagery of fecundity and abundance that Jackson Lears identified as central icons in U.S. advertising imagery at the turn of the century.[157] The songbook includes the song based on the poem "America, the Beautiful," published by Katharine Lee Bates in 1895. The first verse of the song, which reads, "O beautiful, for spacious skies/ For amber waves of grain/ For purple mountain majesty/ Above the fruited plain!" might have served as the idea for the cover of this pamphlet.

The representation of national imagery, be it through maps, images of patriotic icons, songbooks, or other forms of advertising, evoked a pride in American products and the people who produced them. Consumers were encouraged to support these products as a way of supporting the nation – its growth, its ideals, and its glory. Chase & Sanborn proclaimed its coffee the "national coffee [in] a nation of coffee drinkers."[158] The textual message in the pamphlet supports the visual imagery in the pamphlet. Both front and back cover emphasize the company's idea of its product as an important part of U.S. national identity. The brochure's back cover proclaims the U.S. as a Chase & Sanborn nation, branding the United States with its product name, fusing national identity and imagery with mass consumption. It celebrates the growth of American industry, the creation of jobs for workers, and opportunities to consume goods to have a good life. As Fugate describes in his history of the Arbuckle's brand, throughout the nineteenth century, coffee gained in popularity.[159] By the 1890s,

[157] Jackson T. Lears, *Fables of Abundance*.
[158] Chase & Sanborn, "Songs of Our Country," Advertising Ephemera Collection, J. Walter Thompson Archives.
[159] Francis Fugate, *Arbuckles*, 13-26.

consumers were finally relieved from roasting their own coffee when Arbuckle's and, subsequently, other coffee companies started to sell roasted and pre-packaged coffee.

Trade cards expressed ideological beliefs of progress, material success and pride in national culture. As Jay points out, "[t]he major social themes of late nineteenth-century American advertising, and of trade cards in particular, reveal a society that had firm faith in its own institutions, combined with a confident and optimistic view of its role in the progress of civilization."[160] German trade cards followed a similar pattern. The unification of disparate kingdoms into the German empire in the 1870s caused a cultural revival that expressed itself in celebrating the origins of German culture, the accomplishments of German artists, soldiers, and leaders, and its natural beauty. Often referred to as *Gründerzeit* ("Founders' Era"), this time period witnessed the erection of national monuments and grandiose urban facades and inspired artists of all backgrounds to celebrate the identity of a unified Germany. Given their important role in advancing consumer culture and their visual appeal to a large mass of consumers, trade cards played an important role in the nation-building processes in the United States and Germany between 1890 and 1930, in particular because they displayed imagery that expressed cultural values and meanings.

**National Symbolism in Stollwerck Chocolate and Sarotti Chocolate Trade Cards**

Letters, memos, and other business-related documents from the Stollwerck archive in Cologne, Germany, suggest that advertising card images underwent a

[160] Jay, 61.

careful and selective process. Much thought was put into the artistic quality of the trade cards and their effect on the consuming public. The thorough and detailed design of these cards relied on a carefully constructed cultural vocabulary that was accessible to a wide audience. The Stollwerck chocolate company in Cologne became nationally known for its trade cards or *sammelbild* series. CEO Ludwig Stollwerck himself was actively involved in the design of these cards series. In collaboration with academics, business partners, and artists, he conceived of a vast variety of themes for the company's cards series. These cards were included in their chocolates packages, especially those available in vending machines. The first series were issued in the late 1890s and usually consisted of six thematically related cards. Later on, the company, under Stollwerck's leadership, decided to issues card series that exceeded the traditional six-card series. Collections were expanded to sometimes over one hundred cards in one thematically arranged series. As the popularity of these cards grew among customers, companies such as Stollwerck utilized them as an effective and central medium of their advertising campaigns.

Based on popular requests, Stollwerck published albums in which all of the cards in a series could be collected. Many of the six-card series had children's motifs, since children and teenagers were the primary collectors of these cards. Thematically organized, the albums gave collectors the opportunity to organize the cards coherently and to fully enjoy their visual appeal as well as the educational information often printed on the back of each card. Themes varied from fairly unspecific topics such as *Kinderbilder* (children's cards) to more specific and instructive cards such as

*Kaiserdenkmäler* (monuments to emperors) or *Deutsche Staatsmänner* (German statesmen)

Pride in national culture and admiration for national achievements were often highlighted by the creators of these series as desirable effects, in addition, of course, to selling their products. The text of a foreword to a collectors' card album by the chocolate company Stollwerck in 1907 clearly describes the album as a "pantheon for famous leaders and heroes, ingenious inventors and explorers [that] should instill a sense of awe and admiration in German youth and should serve as a shining example to strive for high goals and noble manhood."[161] When Stollwerck reissued their successful card series "The German Rhine" in 1930, the *German Chocolate Newspaper*, which served as the publication for the Chocolate and Candy Industry, proclaimed that these cards exemplify not only an excellent way of advertising, but they also salute the company for "an artistically and ethically valuable propaganda of culture by awakening and preserving national devotion."[162]

Correspondence by Stollwerck's CEO Ludwig Stollwerck as well as other documents from the Stollwerck archives supports Hickethier's findings about the educational mission of these cards and the use of this mission to sell large quantities of merchandise as well as to remain competitive in an expanding nationally competitive market. The correspondence reveals that teachers regarded these cards as more than mere marketing devices and were impressed by the cultural values of the cards and their contents. Teachers' engagement with these paper ephemera offer a

[161] My translation from a quote in Hickethier's article "Wundertüten, Überrschungseier, Sammelbilder: Medienverbund in der kommerziellen Kinderkultur."
[162] My translation from "Sprachrohr der Werbung," *Deutsche Schokoladenzeitung* 10, no. 20 (July 1930): 40.

glimpse into the overall impact that these cards had on consumers of various backgrounds. In a letter dated January 11, 1900, a teacher in Plauen even went so far as to ask Stollwerck for specific cards to distribute to his students, since these reinforced the materials covered in his lessons.[163] Several teachers who wrote to Stollwerck commented on the usefulness of collecting these cards in specifically designed albums. One correspondent critiqued the design of the earlier albums. In the first albums issued by Stollwerck, each card was placed in a designated square. Each card was numbered, and the numbers in those squares corresponded to the numbers on each card. Originally, each square contained a detailed description of the card's image, sometimes reprinted on the back of the card. As one teacher commented, once the card was placed in its proper place, the text accompanying the visual disappeared, depriving, as Hubert Claassen from Aachen wrote in 1900, the collector of the full impact of both image and text. Stollwerck changed the album's format around 1898, following the same impulse that caused Claassen to write his letter. In the albums dating from 1899, the text messages often found on the cards' backs were reprinted right next to the square in which the card was meant to be placed.[164]

[163] "Ich sah neulich einige Reklamebilder Ihrer Fabik und fand, das [sic!] sich dieselben gut zur Unterstützung des Unterrichts in der Volksschule eignen. [...]Ich möchte Sie deshalb freundlichst, bitten, einige Bilder, die sich besonders zu Unterrichtszwecken eignen, mir zur Verteilung an die Schüler zu senden."Letter from Karl Rauh to Ludwgi Stollwerck, Stollwerck AG Archives.
[164] Stollwerck advertising card series, "Der Deutsche Rhein" (The German Rhine), 1930, Stollwerck AG Archives.


"Cities on the Rhine," Trade Card Series Album No. 1, Stollwerck Chocolate, 1898, Stollwerck AG Archives


"New National Monuments," Trade Card Series Album No. 1 & 2, Stollwerck Chocolate 1899, Stollwerck AG Archives

The card series "The German Rhine" (*Der Deutsche Rhein*), with an accompanying album, was published in 1930. It represents an accumulation of cards from earlier series. The Rhine valley appeared as a motif for trade card series as early 1898. The 1930 series focuses equally on the Rhine valley's natural landscapes as well as on its cultural monuments and the historical events and figures associated with them. The reviews of this album reveal how glowingly this publication was received.

The 1930 Rhineland trade card series was very well received by a variety of audiences, especially in circles dealing with young people's culture. In an article in a girl's magazine (*Illustrierte Mädchen-Zeitschrift*) from 1930, the author R. Kannenberg stresses the educational value of this series, particularly because of its visual appeal. Kannenberg emphasizes that trade card series enable their viewers to imagine a journey through the German landscape full of romantic castles, lovely gorges, roaming hills, and the charming and pictorial towns with their medieval

architecture.[165] According to this author, Stollwerck's series of the Rhineland represented a particularly fine example of images that embodied the allure and charm of German culture as represented through these compelling images of German rural and urban panoramas along the Rhine river. The cards seemed to possess, according to Kannenberg, the ability to visually educate their viewers about Germany's national culture.[166]

The Rhineland album is geographically arranged and takes the reader and viewer on an imaginary journey along the Rhine. It exposed the viewer and reader to the natural landscape formations along the Rhine valley as well as to its architectural diversity. At appropriate points, images representing historical events and leaders are added amidst the pictures of countryside and city life. Card number 34, for example, narrates the story of Gutenberg's printing press. In cards 45 and 46, Karl the Great is shown as the king who started cultivating wine along the Rhine valley. Card 130 shows Beethoven in a scene when he and his father were guests at the bishop's court (*erzbischöflicher Hof*) in Bon, and card 156 portrays Goethe in Düsseldorf while he was a guest with the brothers Jakobi for four weeks in 1792.

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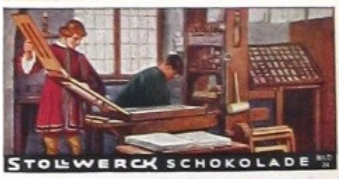
[165] "Es gibt nichts Schöneres, als durch Deutschland zu reisen und die deutsche Landschaft in ihrer abwechslungsreichen, charakterisitischen Schönheit, die romantischen Burgen, die lieblichen Flustäler, die Berge, Waleder, Heiden und die oft sehr malerisch und anregend sich aufbauenden Städte mit ihren noch aus dem Mittelalter erhaltenen altertümlichen Gebäuden, Toren, Türmen, Mauern zu bewundern." R. Kannenberg, „Deutsche Landschaften und Städteansichten im Serienbild," *Illustrierte Mädchen-Zeitung* n 21 v 44 (1930?): 325, Stollwerck AG Archives.

[166] "Die Serienbilder übermitteln einen umfassenden Anschauungsunterricht über unser schönes Heimatland," ibid, 327.



Stollwerck Rhineland series
Card 34, 1930
Stollwerck AG Archives

Stollwerck Rhineland series
Card 45, 1930
Stollwerck AG Archives

Stollwerck Rhineland series
Card 46, 1930
Stollwerck AG Archives

Stollwerck Rhineland series
Card 130, 1930
Stollwerck AG Archives

Stollwerck Rhineland series
Card 156, 1930
Stollwerck AG Archives

In addition to the visual treat of a traveling on the Rhine, this series also provides an imaginary journey to the origins of German culture and exposes the reader and viewer to selected achievements of national heroes from the political, economic, and cultural realms. The intertwining of a geographical voyage with a more abstract journey to the origins of German national culture and pride was tremendously popular in 1930. To this day, the Rhineland trade card series remains a highly sought-after collector's item.

The popularity of the card series about the Rhineland was no coincidence. Songs, poems, and other artistic expressions about the Rhine valley were popular throughout the nineteenth century. Lorie Vanchena terms this sentiment *Rheinromantik* ("Rhine Romanticism") and classifies the *Rhinelieder* ("Songs about the Rhine") "one of the most direct expressions of this nationalist movement in the early 1840s."[167] Even before German unification in the 1870s and before the Rhine occupation by French troops after World War I, which caused numerous outcries

[167] Lorie A. Vanchena, "The Rhine Crisis of 1840: *Rheinlieder*, German Nationalism, and the Masses" Nicholas Vazsonyi, ed., *Searching for Common Ground: Diskurse zur deutschen Identiät* (Köln: Böhlau, 2000): 241.

among the German population, the Rhine valley had become a metaphorical site permeated with national and patriotic feelings. Similar to the poems and other written texts about the Rhineland in the early 1800s, the trade card series issued by Stollwerck in 1930 "[functioned as] as an influential and important voice among those shaping German national consciousness."[168]

The Rhineland has played an important role in early twentieth century Western European history. It has been a contested geographical terrain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century. On the border between modern-day France and Germany, the Rhineland has been a valuable asset to every royal or governmental unit that regulated its economic and agricultural production. In the nineteenth century in particular, the Rhineland developed into an important producer of steel, a commodity highly sought after in the era of increasing industrialization.

Germany lost the Rhineland to France after World War I as part of the stipulations of the Treaty of Versailles. The Rhineland remained occupied by French troops for more than a decade after the ratification of the Versailles treaty. The occupation caused a variety of reactions among the German public. Most Germans agreed that the presence of foreign forces in what many considered to be rightfully part of the German Reich already constituted a severe political constraint; however, the fact that many of the French troops that were part of the occupation force were blacks from North Africa added fuel to the fire.[169] French occupation of the Rhineland stirred up debates about racial theories. Groups formed that loudly

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[168] Ibid., 214.

[169] In the recent years, German historian and cultural studies scholars have paid in creasing attention to this period of German history , see Dieter Breuer and Gertrude Cepl-Kaufman, eds., *Deutscher Rhein – fremder Rosse Tränke? Symbolische Kämpfe umd das Rheinland nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Klartext, 2005).

protested the "black shame on the Rhine" (*Schwarze Schmach am Rhein*). The racial conflict that erupted in the Rhineland extended beyond national borders. Non-German organizations became involved in protesting the unbearable situation of black soldiers overseeing white Europeans. Pamphlets, brochures, and other forms of publication expressing these views were printed and distributed, lectures were held, and the German public expressed its outrage in a variety of other venues. One pamphlet about the social and cultural dimensions of the Rhineland's French occupation contains several quotations from a variety of sources that expressed the outrage about this situation. The pamphlet is entitled "French Reign of Terror in Occupied Zone."[170] It reprinted parts of an article published in the May 1920 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* titled "Black Beasts Used as Auxiliary Troops Outrage and Murder German Women" and compares the situation on the Rhineland with the American Revolutionary War:

> Not since England turned American *savages* loose upon our frontier settlements […], has the world witnessed such *barbarity* as that which followed the invasion of German territory by French Senegalese and Moroccan Negro *savages* [emphasis mine]."[171]

Several pages of a bilingual brochure, published in German and French, are dedicated to the enumeration of successful and attempted rapes and other acts of sexual violence towards German women and children.[172] The pamphlet was published as an appeal to the League of Nations and describes the Rhineland occupation by French African troops as a crime against the honor of the German people in no uncertain racial terms: "These facts show what degradation the white race experiences by being

[170] "French Reign of Terror in Occupied Zone, ca. 1920, Auswärtiges Amt Collection.
[171] Ibid.
[172] "Deutscher Volksbund "Rettet Die Ehre"", ca. 1920, Auswärtiges Amt Collection.

placed under the armed force of low and lowest tribes."[173] Non-whites are described as people whose natural instincts, culture, and social skills are far below those of the civilized white nations of the world.[174] The German League of Protest, in a pamphlet dating from the same year, pleaded to "white race men and women" to "help to free us from these coloured [sic] beasts in the Rhineland."[175] The argument against the black occupation merges the discourses on race and nation in many different ways. Racial difference, based on a belief in European racial superiority, created the outraged reaction to the French occupation. Thus, the argument for German rule in the Rhineland after World War I was phrased in racialized language, merging a fierce nationalism with ideologies of cultural superiority based on racial differences. German nationalism emerged, out of the Rhineland occupation debates, clearly marked with racial overtones.

In the face of severe political debates about the Rhineland, the Stollwerck images shielded the Rhineland from its contemporary political, social, and cultural conflicts. Rather than portraying the political realities of Rhineland culture, the trade cards series selectively celebrates aspects of German national culture that exclude any conflicts or controversies. The Rhineland is celebrated as a pristine natural landscape and reservoir of German cultural values. This mythologization of the nation became an effective tool not only in consumer culture; it also became an important element of Third Reich rhetoric under Adolf Hitler's leadership. The Rhineland became a symbol for German resistance against the Versailles Treaty that Adolf Hitler and the

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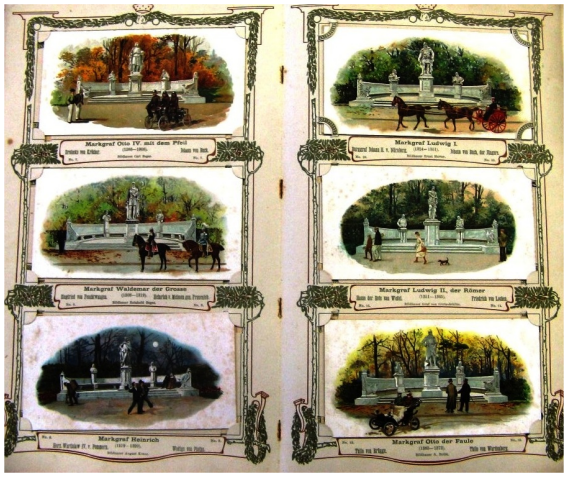
[173] Ibid., 12-13.
[174] "For all white people work in their missions since tens of years to educate the coloured [sic] people to conquer their low instincts and to lift them up to higher culture," ibid., 13.
[175] German League of Protest, "If the White Race has a Moral Mission Here is its Most Imperative Need!" 1920, Auswärtiges Amt Collection.

Nazi party capitalized on heavily. However, the series' patriotic and nationalistic sentiments convey the same message that the racially charged pamphlets against French occupation express, even though the political and cultural conflicts are absent from the series' images and text. The idealization of the nation in these cards embodies within it certain notions of cultural superiority based on race, even if they remain unstated.

Similar to the Stollwerck Rhine series, German natural and urban landscapes became spaces saturated with national identity and pride in a variety of advertising card series by the Sarotti chocolate company located in Berlin, Germany. The series called "Die Siegesallee" (Avenue of Victory) contained thirty-six cards, along with a special album in which all cards could be collected. The series depicted locations along a famous avenue in Berlin that runs through the city's major park the *Tiergarten* ("garden of animals") and ends at the Brandenburg Gate in the city center of Germany's capital. Built in 1873, this avenue served as a special monument to German nationalism. In 1895, Emperor Wilhelm II expanded the avenue by adding 32 marble statues. Each group of statues consists of a prince and one or two of his contemporaries as secondary figures. The Sarotti trade cards in these series are elaborately designed and printed in appealing bright colors. All trade cards show the different statues dedicated to historical figures of German culture. The cards depict a variety of German nobility even before the German nation existed, such as Count Otto I, count of Brandenburg in the 12th century. All of the images show the particular statues in the context of early 20th century city life.[176]

[176] Sarotti trade cards series "Die Siegesallee,", German Historical Museum, Berlin.


Sarotti trade card series, "Die Siegesallee" (Avenue of Victory), ca. 1910
Cards 1-6 (upper), cards 7-12 (lower), Document Collection

The cards above exemplify modern city life in Germany with men, women and children strolling along the avenue, well-dressed couples on dates, horse carriages and automobiles passing by, groups of school children being lectured by their teacher, and even nightlife in the city – in short, an idealized portrayal of urban life in the vibrant metropolis Berlin, the capital of the unified German nation. Trade card number 36, for example, shows the marble statue of Emperor Wilhelm I, accompanied by Prince von Bismarck and Count Moltke, both of whom were important statesmen and war heroes during Emperor Wilhelm's reign.

Card Number 36, "Die Siegesalle" (Avenue of Victory) card series, ca 1910
Document Collection

In addition to displaying the statues of national heroes, the regiment of high-ranking military men augments the nationalist message of the entire series. Additionally, the text on the back of the card provides a brief biography of each of the three men, although it dedicates the most space to the emperor, especially the fact that he led the German people to glorious victories over the Danish in 1864, the Austrians in 1866, and the French in 1870, when he, finally, secured the "greatly desired unity of the German nation."[177]

Sarotti chocolate also issued trade card series with motifs that stressed national pride in German cultural achievements. Many of the Sarotti trade card series consisted of six thematically arranged cards. One of these series focused on narrative form such as the fairy tale or the animal fable. Card number five of this series depicts the genre of the hero-legend.

[177] Backside of trade card 32, ibid.


Sarotti Chocolate trade card series, ca. 1910
Series on Sagas (*Sage*), Document Collection


Trade card No. 5, The Hero's Legend (*Heldensage*)

The images shown above exemplify the mythologization of the nation that Stollwerck trade card series participated in. Image number five of the series contains both visual and textual material that is suggestive of national or patriotic sentiments. It draws on the mythological roots of the German nation and stresses the connection between legend and the historical reality of German's empire which was founded in the 1870s. It depicts a white-haired and bearded bard with a harp in his hands, in the background we see a king on his throne, Friedrich Barbarossa, whose legend is narrated on the back. In the text on the back, however, the reference to national grandeur and pride is strongly highlighted. The reader learns about the legend of Friedrich Barbarossa, Duke of Swabia, King of Germany, and Holy Roman Emperor, who lived in the twelfth century. According to the legend, emperor Friedrich has been trapped since his death in a mountain, where he awakes every one hundred years to ask if he can leave his imprisonment in the mountain because a new emperor assumed the leadership of Germany: "But the year 1870 presented the liberation. In this year,

Germany became once again great and unified and powerful during the war with the French, and now there is again an emperor on Germany's throne."[178]

**Exotic and Imperial Imagery in Arbuckle's and Sarotti Trade Cards**

Simultaneous to the card series that stressed national culture, history, and values, series exposing consumers to the world outside one's own boundaries were frequently issued. Again educational in purpose, these series attempted to educate consumers about people and places beyond the immediate cultural and national circle. As with most depictions of "others" during this time, these images were imbued with stereotypes and one-dimensional portrayals and descriptions of other cultures, especially those outside the Western paradigms of civilization. Through trade card series between the 1890s and the 1910s, consumers in Germany and the United States were exposed to imagery of national cultures, building up pride of cultural values, and to imagery of otherness, often in imperial or colonial settings.

The simultaneous publication of series focusing on national pride and those on foreign cultures and their existence alongside each other at the time of their circulation as well as now in trade card collections in numerous public and private archives provide an opportunity to discuss the discourse of nation, race, and otherness during a time period of radical social and economic change and of colonial and imperial expansion in both Germany and the United States. In her book *American Commodities in an Age of Empire*, Mona Domosh discusses the impact of modern American products in foreign markets, the marketing strategies of these products

[178] Backside of trade card "Die Heldensage," around 1910, Document Collection.

overseas, and the impact of imperial culture in U.S. commercial culture in- and outside of the national boundaries. She stresses that Americans in the 1890s learned about the global world "from the world and images that filled their magazines and from the commodities that littered their home."[179] Singling out magazine advertising in this quote, Domosh includes trade cards and other advertising ephemera in her subsequent discussion. Again, these trade cards represent an important stepping stone towards consumers' acquisition of visual decoding skills in a complex and growing world of mass consumption. These ephemera imaginatively transported the consumer into a world that was, for the majority of consumers, inaccessible. The visual reenactment of foreign and colorful locations and the depiction of exotic people established an "empire of the eye"[180] despite the absence of a political U.S. empire comparable to the British empire. These cards, ads, and other forms of advertising, including the products' packages themselves (as Domosh alludes to in her description of the amount of products "littering" people's homes) helped to enact imperialism in the grocery stores as well as at home.

In 1891, Arbuckle's coffee issued a series called "Views from a Trip around the World." The series contained fifty cards, each card displaying a city from a different part of the world. The predominant part of this series features cities from Europe. More than twenty cards are dedicated to European cities, compared to eight cards about cities in Asia and five cards about cities in Africa. On each card, images of important buildings were combined with portrayals of city natives. The card on

[179] Mona Domosh, *American Commodities,* 2.
[180] The phrase "empire of the eye" is borrowed from Angela Miller's study of American landscape paintings in the mid nineteenth century, Angela Miller, *Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1975* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Zanzibar, one of the five depicting African cities (the remaining four portray Cairo, Algiers, Morocco, and Cape Town), contains the same visual arrangements as the other cards in the series. It includes images of two natives as well as the portrait of H.M. Stanley, the famed journalist and explorer of Africa, and a number of buildings, among them a church on a slave market.


Zanzibar trade card, Arbuckle's series
"View from a Trip around the World," 1892
Warshaw Collection


Boston trade card, Arbuckle's series
"View from a Trip around the World," 1892
Warshaw Collection


Rio de Janeiro trade card, Arbuckle's series
"View from a Trip around the World," 1892
Warshaw Collection

This series also offered the opportunity to consumers in the late nineteenth century to learn about a world beyond their own national boundaries and about their cultural supremacy. The two people on the Rio De Janeiro trade card are a missionary and a cook, a woman of African descent. The individuals representing Boston, are

two European Americans, a man and a woman. The inclusion of foreign and exotic locations and people into the Western worldview, as the visual arrangements on these trade cards suggest, was possible by portraying Westerners (a white missionary on the Rio de Janeiro trade card and H.M. Stanley on the Zanzibar trade card). The text on the Zanzibar trade card's back describes its Swahili population as intelligent largely because of their intermixing with Arabic or Semitic people: "They are noted for the intelligence and enterprise derived from a large infusion of Semitic blood, enabling them to take a leading part in the development of trade and industries during the last half century in Africa."[181]. Overall, the series recreates the imperial worldview which divided the world between the civilized Western countries based on European cultures, and the primitive and exotic non-Western African and South American continents, by stressing the inferiority of non-Westerners.

Arbuckle's also issued another series that took consumers around the world. In 1893, the company issued a fifty card series called "The Pictorial History of the Sports and Pastimes of Nations." Each card portrayed a different group of people from various parts of the world. The trade card on Central Africa illustrates how cultural inferiority of racialized others was portrayed. The text on the card's back describes Central Africans as follows: "Of the natives of Central Africa comparatively little is known. It is a large and partly undiscovered territory as yet, but enough of its natives is [sic] already known, to pronounce them hardy, brave and inured to dangers which would appall most of us. The population of this vast area consists of numberless tribes, which when not at war with each other, are engaged in

[181] Zanzibar trade card, Warshaw Collection.

the chase, or in one or other of their primitive and dangerous sports."[182] The text on the card's backside continues to describe Central Africans as danger-loving, witnessed by one of their favorite pastime, "shooting the rapids of the swiftly flowing streams [of their] sinuous and tortuous waterways." Natives of Central Africa are described as "savages" and possessing "impish ingenuity", ultimately, as the portrayal of the dancing children shows, making "the most grotesque figures."[183] The cleverness of Central African people is only proven in their skillfulness in hunting wild animals such as the hippopotamus or the elephant; however, the text on the card's back is sure to stress the danger in these hunting methods, suggesting that more refined people might not partake in such activities.

