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UNSER HAUS IN KAMERUN: THE RESTORATION OF SETTLER COLONIAL MEMORY IN GERMAN POST-WORLD WAR II CINEMA

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The interior of an African farmhouse: the living room is furnished in a German style mixed with African trophies. On the walls are souvenirs and illustrations with African motifs.

Doris, who has recently arrived from Germany, and Christine, sitting in a wheelchair, are at the dining table. A record player in the background is playing the German military march “Old Comrades.”

DORIS: “Tell me Christine, can I be helpful here..., cooking for example, I am very good at it.”

CHRISTINE: “Good heavens! That’s Bismarck’s task; if you mess with him, hm... he is very sensitive about that.”

Obviously bugged by the music, Christine turns to the record player.

CHRISTINE: “I’ve had enough!” She takes the disc and smashes it on the floor.

DORIS: “What are you doing?”

CHRISTINE: “Well in a burst of carelessness father once remarked to Bismarck that he likes to listen to the song and now Bismarck plays it at least twenty times a day.”

Bismarck, a tall white-haired African, enters the living room.

CHRISTINE: “Oh Bismarck, I...I just wanted to turn the disc and then it dropped.”

BISMARCK: “Ohh.”

Aunt Edith enters the room.

AUNT EDITH: "Good morning kids."

DORIS, CHRISTINE: "Good morning."

AUNT EDITH: "What happened?,"

BISMARCK: "Old Comrades, kaput."

AUNT EDITH: "How wonderful!"

This scene from Alfred Vohrer's *Unser Haus in Kamerun* (Our House in Cameroon) from 1961 tells of how, after World War II, German history was dominated by the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the coming to terms with the past, meaning with Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. In the process, Germany's colonial past shifted to the background. In fact, Germany's colonial past almost disappeared from the discussion and from German cultural productions. *Unser Haus in Kamerun* forms an interesting and important exception to this general trend. First, it is probably the only German feature film in the post-World War II period that was actually shot in a former German African colony, in this case East Africa (then already Tanganyika), not Cameroon like the title would suggest. Second, the film has a number of references to the colonial past and German settlement efforts in Africa that are, however, never properly contextualized. Indeed, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* is set in a timeless present. It never mentions the German colonial loss after World War I, but instead does its utmost to reaffirm and update the notion of Germany as a benevolent colonizer during a time when the actual decolonization of Africa was already in full swing. When the film was released in December 1961, Cameroon had been independent for two years and Tanganyika was just severing its ties with the United Kingdom. The outcome is not only a representation of a timeless, generic, German colonialism but an awkward, outdated, view of German presence in Africa. At the time of the film's release German television was just about to initiate a critical debate about Germany's colonial past with the documentary *Heia Safari* (dir. Ralph Giordano 1966/67).

Historian Frederik Schulze has recently pointed out the relevance of non-textual primary sources for German colonial historiography.¹ His analysis of films like *Land und Leute in Südamerika* (Country and People in South America, 1929) or *Deutsche Ansiedler in Südbrasilien* (German Settlers in Southern Brazil, 1933) shows how the idea of German settler colonialism was still playing a crucial role for German nationalism after Germany's colonial loss. According to Schulze, these films demonstrate "German self-perception as a settler nation."² Contributing to this scholarship, this article discusses how the image of a German colonial settler family was revitalized in German popular cinema of the 1960s through *Unser Haus in Kamerun*. The first part of the essay discusses the film within the confines and conventions of the *Heimatfilm* (homeland film) genre, the most popular film genre in Germany at that time. Then, by focusing on three film motifs in the film – the faithful servant, the benevolent settler colonizer, and colonial sexual economy – this article argues that elements of German colonial ideology were still present in popular German cinema, and, as such, could be seen to construct a questionable historical continuity of German colonialism. However, in contrast to

reviews that criticized the film for its colonial nostalgia, this article argues for a more detailed critique. The film's treatment of colonial settling should be understood in the context of West Germany's new self-perception after World War II: a recovered nation that wanted to be perceived as a new political and economic power in the world, and also on the African continent.

Unser Haus in Kamerun tells the story of a German settler family, the Ambrocks. The head of the family is the widower Willem Ambrock (Hans Söhnker), who, together with his two sons Georg (Götz George) and Rolf (Uwe Friedrichsen), his walking-impaired daughter Christine (Katrin Schaake), and his sister-in-law Edith (Berta Drews) run a second-generation coffee plantation in East Africa. The family's house servant is an African native called "Bismarck" (Kenneth Spencer). Then there is Manuela (Helga Sommerfeld), the neighbor's daughter, who loves Georg. Willem decides to send Georg to Hamburg in Germany for a year, where his old friend, Counsel Steensand, runs a shipping company. There Georg is expected to get some commercial practice in Steensand's company so as to be a successful settler in Africa upon his return. He is also to sort out whether he really loves Manuela.

While in Hamburg, Georg meets Steensand's dubious son, Klaas (Horst Frank), who is officially engaged to a rich young lady from Hamburg high society but who also has an affair with Doris (Johanna von Koczian), an accountant in a hotel. When Georg falls in love with Doris, she follows him to Africa after Georg learns about his brother's death. With her commercial talent, Doris manages to modernize the Ambrock plantation. But when Klaas shows up in Africa, he blackmails Doris to leave with him or risk having the Ambrocks learn about Doris' illegitimate daughter. On their way from the plantation, Klaas dies in a car accident and Doris survives. Together with Georg, who has already learned about her past, she starts a new life in Africa. So, while Germany no longer has any colonies in Africa, it does not mean that there could not be German settler futures there, as Doris and George attest.