The visual arrangements on the card support the textual messages of Western cultural arrogance that helped build strong national and patriotic sentiments in the United States and other Western nations.


Central Africa trade card, Arbuckle Series
"Sports and Pastimes of all Nations," 1893
Warshaw Collection

The role of animals and especially the amount of space on the front of the Central Africa trade card devoted to animal representations are noteworthy. The elephant and the hippopotamus take up approximately half of the card. The elephant's head

[182] Central Africa trade card, 1893, Warshaw Collection.
[183] Ibid.

dominates the viewer's gaze by its position both on top and in the middle of the composition. Adults are only portrayed in once scene, and their facial features are almost unrecognizable. The viewer is left with three barely clothed children, their depiction similar to that of African American children, often referred to as "pickaninnies", representing the human population of Central Africa. The dominance of animals on this card supports the textual reduction of Central Africans to savage- and primitive-like status, not much removed from animals.

The Central Africa card's emphasis on childlike qualities and primitive ways of life is even more pronounced when juxtaposed with the card about Denmark from the same series. This card is organized in three parts, similar to the common three-part divisions in religious art, so called tryptichons.


Denmark trade card, Arbuckle Series
"Sports and Pastimes of all Nations," 1893
Advertising Ephemera Collection

All three parts show the Danish in control over their surroundings. The right part of the composition shows the picture of two swans, taking up considerably less space than any of the animals on the Central Africa trade card. These two harmless creatures are separated by the border of the card's central image, safely contained in their own natural environment. Secondly, the caged monkey on the left hand side of the card suggests the successful containment not just of animals, but especially of

*exotic* animals. Displaying foreign, mainly non-European cultures, such as the numerous African and other "native" villages at World Fairs, P.T. Barnum's shows, Hagenbeck's zoos and *völkerschauen* ("peoples' shows"), and a variety of other exotic spectacles, were common and popular forms of public entertainment throughout the 19th and early 20th century Western worlds.[184] Thirdly, the merry-go-round made of animals also places the Danish in the position of the conqueror of the primitive and inferior realm of the animal world. Its joyous riders sit on more or less accurately sized versions of a variety of animals. Advancement in technology enabled the Danish to be in control of their surroundings. Their conquest of the natural world and subsequent high degree of civilization is represented by the presence of a technological gadget such as the merry-go-around, but also further emphasized by the replicas of animals that are under the total control of human civilizations, something that is absent in the Central African trade card as well as other trade cards of this series depicting non-European cultures.

Further, the text on the Danish card's backside describes the people of Denmark differently than Central Africans. The Danish are described as being "tireless in work."[185] They are portrayed as serious people, even to the extent that they are almost too "serious minded for ardent pleasure seekers."[186] As the text suggests, one of the few opportunities to engage in leisurely activity is the annual visit of the Copenhagen Fair during the summer, featured visually on the front of the card. During the fair, the Danish "*may* take a cessation from labor", only to return to

[184] Hans-Peter Bayerdoerfer and Echkart Hellmuth, eds., *Exotica*.
[185] Arbuckle's trade card, Denmark, Advertising Ephemera Collection.
[186] Ibid.

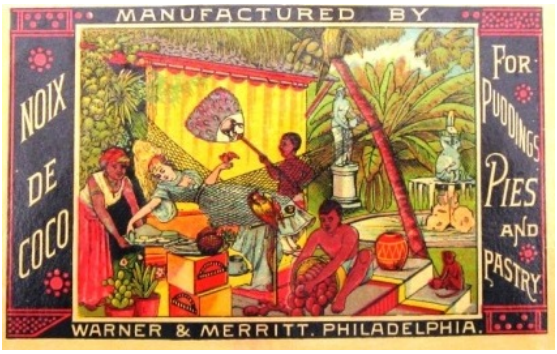
the arduous working routines that seems to define these "strong, healthy, and rugged" people.[187]

Overall, these cards provide escape into a world of adventure and wonder and invite the consumer to participate in this exotic world of dancing savages while being in the safe parameters of a controlled imaginative space, similar to what vaudeville and minstrel shows had been doing for the American public throughout the 19th century. The trade card series takes the consumer on a safe journey throughout the globe. Removed from the actual dangers, one was still transported into exotic and foreign locations. The "white-washing" of exotic and foreign places and the safe arrangement of exotic spectacles, similar to World Fairs or traveling shows, allowed the consumer to partake in the cosmopolitan world displayed before her or his eyes. More so, consumption of the advertised product became associated with the participation in a fantasy world of exotic locations, animals, and people without ever leaving one's parlor, living-room, or porch.

Arbuckle's, like many other companies such as Singer sewing machines for example, issued series that depicted foreign cultures. The depiction of exotic locations in consumer culture, especially for food and beverages such as chocolate and coffee, has always been popular. The location of production sites in tropical locations made the portrayal of exotic locations a logical choice and easily understandable. It also allowed the ad creators to play with the notion of leisure and luxury and their deep-seated connection to exotic and foreign locations. The trade

[187] Ibid.

card for the product "noix de coco", a coconut extract used for baking, is a good example for the use of exotic and foreign scenery to attract consumers' attentions.[188]




"Noix de Coco" trade card, 1890s
Warshaw Collection

Non-whites, in this image, only exist to help create the atmosphere of luxury and comfort for the white consumer. All three servants in this picture contribute to the white woman's pleasure, either by fanning her, serving her, or laboring to create the product that contributes to the fantasy world of exotic comfort. This card serves as a good example of what McClintock calls "imperial kitsch." Jan Nederveen Pieterse, in *White on Black*, calls it "tropical plenty."[189] Images like this carried messages of racialized hierarchies that supported the privileges of whites and the domination of non-whites and solidified the racialized elements in national and patriotic pride in Western countries.

The Sarotti chocolate company also produced cards that portrayed people from around the world, which drew clear lines between the civilized world of Germany and Europe, as depicted in many card series, especially the ones celebrating

[188] "Noix de Coco" trade card, Warshaw Collection.
[189] Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 10.

German national character and history, and the savage and wild world of non-Westerner.


Sarotti Chocolate trade card series, ca. 1910
"Warfare among Wild People," Document Collection

These cards are from the series called "Warfare among wild peoples." (from left: card 1, Wadijas, German East Africa; card 6, Papuas, New Guinea; card 3, Indians, North and Central America; card 4, Zulus, South Africa). This series highlights cultural accomplishments of racially and ethnically different groups by focusing on warfare and violence, feeding into the nineteenth century widely distributed notion of "exotic" others as savages and brutes. In imperial Germany, exotic and colonial imagery served as popular motifs in advertising. In his dissertation, David Ciarlo presents a thorough analysis of a large number of images used in German advertising before 1918.[190] He points out that the shift from general exotic landscapes to images with a clearer colonial iconography coincides with the German empire's rise as a colonial power during the 1880s. His work uncovers the central role of advertising's visual imagery in the German empire's colonial projects.

Most of these cards thrive on cultural, racial, and ethnic stereotypes. Again, in typical fashion for the turn of the nineteenth century, the exposure to others was

[190] David Ciarlo, "Consuming Race."

facilitated through centuries-long assumptions of Western superiority over uncivilized and exotic populations. U.S. consumers could conveniently cast a glance on a vast number of nations and be reassured in their national identity as a culturally superior nation.

**Conclusion: Public Spectacle and "Cultural Citizenship"**

In combination, all these trade card series serve as snapshots of how their creators pictured their national culture and, in using "foreign" motifs, how they pictured others as inferior and primitive, in order to underline and strengthen German and U.S. cultural superiority. These card series contributed to the mythologization of the nation by providing visual imagery that portrayed the United and Germany as culturally superior nations, drawing on patriotic and racialized motifs alike. Overall, the imagery on these cards, often reinforced by accompanying texts, suggests that these cards participated in the process of empire- and nation-building in Germany and the United States at the turn of the nineteenth century and disseminated messages of national pride and cultural difference to consumers.

Advertising trade cards were part of popular culture at the turn of the nineteenth century. Like other public spectacles such as monuments, statues, and other forms of public material culture, they displayed national and patriotic sentiment in the United States and Germany. In *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Soldiers*, Savage examines several monuments and statues that were erected after the Civil War. He shows how these examples of public material culture carry complex narratives of national and racial ideologies: "All three – race, war, and monument – were pivotal to

the nation as it emerged from its long tradition of slavery."[191] Savage is making a convincing argument for the intersection of racial ideology and public culture. He stresses the impact of these three elements on the nation-building, and in a way, the rebuilding process after the Civil War. As past of emerging commercial culture, trade cards were similar spaces that exposed the nation-building project to a mass audience of consumers, confirming the messages circulating in other parts of public culture.

German culture also expressed national and racial ideologies via public monuments. George Mosse states that the use of monuments and the public display of national pride did not become fashionable during the 1930s, especially in European fascist countries. Monuments and public spectacles were part of German public culture during the eighteenth century, when a new sense of nationalism emerged based on an idea of a nation that was "based upon the people themselves, on their general will, and was no longer symbolized solely by allegiance to established royal dynasties."[192] Trade cards, especially those with national and patriotic imagery, can also be regarded as important artifacts of public material culture, or in Mosse's words of "the people themselves," and as contributors to building a sense of national character, especially in market structures that became exceedingly less local by the late 1800s.

Mosse proposes an analysis of the "aesthetics of politics" in order to understand the dynamics of nationalist movements in nineteenth century Germany. This aesthetic idea, according to Mosse, "linked myths, symbols, and the feelings of

[191] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997): 3.
[192] George Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York; H. Fertig, 1975), 2.

the masses."[193] Trade cards with imagery pertaining to the nation and empire were aesthetic objects and objects of mass consumption and were part of this aesthetic that helped shaped national ideologies in he early twentieth century.

The noble beauty and noble aspect of German culture, borrowed from Greek and Roman symbolism, played a central role in the images used on a large number of trade card series. It influenced concepts of political identity, especially national ideologies. The sense of national identity and pride was instilled through sculptures and monuments as well as other forms of public culture. Mosse links this aesthetic ideal to racial ideologies"[T]he beginning of racial eugenics is closely associated with the crucial symbolism of Greek and noble beauty."[194] The physical bodies of blacks, in particular, did not fit into the idealized shape of the human body derived from classical Greek and Roman art and mythology. As these aesthetics became the imaginative foundation of national movements in nineteenth century Germany and other parts of Europe, the racialized concepts and beliefs inherent in those ideas became an integral part of national culture and identity.

As a result of the wide use of advertising trade cards and their national and racial narratives, racialized trade characters became popular examples of modern advertising culture in early twentieth century Germany and the United States. The exposure to racial and national motifs in advertising trade cards set the stage for the popularity of black trade characters such as Aunt Jemima and Rastus in the United States and the Sarotti-Mohr in Germany, turning them into national icons and illustrations of cultural citizenship.

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[193] Ibid., 20.
[194] Ibid., 28.

# Chapter 3: Aunt Jemima Pancakes, the Myth of the "Old South," and National Consumer Culture

## Introduction

This chapter explores the extent to which the trade character Aunt Jemima became a symbol for U.S. national identity between 1890 and 1930 by drawing on visual representations of the Old South that stressed comfort, servitude, and convenience. Black trade characters such as Aunt Jemima facilitated the transition to mass consumption providing a link with an idealized past. Southern hospitality, not Southern racial hostility defined this past. The portrayals of plantation idyll did not account for the treatment that most African Americans were subjected to pre- and post Civil War, but portrayed a world of benign white masters and mistresses and happily obedient black slaves.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Consumer Brands*, Aunt Jemima "was the first trademark to be given a human face, the first to be portrayed by a human actor, and she sold the first ready-mix food of any kind."[195] The usage of imagery portraying a nostalgic and romanticized version of the Old South played a central role in the ad campaigns featuring Aunt Jemima in the 1910s and 1920s. As a "mammy" figure, this trade character represented the mystical world of the Old South as a world full of order, luxury and comfort. Through its repeated portrayal in consumer culture, the idealized image of the Old South became an important national myth that bore on

[195] Joan Goldsworthy, "Aunt Jemima," in *Encyclopedia of Consumer Brands*:*Volume 1 Consumable Products* (Detroit: St. James Press, 1994): 20.

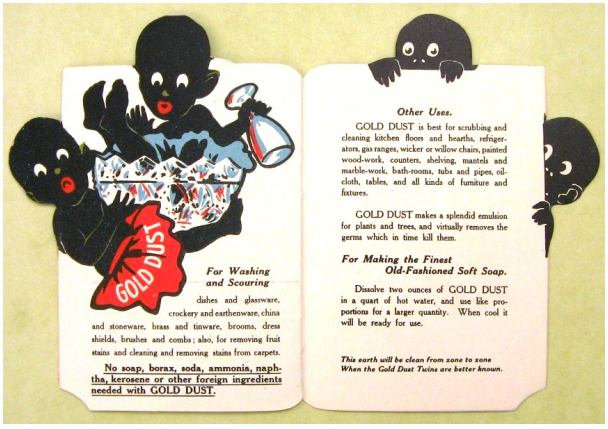
national U.S. identity at the turn of the nineteenth century.[196] In the face of social, economic, and cultural changes connected to mass consumption, the reassuring figures of black slaves such as Aunt Jemima conveyed a sense historical continuity between the nineteenth century and the modern lifestyles of the twentieth century. The product was marketed nationally and became part of the developing identity of the nation. Through such a nostalgic celebration of U.S. history, black trademarks such as Aunt Jemima introduced familiar national myths into the visual world of advertising. As advertising became an important vehicle to spread mass consumption among the US public, trade characters like Aunt Jemima, I suggest, bore some significance on the evolution on mass consumption as a central aspect of U.S. national identity.

Racial stereotypes such as the "mammy" figure, of which Aunt Jemima is a famous example, helped discourses in consumer culture create mythologies similar to those developed in trade card series in the nineteenth century. Mass consumers were familiar with racial stereotypes from vaudeville and minstrelsy shows as well as other forms of popular culture. In the advertising culture of early twentieth century magazine and newspapers, however, the stereotypical and crude manner of these caricatures in many trade cards, burlesque shows, and other forms of popular culture disappeared. Advertising started to utilize mostly images of happy and obedient African Americans to portray a world of racial harmony.

As black men and women entered the workforce in a variety of economic fields between 1890 and 1930, visual representations of blacks, including black trade

[196] For more detailed discussion on the social aspects of Southern culture and race relations between 1890 and 1930, see Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

characters such as the Gold Dust Twins for Fairbanks soap, Aunt Jemima, and Rastus for Cream of Wheat, continued the derogatory and one-dimensional portrayal of African Americans and created, in Michael Norris' words, "mythical black characters in the twentieth century."[197] In this mythological world that Norris alludes to, racial boundaries are crystal clear and happily accepted by all groups, especially African Americans. In reality, black Americans had formed groups that focused on social and cultural resistance to racial oppression since the early days of black enslavement on the North American continent.[198]




*Who Are We?* Advertising Brochure, Fairbanks' Gold Dust Washing Powder, ca. 1910s, Warshaw Collection

The ridiculing and demeaning images of blacks served to publicly denounce the critical nature of political protest against racism and the numerous endeavors of African American for social, economic, and political betterment. African Americans were repeatedly, as Psyche Williams-Forson expresses it, "ridiculed for their efforts

[197] Michael Norris, *Colored Pictures*, 108.
[198] There is a vast body of literature on this topic, see the most recent publication for essays by renowned scholars if U.S. slavery and resistance, Gabor Boritt and Scott Hancock, eds., *Slavery, Resistance, Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): Stephanie Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

to try to forge an identity of their own amid the turbulences of the Reconstruction era" while being subjected to "[a] barrage of images, which sought to wage war upon African American psyches."[199] Taking it even further than Williams-Forson, Riché Richardson connects lynchings and caricatures of African Americans in material culture: "An age of reaction arose by the 1890s, marked by an upsurge of lynchings and a notable increase in caricatured images of blacks in American culture."[200]

Trade Card, ca. 1890-1900, Warshaw Collection

This chapter examines Aunt Jemima advertising material as well as other artifacts of popular culture that drew on images of the black "mammy," especially those that featured the trade character Aunt Jemima. Diana Roberts, who explored the characteristics of the black mammy or auntie figure in U.S. literature of various periods, states that "[t]he mammy typifies the mythic Old South of benign slavery, grace and abundance."[201] This chapter consults a variety of sources, including

[199] Psyche Williams-Forson, *Building House of Chicken Legs*, 46-47.
[200] Riché Richardson, *Black Masculinity and the U.S. South: From Uncle Tom to Gangsta* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 24.
[201] Diane Roberts, *The Myth Of Aunt Jemima: Representations of Race and Region* (London: Routledge, 1994), 1.

memos, correspondence, and other written material by the advertising agency responsible for the Aunt Jemima account, J. Walter Thompson (JWT); advertising material for Aunt Jemima pancake mix and related products; and other contemporary visual imagery and material, including Southern cookbooks, that pertain to the portrayal of black women as mammies as well as to advertising and trade characters in general.

**The Myth of the "Old South"**

In her extensive study of representations of the South in twentieth century American culture, Tara McPherson states that the South is a site that is a symbol of black enslavement as well as romantic and idealized plantation lifestyles.[202] McPherson's discussion about the role of the South in U.S. cultural formations begins with her analysis of the film and novel *Gone With The Wind*. In this discussion, she offers a reading of the black mammy figure, played by Hattie McDaniel in the version adapted for the screen, as a comfortable and reassuring figure to white women (as well as men): "[B]lackness becomes a shadowy source of comfort and security, a desirable space of safety."[203] Margaret Mitchell's Pulitzer-prize wining novel, and the motion picture released in 1939, have captured the lifestyle of an opulent South made up of plantations, steamboats, balls, Southern belles and gentlemen, and happy and dutiful black slaves. Although the motion picture does show the decline of Southern society upon the outbreak of the Civil War, the film's visual detail of the plantation lifestyle and especially its portrayal of the dedication by black slaves to their white

[202] Tara McPherson, *Reconstructing Dixie: Race, Gender, and Nostalgia in the Imagined South* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 3.
[203] Ibid., 58.

masters and mistresses throughout the film, *Gone With the Wind* has enshrined the luxury and splendor of Southern plantation lifestyle. The portrayal of a safe and comfortable Southern lifestyle had been a fashionable motif in U.S. popular culture long before Mitchell wrote her novel. The Aunt Jemima trademark, for example, originated in 1889, long before *Gone With the Wind* was published.

In 1889, Chris Rutt, the original owner of Aunt Jemima pancake flour was inspired by the performance of a minstrel song which featured the character of Aunt Jemima.[204] In the same year, Rutt introduced the trade character Aunt Jemima on a box selling pancake mix. Rutt and his partner Underwood failed to promote the trademark of Aunt Jemima in profitable ways and soon sold it, in 1890, to the R. T. Davis Mill & Manufacturing Company. The company's owner, R. T. Davis, finally gave the public a humanistic portrayal of Aunt Jemima; he invented a fictional history of a former slave woman and named her after his trademark, publishing the pamphlet by Purd Wright, which was entitled *The Life of Aunt Jemima, the Most Famous Colored Woman in the World*.[205]

The marketing campaign for Aunt Jemima pancakes presented this characterization of Southern culture at one of the most publicized public events of the late nineteenth century: the 1893 Columbian World Exposition in Chicago. As a national event, the Chicago World's Fair provided the country the opportunity to

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[204] In *Slave in a Box*, Manring argues that Rutt's "discovery" of Aunt Jemima is not clearly retraceable. All we know is that Quaker Oats' official company history, published in 1967, states that Rutt visited a minstrel show in 1889, in which he, for the first time, saw the performance of a white actor in blackface and drag as a slave woman called Aunt Jemima, see M.M.Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima* (Charlottesville; University Press of Virginia, 1998) and Arthur Marquette, *Brands, Trademarks, and Good Will: The Story of the Quaker Oats Company* (New York: McGraw and Hill, 1967).
[204] Manring, *Slave in a Box*, 74.
[205] Ibid., 75-76

present itself as a truly modern nation, characterized by up-to-date technology, economic production, and sophisticated culture. Art historian Michael Norris describes the Chicago World Fair as "an important event because the organizers used it as an opportunity to define visually the United States and its relations to the world."[206] Norris quotes cultural historian and American Studies scholar Reid Badger who describes world fairs as important locations for national self-definition. The elaborate design of the fairgrounds, which were called the "White City," the careful selection of displayed art and sculptures, and the overall attention paid to visual display made this exposition one of the most well-executed public relations events in the late nineteenth century.[207] The eyes of the nation and the world lay on Chicago for the duration of the fair. It captured the national zeitgeist of the country.

The R.T. Davis Mill & Manufacturing Company, owner of the Aunt Jemima trademark, rented a space at the Fair and hired Nancy Green, a former slave, to impersonate Aunt Jemima and serve pancakes to the public. Aunt Jemima's presence at the Fair and her popularity (she was awarded a medal as "pancake queen") presented the South of plantation comfort and luxury center-stage at the Fair that celebrated the bi-centennial of Columbus' "discovery" of America and the gains of modern industries and technologies.[208] Almost three decades later, artist and

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[206] Michael Norris, *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 68.
[207] Julie K. Brown, *Making Culture Visible: The Public Display of Photography at Fairs, Expositions, and Exhibitions in the United States, 1847-1900* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press, 2001); Carolyn Kinder Carr and George Gurney, eds., *Revisiting the White City: American Art at the 1893 World's Fair* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993); Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's Fair: Visions of Empire at American at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
[208] M. M. Manring, *Slave in a Box,* 74-76.

illustrator N.C. Wyeth captured this moment in one of his sketches that the product campaign used during the 1920s.

I read the celebration of Aunt Jemima at the Fair as a nostalgic celebration of U.S. history. Through the Aunt Jemima trademark and its salute to imagined Southern culture, consumers could commemorate relationships between enslaver and enslaved that disguised the harsh realities of slavery. McPherson aptly describes the South as "the site of the trauma of slavery and also the mythic location of a vast nostalgia industry."[209] The Aunt Jemima ads express both aspects. Since the legend of Aunt Jemima is historically placed before the Civil War, her blackness marks her as an enslaved woman, even though none of the ads ever refers to her as a slave. However, some ads refer to Colonel Higbee, owner of the plantation where Aunt Jemima works as her master or "massa."[210] The ads suggest that slavery was a benign arrangement, in which African Americans were exclusively treated as valued assets of the household. In turn, the black slaves in this fictional world of consumer culture were wholeheartedly indebted and devoted to the white plantation owners. The cordial relationship between Colonel Higbee and Aunt Jemima suggests that black slaves were treated as part of the family. In reality, many whites truly felt close to their mammies and other black slaves and perceived the myth of devoted black slaves and servants as a historical reality. As part of a cultural system based on black enslavement, many white Southerners who were reared by black slaves and, after the Civil War, servants felt sincerely indebted to them, especially to the black women

[209] Tara McPherson, *Reconstructing Dixie,* 3.
[210] "How Aunt Jemima saved the Colonel's mustache and his reputation as a host,' *LHJ* (October 1920); "At the World's Fair in '93 Aunt Jemima was a sensation," *LHJ* (March 1921), Microfilm Collection, J. Walter Thompson Archives.

who often spent more time with them than their parents did. Many whites perceived that the intimacy that they felt towards their slaves and servants was also a true sentiment felt by African Americans.[211]

Historical data, however, suggests that most enslaved people perceived enslavement, however "comfortable" some arrangements could have been, as a barrier to honest and loving relationships.[212] The nostalgic elements in the ads are present in the texts as well as the images and serve as powerful reminders of the idealized and romanticized plantation lifestyle that is at the core of Old South mythology.

The ad creators drew deliberately on the popular and mythic notions of southern culture. James Webb Young, from the Chicago J. Walter Thompson office, became the creative leader behind Southern nostalgia in Aunt Jemima ads in the early twentieth century. Young was quite aware of the effect that portrayals of recognizable visual elements could have on consumers. In one of his many lectures about advertising, he describes the process of creating an idea as combining familiar elements with each other.[213] His campaign for Aunt Jemima pancakes, combining

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[211] In her recent discussion of the "mammy" myth as a faithful slave, Micki McElya discusses the historical evolution of the "mammy" myth in nineteenth century US history" "The mammy narrative embodied in the Aunt Jemima trademark dates back at least to the 1830s, when members of the planter class began using these stories to animate their assertions of slavery as benevolent and slave owning as honorable." Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy: The Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 4.

[212] For the most recent publication on the role of slaves in the household, see Wilma A. Dunaway, *The African-American Family in Slavery and Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), William K. Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House: Elite Slaveholders of the mid-nineteenth-century South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Saidinya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[213] James Webb Young's lectures in 1934, lecture #11 on "Producing an Idea.:" "Namely, that an idea is nothing more or less than a new combination of old elements. […]," 69. The second important principle involved in the production of ideas is that the capacity to bring old elements into new

various elements of Old South mythology with the ideas of loyalty, comfort, and luxury, illustrates these principles.

In combination with each other, visual and textual elements in these ads created a fictional account of Aunt Jemima and her life in the Old South. American audiences of the 1920s were familiar with aspects of Southern culture. In fact, Young himself confessed that he relied on his own cultural memories of the Old South: "This particular idea [real life stories about Aunt Jemima] grew out of material which I acquired as a boy. My father was a steamboat man on the Mississippi River in the days before and after the Civil War, I was raised on stories of the Mississippi River and plantation life and some of this material found its way into the legends of Aunt Jemima."[214] The elegant plantation lifestyle portrayed in these ads consisted of common elements such as the opulent mansion, the gentlemanly older plantation master, the old steamboats of the Mississippi, charming and well-dressed Southern Belles, and black slaves.

**Enshrining the "Mammy" Image during the 1910s**

Aunt Jemima ads during the 1910s played a central role in expanding the image of "mammy" in U.S. national imagination by relying on artistic visual representations. A majority of these ads, especially between 1919 and 1920, capitalized on the usage of images. They contained carefully crafted and executed illustrations. Some of them portrayed white men and women of the twentieth century

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combinations depends largely on the ability to see relationships, 70, Collection of James Webb Young's lectures in 1934, Chicago Office Records.

[214] Young, "Producing an Idea," Collection of James Webb Young's lectures in 1934, Chicago Office Records.

consuming pancakes in different life situations, whereas other ads showed Aunt Jemima's world of the Old South. The pictorial quality of these ads, portraying Aunt Jemima as the jolly and happy black mammy, supported the textual narratives. In combination, they stressed repeatedly Aunt Jemima's contentment and satisfaction in serving her master and his guests. Most of the pictures, apart from the image on the pancake box itself, portray Aunt Jemima in a situation serving white people or preparing food to serve to them.

The ad for the pancake mix that appeared in the LHJ in December 1916 contained more specific information about the trade character herself: "Fifty-five years ago – way down in Dixie – Aunt Jemima made the first of the pancakes that have since made her name a household word all over America."[215] Aunt Jemima's genealogy authenticated her as an authority on food preparation. As an enslaved African American woman, Aunt Jemima had been responsible for the culinary well-being of her owner's family ("fifty-five years ago, down in Dixie", as the ad references, would have been 1861, two years before Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation).[216]

As white women were groomed into sophisticated consumers, the design of Aunt Jemima's trade character transformed from an unsophisticated image into a more stylish and refined visual arrangement. Overall, the aesthetic quality of advertising developed in the early twentieth century, and these developments also affected the trademark design of Aunt Jemima pancakes. In 1917, the trademark logo

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[215] "The Secret of Perfect Pancakes" *LHJ* (December 1916), Microfilm Collection.
[216] Most Aunt Jemima ads portray the trade character as a enslaved woman; however, some ads also depict Aunt Jemima traveling to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 and to other places after the abolition of slavery. All images share the depiction of Aunt Jemima as serving white families. In other words, they always portray her as a dutiful servant; servitude is her rightful place.

changed. The crude picture of Aunt Jemima that had been the company's trademark since its conception was replaced by a more nuanced and artful image of the Southern cook, as indicated in the two images that follow.


Ad, Unknown Publication, ca. 1895
Warshaw Collection


Detail, "The favorite breakfast of every member the family, " LHJ (March 1919),
Lightner Collection of Antique Advertising

Visually appealing packages were an important part of advertising strategies in the early twentieth century. As Frederick O. Perkins, a representative of the JWT New York office, expressed in 1922, product packaging constituted a critical part of advertisers' strategies to reach consumers and influence their buying habits: "In advertising to-day, the reproduction of the package actually becomes a vital part of the advertisement."[217] The design of boxes, containers, and cartons were means of communicating quality and dependability to consumers. They served as ways to convince mass audiences to prefer one product to another. Companies with distinct trademarks tended to focus on highlighting the trade character. Perkins cites Aunt Jemima pancakes as a typical and successful example of the "conventional design" that often involved "pictorial design by the employment of human interest

[217] Frederick O. Perkins. "Packages.' *JWT News Bulletin* (April 1922): 11, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

elements."[218] Again, the 'human interest element' in this campaign centered on the figure of Aunt Jemima. The black mammy was a symbol that most Americans easily recognized. It carried cultural meaning that the advertising campaign capitalized on.

Package design and newspaper advertising went hand in hand to support a unified and focused message of quality. The January 1917 edition of trade journal *Printer's Ink* reprinted an address that a JWT executive delivered to the Sphinx Club of New York. The talk dealt mostly with the differences and similarities of newspaper and magazine advertising. JWT had traditionally been understood as an agency that dealt mostly with magazine ads. This speech established the agency as a leader in newspaper advertising as well. Several JWT clients reacted to this article, among them a member of the Aunt Jemima Mills Company by the name of Clark who "expressed himself as very much interested and even offered to pay for a new plate which would show up the Aunt Jemima package to better advantage."[219]

Two months later, JWT announced a new campaign for the Aunt Jemima brand. Aunt Jemima color ads had been a common feature in the LHJ. As part of this new strategy, the agency planned full color pages in nationally distributed and widely read magazines such as *The Women's Home Companion*, *Pictorial Review*, *Good Housekeeping*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Most importantly, the latest designed ads would introduce the re-designed package.[220] The new boxes would feature a larger and more elaborate portrait of Aunt Jemima than before. In the words of the JWT staff, because of "the striking simplicity and strong display value of these

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[218] Ibid.
[219] *News Bulletin* 31 (January 17, 1917): 7, and *News Bulletin* 32 ( January 24, 1917): 1-2, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[220] *News Bulletin* 39 (March 19, 1917): 1, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

packages, " the new packages "[placed] them well ahead of any of their competitors."[221]

Since its first introduction to the U.S. market, the pancake mix package featured a picture of Aunt Jemima. The new, artistically more sophisticated portrait started occupying most of the space on the package. After the redesign, the drawn image of Aunt Jemima dominated the new box. The caption "Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour," a brief and direct description of the content and brand, accompanied the portrait. The old package included a smaller portrait of Aunt Jemima. This image was not drawn in a very artistic and stylish manner. It was placed in the middle of the package and surrounded by more text. On the newly designed package in 1917, the dominant portrait of Aunt Jemima made the product synonymous with the fictitious character.

**White Women and Aunt Jemima Ads in the 1910s**

Aunt Jemima ads of the 1910s document the transformation of white women from homemakers into consumers. By the late nineteenth century, white U.S. women also entered the realm of consumers. They became the main target for many advertisers, especially of household and food products. An article printed in JWT's Newsletter collection, dating from January 1925, describes this shift as a transformation from a producer to a consumer: "For the woman of yesterday was essentially a *producer*."[222] The article continues to describe women's minor role as consumers, since their exposure to the market was limited to buying raw supplies.

[221] *News Bulletin* 44 (April 23, 1917): 3, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[222] " "I spend Half My life in the Kitchen:" Yet She Finds Time to do Eighty Per Cent of the Nation's Retail Buying.' *JWT Newsletter* (January 1925): 9, Newsletters, 1910-2005.

These supplies were used to create products which in the early twentieth century were available for ready purchase: "Most of her working hours she spent turning these raw materials into bread, preserves, other foods and the thousand and one other things her family needed."[223] The transformations in economic production and distribution turned her into "the nation's Purchasing Agent" [224] who was responsible for almost eighty percent of retail purchases. The image of Aunt Jemima presented interesting escape fantasies to a luxurious plantation life for women who might not have had access to servants or slaves. Further, Aunt Jemima guaranteed the high quality of traditional cooking in a modernized world where most women had become, as the JWT article describes, consumers rather than full-time producers.

In his extensive study on the Aunt Jemima brand, M.M. Manring has pointed out that white women were the main audience of these ads. Aunt Jemima's credibility as a Southern cook gave the product credibility and assured white homemakers and mothers of the product's quality.[225] Similar to other ad campaigns, many of the ads for the Aunt Jemima pancake mix described the product's convenience. Consumers had to add "but water," and the mix required no baking, according to the instructions of an ad published in November of 1916.[226] As the title of the ad promised, Aunt Jemima would "make your pancakes."[227] In one ad published in the LHJ, the image on the top of the ad shows two white women. One is using Aunt Jemima pancake mix, while the other is offering her milk. The pancake mix did not call for adding milk. In fact, one of the draws for Aunt Jemima's mix was the fact that the added

[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] M.M. Manring, *Slave in a Box.*
[226] "Let Aunt Jemima Make Your Pancake" *LHJ* (November 1916), Microfilm Collection.
[227] Ibid.

sweet milk in the mix "saves you the price of a quart of sweet milk."[228] The trademark's trustworthiness stemmed from the fact that the mix was based on the recipe by a real Southern mammy, as the woman in the ad assures her friend: "Aunt Jemima – I have read in the magazines – was a real southern cook of many years ago and became famous through her secret pancake recipe that is used for the pancake flour I now buy in the ready prepared form."[229]

Many of the ads during this time played into white women's desire to be good wives and housekeepers. Ads carried headings such as "Do you make your husband happy?', "The cleverest little bride in the world," and "Don't experiment – start his day right."[230] A before and after illustration, for example, in one ad shows an unsatisfied husband frowning over "horrid cakes"; however, as soon as his bride served "fluffy, delicious cakes" made with the pancake mix, the husband leans over to his wife and affectionately touches her hand.[231] As much as the mammy image kept black women in a tightly cast role, white women's portrayal in these ads also fitted into a stereotype, the demure and subservient housewife. As many of these ads illustrate, white women were depicted as responsible for the culinary well-being of their husbands and families. This portrayal was common not only in advertising, but also in other forms of popular culture. In her discussion about the mammy image in American visual art of the nineteenth century, Jo-Ann Morgan describes the "Euro-American woman [as] a tiny, helpless ornament, a display of Gilded Age conspicuous

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[228] Ibid.
[229] ""Never mind the milk, I don't need it." " *LHJ* (between December 1916 and February 1917), Microfilm Collection.
[230] Unknown, 1917; *Pictorial Review* (December 1917); *Women's Home Companion* (November 1917), Microfilm Collection.
[231] "Don't' experiment – start his day right." *Omaha World Herald*, 5 February 1918, Microfilm Collection.

consumption."[232] The Aunt Jemima ads portrayed white women repeatedly as such ornaments and attempted to convince white women of their central roles in mass consumption.

**Aunt Jemima Plantation Ads in 1919 and 1920**

In the early twentieth century, a vast number of companies competed in the food market, especially producers of breakfast products. In most of the advertising for such products, ideas of convenience and comfort played a central role. Trade characters that stressed the convenient nature of the advertised product were particularly successful. Black trade characters, especially the black female figure of a "mammy," became powerful vessels to carry the message of convenience and comfort. In the context of Southern nostalgia, their blackness represented obedient servitude and faithful devotion to white consumers.

Since the late nineteenth century, advertising for breakfast items such as hot cereals had started to stress the convenience of these products. In a small pamphlet addressed to housewives, for example, Quaker Oats stresses both aspects, healthiness and convenience:

> As a health food for young and old, rich and poor, adults or children, for the mechanic and students, for all who toil with hand or brain, it is unequalled. It can be easily and quickly prepared for the breakfast table. It is delicious when cooked, easily digested, and far cheaper than beef, potatoes, or flour; in fact, it is **The perfect food**.[233]

Convenience of breakfast products was also emphasized by accentuating the versatility of a product. Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour ads, for example, stressed other

[232] Jo-Ann Morgan. "Mammy the Huckster; Selling the old South for the New Century." *American Art* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 100.
[233] "Quaker White Oats: From Each Package Comes Health and Strength," Advertising Pamphlet, ca. 1893, Warshaw Collection.

ways to use the flour mix. Muffin and waffle recipes, for example, were often included on the package.[234]

Hot cereal or baking mixes could give customers nutritious food fast and conveniently – in harmony with the changing lifestyle of the early twentieth century. As urban areas expanded, the pace of life increased, and advertisers capitalized on people's desires for convenience. Convenience meant easy availability of necessary staple products and the availability of products that would fit into a new, more fast-paced lifestyle. Aunt Jemima pancake mix met all these needs. The product was marketed as facilitating a modern lifestyle with the convenience and comfort of the Old South. The consumption of new brand name products also required the development of new consumption behaviors. The familiarity evoked by the ads that drew on the myth of the Old South was a possible means to acquaint US consumers with the ready-made pancake mix. The nostalgia evoked in much of the advertising was almost the exact opposite of the modernist product. In her discussion about the evolution of mass markets at the turn of the century, Susan Strasser claims that "the creation of modern American consumer culture involved not only introducing new products and establishing market demand for them, but also creating new domestic habits and activities."[235] The instant food represented a departure from meals that took hours to prepare. Trade characters with recognizable cultural attributes and characteristics often presented such narratives. Consumers were able to identify easily with the messages of familiarity. More and more, trade characters became images that

[234]This ad contains informs the consumer about other recipes on the package and shows images of waffles and muffins made from Aunt Jemima pancake flour, "What other cook has ever won such fame?" *LHJ* (March 1925), Microfilm Collection.
[235] Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed,* 89.

represented comfort and known surroundings in combination with imagery that represented common desires and aspirations. Evoking social beliefs based on gender roles and racial ideas, as the Aunt Jemima trademark successfully employed, was one possible strategy to achieve this goal.

The black slaves and servants depicted by material culture between 1890 and 1930 had no identity outside of happily serving their masters and mistresses. Kenneth Goings describes the period between 1880 and 1930 as "the worst period (excluding the slavery era) in our nation's history for race relations in general and for African-Americans in particular."[236] Increasing competition between white and black laborers in the South and North was one of the many factors for increasing racial tensions between black and white Americans, often causing scholars to refer to the turn of the nineteenth century as the "nadir" of race relations.[237] Goings illustrates how these mostly derogatory images of blacks were widely disseminated in U.S. popular culture through artifacts of consumption, such as cookie jars or ashtrays, and advertising. He describes a wide range of objects, ranging from trade cards, sheet music, pamphlets, and other ephemera, but he highlights the role of black trade characters such as Aunt Jemima. In fact, he calls Aunt Jemima, together with Rastus from the Cream of Wheat campaign "the real and abiding superstars of this period [1880 to 1930]."[238]

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[236] Kenneth M. Goings, *Mammy and Uncle Mose: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), xvii.

[237] Rayford Logan started using the term nadir in 1954. The term describes the period at the turn of the twentieth century in post-Reconstruction American, often described as one of the worst periods of race relations in the United States. The victories gained after the abolition of slavery and changing policies during Reconstruction following the Civil War declined rapidly. Race riots, mass lynchings, the growth of the Ku Klux Klan, and racial segregation all led to increasing racial tensions. See Rayford W. Logan, *The Negro in American Life and Thought, The Nadir, 1877-1901* (New York: Dial Press, 1954); ibid., *The Betrayal of the Negro from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997).

[238] Ibid.,28.

The image of the black female cook and caretaker, often referred to as "mammy," became one of the most successful visual motifs to convey ideas of comfort and convenience. K. Sue Jewell provides a general description of mammy's characteristics: "She is portrayed as an obese African American woman, of dark complexion, with extremely large breasts and buttocks and shining white teeth visibly displayed in a grin."[239] Images that portray black women in this way appeared in trade cards, commercial pamphlets, and calendars as well as on postcards and sheet music covers. Weekly magazines like *Harper's* or *Puck* also published cartoons that represented black women as oversized and mostly ignorant characters. Images of "mammy" had been recurrent visual motifs in nineteenth century popular culture. In connection with other stereotypical images of African Americans such as black children or "pickaninnies" and docile male servants, mostly referred to as "uncle," the image helped to carry cultural meanings of stereotypically docile and subservient blackness into the age of emerging mass consumption. These caricatures of African Americans promised, as Robert Rydell writes in his discussion about the Columbian World Exposition in Chicago in 1893, "easier living for whites in America's future contingent on blacks remaining in a subordinate position in U.S. society."[240]

The comforting presence of a black mammy helped to ease the transition into an industrial and consumer-oriented economy while also providing cultural escape fantasies of racial harmony and order. Morgan also points out that the mammy image of Aunt Jemima ads and similar representations in the last three decades of the

[239] K. Sue Jewell, *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of US Social Policy* (London: Routledge, 1993), 39.
[240] Robert W. Rydell, "Editor's Introduction," in ed. ibid., *The Reason why the Colored American is not in the World's Columbian Exhibition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), xx.

nineteenth century represented a "reunifying gesture toward North-South reconciliation."[241] Aunt Jemima's success in the early twentieth century goes beyond Morgan's reconciliatory gesture. It actually laid a foundation for a nostalgic view of U.S. history by drawing on mythologies of the Old South and slavery as a benign institution. Between 1890 and 1930, the Aunt Jemima trade character became a popular and important trademark that promised (white) consumers a world with clear racial boundaries. It provided a sense of stability in a rapidly changing and expanding world of economic growth, demographic change, and overseas expansion. In order to sell the product, the ad creators for Aunt Jemima pancakes continued to exploit the nostalgic longing of the (white) public in the United States for a manageable world by developing the narratives around Aunt Jemima. Ads for the trademark placed (white) consumers into the manageable world of the black mammy who takes care of her beloved white family.

The early efforts of the Aunt Jemima brand to develop a distinct trade character, and JWT's efforts to maximize the effect of the already established trademark during the 1910s and 1920s, strengthened the idea of the black female slave/servant as the nurturer and enabler of U.S. leisure and comfort. The narrative ads for Aunt Jemima, starting in 1919, recreated the fantasy world about the Old South that informed most U.S. Americans' historical understanding of the southern states. The picture was one of opulence and luxury. In the plantation lifestyle ad series, the plantation owner and his family, the invented Colonel Higbee, lived comfortably in their beautiful mansion in Louisiana. Aunt Jemima and her family,

[241] Morgan, 88.

who lived in a cabin, labored hard, but were happy to serve the master of the house and his guests, of which, according to the stories, there seemed to be plenty.

The stories in the ads, accompanied by a variety of images, recreate the colorful life of an opulent plantation lifestyle. Each ad in this series usually contained one large picture on the top of the page, dominating the advertisement, as well as three to four smaller illustrations that captured several of the narratives in the text. These ads ran between 1919 and 1920. The ad entitled "The Cook whose Cabin Became More Famous than Uncle Tom's Cabin," which might have been the first of this series, published in October 1919, describes the fictitious home of Aunt Jemima as a "stately white-pillared mansion" on the Mississippi river in Louisiana.[242]


THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

The Cook whose Cabin Became More Famous than Uncle Tom's

DOWN in Louisiana on the banks of the rolling Mississippi Aunt Jemima's little cabin stood, and not far distant the plantation manor where her genial "Massa," Colonel Higbee, lived.

In all the sunny Southland there was no cook like Aunt Jemima. For miles and miles around the people came to meet her—for even in those days before the war her fame had spread through all the South. Folks traveled in the delicateness of dishes she used to prepare.

Most of all they delighted in her pancakes. So tender and fluffy, so fine-flavored and satisfying were they that other cooks, try as they would, simply could not make their equal! So temptingly brown they came in, hot from the griddle! So unvarying in goodness—morning after morning the same!

Little wonder that Aunt Jemima was pressed for the secret of their making!

Would money buy that recipe? One Henry Carter of Richmond thought it would, and it was a tidy sum he offered. But he didn't know Aunt Jemima.

"Ah ain't intendin' to sell nuffin' what ah know," she told him. "Dem cakes is jes' fo' mine an' fo' Cun'l Higbee's fambly an' his frien's when dey cum hoah!"

But the war came on. Dark days hung over the household of Colonel Higbee. And darker days—the Colonel gone—the plantation sold. There's not room to recount those times. Nor is there space to tell of the old Confederate General who years after recalled the time when, lost with his aide, he had happened upon Aunt Jemima's cabin and one of her pancake breakfasts—of how his friend who represented a milling company in the North found the old mammy and bought from her the magic recipe—of other episodes in the romance. But you've met Aunt Jemima herself. And, tomorrow, you can have her wonderful pancakes! Pancakes, tempting and tender and fluffy—just as she herself made them! For in the red package from which beams her smiling face—you can get one in any grocery—there's ready prepared Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour—from her very own recipe! With even sweet milk in it! And to rich it needs no eggs! With everything that Aunt Jemima used except the water!

'Tis just a minute's work to stir that in. And you have a piping hot plateful almost before you know it.

One taste and you'll understand why Aunt Jemima became famous—why her fame has spread so far, so very far from that little cabin on the river bank down in Louisiana. And you'll never forget!

LHJ, October 1916, Microfilm Collection.

According to the ad's copy, Colonel Higbee, "a gental [sic!] open-hearted Southern gentleman," was famous for his hospitality and the good food that Aunt Jemima, with

[242] "The Cook whose Cabin Became More Famous than Uncle Tom's," *LHJ* (October 1919), Microfilm Collection.

the best recipes of all "the other Southern Mammies," happily provided. [243] The text is framed, as all the ads from this series are, by a number of pictures. The largest image that occupies the center of the page portrays Aunt Jemima serving Colonel Higbee and his company, her "kindly black face [beaming] as she brought in her celebrated Cakes!"[244] It is important to stress that none of the ads in this series ever mention the words slavery, master, or slave; however, the life being portrayed in all these ads is the lifestyle of Southern plantations before the Civil War that were run by black slave labor. Pictures of culinary Southern culture, such as tea sets, are accompanied by two pictures portraying Colonel Higbee and Aunt Jemima and fill the rest of the one-page ad.

The fantasy of Southern hospitality continued in the advertisements run in the holiday months of November (Thanksgiving) and December (Christmas). The November ad's central picture depicts Colonel Higbee's guests arriving in their carriage, tended to by an older enslaved man who happily exclaims: "Yas suh! Yas suh – de Cun'l sho'do like lots of company."[245]

[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.
[245] "When Guests Dropped in to Stay A Week or Two," *LHJ* (November 1919), Microfilm Collection.


LHJ, November 1919, Microfilm Collection.

The picture of two young white Southern Belles descending the grand mansion's stairs to dance "polkas till midnight," and an image of the black butler welcoming yet another guest, "Master John Henry" from Richmond, stress southern hospitality, a major theme in the trademark's ads.[246] Aunt Jemima's devotion to accommodating her master's practice of entertaining guests extends to neglect of her own children. One of the accompanying images in the ad shows her preparing the batter for her famous pancakes and scolding a black boy, presumably her child, for interrupting her work: "Scat! Yo' black rascal. Don't come hamperin' me when they's company waitin fo' breakfast!"[247] Again, the text does not refer to Aunt Jemima, the black butler, or the black child as enslaved property of Colonel Higbee; rather, it stresses the joy and "pleasant flurry of excitement" that came with the arrival of house guests in "the delightful Louisiana household where Aunt Jemima was cook!"[248] The ad's portrayal of black labor, and especially the absence of accurate language to describe

[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Ibid.

the social relationship between Higbee and Aunt Jemima, ignores the harsh realities of enslavement by focusing on the fantasy of happy black slaves. It collapses the power relationship between the master and enslaved.

The Christmas ad in the December issue of the LHJ is yet another example of the romanticized myth of the hospitable South.


LHJ, December 1919, Microfilm Collection

Again, much of the hospitality is enabled by black labor, such as Aunt Jemima preparing the food and the black butler serving the Colonel's guests by delivering the food or taking care of the luggage. The imagery of black labor is abundant in these ads. In the Christmas ads alone, three out of the five pictures portray blacks working: the butler carrying the luggage, Aunt Jemima cooking at the stove, and the black butler carrying the serving tray. The text stresses the quantity of guests – "an avalanche of guests and luggage."[249] None of the servants complain about the increased amount of work. On the contrary, the text only offers us Aunt Jemima's

[249] "The Last Christmas on the old Plantation," *LHJ* (December 1919), Microfilm Collection.

happiness at hearing the guests' compliments about her food, "till her black face was all aglow with pride!"[250]

Although these ads portray the plantation master, Colonel Higbee, abundantly, they never present consumers with a plantation mistress, a Mrs. Higbee. As Manring points out, the white plantation mistress was absent from the ads.[251] The absence of a figure representing the position equal to the plantation mistress enabled white female customers to imagine themselves in the role of the Southern Mistress whose well-being was taken care of as the mistress of a grand and luxurious plantation. Aunt Jemima did not serve as a figure of identification; she was a servant to be in charge of, not someone to emulate. Although, as Manring points out, Aunt Jemima's master, Colonel Higbee does not seem to have a wife, there are plenty of southern belles in the ads' imagery. Although they are not presented as central characters, they probably reminded white female consumers of ideal femininity. Characters such as these also suggest the leisure that white women could have in this setting where someone else was doing "woman's work." Visually, in fact, the ads present female white characters that could be the plantations mistress and her daughter, such as in the Christmas ad from 1919. An older white-haired lady stands behind a younger white woman who stretches out her hands in a welcoming gesture to "all the cousins and aunts and uncles."[252]

More than ten years later, the visual and textual narratives of the old South plantation lifestyle resurface in a series of ads that ran in *Cosmopolitan, McCall's,*

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[250] Ibid.
[251] Manring, "Chapter 5: The Old South, the Absent Mistress, and the Slave in the Box," in *Slavein a Box*, 110-148.
[252] "The Last Christmas in the Old Plantation," *LHJ* (December 1919), Microfilm Collection.

and other magazines. Most of the 1930s ads do not appear, unlike the 1919 advertisements, on a whole page. The illustrations are less artistically elaborate than in the series for the *LHJ* in 1919; however, they portray similar scenes of romanticized plantation lifestyle such as the opulent banquets or steamboats on the Mississippi river.

In 1920, the JWT advertising agency commissioned six different panels by N.C. Wyeth that continued the narrative of the Old South utilized in the plantation lifestyle series.[253] These pictures appeared in major publications in 1920, such as the LHJ and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Similar to the series published in 1919, this collection of ads portrayed the hospitable and luxurious plantation lifestyle of the romanticized South that became an important aspect of national mythology about the nation's past and current race relations. Each of those six full-page ads includes the image on the top half of the page and an accompanying narrative on the remaining page, including a picture of the Aunt Jemima package, sometimes even an image of a stack of pancakes. The text is arranged in three columns, introduced by a title that provides the consumer with a quick summary of the ad's pictorial and textual content. With this strategy, James Webb Young, the creative mind behind these ads, attempted to transform "Aunt Jemima from a trade-mark into a real southern cook […] by telling a series of dramatic incidents which supposedly took place in the life of Aunt Jemima."[254]

[253] N.C. Wyeth was a famous illustrator and artist mostly known for his numerous illustrations of classical literary works such as *The last of the Mohicans* and *Treasure Island*. For further discussion, see David Michaelis, *N.C. Wyeth: A Biography* (New York: Perennial, 2003).
[254] Young, "Producing an Idea," 72.

The first ad in this series of six tells the story of "how Aunt Jemima saved the Colonels' mustache and his reputation as a host."[255]


LHJ, October 1920, Microfilm Collection

The lengthy and detailed narrative tells the story of Jemima's career as the plantation's cook. In this ad, consumers met familiar characters from the previous series, such as the black butler – whose name, we learn, is Mose – and new characters like Aunt Jemima's mother Eliza, "the Colonel's old mammy cook."[256] When her mother fell ill, so the story goes, at an inopportune time (Higbee was entertaining a large number of guests), the young Jemima took over the kitchen and saved the day by preparing what was to become her signature move: the golden and delicious pancakes. Aunt Jemima's superior abilities as a cook manifested themselves when she was only a child. At that time, she is characterized as possessing all the attributes of the subservient and happily obliging black slave, an image very central to the myth of

[255] "How Aunt Jemima saved the Colonels' mustache and his reputation as a host," *LHJ* (October 1920), Microfilm Collection.
[256] Ibid.

the romanticized South. This ad confirms again that black slaves' first duty is to serving their masters before taking into account any personal matters. Aunt Jemima's concern, when her mother falls ill, is to make sure that the plantation life will not be disrupted, not to ensure her mother's well-being.

The remaining five ads continue to tell vignettes of Aunt Jemima's life before and after the end of the Civil War. All incidents highlight Aunt Jemima's expertise in culinary matters as well as her loyalty to Rosemont, Colonel Higbee's plantation, and its inhabitants. In 1864, according to the ad published in November 1920 in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Aunt Jemima served two confederate soldiers who were cut off from their troops, exclaiming, "Yo' sho' did give dem Yanks de slip."[257]


THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Gray Morn

*How kind Fate took a Hand in the Misfortunes of War back in the days of '64*

LHJ, November 1920, Microfilm Collection

Again, the slave mammy is serving obediently and happily two men who are fighting for the preservation of slavery, the very institution that keeps her in bondage. Since the ad's focus is on communicating the comfort of pre-Civil War Southern lifestyle, unhappy black slaves do not fit into that myth. Hence, Aunt Jemima serves her master

[257] "Gray Morn: how kind Fate took a Hand in the Misfortunes of War back in the days of "64," *LHJ* (November 1920), Microfilm Collection.

and his lifestyle in any ways she can and remains content with his "kind words […] of appreciation for her loyalty and cheerful service."[258]

**"Mammy's" Message of Convenience, Comfort, and Servitude**

"Mammy's" existence in commercial culture, through stories and images such as those in Aunt Jemima ad series of 1919 and 1920, continued to establish the black female caregiver into a national symbol representing comfort and convenience, despite scant historical documentation. The black "mammy," as Emily Townes describes, is mostly a construction of white cultural imagination: "The reality is that although the historical Mammy is suspect, the imagined and the mythological [one] that springs from the fantastic hegemonic imagination – the remembered one – is alive and well."[259] Alongside the more obvious national and patriotic symbols like Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty, Aunt Jemima, I suggest, turned into a central national icon in depicting, experiencing, and understanding U.S. national culture and identity and reinforced mass consumption as a central aspect of U.S. national identity. The frequent usage of "mammy" images in US commercial and popular culture of the early twentieth century support the interpretation of Aunt Jemima as a national icon. The myth of the faithful slave, according to Micki McElya, "is deeply rooted in the American racial imagination."[260] As the most famous example of this myth, Aunt Jemima occupies a central role in US mass consumption and its increasing effect on US national identity.

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[258] "At the World's fair in "93 Aunt Jemima was a sensation," *LHJ* (March 1921), Microfilm Collection.
[259] Emilie M. Townes, *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil* (New York: Palgrave MacMilla, 2006): 33.
[260] Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*, 3.

In the early twentieth century, Aunt Jemima ads were very successful and highly acclaimed among advertising experts. JWT staff often cited their client's Aunt Jemima Mill's advertising campaign as a successful example to other companies.[261] In a letter to William Churchill, sales manager for Corning Glass Works, from August 11, 1916, one of the JWT Vice Presidents mentions the success of that campaign, especially its transition from locally focused promotions to nationwide marketing: "Aunt Jemima Mills Company, makers of Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour. Commencing with local campaigns, this has now become a nationally advertised product."[262]

Other advertising creators took advantage of the popularity of this image to advertise a variety of products. In the majority of ads, the most frequently portrayed characteristics of a mammy were her clothes, including a head wrap and an apron, her large body, and her ungrammatical use of the English language. All three elements established that black women's primary role was that of a caretaker to white people, serving their needs and desires. Many of the products that utilized the mammy image were household items, food related mostly, but not exclusively, as the following example demonstrates. This ad for Mentor Comfort Underwear appeared in the LHJ in September of 1901 and portrays a mammy in two characteristic ways: with a large body and wearing an apron.

[261] The R.T. Davis Mills Company that owned Aunt Jemima pancakes was later renamed into the Aunt Jemima Mills Company. This name change must have taken place between the 1890s and the 1910s. In 1916, the JWT business memoranda and Newsletters refer to the company as Aunt Jemima Mills.
[262] Letter to William Churchill, (August 11, 1916): 2, Newsletters, 1910-2005.


Ad for Comfort Underwear, ca. 1910s-1920s, Warshaw Collection


Ad for Campbell's Tomato Soup, October 1914, Warshaw Collection

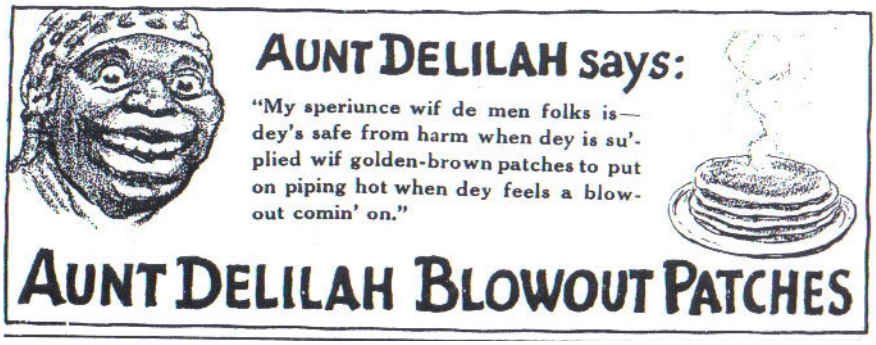
It depicts two women, one white, and the other black. The black mammy is considerably larger than the white woman. She is marked as a servant, wearing an apron, whereas the white woman is dressed in professional clothing indicative of a white collar job or of middle- or upper class status (white blouse and black skirt).

In an ad for Campbell's Tomato Soup from October 1914, the same two characteristics of a mammy are used, although the black female is referred to as "cook" by the little white girl in the ad. Published in *Modern Priscilla*, the ad portrays a black woman preparing canned Campbell's soup. She is asked by a young white girl to "spare me a little, please."[263] In typical fashion, she wears an apron and a head wrap. In addition to her clothes and her body size, by serving food, she also takes care

[263] Campbell's Tomato Soup Ad, Warsaw Collection, NMAH, Washington, D.C.

of the young white girl. Under the institution of slavery, enslaved black females often took on the roles of caretakers and nurtures of white children.[264]

Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the mammy image continued to be popular in advertising. Almost ten years after the Campbell's ad, in a 1923 theater program, Aunt Delilah advertises for "Aunt Delilah Blowout Patches."




Aunt Delilah ad, 1923, Warshaw Collection

"Patches" is a synonym for pancakes, and the ad features an image of a stack of steaming pancakes on the right hand side. On the left hand side, Aunt Delilah grins at the viewer. Her wide eyes, thick lips, and her coarse facial features are typical characteristics of early twentieth century racial caricature. She is drawn in a way that is reminiscent of the drawing of apes, a popular way of portraying African Americans in particular and people of African descent in general throughout the past centuries. Aunt Delilah also wears a head wrap or scarf, a typical accessory of the mammy figure.

In addition to the visual markers of servitude, the accompanying text also stresses Aunt Delilah's position in society as a servant. The text was written to

[264] For further discussion on the roles of enslaved women, see Dylan C. Penningroth, *The Claims of Kinfolk: African American Property and Community in the nineteenth-century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Paul Finkelman, ed., *Women and the Family in a Slave Society* (New York: Garland Publications, 1989).

represent stereotypes of typical black Southern dialect. Every other word is misspelled and stresses the uneducated and presumed uncivilized status of Aunt Delilah, "experience" turns into "speriunce," "they" becomes "dey," and "they are" turns into "dey's." Very early on in its career, the Aunt Jemima pancakes brand coined a catchphrase for Aunt Jemima. The famous "I'se in town, Honey" became the signature sentence of Aunt Jemima as early as 1893. In fact, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the company owners spread this slogan among the pancake consumers via badges and other advertising ephemera.[265]

As Psyche Williams-Forson points out in her discussion on black women, food, and power, the misspellings of words, never accidental, authenticated these black women as the "real deal" of Southern culture: "The deliberate misspelling […] is intended to serve as a linguistic signifier to the more visible variable of race."[266] Several aspects of the mammy image served as visual reminders of black women's subservient role, stressing their proper place in the kitchen to (culinarily) serve the white population. Both the physical appearance and the dialect of these women was meant to expose the low levels of formal education among African Americans, presenting them as ignorant. This type of linguistic representation had been a point of comic relief for white audiences since the early beginnings of minstrel shows.[267]

**Southern Cookbooks**

[265] Marquette, 145-146.
[266] Psyche Williams-Forson, *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs,* 88.
[267] Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); William J. Mahar, *Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

Several cookbooks of Southern cuisine also contained similar visual and linguistic references to racial identity. *Mammy's Cookbook*, published in 1927, features the familiar representation of a black mammy, wearing the customary head wrap, in the book's introduction. The author Katharin Bell, fondly remembers her mammy, by the name of Sally Miller. Bell longs for the good old days, since "[w]ith the dying out of the black mammies of the South, much that was good and beautiful has gone out of life."[268] Her introduction is a prime example of cultural nostalgia for the Old South and a lifestyle dominated by the comfort of big plantations and luxurious standards of living for its white inhabitants, just like the Aunt Jemima ad series from 1919 and 1920 portrayed. Bell yearns for the good old days of "faithful" black servants (and slaves prior to 1865) with "those qualities of loyalty and devotion which have enshrined her and her kind, in the loving hearts of their 'White Folks.'"[269]

Faithfulness and devotion are recurring themes in descriptions of black female servants/slaves in Southern cookbooks of the same era. Many of the authors expressed their gratitude to their black mammies. In 1922, Elizabeth Burford Bashinsky published a compilation of recipes under the title *Tried and True Recipes*.[270] At least two more editions followed, one published in 1926, the other in 1937. The publication of this recipe collection was supported by the Daughters of the Confederacy. Bashinsky was an active member of the organization's Alabama chapter and had been inducted into Alabama Women's Hall of Fame, located on the

[268] Katharin Bell, *Mammy's Cookbook* (1927): 3. Longone Culinary Archives, Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Elizabeth Burford Bashinsky, *Tried and True Recipe: Second Book* Alabama Divisoin, United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1926 [1922], Longone Culinary Archives.

Judson College campus in Marion, Alabama.[271] Both the 1926 and 1937 editions of the text include the picture of Martha Dismukes, from Troy, Alabama. Dismukes served the Bashinsky's family for thirty-five years. She was the caretaker for Bashinsky's daughter Helen, as the dedication suggests: "After a faithful service of thirty-five years, Martha richly deserves an honored place, not only in our family traditions, but also in our heart's affections as – Helen's Mammy." The dedication to Dismukes is followed by a poem called ""The Black Mammy of the Old South."[272] Maria Howard Weeden is cited as the author of this piece. Weeden, a resident in Huntsville, Alabama, published several works of poetry and produced a number of paintings. In its entirety, her artistic work, both with pen and brush, rendered scenes from life in the Old South. The poem cited in Bashinsky's collection of recipes is written in the characteristic "black dialect" of nineteenth and twentieth century U.S. popular culture.

Bashinsky's cookbook gives an accurate portrayal of white Southern women's attitudes toward the memory of the nineteenth century South, especially those women involved in the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). Joan Marie Johnson discusses the reaction of African American Women's Club members to the planning of a memorial to black mammies in Washington, D.C. She shows the investment of white Southern women in preserving a particular image of the Confederacy: "In addition to decorating veterans' graves and celebrating Memorial Day, the Daughters promoted their history of the Civil War through collecting relics, regulating textbooks, sponsoring essay contests for students, and building monuments to the

[271] http://www.awhf.org/ (accessed August 28, 2007).
[272] Bashinsky [page number unavailable], Longone Culinary Archives.

Confederacy."[273] In the early 1920s, the UDC became involved in erecting a national monument dedicated to the black mammies of the South. African American leadership, especially African American women's organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), expressed their outrage to Congress and were successful in preventing the creation of such monument.[274] As Johnson argues, black civil rights group objected to the portrayal of African Americans in most Southern monuments to the Civil War. African Americans tended to be portrayed as faithful and loyal servants to their white masters and mistresses. Slavery was depicted as a benign institution, not as an economic system build on the exploitation of the American black population: "Imbedded in the meaning of these monuments was a particular telling of Southern history in which African Americans had been content as slaves and reverted to savagery without the mitigating influence of their master."[275]

The UDC and other organizations dedicated to what they referred to as the preservation of Southern pride had worked hard to eradicate the images of the brutality and injustice of black enslavement. The erection of monuments to confederate war heroes and veterans played an important role in that process.[276] The "myth of the faithful slave"[277] was abundantly portrayed in monuments, plaques, and other public sculptures throughout the U.S. South. Southern cookbooks that were published during this time reflected the same sentiment of Sothern nostalgia for loyal and devoted servants. Similar to the monuments erected during the 1920s,

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[273] Joan Marie Johnson, ""Ye Gave Them a Stone:" African American Women's Clubs, the Frederick Douglass Home, and the Black Mammy Monument," *Journal of Women's History* 17, 1 (2005): 69.
[274] Ibid., 69-79.
[275] Ibid., 63.
[276] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers,* 155-61.
[277] Johnson, 70.

Bashinsky's text celebrates Southern culture in which the brutality of black enslavement was replaced by the celebration of loyal and faithful servants and by white women's exclusive claims on Southern culture. Bashinsky's dedication to her mammy shows that. One might assume that the publication might attribute many of the book's recipes to these black women servants; however, the book's foreword does not indicate that. Each recipe that was sent in by a member of the UDC was signed by the sender's name. There is no reference in Bashinsky's foreword to the work done by black women in the kitchens of white households. The credit for these recipes goes to the white women sending in the recipes, "[w]omen of culture and refinement, leaders of patriotic and literary organizations, directors of the "noble science" of cookery."[278] As the preface continues, these recipes came from "the cook books of their mothers and grandmothers, traditional in their families." The enslaved cooks and kitchen workers are not credited for these "treasures." They are referenced only by images, bearing the familiar visual markers of the slave mammy such as the head wrap, and the textual signifier of black dialect.

Material culture played an important part in educating white Southerners about proper race relations between white and black Americans. In the aftermath of slavery, African Americans began to be granted some civil rights, primarily the right to freedom from bondage. The racial dynamics of white superiority and black inferiority, on which slavery was based did not cease to exist and were perpetuated in objects of material culture. "Miss Minerva" books were popular books published in

[278] Bashinsky, "Preface," 2nd edition, 1926, Longone Culinary Archives.

the early twentieth century.[279] The author of the first Miss Minerva book, Frances Boyd Calhoun, created a series of fictional characters that center around the main character, Miss Minerva, a Southern black woman. In 1918, the original publisher of Calhoun's first book turned to Emma Speed Sampson, a well-known Southern writer at the time, who continued the Miss Minerva series.[280] In 1931, Sampson published *Miss Minerva's Cookbook*.[281] The text contains a variety of recipes.

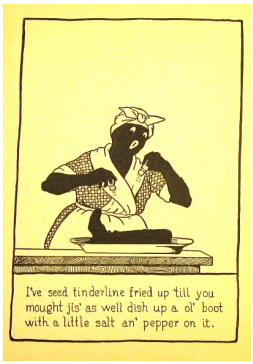


Illustration from *Miss Minerva's Cookbook,*
Janice Bluestein Longone Culinary Archive

All are written in "Negro Dialect," imitating Miss Minerva's original speech.[282] In addition to the familiar linguistic signifier of race, the book cover portrays Miss Minerva as the typical mammy, clothed in the typical servant uniform with an apron and the well-known head wrap. Throughout the text, various illustrations of Miss Minerva and other characters accompany the recipes.

Altogether, these cookbooks establish the mammy figure as the standard portrayal of black women in the early twentieth century. The incorrect usage of the

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[279] It is noteworthy that this publication refers to the black "mammy" as "miss" and not as "auntie" or by fist name. However, the images of Miss Minerva portray her in the usual fashion.
[280] John Scott Wilson, "Race and Manners for Southern Girls and Boys: "The Miss Minerva" Books and race Relations in a Southern Children's Series" *The Journal of American Culture* 17, 3 (September 1994): 69.
[281] Emma Speed Sampson, *Miss Minerva's Cookbook*: *De Way to a Man's Heart* (Chicago: Reilly & Lee, 1931, Longone Culinary Archives.
[282] Ibid., 8.

English language, the "Negro dialect" as Sampson puts it, portrays African American women in particular (and African Americans in general) as ignorant. The repetitive representations of black womanhood in positions of servitude to white families strip them of any legitimate occupation outside of the servant role. The resistance of members of the NACW to the UDC's attempts to erect a national monument to the black mammy captures African Americans' awareness of the limited public identity for black women. Such a monument would have enshrined black women as servants to white families. Black female leadership of this period sought to represent African American women as vanguards of morality and respectability.[283] Leaders of groups such as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) asked not only to see black women as moral and respectable; they also sought to open up opportunities for black women and have them seen as competent and treated with dignity. A monument to the black mammy would have cast African American women primarily into the role of domestic caretakers. Such a monument was never carved in stone, as the UDC had planned, but it was still constructed; in consumer culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as Alice Deck points out: "While a government-sanctioned monument in tribute to the old southern black mammy does not exist on the mall in Washington, D.C., her corporate surrogate, the Aunt Jemima trademark, is emblazoned on processed breakfast food items […] and baking goods […]."[284]

## Conclusion

[283] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).
[284] Alice A. Deck, "The Mammy/Aunt Jemima as an American icon: Toni Morrison Responds," in *US Icons and Iconicity*, eds. Walter W. Hoeblinger, Klaus Rieser, and Susanne Rieser (Wien: Lit Verlag, 2006), 156.

In 1922, Aunt Jemima was one of the most recognized trademarks in the United States. F.B. Knight, an assistant professor in psychology at the State University of Iowa, conducted tests in the 1920s to measure the popularity of existing trademarks. Aunt Jemima scored third place in his investigation. JWT New Bulletin from October 16, 1922, summarizes Knight's results. He also found that these trademarks had developed an identity by themselves. In other words, the advertising campaign have been successful in creating human personas for these trade characters: "These trade marks, Mr. Knight is sure, are not carried by surrounding advertising copy, but are known in and of themselves alone."[285] This finding strongly suggests that a trade character's visual representation had an enormous impact on customers.

From an economic standpoint, the usage of Aunt Jemima has proven a very effective marketing tool. The trademark, now owned by Quaker Oats, has achieved over 90% market recognition in the 1990s, a very rare phenomenon in a world filled with rapidly emerging products and rapidly changing marketing strategies.[286] In a study dating from 1958 that JWT conducted for Quaker Oats, the trade character of Aunt Jemima emerged to posses the positive characteristics of an expert on pancakes.[287] This study claims that despite the derogatory elements of the depiction considering the historical and cultural inaccuracy of black women's realities, Aunt Jemima transcends the real limitations of blackness through her fictional past by becoming a commodity. As the study states, "[t]he implication here is that less

[285] "The Value of a Trade Mark." *JWT New Bulletin* n 91-Q (October 16, 1922): 1, Newsletters, 1910-2005.
[286] Joan Goldsworthy cites this number in her article on Aunt Jemima in the *Encyclopedia of Consumer Brands*:*Volume 1 Consumable Products*.
[287] "The positive ideas about Aunt Jemima as a person come more strongly to the fore, to the point that one respondent described her as "The Queen of Pancakes", 19. Quaker Oats Account File, 1945-. J. Walter Thompson Archives.

attention goes into her being a Negro, old-fashioned, or one who cooks rich dishes. Her jolliness, skill, continuing know-how and warmth are the central conceptions."[288] Ultimately, this quote presents some underlying factors in a warped way. The fact that she is a black, old-fashioned woman actually qualifies her characteristics that define her as jolly, skillful, knowledgeable, and warm. Thus, the image of Mammy, always historically distorted, became a staple of U.S. cultural identity, facilitated by commercial culture, especially by advertising and the visual appeal of the Aunt Jemima campaign.

Aunt Jemima's historical role as a plantation slave contributed to her establishment as an expert and connoisseur of food preparation. She became an ideal symbol for a company that started selling a new, mass-produced flour mix. Her credibility as an expert in domestic matters and her non-threatening nature as the jolly, subservient slave of romanticized Southern plantation tales helped facilitate the consumption of an unfamiliar product. Such a product corresponded with cultural and social lifestyle changes brought on by industrialization, urbanization, and modernization. The ad campaign launched by JWT, especially under James Webb Young's leadership in merging Southern folk tales and culture with modern visual and textual strategies common to advertising, enshrined Mammy as a national symbol.

[288] Ibid., 19.

# Chapter 4: Cream of Wheat's Black Chef, Black Masculinity, and National Consumer Culture

## Introduction

This chapter discusses the evolution of the Cream of Wheat (CoW) Company's trade character between 1890 and 1930. The black chef called Rastus has served as the trademark for the hot cereal since its introduction to the U.S. market in the late 1890s. Until the 1920s, the black chef had been the focus of the CoW Company's newspaper and magazine advertising campaigns. At that point, the advertising agents of the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) ad agency decided to remove the trade character from the newspaper and magazine ads. Although he had become a "nationwide figure," Rastus' work was done.[289] Images of Rastus played an important role in the "all-illustration style of advertising" of that period; however, after 1922, representations of Rastus were reduced to smaller images on ads.[290] By 1925, any images of the black chef were completely removed from print advertising. The image of Rastus remained present only on the package and on representations of the package in newspaper and magazine advertisements.

I regard Rastus as a visual symbol of mass consumption that became an important aspect of national behavior and identity during this period. Although his work as the central focus of advertising campaigns waned in the 1920s, until that

[289] "Cream of Wheat Account History", 3, Account Files. J. Walter Thompson Archives.
[290] Ibid., 3.

time, his image as the product's trademark helped the CoW Company firmly plant itself into the consciousness of American consumers and establish its breakfast product as a brand name staple in American pantries.

Ad agents justified the change by claiming that Rastus' presence in the ads was not helping increase sales figures. I suggest that in addition to JWT's explanation of stagnant sales, Rastus was discarded from the magazines and newspaper campaigns because his character stopped fitting in smoothly to the idyllic depiction of white society. His presence as a black worker in the various ads portraying domestic life did not draw on the nostalgic myth of the Old South. Unlike Aunt Jemima, who survived the 1920s and continued to be the main focus in advertising campaigns beyond the 1930s, Rastus had not been established as a nostalgic figure of a particular mythological world. He did not have the safety of the romanticized plantation world of the Old South. From the start of CoW's advertising campaigns, Rastus has been part of the modern culture of the early twentieth century. This chapter will discuss why the CoW's campaign's major focus shifted away from Rastus while Aunt Jemima remained prominent.

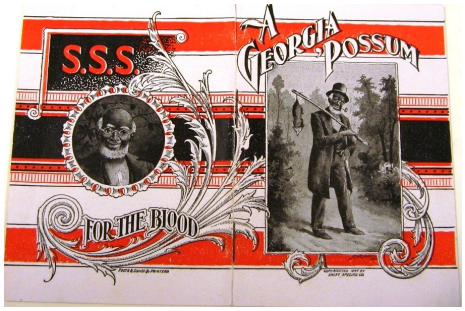
In contrast to images on trade cards and pamphlets of the late 1800s that both Psyche Williams-Forson and Riché Richardson refer to, the CoW ads in the first two decades of the twentieth century present the black chef in a more dignified posture. Rastus' ever-smiling, ever-serving figure does not leave room for any range of emotions, not even those crude and vulgar sentiments of nineteenth century ephemera. Despite his lack of racial caricature, the trade character nevertheless

assumes the obedient servant's attitude associated with black slaves of the mythological plantation South.

Cultural images of black manhood shifted between portraying black men as savage brutes and sexual predators to docile uncle toms, neither of which fully applied to Rastus. The early campaign for CoW drew on the black chef as an artifact from a past in which black servitude under slavery ensured the comfort of white wealth. However, as Rastus was never presented as a slave, unlike Aunt Jemima, and actually was modeled after an urban black worker, a cook in a Chicago restaurant, he seemed more and more like a ghost in CoW's wholesome pictures of idyllic U.S. society. He seems like a remnant of a past that does not quite fit into the pleasant and wholesome white society that the images overall portrayed. Although black figures enabled white leisure, and Rastus, as a black servant, certainly fulfills that role, he seems almost like an intruder. His presence as a black servant, although useful to convey narratives of nostalgia for a world with clear racial boundaries between blacks and whites, might have not fit in to portray the various situations in which whites were at the center of attention.

Contrary to other depictions of black men and women in advertising who were clearly linked to Southern culture, Rastus seems integrated into modern white civilization. He is portrayed in modern, urban spaces with well-dressed white people, and his clothes are professional and in impeccable condition. Most imagery of African Americans in trade cards and other advertising material at the turn of the nineteenth century emphasized the savagery and unrefined nature of black people.

The depiction of trade characters, however, presented a sharp contrast to these images.




"Georgia Possum," early 1900s
Lightner Collection

Trade Card or Calendar Image, late 1800s
Warshaw Collection

Both images above portray African Americans as uncivilized, yet unthreatening, in a rural context. The old black man on the pamphlet by Swift Specific Company in Georgia represents an older black man, a common visual trope of Southern folk culture: the "Uncle Tom" whom Harriet Beecher Stowe immortalized in her famed novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In the center of the pamphlet's cover, this "Uncle Tom" carries a stick with a "Georgia Possum." The other picture, most likely a trade card or calendar motif, contains an image of a dancing African American couple with two black men in the background providing the music for the couple's exaggerated moves. The man and woman are wearing formal clothes (he wears a suit with a vest, she is dressed in a red dress with a white petticoat), but their garments are unkempt and tattered. The clothes of "Uncle Tom" on the Swift Specific pamphlet are in a similar state. Although he is wearing a suit and a top hat, his clothes are also worn out and poorly maintained. The African Americans on both images attempt to "look" civilized, but utterly fail. The unsuccessful imitation of civilized attributes such as

formal clothing is a common motif in depictions of blacks in U.S. visual culture of this period.

The trade character Rastus enters the stage of U.S. consumer culture at the time of racial tensions often referred to as the nadir of race relations, usually describes as the period between the 1890s and 1920s, of increasing economic, social and political mobility of African Americans, and of reassertion of Western notions of white superiority over less civilized people of color. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the range of representations of black masculinity had become narrative and ideological tropes for public discourses on civilization and savagery. Images of black men oscillated between brute, over-sexualized savages and docile, emasculated old men, the "Uncle Toms" of Southern plantation mythology. These representations of black masculinity also served the purpose of justifying lynchings of blacks in the early decades of the twentieth century. During this period, lynchings were responsible for the deaths of approximately 3,000 to 4,000 southerners, most of them African American.[291] Often, black male victims of lynchings were accused of violating white women. White anxiety about miscegenation fueled the anti-black lynching crusades of the early twentieth century, and black manhood became synonymous, as Riché Richardson argues, with "the black rapist myth [that] was the historical basis on which the Ku Klux Klan emerged in the late 1860s" and which carried on into the twentieth century.[292] Further, as the twentieth century progressed, African American civil rights leaders, artists, politicians, and activists developed separate mechanisms

[291] For a detailed discussion and documentation of lynching statistics, see Stewart E. Tolnay and E.M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995); Ralph Ginzburg, *100 Years of Lynchings* (Baltimore: Black Classics Press, 1988).
[292] Riché Richardson, *Black Masculinity and the U.S. South*, 58.

of political, cultural, and social expression and could no longer be easily discarded as jolly happy "negroes." The "New Negro" movement and cultural movements such as the Harlem Renaissance during the 1920s and 1930s affected the formation of modernist discourses beyond the circles of black intellectuals and activists and shaped broad U.S. modernist sensibilities.[293]

The early twentieth century *zeitgeist* was also influenced by modernist ideologies that originated in African American culture. The "New Negro" movement attempted to edit U.S. mainstream white culture's negative and stereotypical views about African Americans, especially its male leaders. Systematic efforts by state legislatures, economic practices, and social customs to suppress African American social mobility often referred to as Jim Crow dominated race relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Leadership in black communities across the nation "struggled to formulate and articulate the character of a new figure whom they called 'the new Negro.'"[294] Black men's attempts in demanding equal opportunities were similar to black women activists' efforts to promote a culture of respectability.[295] The concept of the "new Negro" came into existence at a time when racial hostility against African Americans had reached a critical point. Aggression towards black men in particular was manifested in lynchings during this period.

As the Harlem Renaissance was in full throttle, aspects of black American culture caught the interest and attention of whites. Jazz music and other forms of

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[293] In *Manning the Race*, Marlon B. Ross discusses the influence of the New Negro movement on white U.S. culture and identifies the "fascination with all things Negro during the 1920s" as the reason for "the increasing curiosity about black culture among the white elite," a curiosity that trickled down to various levels of U.S. mainstream culture, Marlon B. Ross, *Manning the Race: Reforming Black Manhood in the Jim Crow Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 22.
[294] Marlon B. Ross, *Manning the Race*, 16.
[295] E. Francis White, *Dark Continent of Our Bodies: Black Feminism and the Politics of* Respectability (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*

black entertainment started to enter U.S. mainstream culture. Rastus, a relic of a mythological world in which blackness could only mean servitude and complete devotion to whites, turned into an "uncomfortable" or unsuitable figure for this modernist "fascination with all things Negro during the 1920s and afterwards."[296]

**Hercules, George Washington's cook, and images of servitude**

Most visual representations of black men in U.S. visual culture do not resemble the Cream of Wheat trade character. Artistic renditions of black masculinity prior to the late 1800s tended to portray black men as part of rural plantation life, as noble slaves, or as uncivilized savages.[297] Hercules, George Washington's cook, serves as an interesting historical model for Rastus.[298] Washington and his wife highly valued their enslaved cook and extended certain privileges to him mostly uncommon to enslaved African Americans.[299] The famous American portrait-painter Gilbert Stuart, who has painted Washington himself as well as many other U.S.

[296] Ross, *Manning the Race*, 22.
[297] Hugh Honour, *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the American Revolution to World War I*, vol. 4 (Fribourg: Office du livre, 1989).
[298] I am indebted to my colleague Dr. Cheryl LaRoche for informing me about Hercules' existence, whose portrait we admired at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Museum in Madrid, Spain, and sharing her thoughts about his life with me.
[299] Hercules was allowed to carry money when going to the market, and he had, considering the contemporary restrictions for enslaved African Americans, considerable freedom to move around the city of Philadelphia.

presidents and dignitaries, also created a portrait of Hercules in the late 18th century, presumably between 1786 and 1897.

"Hercules," Gilbert Stuart
http://www.ushistory.org/presidentshouse/slaves/hercules.htm

In the portrait, Hercules is wearing a chef's hat and garments, just like Rastus does more than a century later in the Cream of Wheat trademark. Hercules was the chief cook at Washington's Virginia plantation, Mount Vernon. In 1890, because of dissatisfaction with the meals served in his presidential residence in the North, Washington ordered Hercules to his residence in Philadelphia. Hercules was well-known among Washington's friends and associates as "a celebrated artiste… as highly accomplished a proficient in the culinary art as could be found the United States."[300] G.W. Parke Custis, whose writings about George Washington were published in the late 1800s, continued to describe Hercules as a "dandy" whose appearance in- and outside the kitchen was impeccable. Hercules' possessed considerable social pedigree as the chief cook of the nation's president. He was even allowed to carry money on his shopping trips to the market; ultimately, however, he

[300] This quotation is by G.W. Parke Custis, *Recollections and Private Memoirs of the Life and Character of Washington* (New York, 1880), cited in Edward Lawler, Jr., "Hercules", retrieved from http://www.ushistory.org/presidentshouse/slaves/hercules.htm on October 5, 2007. Lawler includes approximately two pages of Custis' work at the end of his short biographical sketch of Hercules.

and his children remained enslaved to his master, despite all the recognition for his cooking skills. Hercules escaped to freedom in 1897, shortly before Washington and his entourage was to return to Mount Vernon at the end of his presidency. Hercules' "elevated" status in the Washington household depended on his culinary expertise. Similar to the images of Rastus more than a century later, Hercules' portrait and textual description by Curtis focused on his visual appearance, such as his "snow-white apron."[301]

Custis' descriptions of Hercules' role in the Washington household and his reputation as a culinary expert placed him above the "regular" enslaved African American in Washington's possession. Despite all the freedoms he was granted and the praise and admiration he must have received from Washington and others, his basic rights were restricted in the most inhumane way. Just like all other slaves, in the end, Hercules had to relinquish one of his basic rights, the right to command his own life, his freedom, to his white master and mistress. His portrait carries a sense of restraint as much as a sense of freedom and equality. The white uniform that designates Hercules' special status and signifies aspects of his enslaved life that allowed some freedom, also restraints him. In Stuart's portrait, Hercules, with a slight smirk on his face, meets the viewer's gaze with a sense of pride and entitlement; however, the white collar of his shirt, tightly wrapped around his neck, seems to almost suffocate him. In addition, the hat placed on his full hair seems to just barely control the fullness of his coiffure. The very attributes that distinguish Hercules from the "common" black slaves also entrap him: his clothes and headwear.

[301] Ibid.

Rastus finds himself in a similar predicament. Even though his white chef uniform distinguishes him, and Rastus resembles Hercules more than the crude and exaggerated depictions of black men as sexual predators or the docile uncles of the romanticized plantation South, these very marks of distinction signifying skill and competence prevent Rastus from having any identity beyond that of the obedient servant. Whereas Hercules escaped from his captivity, Rastus stays a captive, entrapped on the cereal box. Despite Rastus' similarity to Hercules, a slave during the eighteenth century, the advertisements never place him in a cultural setting in which slavery is integrated, such as the plantation South of the Aunt Jemima campaign. Again, Rastus seems like an artifact from the past that was picked up by the advertising campaign, but his role as a black slave or servant was never fully developed. All through his career in CoW's magazine advertising campaign, Rastus remained static and unchangeable, an unmoving and immobile remnant of the past.

**History of a Trademark**

Since the early advertising campaign, CoW advertisements stressed the quality of the product as one its major themes. The use of a black persona as a trademark became part of this strategy. Rastus' blackness legitimized him as a culinary expert and a provider of comfort and luxury to (white) consumer. Although described as accidental, the origins of Rastus capture the cultural practice of blacks serving and cooking for wealthy white people. From the first production of CoW, the black chef was part of the company's product design. One of the owners of the North

Dakota Milling Corporation,[302] Emery Mapes, a former printer, used a old printing plates depicting a black cook with a skillet in his hand[303] as the image printed on the first shipment of CoW. CoW, a new product on the breakfast food market, was based on a recipe by the wife of the company's miller Thomas Amidon. The success of the product and the increasing demand for it led quickly to a more professional redesign of the trademark.

The North Dakota Milling Corporation started production of Cream of Wheat in 1895, and two years later, in 1897, started a magazine advertising campaign under the leadership of the JWT agency.[304] The historical sources do not explain the reason for this delay, but by 1897, CoW's ads became a regular feature in the major newspapers and weekly magazines.[305] John Mahin, an employee of the JWT Chicago office, negotiated with the company headquarters in Grand Forks, ND. He secured $ 1,200 for a Cream of Wheat advertising campaign scheduled to run in the LHJ; however, financial difficulties led to the disintegration of the North Dakota Milling

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[302] The company's original name was the North Dakota Milling Corporation. In 1905, according to Moira F. Harris article in *Minnesota History*, the company was officially named the Cream of Wheat Company. The JWT employee who authored the Cream of Wheat account file refers to the company by its post-1905 name, even when talking about an earlier time period, Moira F. Harris, "Ho-ho-ho! It *Bears* Repeating – Advertising Characters in the Land of Sky Blue Waters," *Minnesota History* 57, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 23-35.

[303] A variety of articles on Minnesota and North Dakota history and culture discuss the history of Cream of Wheat, paying particular attention to the creation of the famous trade character, Moira F. Harris, "Ho-ho-ho! It *Bears* Repeating," Patricia Condon Johnston, "Edward Brewer: Illustrator and Painter," *Minnesota History* 47, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 3-15.

[304] According to Patricia Condon Johnston's article on Edward Brewer, arguably the most famous illustrator for Cream of Wheat, in *Minnesota History*, magazine advertising started in 1996: "Mapes first began advertising in 1896 while the plant was still in North Dakota," 4, Account Files..According to the JWT account file, Mapes and Clifford arranged a deal with the proprietor of the Minneapolis Tribune, W.J. Murphy, and with Cushman Brothers & Company in New York, to advertise the product; however, it remains unclear from this document if 1896 or 1895 started the magazine advertising campaign that under changing leadership remains one of the most well-known for the turn of the century

[305] The original account history, which dates from April 12, 1926, does not specify if the originally planned ad campaign was launched. A later document from the JWT account files, issued by JWT on February 21, 1938, clearly states that magazine advertising did not start until 1897. "Magazine Experiences; Facts about Successful National Advertisers," Account Files.

Corporation and caused a cessation in the production of the Cream of Wheat product.[306] This business failure left JWT with an open account of $1,200, which was meant to cover Cream of Wheat's intended magazine advertising campaign. In an attempt to secure the amount, JWT tried to sell a shipment of Cream of Wheat's cereal worth about $2,000. However, the court's deliberation to decide if JWT was entitled to this shipment took too long to reach a decision, and the shipment of the cereal had spoiled and was unfit to sell.

Mapes and his associate Clifford recognized the strength of this trademark even though the brand name product's first launch had failed. After the failure of the North Dakota Milling Company, both gentlemen secured the trademark and started, with investments from a variety of sources, to produce the cereal again. After some negotiation between Mapes, Clifford, and several people at JWT, an agreement was reached. JWT issued the CoW Company a credit in the amount of $35,000 per annum to cover advertising expenses. To avoid non-payment, based on the previous experience with this product, which left JWT with a deficit of $1,200, the new contract specified that JWT would receive "twenty-five cents a case for each case of goods sold each month, and that any bills which [the cream of Wheat Company] failed to pay as [JWT] rendered them would be carried by [JWT] until the per case

[306] The failure of the initial production company for Cream of Wheat is a textbook example for many rising businesses in the late 19th century. The emerging national financial market and the growth of mass manufactured products led to plenty successes and failures during the Gilded Age, an era when the financial markets were dominated by banks' investing in upcoming companies. The failure of the North Dakota Milling Company in the spring of 1896 was based on the financial collapse of two banks, the Globe Savings Bank in Chicago and the bank at Nashua, New Hampshire, which were run by Charles W. Spaulding and his father, respectively. A bad investment by Spaulding Jr. led to the collapse of the bank run by Spaulding Senior, which backed the North Dakota Milling Company financially. "Cream of Wheat Account History," 1-2, Account Files.

arrangement liquidated the account in full."[307] This strategy, "appropriating a certain amount for advertising per unit of product," became a popular way of drawing up contracts between advertising agencies and production companies. [308]

The CoW account stayed with JWT until 1907, when the company decided to transfer the advertising campaign to another agency. In 1922, JWT once again became responsible for the ad campaigns for Cream of Wheat. After the transfer from the MacMartin Advertising Agency, JWT started suggesting some changes in approaching the ad campaign for the popular breakfast cereal. Part of the reason for the change was the lack of sales increase over the previous years. According to the sales records, sales for Cream of Wheat remained static between 1912 and 1922, despite an overall population increase of 15%. In the first decade of Cream of Wheat advertising, between 1897 and 1907, the focus of the campaign "consisted mainly of large pictures of this Cream of Wheat Darkey, his face wreathed in smiles and a package of Cream of Wheat in his hand."[309] The formula was simple, but effective. The black chef Rastus became a well-known icon in the landscape of American consumption.

As the surviving records on CoW indicate, Rastus is based on a real person. After the initial meeting with the North Dakota Milling Corporation in 1895, John Mahin of JWT was given "an illustration of a darkey with a saucepan" created by a county engraver's office to use as the blueprint for the trademark.[310] The JWT staff, however, found the engraving inadequate, but remained in favor of the motif. Instead

[307] Ibid., 2.
[308] JWT actually claims that this case was the first time that an arrangement like this was used in the advertising business. Ibid., 2.
[309] Ibid., 3.
[310] Ibid., 1.

of using the original engraving, the picture of the black cook, they argued, the "darkey" would gain in effectiveness if the image looked more life-like, "like a real human being and the saucepan like a real cooking utensil."[311] Since the original engraving was deemed inadequate for the Cream of Wheat trademark, the search for the "real darkey" began. When Emory Mapes of the North Dakota Millings Company visited Chicago, accompanied by JWT ad executive John Mahin, he noticed an African American employee at the restaurant where both gentlemen were having breakfast. For reasons unspecified in any documents, this gentleman, who remains unnamed, "seemed to fit the bill as a model for the future famous "Rastus."[312] It is undeniable, however, that Mapes' and Mahin's "discovery" defined the trademark not only in the early twentieth century, but even into the twenty-first. Mapes' and Mahin's formula became a success. JWT sent a photographer to take pictures of the restaurant employee, of which no copies have survived.

Years later, according to JWT account file, Mapes wanted to take some more pictures of the same man who became the symbol of his growing business, but upon arriving at the restaurant, he found the "darkey […]had changed so greatly that his photograph would bear no resemblance to his former picture."[313] These earlier photographs had become the essence of the ad campaign for Cream of Wheat all over the nation. Mapes initially thought that new images "might assist in the development of his advertising", but he decided that the recognition value of the original "darkey" was more important to guarantee his sales figures than adding new pictures.

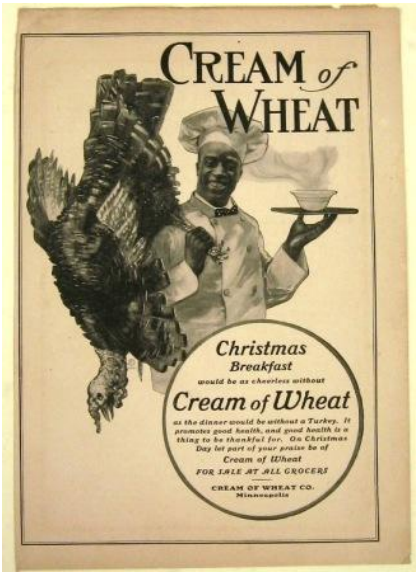
[311] Ibid., 1.
[312] Ibid., 1.
[313] Ibid., 1.

During the period 1907 to 1921, the relationship between Mapes and the JWT agency was discontinued. Although no reasons are listed for the discontinuation of Mapes' collaboration with JWT after 1907, it might have been the fact that Mapes had a specific idea of what the advertising should look like. JWT, more and more, saw itself as an agency that would deliver the advertising strategies with less and less involvement by company executives. Disagreements over the appropriate advertising strategies for Cream of Wheat seemed likely and might have led to the split between Mapes and JWT in 1907. Between 1907 and 1922, Mapes and other ad agencies, including N.W. Ayer, did not change the advertising strategy for Cream of Wheat. For the next fifteen years, copy and imagery remained the same and centered on Rastus, the black chef, Mapes' brainchild. Mapes' concept of advertising was direct and simple, "magazine advertising only; never skip a number; never take on a publication that cannot be carried continuously; use only the appetite appeal; a good picture and brief copy."[314]

When the account returned to JWT after Mapes' death in 1921, JWT employees understood the appeal of Rastus, the black cook, on the product's consumers; however, they also felt that relying only on the pictorial approach that centered on an image of the "darkey" had led to a stagnation in sales during the past decade. During that time period, most of the actual advertisements portrayed Rastus in a variety of situations. He appeared in almost every ad either until the mid 1920s as the central figure carrying the ad's narrative. The ad below from 1899 illustrates the basic formula of most of the pictorial advertising of the early twentieth century. In this ad, Rastus provides the connection between the hot cereal and Christmas

[314] "Magazine Experiences," Account Files.

breakfast by carrying a turkey in one hand (instead of his usual skillet) and the serving tray with the steaming bowl of cereal in the other, stressing the necessity of CoW as breakfast food that "promotes good health" that should be "part of your praise" on Christmas Day.[315]



CoW Christmas ad, Charles Schweinler Press, 1899
Lightner Collection

The basic formula of placing the black chef in a variety of human-interest situations did not draw the desired results by the time that the account returned to the JWT agency. The agency's staff decided to attack the problem of stagnating sales figures by conducting consumer surveys. The JWT ad agents were keenly aware, as were many advertising professionals in the early 20th century, that the target audience for most products, especially culinary items, were women, who in most cases were responsible for shopping and deciding which products were preferable. In April 1922, female copywriters from the JWT agency went door-to-door in a variety of neighborhoods in and around Chicago, "introduced themselves as domestic science

[315] "Cream of Wheat Christmas Breakfast," Charles Schweinler Press, 1899, Lightner Collection of Antique Advertising.

experts […] and by taking an interest in the housewives' own problems, induced them to talk about the family diet."[316]

The investigation showed that Cream of Wheat was a popular breakfast cereal. Almost everybody interviewed knew of it and had even tried it. Mostly, people had a very positive response toward the product; however, none of the individuals interviewed articulated a clear reason to choose Cream of Wheat instead of another instant breakfast product. In the ten years prior to 1922, the market of breakfast cereals had expanded. According to the staff memo in the JWT files, the old strategy of simple pictorial appeal was adequate at a time when there was little to no competition on the market. The predominantly illustrative approach that Mapes seemed to favor, and that JWT used for this account until 1907, seemed less appropriate in a market full of competitors. Hence, the JWT staff decided to take a new approach, which would focus on distinguishing Cream of Wheat from its competitors.

Two ingredients seemed essential for this switch. One, instead of brief copy, as Mapes had advocated, the new campaign included a lot of textual information that focused on the nutritional benefits of Cream of Wheat. The second change proved to be more complicated. Originally, the JWT staff decided to "'kill' the so-well-known Cream of Wheat Darkey" and focus instead on "forceful reasons[s] why [customers] should use [Cream of Wheat] regularly."[317] Negotiations with the managerial staff at the Cream of Wheat Company led to a compromise. Half of the appropriations for the

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[316] This investigation around the Chicago area included 140 interviews. A follow-up investigation was conducted during May of the same year. This time, the geographical area was expanded beyond Chicago to include Cleveland, Toledo, Akron, Sandusky, Lorain, Kent, and Ravena and covered approximately 60 cosnumers. "Cream of Wheat Account History," 3, Account Files.
[317] Ibid., 3.

new ad campaign would be spent on ads focusing on the text-based style. Thus, in September 1923, the ads with a more pronounced focus on the copy were run in half of the magazines. Sales figures collected in the summer of 1924 proved that the innovative approach seemed to have some effect: for the first time in ten years, sales figures increased, by approximately ten percent. The success of this new copy-heavy campaign enabled the JWT staff to argue their case to discontinue the ads with the older pictorial appeal still running in some publications. The only remaining publication still running the visually focused ad series of Cream of Wheat was the Saturday Evening Post. Finally, in the fall 1924, the JWT staff achieved its ultimate victory, when the CoW Company decided to completely replace the pictorial ads with the textually focused design.

Although images of the black chef were removed from the ads after 1925, the image continued to be associated with CoW. As part of the changes during the 1920s, the JWT ad agencies wished to market more directly to CoW's main consumers: children. Previously, CoW ads had appealed to mothers, stressing the benefits for their children. During the 1920s, Cream of Wheat advertising, by expanding its traditional pictorial appeal to a more text-based approach, focused on the nutritional benefits of the product as well as on addressing children directly. A JWT staff member expressed in a staff meeting in on April 30, 1930, that the ad agency had to always "sell Cream of Wheat indirectly, through the mothers to the children."[318] Two different strategies in the 1920s print ad campaigns as well as the radio program of the late 1920s offered opportunities to address children directly. The CoW Company encouraged customers to collect coupons that could be found in CoW packages. A

[318] JWT Staff Meeting April 16, 1930, Staff Meeting Minutes Collection, 1927-1938.

certain number of coupons would qualify the sender to receive a free Rastus doll: "For six months the company has been offering on its packages a Rastus doll, which will be sent for ten cents and two Cream of Wheat package covers. Thousands of these dolls are being sent out each week."[319] The Aunt Jemima Company had used a similar strategy, making dolls available of Aunt Jemima's entire family. JWT also conceived of another strategy to reach children. CoW ads in the 1920s introduced the H.C.B. (Health helps Chevaliers win Battles) Club. Children would receive a personalized letter from the company, once their parent had sent in a coupon containing her or his child's name. The package consisted of a monthly calendar on which children could record their consumption of hot cereal bowls with gold stars. Children would receive different titles and awards depending on how frequently they would send in their charts to the company. JWT sent out questionnaires to the families who participated in the Chevalier club. Based on the agency's claim of 2,222 answers, "91% are eating Cream of Wheat three times a week" and JWT staff concluded that "the H.C.B. Club is causing the consumption of a whole lot of Cream of Wheat that would otherwise be resting on the dealers' shelves."[320]

As the JWT ad agency was striving to communicate more directly with the targeted consumers of the breakfast cereal, Rastus was cast aside and disappeared from advertising campaign's center stage. In contrast to how the Aunt Jemima character was handled, advertisers had not developed a voice and living personality for Rastus. He served as a meaningful figure only as an ornament representing culinary expertise, service, and comfort, but he had no opportunity to address his

[319] "Cream of Wheat Account History," Account Files.
[320] Ibid., 5.

audience directly. As a black man of middle-age, his presence in a white world was complicated. His modern, almost urban appearance could not be connected with the mythological world where African Americans had a distinct place: the world of the Old South. Rastus had always been integrated into the modern world of the early twentieth century, whereas Aunt Jemima was clearly a figure from a romanticized past. His pictorial presence, useful since the 1890s, had helped establish the product in the mass consumer market, but he was no longer needed as the main focus in magazine and newspaper advertising. He was shifted to doing his work as a background figure, displaying his smile and uniform as unthreatening and quiet reassurance of culinary quality, service, and comfort.

**Modernity versus the Old South**

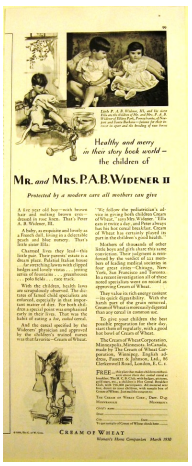
The CoW Company did not draw on narratives of romanticized plantation lifestyle, despite their usage of a black trade character. CoW's black chef is a middle-aged black man. Contrary to Uncle Mose's butler's uniform or farmer's gear, Rastus wears a white chef's hat, a white jacket over a white shirt with a red bow tie, white pants, and sometimes a white apron wrapped around his legs. His outfit is a combination of a waiter's and a cook's uniform. It is not the typical outfit of a plantation slave. The creators of the image drew on an image of a black worker in an urban setting rather than the widely distributed images of working black men on a slave plantation.

The CoW ad campaign started out placing Rastus in a variety of situations of American life; however, but 1925, JWT agency staff shifted the campaign's focus.

The following three ads illustrate this change in focus in CoW newspaper and magazine ads during the 1920s. The ad from 1916, entitled "The Reception Committee," portrays Rastus in the carefree company of several young white children to whom he is serving the breakfast cereal. Almost ten years later, in 1925, after the suggested changes by JWT staff, the ad's focus has shifted exclusively on children. The young boy occupies the center of the image. The black chef only appears as a reproduction on the cereal box in the young boy's hand. The ad published in 1930 fully exemplifies the discarding of Rastus, but also the change from pictorial advertising to ads that focus predominantly on copy. This ad's text tells the story of Peter and Ella Widener, the two children of a famous Pennsylvania race horse breeder family. The children's excellent health is based, according to the ad, on their regular consumption of Cream of Wheat. As the JWT ad agents suggested in 1922, this ad has completely abandoned any image of the company's trademark. Rastus' proximity to white children, which was a regular motif in CoW ads in the early twentieth century, had been abandoned by the mid 1920s, and ultimately, the JWT agency completely discarded any visual reference to the black chef in newspaper and magazine advertising.


CoW ad, 1916, Print Collection, Clements Library


CoW ad, Saturday Evening Post 1925, Domestic Ads




CoW ad, 1930, Lightner Collection

In the ads up until 1925, Rastus rarely carries out any activities that are not related to serving or cooking. In most ads, her carries or prepares Cream of Wheat. The most common image of Rastus is an image of his torso holding up a serving dish with a steaming bowl. This image was reproduced in ads throughout the early twentieth century. Even if the ad's scenario did not center on the black chef, his image was usually a prominent feature of an ad, often appearing on a billboard, box or magazine page depicted in the ad. In one way or another, his image was always integrated into the ad's visual narrative.


"Financially Embarrassed" Edward Brewer, 1916 Print Collection


"None but the Brave Deserve the Fare," Edward Brewer, 1918 Print Collection


"Keeping Watch" Edward Brewer, 1922 Print Collection

Well-known American artists created many of the images in the 1910s and 1920s. N.C. Wyeth, for example, created a famous paining entitled "Rural Delivery" in 1907 that appeared in several magazines and newspapers in 1907. Edward Brewer also created a number of paintings that, contrary to Wyeth's pieces, included the black chef.

The "folksy ads" that Brewer and other artists created in the early decades of the twentieth century populated the pages of magazines and newspapers and turned Rastus into a symbol of American consumption. Brewer, in fact, created the largest number of paintings that were used for newspaper and magazine advertising up to the 1920s. Between 1911 and 1926, he presented Rastus in a variety of settings to American consumers. Brewer was born n St. Paul, Minnesota and is describes as "Minnesota's answer to famed illustrator Norman Rockwell. Similar to Rockwell's idyllic portrayals of modern U.S. society, Brewer's illustrations for CoW captured a tranquil and idyllic, yet modern panorama of the American commercial landscape. The Nabisco company, today's owner of the trademark, displays many of the original paintings in its headquarter offices in New Jersey.

Brewer placed Rastus in a central position in many of the visual compositions prior to 1925; however, Rastus is nothing more than adornment to the narrative storyline rather than the carrier of the story. Johnston's narrative of Brewer's contributions to the CoW campaign seems to suggest that Brewer's ads portrayed Rastus in more complex, "three-dimensional way."[321] Brewer's paintings certainly serve as examples of the modern and nuanced artistic advertising illustration of the early twentieth century that artists such as himself and Wyeth became well-known

[321] Patricia Condon Johnston, "Edward Brewer: Illustrator and Painter," 3.

for; however, the portrayal of Rastus remains unchanged in any of the sketches that Brewer or his colleagues created. As a character, Rastus remained as static as he had been since the earliest ad featuring him. His facial expression continued to be unchanged in Brewer's illustrations as well as in other artists' renditions of the trade character. Brewer is actually accredited with naming the black chef.[322] In an ad dating from 1914, Brewer painted himself while creating a bust of CoW's black chef.


"A Proud Day for Rastus," *Today's Magazine*, 1914 (Edward Brewer)
Print Collection

The image is called "A Proud Day for Rastus" and is the first documented ad that actually refers to the black trade character by name.[323]According to Johnston's article, Brewer in fact created such a bust of Rastus that allowed him "to paint [Rastus] from a variety of angles."[324]

In an article published in the NAACP's magazine *Crisis,* Marguerite Ross Barnett describes the change in the depiction of Rastus during the 1920s as "more a

[322] Ibid., 3.
[323] Ibid., 5.
[324] Ibid., 5.

reference to the product than the force behind it."[325] Whereas Rastus was a "participant in the painting's action" until the mid-1920s, his appearance was restricted to the marginal representation on the product's box.[326] However, even though Rastus did indeed appear in many of the ads, he always told the same story of dependable servitude and unthreatening blackness. In another article in the NAACP's magazine *Crisis* in 1982, Barnett describes Rastus as "an unctuously smiling chef […] always happy and content."[327] Part of the uncanny sensation that Barnett describes results from Rastus' stationary posture and frozen smile even when he is part of the visual narrative. Barnett describes CoW's black chef as "Uncle Tom's counterpart in the advertising world," but the visual presentation of Rastus in his crisp white chef uniform distinguishes him from the Uncle Tom figure deeply rooted in the folklore of plantation life. Rastus has left the plantation, and therefore, the ads cannot draw on the romanticized plantation lifestyle that became the heartbeat of the Aunt Jemima campaigns. Rastus is never portrayed in the company of other African Americans. The few ads that feature other black people are usually depictions of rural life and portray African Americans as anti-modern and uneducated.[328]

Until 1925, the black chef Rastus facilitated the changing consumption habits of hot cereal products with his unchanging smile and obedient posture. Like Aunt Jemima, he became a national symbol for mass consumption, facilitating the economic, social, and cultural changes that came along with the transformation to a

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[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid.
[327] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "Nostalgia as Nightmare: Blacks and American Popular Culture," *Crisis* 89, no. 2 (1982): 43.
[328] Barnett mentions such an ad that shows an older black man looking at a billboard with Rastus' image on it. He exclaims in the typical "black dialect," demonstrating his inferior education: "Ah reckon as how he's de bes' know man in de worl." Ibid., 43.

market structure based on mass produced brand name products. Both trade characters are, as Jackson Lears states, "rooted in a static, folkish vision of preindustrial abundance."[329] The comfort evoked by Rastus did not rest on the myth of a romanticized South of plantation lifestyle but on the soothing presence of a black male cook that was related closely enough to US cultural narratives of comfort and service linked to black Americans, but also removed enough from plantation lifestyles to be integrated into a large variety of human interest situations.

Often, as in Jackson Lear's discussion, Aunt Jemima and Rastus are collapsed as the same by being described as "folkish" symbols. This analysis ignores significant differences between these two trademarks and the kind of cultural work that they did, as well as the difference in the design of advertising campaigns. In an article published in the *Journal of Antiques and Collectibles*, Sarah Ross describes Rastus as "a male counterpart of Aunt Jemima."[330] However, it is my contention that there is one important difference between these two trademarks. The trademark for Aunt Jemima pancakes drew on the mythologies of antebellum Southern culture. The product campaigns centered on the plantation culture the Old South and Aunt Jemima's role as the obedient and happy slave. Aunt Jemima's image of a mammy, integrated into Southern plantation lifestyle, seemed to have been easier to expand. The numerous visual and textual narratives created by JWT staff, especially James Webb Young, suggest so. Rastus had never been linked to the popular myth of US history, that of the Old South.

[329] Jackson T. Lears, *Fables of Abundance*, 124.
[330] Alice Ross, "Rastus and Friends," *Journal of Antiques and Collectibles* (April 2003).

Rastus' differences in appearance from Aunt Jemima, apart from the obvious gender difference, are remarkable and might explain why Cream of Wheat advertising campaigns did not invent a history for him in the way that Aunt Jemima advertisements capitalized on her plantation past. Manring points out that "[t]here was nothing magical about his cooking ability, and his personality was unknown to buyers."[331] Unlike Aunt Jemima, Rastus did not acquire a personality beyond the static smile and crisp uniform. Between 1897 and 1923, for 26 years, Rastus never spoke a word. These differences from Aunt Jemima might also explain why Cream of Wheat ads shifted their focus from pictorial advertising that included representations of Rastus to ads in which he appeared on a product box that was included in most printed ads in the 1920s. The Aunt Jemima advertising campaign repeatedly utilized narratives of the Old South to lend credibility to the product's trade character as an expert in her field. The romanticized version of the South was the key element in making Aunt Jemima pancake mix attractive to consumers in the United States between 1890 and 1930. Aunt Jemima's counterpart on the plantation, the black butler and her "husband" Uncle Mose, was usually portrayed as an elderly gentleman with thin, grey hair and a grandfather-like beard.

**Black Masculinity, Civilization, and Savagery in CoW ads**

Since the late 1800s, the CoW ad campaign tried to integrate Rastus successfully into twentieth century modern life; however, in 1925, these attempts are finally abandoned. Part of this reason, I suggest, is the ambiguity in relating to Rastus' relationship with young white children, especially girls. Rastus is repeatedly

[331] Manring, *Slave in a Box*, 115-116.

in the company of young white children, male and female. Rastus' portrayal as feminine is crucial for this visual narrative to work. In most images in which he is in close and intimate proximity with white children, Rastus wears a skirt-length apron that further reduces his masculinity. Rastus' images coexisted with depictions of black masculinity that were anything but emasculated, weak, or docile. Such imagery was a powerful ideological tool of twentieth century U.S. culture and was used to construct U.S. national identity as civilized, modern, and sophisticated.

Contrary to the JWT account history's explanation for "firing" Rastus, I suggest a different reason for this change. As the JWT ad agency re-acquired the CoW account, Rastus' presence as a black man was no longer sustainable. The agency's staff decided to discard the black chef as the primary focus. The white public's perceptions of black masculinity as threatening did not allow Rastus, a man who in terms of his age possessed sexual prowess, to develop a personality beyond the boundaries of the cereal box. During the early twentieth century, the anxiety about black male sexuality surfaced in various forms of US popular culture such as the portrayal of the black rapist in W.W. Griffiths *Birth of a Nation*. Further, the justification for the large number of lynchings of black men in the South at the turn of the nineteenth century was often linked to alleged sexual assaults, that upon further investigation often turned out to be unsubstantiated. Aunt Jemima provided comfort and reassurance by telling her invented life story to mass consumers and by sharing important episodes of her biography with the public. Rastus supplied mass consumers with a different stability that was not based on romanticized past, but on a modern servant whose identity outside of his position was non-existent. Where a life outside

the box made Aunt Jemima a successful national symbol of consumer culture, Rastus' confinement to the box saved the imagery of the black male servant, so that his established image could continue to represent the CoW Company. His representation on each and very product box as the company's trademark, even though the ad campaign had moved in a different direction, created a continuity of Rastus' image as representing culinary expertise, service, and comfort.

Interestingly, Rastus' modern exterior and culturally less specific appearance than Aunt Jemima made this trade character into a translatable trademark in another cultural context. In the late 1920s, as JWT was expanding not only in the United States, but also overseas, especially in Europe, the agency started marketing U.S. products in places like England and Germany. Cream of Wheat was one of them. An interesting issue arose as discussions ensued whether to "to take the negro off the package."[332] A brief survey was conducted by taking "the package to a number of women [to] see what they thought;" apparently, no more than "5% of the people interviewed […] objected to it."[333] It was decided that Rastus, the "negro," would stay on the package.

Scholarship on racial representation and masculinity at the turn of the nineteenth century highlights that white mainstream U.S. culture perceived black masculinity as a threat to white civilization based on Western European, mostly Anglo-Saxon, Protestant roots.[334] Gail Bederman discusses at length the connection between racial and gender ideologies and the cultural perception of civilization in the

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[332] JWT Staff Meeting Records, Wednesday August 8, 1928, 6, Staff Meeting Minutes Collection, 1927-1938.
[333] Ibid., 7.
[334] Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She argues that the discourse of civilization "positioned African American men as the antithesis of both the white man and civilization."[335] African American men represented a threat to white culture and morality, and they were frequently portrayed as "uncivilized, unmanly rapists, unable to control their sexual desires."[336] The white press justified the high number of lynchings in Southern and Northern states at the turn of the nineteenth century because of the cultural perception of black men as beasts driven by raw sexual instincts, unable to control themselves. Civil Rights activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett was one among many prominent African American leaders who doubted, and often proved, that the black men who were lynched did not assault or rape white women, which they were almost always accused of.[337]

CoW's black chef does not echo these stereotypical cultural views of black men. He is clearly not a black brute or uncivilized savage. His orderly appearance and his never-changing smile make him an example of non-threatening black masculinity. On the other hand, he is not a realistic depiction either. In fact, he is a truly one-dimensional symbol who became synonymous with the product that he advertised. Rastus' visual persona had little to no connection with the real-life experiences of African Americans between 1890 and 1930. CoW's heavily pictorial advertising campaign that centered on images of Rastus takes place in the 1910s and 1920s while

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[335] Bederman, *Manliness and Civilizaton*, 49.
[336] Ibid., 46.
[337] For the most recent historical discussion on lynching at the turn of the nineteenth century, see: Jacqueline Denise Goldsby, *A Spectacular Secret: Lynching in American Life and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874-1947* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Phillip Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (New York: Random House, 2002); Patricia Ann Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and James Allen et al., *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* (Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms, 2000).

African Americans were facing racial discrimination and persecution on a variety of political, economic, and cultural levels. Many states passed legislation that excluded black Americans from full participation in public life. African American men and women found themselves being excluded from most white-collar jobs. Black women often worked in the domestic arena as housemaids, washer women, and cooks, whereas the men were often restricted to hard physical labor on the fields and in factories.

From the early beginning of CoW's commercial campaign, the ads connected the product to children. The health advantages for the overall American population were mentioned, but the emphasis laid on the advantage that CoW consumption had for children. In the early 1900s, CoW issued a whole series of ads that depicted nursery rhymes. In each ad, Rastus served a bowl of the hot cereal holding his skillet in the other hand. In subsequent ads, Rastus repeatedly appeared in the presence of children. Many ads portray Rastus in close proximity to young white girls. These images offer some interesting opportunities to think about the connections between black masculinity, advertising culture, and white anxiety. Despite the ad agents' explanation of Rastus' dismissal from the visual narratives in CoW ads, the images that put Rastus in intimate situations with white girls might offer another explanation. The change in 1925 successfully removed the black chef and any potential sexual tensions between him and young white girls. That this might have become a concern is suggested in a series of ads that appeared prior to this change and suggests a reading that portrays Rastus as a potential object of desire for the young white girls depicted.

An early ad created by the Ayer ad agency, which was published during the 1910s, portrays a young white girl who is drawing Rastus' image on her window. She seems totally absorbed in the effort of creating a likeness of the black chef, whose picture she is holding in one hand while drawing with the other. Her gaze is focused on her art work.

Cream of Wheat Ad, ca. 1910s, N.W. Ayer Archives
N.W. Ayer Archives

The accompanying text tells the consumer that Cream of What is "the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night."[338] The ad suggests that the girl is fantasizing about Cream of Wheat, but she is drawing a picture of the black chef. As Rastus became synonymous with the product, as this ad suggests, it seems safe for this young girl to daydream about Cream of Wheat; however, she is not drawing the bowl of hot cereal, According to the ad's text, the food item cream of wheat is on her mind as a nourishing and delicious meal. As the girl is either waking up in the morning or about to go to bed, as the ad suggests, she draws Rastus on her window, not the bowl of steaming hot cereal.

[338] Cream of Wheat ad,, ca. 1910s, N.W. Ayer Collection, NMAH, Washington, D.C.

Another ad that was created in 1914 shows the complex dynamics between the white female children of Rastus' world and the black chef.


"Look Pleasant, Please," *People's Home Journal,* 1914
Print Collection

The white girl in the ad is commanding Rastus to compose a photograph. She is comfortable and confident in commanding the black chef, expecting him to do what she tells him to do. The background illustration containing a stove places this scene in Rastus' domain, the kitchen, but the child's entitlement in ordering the black servant demonstrates that white people are in charge. The girl is dressed in a stylish dress typical for the first decades of the twentieth century. Rastus' outfit consists of his typical white pants, jacket, and hat that mark him as a kitchen worker; however, his socks stand out. Red with white dots, they form a visual connection with parts of the girl's dress. Rastus' stylishness affords him a level of individuality and of sexual identity that is rarely expressed in any of the CoW ads. The socks are reminiscent of Custis' description of Washington's cook, Hercules, when he emphasizes his stylish dress, especially his "silk […] stockings."[339]

[339] George Washington Parke Custis, *Recolletions and Pravate Memoirs of the Life and Character of Washington,* quoted in Edward Lawler, Jr., "Hercules."

Rastus' proximity to and closeness with white children, especially young girls, is particularly interesting when compared to other images of black men and white girls in U.S. popular culture. In the well-known motion picture *Birth of a Nation*, black men were portrayed as sexual predators of young white girls and women. At a time when black men were severely chastised and even murdered for even glancing at a white woman, Rastus' repeated portrayal of close, even intimate relationships with white girls could only work by creating a completely one-dimensional figure. However, the repeated and increasingly imaginative portrayals of Rastus by Brewer and other artists in various human-interest situations, especially with young white girls, began, I suggest, to transform a one-dimensional trademark into an image that evoked an array of complex and intricate emotions and attitudes about black masculinity.

In addition to the JWT ad agents' explanation of Rastus' loss of commercial appeal, I take into consideration that his feminized identity "stopped working." He became a liability at a time when white Americans were afraid of black men as brutes and sexual offenders and when black masculinity was used to signify the opposite of white civilization. Rastus was not firmly rooted in national mythology of the Old plantation South and could not be left alone as a harmless and docile "Uncle Tom." As the twentieth century progressed, his dominant presence in newspaper and magazine ads also corresponded less and less with a modernist sensibility that U.S. consumer culture wished to present.

This emerging modernist sensibility was influenced by artistic and political movements such as the "New Negro" movement or the Harlem Renaissance that

found expressions in literary texts, sculptures, paintings, photographs, philosophical treatises, and political texts. Alain Locke's publication of *The New Negro* in 1925 gave the arts movement forming in Harlem, New York, by the late 1910s its name. Literary production skyrocketed. Writers such as Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, Jean Toomer and many more emerged as the new leading literary voices among African American artists and had even attracted the attention of white Americans.[340] Visual arts such as paintings, graphic arts, and sculpture were also part of the Harlem Renaissance.[341]

As Fox argues, in *Mirror Makers*, "Trade characters such as Aunt Jemima, Cream of Wheat's black chef, and the Uneeda slickerboy of themselves made no selling arguments, but by their comfortable familiarity they reminded the public of the product, gently and persistently."[342] Rastus familiarity derived from his status as a servant to whites. His serving demeanor fit in with mainstream ideas of African Americans as subservient to white Americans. As a national symbol for mass consumption in magazine and newspaper ads until the 1920s, Rastus' familiarity was one of many factors that facilitated the adaptation of U.S. culture to mass consumption. As Rastus' black masculinity became a visual trope that in addition to carrying the message of servitude also contained the implication of virile sexuality,

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[340] There are a number of publications that address the Harlem Renaissance and its role in early twentieth century US culture. The following is a short selection of comprehensive and widely used texts: Caroline Goeser, *Picturing the New Negro: Harlem Renaissance Print Culture and Modern Black Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007); David L. Lewis, *When Harlem was in Vogue* (New York: Penguin, 1997); George Hutchinson, *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1995).

[341] For further discussion on the visual art during the Harlem Renaissance, see the exhibition catalogue *Rhapsodies in Black: Art of the Harlem Renaissance* (London: Hayword Gallery, 1997). Also, an essay by Hazel Carby about the visual representation of Paul Robeson in her compilation of the DuBois lectures *Race Men,* highlights the visual nature of the movement, Hazel Carby, " The Body and Soul of Modernism," in, *Race Men*, ibid. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 45-83.

[342] Fox, 44.

the trade character was banished from the national campaigns and continued in the safe parameters on CoW's packages.

# Chapter 5: Exotic Blackness: European Orientalism, German Colonialism, and the Sarotti-Mohr

## Introduction

This chapter will discuss the black trade character of the German chocolate manufacturer Sarotti, which was copyrighted in 1918: the Sarotti-Mohr. The moor's birth at the end of World War I coincides with the dismantling of the short-lived German empire (1870s to 1918) and Germany's end as a colonial power, equally short lived.[343] I read the Sarotti-Mohr as an exoticized icon that German consumers of the early twentieth century were able to place in a century long epistemology of visual representations that equated blackness with servitude through orientalist and colonial discourses. Trade card series in the early twentieth century by companies such as Sarotti Chocolate and the Stollwerck AG had established a visual practice of emphasizing cultural differences between various ethnic and racial groups. Such imagery paved the way for the exoticized portrayal of the Sarotti-Mohr. Similar to the US black trade characters Aunt Jemima and Rastus, the Sarotti-Mohr's servant status made him into an easily recognizable visual icon when mass consumption became a central aspect of German national culture.

I would like to distinguish my use of oriental and orientalist. Oriental refers to objects, structures, even people whose origins lie in the geographical area that the Orient encompasses, which includes parts of the Asian and African continents mostly.

[343] During the Berlin conference in 1884/85, Germany became the colonizing force in parts of Africa and Asia. Defeated in World War I, Germany had lost all its colonies to the allied forces.

"Orientalist," on the other hand, as I like to propose, describes ideas and visual phenomena that are engaged in the construction of the Orient as an imaginary space. Of course, I do not want to suggest that the "Orient" is a mere construction of Western fantasies and, more importantly, that subjects in the Orient possessed no agency. On the contrary, recent scholarship in art history has eloquently demonstrated that artists and intellectuals in regions encompassed in the Orient were more than just objects depicted on canvases, in sculptures, or texts. Recent anthologies demonstrate that Orientalism as a monolithic discourse that was solely constructed by Western imperialists is historically not accurate.[344] In this chapter, however, for my analysis of Sarotti's trademark, I am mostly interested in the discourse formation of Orientalism dominated by Western fantasies and desires.

The Sarotti-Mohr is a manifestation of German orientalism. At a time of intensive nation-building when Germany emerged beaten out of World War I, Sarotti's moor became a popular image of modern consumer culture that presented Sarotti's products to its customers in appealing and familiar ways. The orientalist image of the black servant has been a popular image in Western European material culture, including Germany (or areas that later would become part of the German nation) since the seventeenth century.[345]

Similar to the imagery in the United States, the "majority of images of blacks [in Europe] were servants, slaves, and other generically exotic peripheral

[344] Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones and Mary Robert, eds., *Edges of Empire: Orientalism and Visual Culture* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2005); Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts. Eds., *Orientalism's Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).
[345] Peter Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, Edle Mohren: Afrikaner in Geschichte und Bewusstsein der Deutschen*, new ed. (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001).

characters."[346] Contrary to the nostalgic myths of comfort, culinary expertise, and down-to-earth manner (the German concept of *Bodenständigkeit*) that Aunt Jemima and Rastus represent, the Sarotti-Mohr embodies a myth of the exotic other, luxurious indulgence, and almost illicit, provocative behavior. Despite their differences, all three trade characters seem to represent nostalgic ideas of cultural identity to consumers. As it is hard to gage the reactions of consumers almost a century ago, the visual images themselves are the surviving historical witnesses and offer ample room for interpretation.

The moor was part of a complex system of visual representations in European visual culture that have portrayed blackness through orientalist motifs and themes. As an example of such a representation, the Sarotti-Mohr, as I suggest, facilitated the shift to mass consumption as a central part of national identity in Germany. The essential ingredients of this facilitation process were the combination of commercial imagery that drew on Germany's experience as a colonial power between the 1880s and the end of World War I, on German culture's colonial fantasies prior to the 1880s, and on a general European fascination with the "exotic." What I call the "exotic" describes an intricate web of visual representations, ranging from eighteenth and nineteenth century art, travel narratives, literary texts, and other form of cultural displays such as World Fairs, traveling shows, and photographic panoramas.

I suggest that looking at the visual representations of the "Orient" in Sarotti's advertising campaign of the 1920s and early 1930s shows the connection of

[346] Adrienne Childs, "The Black Exotic: Tradition and Ethnography in Nineteenth-century Orientalist Art" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2005), 8.

Germany's association of blackness with exotic fancies and visions based on orientalist and colonial motifs and narratives. These representations drew on familiar cultural images of exotic others and helped to establish consumption of brand name products as standard practices of German national behavior. The Sarotti-Mohr These motifs and narratives had been part of German epistemologies for previous centuries, and consumers would readily understand the connection between chocolate consumption, luxurious leisure, exotic blackness, and oriental allure that Sarotti drew on in their choice of trademark and advertisements design. The portrayal of foreign cultures had little to do with the reality of these other cultures, but how German consumers made sense of a world where mass consumption based on industrial development became an important aspect of national identity. The visual exploration of oriental motifs in the company's advertising materials, many of which drew on orientalist and other "othering" discourses, as well as in other forms of German popular culture prior to 1918 were part of a general Western discourse on the exotic locations. This discourse has been most poignantly described by Edward Said's critical account of orientalism.[347]

A substantial part of Sarotti's advertising strategy seemed to have been focused on attracting consumers via orientalist motifs and narratives in which the Sarotti-Mohr became the central element. In that process, the black trade character was transformed from a mere trademark into a recognizable image that became synonymous with the product. Sarotti chocolate became the "chocolate with the moor" (*die Schokolade mit dem Mohren*). Just as Aunt Jemima and Cream of Wheat's

[347] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

Rastus in the United States, the Sarotti-Mohr captured consumers' fascination with racialized imagery.

**Sarotti Chocolates and the German Chocolate Industry**

By the twentieth century, the German chocolate industry had grown into an important part of Germany's commerce and had started to play a significant role in the area of food production. In 1914, a daily newspaper in Leipzig, the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* ("Leipzig's Newest News"), reported that the German chocolate industry represented a noteworthy and booming part of Germany's increasing industrialization. The author comments in particular on the increase of chocolate consumption in the years prior to 1914. The growth of the chocolate industry over the past years, as the article describes, demanded "respect," especially because much of the chocolate industry's profit derived from seasonal products, such as Christmas and Easter products.[348]

One of the economic challenges for the German chocolate industry was the production of affordable chocolate in competition with a well-developed chocolate industry in neighboring countries that had a stronghold on the German chocolate market. The German chocolate industry faced competition especially from companies in Switzerland that had imported their chocolate products to the German market throughout the nineteenth century.[349] To thwart the success of their foreign

[348] "Dieser Industriezweig hat eine Ausdehnung genommen, wie sie selbst in der sonstigen grossen industriellen Entwicklug Deutschlands Respeckt abnötigt," "Die deutsche Schokoladen-Industrie," *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* (January 4, 1914): Document Collection.

[349] In the early twentieth century, the correspondence from Ludwig Stollwerck, CEO of the Stollwerck chocolate company in Cologne, is filled with references to Swiss companies, especially the competition that these foreign companies presented in the market for inexpensive and mass-produced milk chocolate, Stollwerck AG Archives.

competitors, many German chocolate manufactures capitalized on German "patriotic sentiment." [350] In their advertising in magazines and on packages, many companies stressed that German milk was used to produce their products. In the late 1890s, the German chocolate company Hildebrand, located in Berlin, for example, capitalized on German consumers' nationalistic attitudes and promoted its products as *Hildebrand's deutsche Schokolade und deutscher Kakao* ("Hidebrand's German chocolate and German cocoa").

To market German milk chocolate, the emphasis in copy and image was supposed to be the Bavarian Alp region, since the quality of milk is connected with the luscious green of the grass in the Alps. Competing with Swiss companies, LST remarks that in reality it should matter little if the milk comes from the Bavarian or the Swiss Alps, hence, the perceived "monopoly" of milk chocolate by the Swiss needed to be corrected by a successful ad campaign for the German milk chocolate.[351]

After World War I, many German chocolatiers realized another threat to the German chocolate industry: the danger of foreign companies taking over German companies. Germany's chocolate industry played a central role in the overall German commerce and foreign investors became interested in becoming involved in a promising business. Sarotti dealt with such an incident in 1920. Since the company

[350] Ludwig Stollwerck comments on Hildebrand's practice of describing its products as specifically German. He states that through this strategy, the company was able to make some significant economic progress by capitalizing on the prevalent "patriotic sentiment, (my translation) Ludwig Stollwerck to Stollwerck management in Berlin, January 16, 1905, Stollwerck AG Archives.

[351] Ludwig Stollwerck wrote to his employees in the Stollwerck's Berlin headquarters as well as to his friend and colleague Buexenstein, who owned the company responsible for a majority of Stollwerck's printing, about the necessity to promote German chocolate in order to compete with Swiss and other European chocolate manufacturers that were selling their products in Germany. Ludwig Stollwerck to Stollwerck Berlin headquarters, January 16, 1905, Stollwerck AG Archives.

had been incorporated, a substantial amount of stock had been bought by Swedish investors, who, in 1920, possessed about one-fourth of the company's shares.[352]

Traditionally, advertising for chocolate consumption attempted to strike a balance between luxurious consumption and its health benefits. Chocolate was not regarded as a product that was necessary for survival, as an article on the Sarotti Company claims in 1924, rather as a commodity that enriched culinary pleasures.[353] However, culinary opulence had its limitations: chocolate was supposed to provide "tasteful and aesthetic pleasures," not "provocative indulgence."[354] The elegant and tasteful designs of chocolate packaging materials and their stylish presentation in store windows as well as in advertisements presented a modern, yet conservative aesthetic design that Sarotti and other chocolate companies capitalized on during the early twentieth century.

Most chocolate producers sold both cocoa mixes as well as chocolate products. Cocoa was classified as a *Nahrungsmittel* (a product for consumption) whereas chocolate along with tea and coffee tended to be looked at as a *Genussmittel* (a product for pleasure). The distinction is important because the chocolate industry was able to increase not only the sales of cocoa, the "necessity," but also of chocolate, the "luxury." Often, advertisements for the more exotic products of luxury such as chocolate, coffee, or tea played a central role in making people understand that their origins lay outside of Europe. Lacking specific knowledge about the cultivation process of these substances, most consumers knew, mostly via advertising, that they

[352] Ludwig Stollwerck to Dr. Jungel, December 12, 1920, Stollwerck AG Archives.
[353] "Ein Gang durch eine grosse Schokoladenfabrik (Sarotti)," *Schokoladen-Handels-Zeitung* (August 23, 1924): 10-18.
[354] My translation, ibid., 10

were of "non-European origin."[355] Advertising frequently stressed the "non-Europeanness" of these items by visual motifs that indicated their exotic or foreign origins, such as pyramids or camels.[356]

The design of packaging was important to many chocolate manufacturers. Ludwig Stollwerk, CEO for the Cologne based Stollwerck chocolate company, for example, frequently corresponded with his managers and advertising agents about the design of advertising materials used by other companies. Often, he sent samples from other companies to his staff in order to improve Stollwerck's own designs. On June 16, 1908, for example, Stollwerck wrote a letter to art historian Doepler in Berlin about the seemingly poor quality of Stollwerck's wrappers to those created by Sarotti. Doepler was a frequent correspondent of Stollwerck's, especially in matters of aesthetic quality, and played a key role in designing many of the Stollwerck trade card series.[357]

By the early 1900s, as chocolate was transformed into an affordable *Genussmittel*, chocolate advertising did not focus exclusively on describing how healthy and beneficial the consumption of cocoa and chocolate related products could be. Rather, it started to also praise its value as an article to indulge in.

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[355] Jens-Uwe Brinkmann, "Der Weg der Genussmittle nach Europa," in *Der bittersüsse Wohlgeschmack*, ed. ibid. and Cornelia Roehlke (Göttingen: Das Museum, 1994).
[356] Peter von Kornatzki, "Pack den Tiger aufs Plakat," in *Exotische Welten, Europäische Fantasien*, 220-229.
[357] Ludwig Stollwerck to Doepler, Stollwerck AG Archives.


Stollwerck Ad, ca. 1910s
Stollwerck AG Archives


Mauxion Chocolates, Magazine Ad, ca. 1910, Stollwerck AG Archives


Felsche Chocolates, Ad, 1912
Stollwerck AG Archives

The first of the three ads above advertises Stollwerck chocolate as a product that can bestow "felicitousness and joy."[358] The second ad, by the German chocolate manufacturer Mauxion, located in Berlin, shows a young white woman dressed in a fashionable and elegant coat with fur collar and sleeves, suggesting that chocolate consumption is part of the lifestyle of such a stylish and chic young lady. The third ad, by another German chocolate company, Felsche Chocolade and Cacao, includes an image with three young women masquerading and playfully incorporating the consumption of chocolate into their salon lifestyle. These examples of magazine ads from the early twentieth century suggest that advertisers for chocolate products, including cocoa, meant to entice German customers to imagine themselves as part of a lifestyle that was elegant, luxurious, and playful and that overall projected a sense of pleasure and indulgence when consuming chocolate. The third ad in particular shows a common element of advertising for chocolate and other *Genussmittel*: the feminine salon space or boudoir.

[358] My translation, Stollwerck Ad, ca. 1910s, Stollwerck AG Archives.

With its central location in the nation's capital Berlin, Sarotti became a leading chocolate manufacturer in the early twentieth century. Its advertising strategies, especially the design of boxes, wrappers and other packaging materials tended to stress the luxurious nature of chocolate. Its lavish designs of packaging, extensive advertising, and focus on public presentation in window displays turned the name Sarotti into a well recognized brand name in Germany. The company capitalized on the notion of chocolate being a special treat by investing into their exotic trademark, the Sarotti Mohr.

The Sarotti Company also distinguished itself by the way it displayed its products in store windows. The Sarotti store in the center of Berlin, Germany's capital, was a well-known locale of the metropole's bustling modern city life. Its window displays were frequently featured in trade magazines.


Picture of the Sarotti store in Berlin, ca. 1928,
*Die Auslage* ("The Window Display"), Document Collection

The caption under the image, which was published in the trade magazine *Die Auslage*, informs that the Sarotti's director of marketing Ms. Schmitter had created this "colorful, extraordinarily noticeable" display and continues to praise Schmitter as

having created "path breaking" displays for Sarotti in the past.[359] It seems, based on this observation, that Sarotti's displays of its products enjoyed the attention of other experts in the field of advertising, especially in the art of window displays. It is possible to conclude that the company's displays as well as other advertising strategies also caught the eye of consumers.

The design of Sarotti's advertising material, especially the decorative patterns used for praline boxes and chocolate wrappers, gave consumers access to a visually opulent and exotic experience. Sarotti's affordable and mass produced merchandise, manufactured in the company's modern and industrial factory in Berlin, provided contact with a fantasy world of luxurious comfort and exotic leisure. The design of boxes, packages, wrappers, and other forms of packaging as well as the presence of the Moorish servant, Sarotti's trademark, in the company's advertising materials recreated the lavish and luxurious worlds of Western aristocracy's eighteenth and nineteenth century material culture, in which exotic and oriental elements played an important role.[360]

As part of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the company in 1918, Sarotti's new trademark icon, the Sarotti-Mohr, was born. German Graphic designer Julius Gipkens designed the original *Drei-Mohren Motiv* ("three moors motif "). Prior to 1918, Gipkens, a well known *Gebrauchsgraphiker* ("graphic designer"), created the original trademark, had worked on a variety of commercial artistic

[359] My translation, *Die Auslage* ("The Window Display") no. 28 (ca. 1928): 13, Document Collection.
[360] Frank Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture: Imagining Mesopotamia in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Peter Mason, *Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Hermann Pollig, "Exotische Welten, Europäische Fantasien," in *Exotische Welten, Europäische Fantasien*, 16-25.; Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," in *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-century Art and Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989).

projects. He was well-known in Berlin and a member of the celebrated *Werkbund* ("German Work Federation"), a movement of German architects, designers, and artists, especially those working in the advertising realm.

Original "Drei-Mohren Motiv" by Julius Gipkens, 1918
Stollwerck AG Archives

The original company's headquarters in the mid-nineteenth century were located in a street called "Mohrenstraße" (Moor Street) in the center of Berlin.[361] The company's original location is always quoted as the reason for Gipken's design of the Sarotti-Mohr.[362] His original sketch as well as his and other designers' illustrations have always outfitted the figure with typical oriental attire and clearly reduced the Sarotti-Mohr to the position of a servant. He is dressed in what can best be described as "Turkish fashion," or "à la turque," embodying the close connections of the "Orient" and "Black Africa" in German iconography.

[361] The Mohrenstraße in Berlin has a moving history. Already by the late seventeenth century, this street existed in the center of Berlin. During Germany's colonial expansion, the street served as a place for parades by African delegates, such as representatives from the Brandenburg colony Grossfriedrichsburg, now a part of Ghana. To this day, the street is called Mohrenstraße and is even the name for one subway station, Ulrich van der Heyden, "Die Mohrenstrasse," in *Kolonialmetropole Berlin: Eine Spurensuche* ed. Ulrich van der Heyden et al. (Berlin: Berlin Edition, 2002), 188-189.
[362] In their recent publication on the Sarotti-Mohr, Rita Gudermann and Bernhard Wulff also cite this story as the origin story for the symbol, in Rita Gudermann and Bernhard Wulff, *Der Sarotti-Mohr; Die bewegte Geschichte einer Werbefigur* (Berlin: Links Verlag, 2004).


Advertising pamphlet, ca. 1949
Document Collection

By the 1940s, around the time of the pamphlet *Ein Besuch im Reiche des Sarotti-Mohren* ("A Visit in the Empire of the Sarotti-Mohr"), the trade character had a central part of the public face of the company. The pamphlet's text refers to the trade character as "popular among old and young."[363] Sarotti continued to use the original trademark that showed three moors, but the company also started to introduce some changes to the original design. On top of the *Drei Mohren Motif*, advertising materials began to display just one moor. Quite a variety of designs existed. The original trademark continued to appear on chocolate wrappers mostly, advertising the *Drei Mohren Mischung* ("three moors mixture"). A variation of this was the *Zwei Mohren Mischung* ("two moors mixture").

[363] "Ein Besuch im Reiche des Sarotti-Mohren," Pamphlet, Sarotti Company, Berlin, ca. 1949, Document Collection.


Zwei Mohren Mischung, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives

The design of just one moor varied. The most common variation was the moor carrying a flag instead of a tray. This image started to be used on a wide variety of products, ranging from chocolate bars and praline packages to cocoa boxes.


Praline Box, ca. 1930
Material Culture Collection

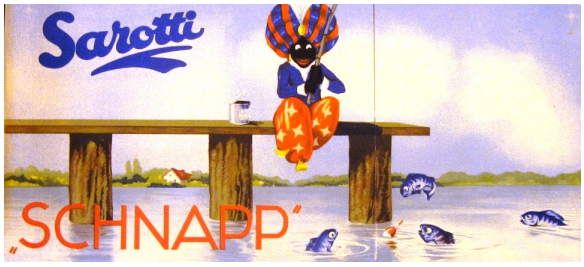

Baking Chocolate, ca. 1920
Material Culture Collection


Drink Chocolate, ca. 1920
Material Culture Coll.

The moor remained the most consistent design over the years with little to no change. Sometimes, as in all three images above, the name "Sarotti" was printed on the flag carried by the moor, sometimes it was not. Often, as in the middle picture, it was the smallest and only visual icon on a given product package. Repeatedly, the flag-carrying moor was placed in a circle, giving the image a seal-like character, such as in the baking and drinking chocolate boxes pictured above.

Other variations of the moor range from less to more elaborately drawn versions. Some pictures, true to the original, emphasize the figure's face. Black skin,

wide eyes, and thick, red lips, such as in the originally registered trademark, were a dominant feature of many designs.




Chocolate Bar Cover "Schnapp!" ("Grab!")
ca. 1930, Material Culture Collection


Sarotti Christmas Magazine Ad
ca. 1920s, Stollwerck AG Archives

The chocolate bar cover as well as the magazine ad above include the moor's black skin and exaggerated facial features. Other designs that date from the 1920s and 1930s emphasize the oriental elements more than his racial facial features.


Praline Box, 1936
Stollwerck AG Archives

The cover of the praline box shown above still exposes the moor's black skin, and the figure's facial silhouette exposes full lips that had become characteristic in portraits of men and women of African descent. Contrary to the two previous images, the cover of this package is dominated by its ornamental design consisting of the yellow

ribbon and bow on its left, the brown pattern on its bottom, and the moor's yellow costume.

The oriental aesthetic that was so widespread in Europe contained certain elements that recur in visual and material representations of oriental people, places, and things. These elements ranged from clothing and accessories such as harem pants or turbans, exotic animals and plants such as tigers, camels, or elephants and palm trees or strange, colorful plants, extravagantly decorated foreign artifacts such as carpets or water pipes, to architectural structures such as pyramids or mosque towers.

Overall, the tremendous amount of variation in the Sarotti-Mohr's visual design suggests the conclusion that an appealing visual design of its trade character played an important role for the Sarotti Company. In combination with the company's reputation for lavish window displays, the meticulous and abundant graphic variations on advertising materials illustrate the importance that Sarotti placed on appealing to consumers via visual stimulation.

**Orientalism in Visual Culture**

The concept of oriental and exotic are closely connected. In fact, they are often difficult to distinguish. As a concept, exoticism tends to be less narrow than orientalism. The latter suggests a clearer binary between Orient and Occident. Exoticism on the other hand, as art historian Frederick Bohrer suggests in *Orientalism and Visual Culture*, often "refers somewhat more indiscriminately, and non-hierarchically, to a generic elsewhere."[364] The arbitrary character of exotic visual representations, often incorporating oriental elements, manifests in Sarotti's trade

[364] Frank Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture*, 17.

character. The combination of blackness and oriental fashion do not provide a specific locality; however, both elements indicate the foreign and exotic nature of the icon. This combination of blackness and oriental components are not uncommon in the visual archives of European art. In her dissertation, on exotic imagery in nineteenth century Europe, art historian Adrienne Child summarizes that "representations of blacks in Orientalist art served a complex and nuanced function as nineteenth-century European artists fashioned the exotic."[365] The fashioning of the exotic that Childs refers to continued in early twentieth century German advertising culture. To be more exact, the introduction of the Sarotti-Mohr as the trademark for Sarotti chocolate in 1918 was meaningful to mass consumers because of the century-long processes of exoticizing blackness and conflating it with exotic orientalism: "The Orient was the filter through which the Europeans explored blackness."[366]

The Sarotti-Mohr was different from many other commercial images that depicted blacks. Much of the advertising imagery at the turn of the century featuring blacks portrayed them as colonial subjects. Oscillating between "noble natives" and "uncivilized savages," these images lacked the ornamental opulence and oriental patterns and motifs so common in the sketches of the Sarotti-Mohr. However, images of black servants in oriental and "Moorish" apparel were not uncommon. The visual history of black servants predates the appearance Sarotti's trademark. Germany's visual repertoire in portraying "otherness" stems from centuries of orientalist representations of exotic people, places, and things. The visual connection with the Orient was a useful way to mark eating chocolate as luxurious consumption, since the

[365] Childs, "The Black Exotic,", abstract.
[366] Ibid., 5.

German chocolate industry started to portray its products as more than just beneficial for health. As a *Genussmittel*, chocolate was marketed as an item of pleasure and indulgence, connotations that orientalist imagery in Western art had expressed appropriately over the centuries.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the presence of black servants in Germany and many other parts of Europe is well-documented, both in art and literature. Both men and women of African descent were part of European courts. In many cases, relationships between masters/mistresses and their slaves resulted in illegitimate children. Well-known examples include Alexander Medici, the illegitimate son of Pope Clemens VII and an unknown African woman. White aristocratic women also engaged in intimate relationships with their male servants. One French aristocratic woman who was pregnant with the child of her black slave is known to be referred to, by her friend Madame de Sevigne, as having indulged in "too much chocolate."[367] The oriental clothing of the Sarotti-Mohr bares a noticeable resemblance to the depiction of black servants in paintings, sculptures, and other art forms. Pieterse suggests that the Sarotti-Mohr, as well as other popular images of black servants with oriental clothing, are connected with the popular image of the eunuch, the castrated black servant/slave who protected the women in the harems of the oriental world.[368] The desexualized component of eunuch-like images makes them safe carriers of

[367] Both examples are taken from Weygo Comte Rudt de Collenberg's article on moor servants in eighteenth century Europe, in which the French Madame de Sevigne is quoted as having said that her friend had eaten too much chocolate ("mange trop de chocolat"), Weygo Comte Rudt de Collenberg, "Haus- und Hofmohren des 18. Jahrhunderts in Europa," in *Gesinde im 18. Jahrhundert,* ed. Gotthardt Frühsorge et al. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1995), 278.

[368] The imagery of the eunuch is at the crossroads of constructions of both blackness as well as orientalism. The figure of the eunuch captures the double-bind of these two-oppressive discourses: "The black servant in these fantasies is essentially the eunuch, the emasculated harem or slave. The black eunuch in an imaginary harem may be the basis for figures such as the Sarotti-Mohr." Pieterse, *White on Black,* 128.

sexual fantasies. The idea of sexual desire is removed in images like the Sarotti-Mohr and earlier representations of moors by making them childlike and by linking them iconographically with the castrated eunuch. The narration of forbidden pleasures implicit in a complex image such as that of the black servant "à la turque" serves as a particularly useful tool to advertise for products like chocolate and coffee, products that are associated with leisurely consumption.

In many courtly paintings of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, black servants, often just children, are important features in paintings of aristocrats or the bourgeoisie to establish their status, wealth and cultural superiority. Moors also appear in literature, sculpture, and particularly as porcelain statues and on porcelain artifacts such as sugar bowls and coffee cups.[369] The image of the domesticated black servant served as a counter image to the trope of the black barbaric savage. German Historian Peter Martin points out that "many statesmen, writers, artists, and scientists, but also many of the 'common people' [in Germany] used Africans as metaphors to depict their views on state and society."[370] Martin's thorough historical analysis of the role of Africans in German culture claims that Germans, and to a certain extent most Europeans, perceived people of African descent either as "black devils" or "noble moors" throughout the last nine centuries. These two images are not complete

[369] Ulla Heise and Beatrix Freifrau von Wolff Metternich edited a volume on coffee and eroticism in the past three centuries. An exhibition of objects and paintings accompanied this publication. In one of the articles in this volume, Wolff Metternich focuses on the image of the "Kaffemohr" (coffee-moor), Beatrix Freifrau von Wolff Metternich, "Sultan, Sultanin und Kaffemohr," in *Coffeum wirft die Jungfrau um: Kaffee und Erotik in Porzellan und Grafik aus drei Jahrhunderten,* ed. Ulla Heise et al. (Leipzig: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1998). For a discussion on moors in literature, see Uta Sadji, "Mohrendiener im deutschen Drama des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Gesinde im 18. Jahrhundert,* ed. Frühsorge (1995)..

[370] Peter Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, Edle Mohren,* 10-11.

opposites, but are complementary images, used to justify and expand white superiority.

Spurred by Edward Said's work *Orientalism* in 1979, academic fields in the humanities and social sciences have critically engaged with his theories about Western or European views on the "Orient." Most importantly, Said suggests that Western societies had developed a relationship with the "Orient." The ideological concept "Orient" encompasses a geographical area that includes a vast number of cultural groups. The Western concept of the "Orient" collapses cultural and social differences between most of these groups to construct the idea of the "Orient" as a monolithic concept of "Other" onto which Western nations could project various beliefs of Western cultural self-definition and superiority. The idea of the "Orient" is thus a product of cultural imagination more than an accurate portrayal of historical realities of "Oriental" cultures and people. As an ideological concept, "[t]he Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture" and, as scholars have illustrated, became an important cultural idea in Western thought.[371]

Oriental imagery has been a popular motif in representing leisure and luxury, as John MacKenzie points out in his monograph *Orientalism: History, theory and the arts*: "Orientalism was also a frequent feature of the popular culture of leisure."[372] In the advertising culture of chocolate and similar products that have been historically associated with luxury and indulgence, oriental motifs have been used prior to 1918. Sarotti's use of orientalesque ornaments and designs is an example of that. The arrangement of different shapes and forms on chocolate boxes and wrappers in

[371] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1.
[372] John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), xx.

addition to the image of the moor servant provided Sarotti products with a flair of elegance and luxury. By drawing on visual motifs of orientalist myths that had been circulating in Western European cultures for the past centuries, Sarotti became one of the top chocolate manufacturers in early twentieth century Germany.

At a time of political uncertainty, German consumers might have been able to find solace in the comforting images of oriental landscapes and ornamental patterns. Drawing on the exoticized myths of blackness, the company contributed to the building of national consumer culture. Often, constructions of "Other" such as the "Orient" allowed an escape fantasy from bleak surroundings. MacKenzie suggests that the mythologies of the "Orient" represented a longing for pastoral idylls that the modern developments of industrialism and urbanization had swallowed.[373] Similar to Aunt Jemima's and Rastus' alternative worlds in consumer culture, the Sarotti-Mohr seemed to promise a world of carefree enjoyment and comfort. By utilizing not only oriental ornaments, but also a racialized oriental other as the company's trade character, Sarotti continued the concepts of exotic foreignness established in trade cards.

**Exotic Imagery and Colonial Fantasies**

Sarotti's images of its black trade character portray the icon as the ultimate exotic. The fairly unique mixture of colonial elements and oriental motifs in German popular culture lie at the core of what I call exotic here. The company's introduction

[373] "In other words, the fascination of the East lay in the manner in which it offered an atavistic reaction to modern industrialism, with its urban squalor, moral and physical unhealthiness, mass demoralization, social discontents, and the transfer of loyalties from the individual to the labour organisation with its politically explosive potential," ibid., 59.

of its trademark in 1918, at the end of Germany's short-lived colonial era, connects the moor not only with the visual representations of German colonial subjects, but also with images of colonialism prior to Germany's active role as a colonizing empire. The image ultimately collapses a historically specific visual repertoire, that of Germany's colonial experience, with a historically vaguer visual epistemology of exotic people, places, and things that have shaped European visual culture for centuries. Orientalist imagery plays an important role in that.

Colonial and exotic imagery from the *fin de siecle* such as the Sarotti-Mohr descends from the colonial fantasies that existed prior to German's status as a colonial empire. The Sarotti-Mohr originated at the end of World War I which hat marked the end of the German empire and the beginning of the Weimar Republic. The young German nation was faced with a crisis. Thus, a colonial and exotic image such as the Sarotti-Mohr, appearing at the decline of the failed German empire and at the beginning of the Weimar republic, is a historical artifact of consumer culture that continues Germany's pre-national colonial fantasies into the twentieth century. As a continuation of these fantasies, the trade character becomes, as I like to suggest, a part of building national identity in consumer culture of the 1920s.

The Sarotti-Mohr's appearance as the trademark for the Sarotti chocolate Company in 1918 originated out of widely distributed collective memories of colonial fantasies dating back to the eighteenth century. More specifically, as German historian David Ciarlo explains, the image evolved from decade-long utilization of black people in advertising. Ciarlo suggests that the figure of the little black moor in oriental clothing was more than a mere "harmless (or slightly uncomfortable)

reflection of the German cultural subconscious;" rather, as he argues, the trademark was a direct product of both expanding advertising techniques and the intense period of "the German colonial project."[374] The Sarotti-Mohr presents the pinnacle of the decade long transformation in advertising images from exotic to colonial. Much of the visual imagery of Sarotti chocolate attempts to balance elements of exoticized difference and cultural traditions. Ciarlo refers to this ambivalence as a combination of "attractive foreignness and comfortable familiarity."[375] Ultimately, advertising culture returned to the image of exoticism rather than colonialism, or rather the more direct colonial imagery that Ciarlo identified during Germany's reign as a colonial power.

Ciarlo's differentiation between the exotic and the colonial is important. However, I suggest that the Sarotti-Mohr is ultimately a figure that successfully combines the colonial and exotic. The image drew on the visual familiarity of German consumers with the advertisements that Ciarlo describes. As Ciarlo argues, the shift from exotic to colonial can be traced in the images used in a variety of advertising trademarks from the late nineteenth into the twentieth century. At the same time, the trademark absorbed a long history of orientalist and exoticized visual culture.

Recently, interest in Germany's colonial past and the influence of colonialism on German culture has produced a new and interesting body of literature in German cultural and literary studies as well as in German historiography. This "paradigm

[374] My translation, David Ciarlo, "Rasse konsumieren: Von der exotischen zur kolonialen Imagination in der Bildreklame des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs," in *Phantasiereiche: Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus*, ed. Birte Kundrus (Frankfurt: Campus, 2003), 148.
[375] My translation, Ciarlo, "Rasse konsumieren," 135.

shift," as German literary studies scholar Russell Berman calls it, was spurred on by growing influence of colonial and post-colonial studies during the 1980s and 1990s.[376] Questions about the relationship between colonial subjects and colonial forces that had stimulated debates in British, French, Dutch, Spanish, and North and South American history and literature and led to revisions of literary canons, historical narratives, and cultural formations across various disciplines. Edward Said's seminal piece *Orientalism* as well as other publications that followed Said's oeuvre have created an extensive body of literature that deals with cultural, socio-economic, and political levels of social structures, cultural production, and collection as well as individual experiences.

Despite various differences between the German colonial movement and colonial politics of Britain and France, the most important dissimilarity seemed to have been what Berman calls "secondary colonialism." Contrary to France or Britain, as Berman explains, the German empire did not emphasize the increase of wealth, the economic export opportunities, or the mission to civilize native populations. Rather, its primary purpose was to seek a comparable role in global colonial politics to the French and especially the British empires. Germany's primary motive, thus, seemed to have been to become an "equal player" with the two European colonial giants Britain and France.[377]

Susanne Zantrop's work has spearheaded the scholarly movement to reconsider Germany's relationship not only to its colonial period lasting from 1884 to 1918, but also to the colonialist attitudes and ideologies in Germany, even before the

[376] Russell A. Berman, "Der ewige Zweite: Deutschlands sekundärer Kolonialismus," in *Phantasiereiche*, 21.
[377] Ibid., 28-29.

nation was unified as an empire in the 1870s.[378] Zantrop examines German literature, political pamphlets, and other cultural documents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She proposes that much of German culture, as these objects testify, included "fantasies of colonial mastery" based on very little actual experience with colonial enterprises.[379] These fantasies, as Zantrop continues, often interpreted and critiqued the colonial adventures of more accomplished colonial empires such as Britain and France, "creat[ing] an imaginary German colonial history on paper and in the minds of their readers."[380]

Germany's colonial fantasies were part of the process of forging German nationalism prior to the creation of a nation-state during the 1870s. According to Zantrop, these fantasies are part "the complexities and ambivalence of the nation's imagination."[381] As a "non-colonial (non)nation," German philosophers, intellectuals, and intellectuals distinguished themselves from their European colonialist counterparts, especially France, as morally superior. [382] These ideological discourses allowed Germans to see themselves by the late nineteenth century as "colonial cultivator[s]" and to draw on these colonial fantasies as significant components of nation-building.

Historians Geyer and Hellmuth explained the importance of visuality throughout the nineteenth century. The window displays for the Sarotti store in Berlin demonstrate that the importance of visual appeals carried into the early twentieth

[378] Susanne Zantrop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).
[379] Ibid., 3.
[380] Ibid., 3.
[381] Ibid., 4.
[382] Ibid., 95.

century. Geyer and Hellmuth particularly stress the theatrical presentation of colonial products. These window displays serve as perfect examples of this theatrical quality that items from colonial and exotic background were associated with.

In addition, some packaging materials for Sarotti chocolate suggest that colonial and exotic elements lend themselves easily to a theatrical presentation, such as this package for Sarotti chocolate.


Sarotti Chocolate Wrapper, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives


Sarotti Chocolate Wrapper, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives

The staging of exoticism that Geyer and Hellmuth propose to be central throughout the nineteenth century takes on an interesting meaning in this chocolate wrapper design. The three moors are entering the scene via an opening that resembles a stage setting. The brown background opens an entrance large enough for the three servants to emerge. The shape of the opening resembles the shape of a stage with draped curtains on each side. The image on the left, more clearly than the version on the right, also displays stairs that the three moors are descending upon their emergence through the stage-like opening. The image is repeated through the 1920s as advertisements in national magazines and newspapers such as *Die Gartenlaube*. It almost seems as if these three moors are entering the vestibule of the consumer's imagination, manifesting racialized fantasies of exotic others that, as Ciarlo had

described, have been regarded as part of the "German cultural subconscious."[383] As these images suggests, the Sarotti-Moor (or moors) carries the symbolic heritage so typical of nineteenth century staging of exoticism as well as the ideological connection with several decades of German colonial exploits and their reflection in advertising imagery.

**Applying Orientalism to Sarotti Packages**

The routes of the slave trade in Western Europe might be one reason why the Sarotti-Mohr displays the unique mix of blackness and orientalist elements. After the loss of Constantinople in 1452, much of the slave trade to Europe was channeled through the Ottoman Empire. As European nations, especially the Portuguese, established trading post on the West Coast of Africa by the mid-seventeenth century, African slaves were brought directly from the west coast on the African continent to Europe. European slave traders no longer had to rely on Arab traders.[384] Prior to the increasing involvement of European slave traders, the figure of the moor had been a popular image in German culture and was not always portrayed as a servant. Roughly since the thirteenth century, various German and other European cities featured the head of a black man, in most cases a soldier or king, in their emblems.[385] These images do not clearly identify people of African descent as slaves or servants to Europeans. The redirection of the slave trade in the mid-seventeenth century might

[383] Ciarlo, "Rasse konsumieren," 148.
[384] For a brief discussion on the Ottoman slave trade prior to the nineteenth century, see the introduction in Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1996).
[385] For further discussion, see Mira Alexandra Schnoor and Tobias Schuster, "Der Mohr im Wappen. Wie Afrikaner in bayerische Wappen kamen," *Geschichte quer. Zeitschrift der bayerischen Geschichtswerkstätten* v. 4 (1995): 5 – 12.

serve as a possible explanation with the emergence of blacks as servants in European iconography.

Further, blackness and foreign-ness were closely linked epistemologically. Andrea Polaschegg points out that the term "moor" which was often used indistinguishably with "Arab" had undergone a complex historical evolution over the centuries, leading to a mélange of oriental, exotic, and black that all played out in the image of the Sarotti-Mohr. Overall, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, "Orient" and "Africa" were often used to designate identical cultural landscapes.[386] Polaschegg also points to the important role that constructions of the Orient played in facilitating the consumption of colonial products (*Kolonialwaren*) and "comfort foods" (*Genussmittel*). Although products such as tea, coffee, and cocoa became popular throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, their "oriental connotation" *(orientalische Konnotation)* remained and continued to influence the advertising strategies of companies that produced such merchandise.[387]

Sarotti's use of such oriental connotations in its advertising materials reflected in subtle ways the cultural beliefs in German (white) superiority and in the inferiority of exoticized others. These beliefs were part of Western perceptions of other cultures that orientalist and exotic representations in German popular culture had distributed since the seventeenth century. The portrayal of romantic aristocratic culture, playful portrayals of the Sarotti-Mohr's naïveté, and the visual clichés of exotic oriental elements portrayed an image of luxurious consumption in the company's advertising materials. All of these themes relied on the image of the obedient servant and shaped

[386] My translation, Andrea Polaschegg, *Der andere Orientalismus: Regeln deutsch-morgenländischer Imagination im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 79.
[387] Ibid., 88-89.

the company's visual advertising strategies. The imagery in much of Sarotti's advertising materials was decodable by many consumers because it drew widely distributed visual motifs of late nineteenth and early twentieth century culture. This culture was saturated with romanticized visions of exotic foreign locations that promised an imaginary retreat into foreign worlds in which white Europeans were able to indulge in leisurely comfort.

Dreamy motifs drawing on visual elements of the Rococo era romanticized chocolate consumption. Sarotti designed an entire series of praline boxes that captured Rococo's romanticized idea of court life.


Sarotti Chocolate Package Design, ca. 1930s, Stollwerck AG Archives

The image shown above was most likely used as cover pictures on a pralines box. The first image portrays a female courtier in the company of her dogs and her Moorish servant that was placed on the top of the box cover. The sides of the box were covered with a variation of the main image. In this image, as is shown above, the little moor servant chases after his mistress, offering her the chocolates. Consumers were invited to imagine themselves as taking part in this romantic and playful imaginary

landscape of consumption, especially one in which black servants were readily available to cater to their master's and mistress' needs.

Court culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Rococo era also drew on exotic motifs. Chinoiserie and Turquerie were common artistic styles that were fashionable among aristocrats throughout Western Europe, mostly consisting of extensive collections of porcelain with exotic motifs, lavish interior design with Turkish, Chinese, and other style elements, and the display of foreign specimens, ranging from animals such as parrots to human beings such as the black court slaves[388]. Exotic elements such as black servants and exotic bird and plant species were established visual elements in portraits of European court culture.

Sarotti was not the only company that utilized the appeal of these popular motifs. The well-known German perfume producer 4711 also appealed to consumers by visually engaging them in the romanticized courtly world of Rococo culture. An ad from 1922 in the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (Berlin's Illustrated Newspaper) portrays a young female courtier who accepts a bottle of the advertised perfume "Tosca" from her Moorish servant.[389] The black servant, similar to the Sarotti-Mohr, wears a turban and other oriental garments. [scan image]

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[388] "*Turquerie* is the term the French used to describe works of art, literature, and music with Turkish themes that had been popular in literature and theater since the seventeenth century," Childs, "The Black Exotic," 69. For a discussion on Chinoiserie, see Monika Kopplin, " 'Amoenitates Exoticae:' Exotische Köstsichkeiten im Zeitalter des Barock," in *Exotische Welten, Europäische Fantasien*, 518-561.

[389] *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* 31, n22 (November 19, 1922): 921.


Sarotti Chocolate Package Design, ca. 1930s, Stollwerck AG Archives

In many images, the moor was placed in an oriental setting, such as in the image above. In this praline box cover, the Sarotti-Moor serves a young white woman who, like he, is dressed in arabesque clothing. She wears a turban, and her gown resembles the garments worn by women in paintings that depict harems in the Orient. The building in the background resembles a mosque, supporting the overall oriental atmosphere in the image.


Sarotti Mocha Beans Box, 1933, Stollwerck AG Archives

Another example of an image that uses the motif of a mosque to recreate the oriental setting is the above chocolate box from 1922. The silhouette of the mosque as well as of a palm tress on the right side of the image in combination with the image of the Sarotti-Mohr creates an imaginary landscape of luxurious consumption and extravagant lifestyle that the Sarotti Company frequently used to advertise its products. The image on this box is also another example of the many variations of the moor's image. Here, the moor's clothing contains a lot of detail that does not appear

on other images. His clothing overall seems to be of sophisticated workmanship, especially the elaborate design on the bottom of his pants.


Stollwerck Chocolate Bar Wrappers, ca. 1920s, Stollwerck AG Archives

Other chocolate companies also drew on orientalist motifs. Stollwerck, as the image above shows, advertised for two of its chocolate bars with exotic and orientalist imagery. The red package for *Milch-Krokant* ("milk brittle") features a parrot on a branch with flowers, a common element of exotic art and imagery from previous centuries. Further, in the background, a tower-like building is visible whose pinnacle resembles the top of Japanese or Chinese, maybe even Arabic architectural styles. The second chocolate bar cover shown above makes the oriental connection even clearer. The package advertising Stollwerck's *Mokka Herb* ("mocha dark") includes an image of an Arab on a camel, in the background a mosque-like building.

As Gudermann and Wulff point out, Sarotti's partiality towards orientalist décor predates the origin of the Sarotti-Mohr. The design of Sarotti's pavilion on the Berlin Industrial Fair from 1896 reveals the affinity for oriental decorations and patterns that found their way into Western material culture of the late nineteenth and

early twentieth century Western European culture.[390] Architectural designs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were inspired by Arabic and Turkish designs. The ornamental style of Moorish buildings such as the Alhambra in Granada, Spain, the palace of the former Moorish monarchs of Spain, was a widely studied architectural structure during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and influenced the work of many architects in Western Europe.[391]

In addition to the figure of the Sarotti-Mohr, decorative arches, semicircles, and other visually opulent decorations on Sarotti's packaging material lured consumers into a world of exotic pleasures. This world had been accessible to many Western Europeans via Orientalist visual and textual narratives prior to the early twentieth century. The exotic nature of this world, communicated not only via the moor's blackness, but also through the decorative elements such arabesque-like structures, was capitalized on by Sarotti to sell its products. Elegance as inspired by oriental décor became an essential ingredient for a company that was adamant to locate itself as a German company. National values and participation in the national economic project were important in the company, but when it came to selling Sarotti products, the mythological discourses of exotic and foreign landscapes became a powerful marketing tool.

[390] Gudermann and Wulff discuss this connection in more detail, *Der Sarotti-Mohr*.
[391] Stefan Koppelkamm, "Orientalisierende Architektur des 18. und 19. Jahrhundert" (Orientalizing Architecture of the 18th and 19th Century), in *Exotische Welten, Europäische Phantasien*, 164-171.


Sarotti Mocha-Cream Chocolate Bar Wrapper, ca. 1920s,
Material Culture Collection

This wrapper for Sarotti's mocha-cream chocolate (*Mokka-Sahnen Schokolade*) contains many of the typical ornamental elements. The curving of the decorative pattern in gold resembles the structures of oriental inspired architecture that was popular in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The elaborate golden lines that circle over the entire wrapper as well as the brown arcs in the lower left and upper right golden corners provide the wrapper with symmetrical structure as well as with enough extravagant excess to simulate the mysterious landscape of exotic foreign cultures in the Orient.


Sarotti Praline Box Cover, ca. 1920s
Material Culture Collection


Sarotti Praline Box Cover, ca. 1920s
Material Culture Collection

The to praline box covers above continue the ornamental opulence of the mocha chocolate wrapper. In both covers, the Sarotti-Mohr is placed in an emblem-like structure that is symmetrically designed, but embellished with enough curves to provide it with alluring flair. These curves are often referred to as arabesques.

According to the Grove Art Online Dictionary, an arabesque is an ornamental decoration that originates in Islamic art that became widely used by Western artists during the nineteenth century, "with the rise of Western interest in Islamic art."[392] The visual ornaments on both covers are elegantly arranged and invite the consumer to partake in an extravagant pleasure. The extravagant nature of this product is communicated via the ornate design features.

Luxurious consumption also was narrated through the naïve portrayal of the moor, placed in circumstances and situations, often of a fantastic or unrealistic nature, but always stressing his almost childish qualities. He was not portrayed as a person with a sense of human identity, but as a mere figure of fantasy and Western imaginations about the Orient. He became a central figure in the company's advertising materials, and his portrayal as a droll and comic character supported German cultural beliefs in the cultural inferiority and lack of intellectual capacity of blacks. A series of packaging designs from the 1920s and early 1930s exemplify the central role that the Sarotti-Mohr started to play in decorating chocolate praline boxes. These designs were developed for chocolate packages. Almost all contain a central picture, accompanied by a narrow band that contains the same or similar motifs. The large images would be placed on the cover of the box, whereas the band would be draped around the sides of the box. The majority of these designs portrays the moor servant in humorous situations.

One pattern that seems to emerge from the more than sixty designs has to do with portraying the moor in company of animals. These situations seem to portray

[392] "Arabesque," (retrieved from Grove Art Online, December 3, 2007).

him as slightly helpless in dealing with the animals. It is also remarkable that he seems to be smaller than each animal.


Sarotti Package Design, ca. 1930s
Stollwerck AG Archives


Sarotti Package Design, ca. 1930s
Stollwerk AG Archives

Sometimes, as the image below portrays, the moor is at the mercy of animals, such as in this image where he flees from a frog that attacks him.


Sarotti Package Design, ca. 1930s
Stollwerck AG Archives

All three motifs that present the moor in bizarre, almost graceless positions with animals support the moor's childishness and almost caricature-like nature. He is nothing more than an adornment to imaginary landscapes of consumption in which consumers could be amused at a black servant's amusing antics.

In these package designs, the Sarotti-Mohr approaches animals hesitantly or is even chased away. The proportions of animals and human are distorted. The moor is reduced to the small size of the animals and is not in control of these situations. He depends on the good will of the animals he attempts to interact with. Mastery over nature, including animals, has traditionally been an important aspect of Western

discourses. Art historians of eighteenth and nineteenth century landscape paintings portrayed man to be in charge of the natural environment. As trade card series of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century showed, portrayals of the natural world revealed a culture's engagement in discourses on civilization and savagery.

Other cover designs include animals and plants to stress exotic abundance. The two covers for praline boxes shown below, dating from approximately the mid-1920s, place the moor with common design elements from orientalist and exotic visual European culture.


Sarotti Praline Box, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives


Sarotti Praline Box, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives

The image on the left includes a large image of a pink flower in disproportion to the figure of the moor. In this image, the moor is clad in a yellow orientalist uniform. He is holding a white and pink parrot, an exotic bird that was frequently used by Sarotti and other chocolate manufacturers in visual advertising material. The cover design on the right includes the image of four large red flowers on both sides of the frame. Two of them are placed in a highly ornamented vase. In this image, the moor is clothed in a blue and gold uniform, in line with the overall blue tone of the entire design.

The two cover designs below are two more examples of how Sarotti capitalized on the orientalist discourse that visual culture in Western Europe had

displayed for prior centuries. The designs, dating from the mid-1920s, show the same image in different colors.



Sarotti Praline Boxes and Inside Cover, ca. 1920s
Stollwerck AG Archives

The first image in pink also shows the side design for the box cover, which repeats the desert-like landscape on the cover by repeating the common icons of palm trees and sand dunes. The cover images display the Sarotti-Mohr who is serving chocolate to two Arab men. German consumers were able, I suggest, by accessing these foreign and exotic landscapes at their own leisure to experience a different culture without leaving home. The design on the inside of the box, the image next to the yellow cover, contains an image of two moors serving a female courtier dressed in rococo-esque clothes. As this chocolate box illustrates, The successful combination of exotic landscapes and aristocratic lifestyles in just one package seemed to have been a common strategy in Sarotti's package design during the 1920s.

Overall, the Sarotti Company utilized the rich repertoire of visual imagery established by orientalist art and design, presenting its consumers a mythologized Orient on packages and in advertisements. MacKenzie describes this world of oriental myth as follows: "a feudal, chivalric, pre-industrial world of supposedly uncomplicated social relations."[393] Similar to the idealized plantation South of Aunt Jemima's world and the idyllic Norman Rockwell inspired social order of Rastus' domain, the Sarotti-Mohr suggested a world in which carefree fun and luxurious indulgence were accessible by consuming a chocolate bar. In the context of European visual traditions, the image of an exotic black servant such as the chocolate company's trademark signified luxury: "Like a richly patterned silk fabric or an Oriental carpet, the African servant who had entered Europe through the same channels also signaled the luxuries of distant lands."[394]

[393] Ibid., 209.
[394] Childs, 56.

# Conclusion

What seems to be remarkable about all three trade characters is the fact that all three of them have survived into the twenty-first century. Rastus is the least unchanged. He has remained the most stable out of the three trade characters discussed, mainly, as I suggest, because his image started to be excluded from major print advertising and elaborate package design in the 1920s. The same basic image of Rastus has been included on Cream of Wheat packaging since the early 1900s.

Aunt Jemima underwent several changes since the early twentieth century, leading to her redesign in the 1950s. Today, the image of Aunt Jemima has changed drastically from the original drawing. The contemporary trade character is drawn with a permed and carefully arranged coiffure, pearl earrings, and a delicate lace collar. The image of respectability is only diminished by the unchanged name, which has led M.M. Manring to the conclusion that she has remained a "slave in a box."[395]

The Sarotti-Mohr has ceased being the trademark of Sarotti chocolate, now owned by the Suisse Corporation Barry-Callebault. With an awareness for the sensitivities of an international market, Barry-Callebaut altered the appearance of the Sarotti-Mohr shortly after the acquisition of Stollwerck and Sarotti chocolate. During the International Candy Fair (*Internationale Suesswarenmesse*) in Cologne, Germany, in January and February 2004, the company announced its decision to "modernize" the imagery of the Sarotti-Mohr. Bernhard Pfaff, marketing director at Stollwerck chocolate, who was Sarotti's previous owner, explained that the icon needed to be

[395] M.M.Manring, *Slave in a Box*.

"rejuvenated and adjusted." The new icon is a golden figure juggling stars, representing, in Pfaff's words, the Sarotti-Mohr's role as a "magician of the senses."[396] Despite this change, the company still uses moor-motifs from the 1960s and earlier.

Overall, this dissertation engages in examining the development of brand names and trademarks in modern consumer culture by suggesting that advertising trade cards' narratives of national identity and racialized others laid the visual groundwork for black trade characters' success. The myth of the "old South" of Aunt Jemima, the portrayal of black masculinity through Rastus, and the articulation of European Orientalism and German colonialism in the Sarotti-Mohr were successful discourses that advertised their respective products to masses of consumers in the early twentieth century. All three relied on limited, yet familiar depictions of blackness that enabled (white) consumers to participate in a mostly imagined world of comfort, luxury, and leisure.

This work is narrow in its focus as it concerns its discussion about trade characters between 1890 and 1930 because it has focused exclusively on three black trade characters. I have chosen to focus on these three characters to address the creation of national mythologies in consumer culture and their reliance on racialized identities. My discussion in the previous chapters aimed at showing a connection between trade card series and magazine advertising. The surviving historical evidence that I consulted for this dissertation seemed to suggest that the visual work of many trade card series in making consumers familiar with mythological narratives of

[396] My translation, Tanja Trenz, "Sarotti-Mohr mit neuem Design," *Lebensmittelzeitung* (February 4, 2004): 56.

national culture and exoticized foreigners found a continuation in newspaper and magazine advertising campaigns as well as in package designs of the early twentieth century. The serial nature of many of these ads and packages thrived on the repetition of related motifs.

Throughout the writing process, I asked myself, what would Aunt Jemima, Rastus, and the Sarotti-Mohr talk about if they would meet? However unrealistic such dialogues might seem, imagining a conversation between these three figures stresses the fact that the historical realities for blacks in the United States and Germany that exist behind these images were ignored and warped to present homogenous images of luxury and comfort that depended on the servitude of blacks. Between 1890 and 1930, all three trade characters' public face projected dependability, subservience, and entertainment to mass audiences in both the United States and Germany. Creative projects, especially in the United States, have attempted to place such images in political context of black exploitation.[397] This dissertation, particularly by highlighting the similarities in the stereotypical racialization of blackness in two different cultural environments, presents the opportunity to emphasize the unrealistic nature of these portrayals of racial difference.

[397] See Lisa Anderson, *Mammies No More: The Changing Image of Black Women on Stage and Screen* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997). Anderson gives numerous examples of black stage writing which critiques the stereotype of the mammy in many different ways. Also, the works by artists Faith Ringgold, Betye Saar, and Joyce Scott, among others, who deconstruct the mammy image in their paintings, sculptures, collages, etc., are examples of how African American artists "talk back" to the limiting images available to them from "mainstream" U.S. culture, see Terry Gips, "Joyce J. Scott's Mammy/Nanny Series," *Feminist Studies* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 310 - 20; Kate Haug, "Myth and Matriarchy: An Analysis of the Mammy Stereotype," in *Dirt and Domesticity: Constructions of the Feminine*, ed. Frazer Ward, Kate Haug, and Cara Mertes (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1992); Lisa E. Farrington, *Creating Their Own Image: The History of African-American Women Artists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

This dissertation raises some important questions about the origin of images in mass consumption that are being regurgitated in contemporary consumer culture. The ongoing debates about visual representations in popular culture have led to a large number of critical anthologies, conference presentations, and monographs that discuss the historical legacy of images such as Rastus or Aunt Jemima. The question remains as to why stereotypical representations of racialized others continue to exist in Western popular culture. Simply put, it seems that a certain concept of race sells.

The nostalgic features of Aunt Jemima, the obedient character of Rastus, and the exotic elements of the Sarotti-Mohr, despite different narratives and historical quality, all contributed to the transformation of mass consumption as a central part of national identities in the United States and Germany. The attributes of all trade characters, however different from each other, were all communicated via visual representations. Images in either magazine advertisements or on product packaging impacted the popularity of all three products. Advertisers and industrialists agreed about the importance of advertising per se, and especially about the role of visual representations.

Racialized images such as Aunt Jemima and the Sarotti-Mohr seemed to have been very seductive images to consumers. The promises of luxurious lifestyles enabled by black slaves and servants, common motifs in Western visual culture, made products attractive and competitive. The promises of material comfort and racial boundaries that were easily negotiable for (white) customers were appealing discourses that black trade characters were able to translate for consumers without too much effort.

As trade cards, especially trade card series that could be formally collected, helped train consumers in both cultures to successfully translate cultural meaning via visual objects, trade characters continued to capitalize on visual stimuli. In combination with clever copy, especially in the case of Aunt Jemima, trade characters recreated worlds that were often beyond the immediate experience of most consumers. All three trade characters promised a world in which comfortable and elegant consumption was the norm. The comfort and elegance, be it the romanticized plantation South of Aunt Jemima pancakes, the modern urban world with one's own black cook of Cream of Wheat, or the luxurious spaces of exotic landscapes or aristocratic boudoirs of Sarotti chocolate, the universe of all three brand names depended on stereotypical constructions of blackness.

The comparative element in this dissertation allows for a broader understanding of race and racialization and its connection to the formation of national identities. The comparison between the United States and Germany offers some interesting opportunities to not only think about the parallel as well as different developments of mass consumption, but also about the exciting opportunities that cultural comparative work has to offer to American Studies in a transnational and global academic environment. As American Studies has been moving towards transnational discussions of American identity, comparative work fits into this mindset since it engages configurations of identities and cultural discourses beyond boundaries set, often arbitrarily, by national borders. The recent transnational turn in the field has invited broader dialogues between scholars of various academic disciplines as well as of areas of different cultural environments. This dissertation

represents this new trend by relating visual imagery and cultural discourses from two different countries with each other.

This study, of course, has its limitations in how far we can generalize of the effect of these images on consumers per se. The surviving documents from advertising agencies and company archives grant a glimpse into the complexities of advertisement and visual imagery, but they cannot offer an exhaustive idea of how consumers reacted to trade cards, magazines, packages, and other advertising forms. What might serve as an indicator of popularity might be the continued fascination with these objects by professional and lay collectors alike. Trade cards still enjoy a tremendous popularity. What is undeniable, however, is the massive production of visually stimulating materials between 1890 and 1930, and the frequency in which advertisers changed images. This might indicate a demand from the consuming public for new stimulating and exciting visual imagery.

The dissertation is also limited in drawing conclusions about the influence that racialized trade characters had on the complex processes of nation-building in Germany and the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. Much of the interpretation of the images presented in this work relies on analysis that is influenced by twentieth and twenty-first century cultural sensibilities. However, the extensive number of and variety in primary sources consulted for this dissertation, which illustrate the significance of visual imagery in advertising in this historical period, support the necessity to scrutinize the multiple meanings of the presented images.

This dissertation also does not engage very thoroughly with the dimensions of gender identity. The primary focus in this work has been to develop an argument

about how constructions of racial otherness have played out in consumer culture at the turn of the nineteenth century. Gender has been an important category of analysis in studies of mass consumption.[398] As women consumers caught the attention of advertisers in the early twentieth century, as many primary sources suggest, engaging in a more thorough analysis with the gender identities of each trade character as well as with the gendered dimensions of consumption could be a welcome expansion of this work.

Much of the conclusions drawn in this dissertation rely on available primary source material. The J. Walter Thompson (JWT) Archives at Duke University as well as the Stollwerck AG Archives in Cologne, Germany, provided important material for this work. However, the surviving records are incomplete. There are gaps in the JWT newsletter collection, and there are no surviving documents about the design of Aunt Jemima trademark in the ad agency's archives. In addition, very little documentation from the Sarotti Company has survived. The extensive records of the Stollwerck AG give some indication about the design process of advertising materials in the German chocolate industry. The little documentation available about the Sarotti Company that has survived in the document collection of the German Historical Museum in Berlin does not provide the same depth that is available in the Stollwerck archives.

Finally, this dissertation does not provide a narrative about the reaction by African Americans, Afro-Germans, or other groups of consumers that were directly affected by the stereotypical portrayal of these images. A thorough engagement with the reactions of groups such as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW)

[398] McClintok, *Imperlai Leather,* Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor,* and Mehaffy, "Advertising Race/Racing Advertising" are but three examples that engage deeply with gendered dimensions of consumption, and even to a certain extent with the intersection of race and gender.

or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the United States would add a further dimension to the discussion about race, mass consumption, and national identity. Such an analysis might prove more difficult for the German context, largely because the black German population was considerably smaller and less organized than its American counterpart was.

The question remains: why do these images remain on the boxes? Even though Aunt Jemima's picture has changed, black collectibles such as Aunt Jemima pancake syrup dispensers are popular items in antique fairs and stores. Sarotti chocolate discarded the moor as its trademark; however, the company still produces nostalgic editions with racialized motifs, many of them dating back to the 1920s. There seems to be something in these images of Aunt Jemima, Rastus, and the Sarotti-Mohr that to this day attracts consumers in the Western world to engage with the racialized discourses represented by these icons. All three trade characters exemplify the complicated politics of racialized representation. Between 1890 and 1930, as this work suggests, these racialized images became firmly implanted in consumer culture as the United States and Germany changed into nations of mass consumption. Today, in the twenty-first century, we are faced, as consumers and scholars alike, with legacies of visual imagery that has persisted despite political and social reform movements.

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