Unser Haus in Kamerun was produced by Rialto-Film, a popular Danish-German production company that was known for its adaptations of the crime stories of British novelist Edgar Wallace. From the late fifties until the early seventies, Wallace films drew millions of German viewers into the movies and became a trademark for popular German cinema.³ In the early sixties, the German Rialto started a second franchise with adaptations of westerns from German adventure author Karl May. The first May western, *Der Schatz im Silbersee* (The Treasure of Silver Lake), was released in December 1962, exactly a year after *Unser Haus in Kamerun*.

The production details of *Unser Haus in Kamerun* share important features with both Rialto series: Alfred Vohrer was as the director of many Edgar Wallace films and he strongly influenced the series' look when directing some of the Karl May adaptations. Furthermore, Vohrer's regular film composer Martin Böttcher worked for both series. His score for *Der Schatz im Silbersee* remains one of the most iconic in German film history. For *Unser Haus in Kamerun*, Böttcher used a very similar musical theme for soundtracking the

Africa steppe, which makes the film almost a musical blueprint for the May films that were produced in the following years. Götz George, the main protagonist in *Unser Haus in Kamerun*, was also cast for *Der Schatz im Silbersee*. Last but not least, like many of the Karl May films, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* was addressing an international market and audience. The film was released in Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, and elsewhere.

A Colonial Heimatfilm

Unser Haus in Kamerun focuses on family relations and constellations that are characteristic for the most popular genre of post-World War II German cinema, the *Heimatfilm* (homeland film). The genre is typically identified by films with exceedingly simple storylines that are shot in prototypical, and “mythic,” German sceneries, such as the Black Forest or the Alps. The African and colonial setting, however, makes the film an “exterritorialized Heimatfilm.”⁴ For decades, Heimatfilms were considered to provide the German audience with a “holiday from history,” an obfuscated reality that, after World War II, aligned the audience “with the reactionary ideology of the decade.”⁵ Recent scholarship has, however, produced a new understanding of the Heimatfilm genre. Heimatfilms, as film scholar Sabine Hake notes, showed “an acute awareness of contemporary problems in their preoccupation with incomplete, dysfunctional, or unconventional families.”⁶

Unser Haus in Kamerun corresponds in many ways to Hake’s notions of the dysfunctional family and the integration of traditional structures into processes of social, technological, and spatial modernization that should form the basis on which a brand new and modern West Germany identity needed to be built.⁷ Yet, this process of intersecting the old and the new is riddled with tensions. Willem Ambrock is a widower and the family’s patriarch who stands for traditional beliefs and values, while Aunt Edith represents the lost mother, and balances Willem’s conservatism. She supports the younger generation in their rebellion against old traditions. Edith is also presented as progressive in that she drinks whiskey and defies table manners. The losses suffered by the Ambrocks provide a specific moral lesson: an unstable or risky life will result in misery. Georg loses his brother Rolf through the latter’s foolhardy affection for flying airplanes without paying attention to technical standards; risky adventurers have short futures.

Dysfunctionality also characterizes Manuela and Doris’ family situation. Manuela, the neighbors’ daughter, seems to be raising herself. She talks about her parents but they are never shown in the film. In turn, Doris, being a single mother, has to work hard to finance her daughter’s boarding school. Due to her profession, willingness to work, and skills as an accountant, she takes over the management of the plantation and produces a small German *Wirtschaftswunder* in Africa. Doris is both modern and moral, and thus deserves happiness and prosperity as a German settler in Africa.

With its exotic setting, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* overlaps with another popular genre of the 1950s and 1960s, the travel film. Relocating film stories to exotic

places, mainly southern European neighboring states, the West German film industry reacted to the boom in German tourism that was caused by the German economic miracle after World War II, the *Wirtschaftswunder*. German film companies produced a number of films with stories about benevolent and friendly Germans abroad, either in the Americas, the South Seas, or in Africa.

The story of a German colonial settler family abroad, more specifically in a former German colony was perfectly suited to transfigure the image of German colonialism in the 1960s, a period of time that saw the beginnings of efforts for a more benevolent German commitment on the Africa continent through job creation and humanitarian aid, as shown in the film. The movie sought to restore the self-perception of Germany as a settler nation, a nation that should be recognized for its positive contributions in the world.

Unser Haus in Kamerun was not the first West German film production that was filmed on the African continent. One such film series was the trilogy *Liane, das Mädchen aus dem Urwald* [Liane, Jungle Goddess] (Eduard von Borsody, FRG 1956), *Liane, die weiße Sklavin* [Nature Girl and the Slaver] (Hermann Leitner, FRG 1957), and *Liane, Tochter des Dschungels* [Liane, Daughter of the Jungle] (Hermann Leitner, FRG 1961). This was the reworking of the popular colonial adventure theme of a white jungle girl who lives with an African tribe and who gets discovered by white expeditioners.⁸

Unser Haus in Kamerun was neither shot, nor does its story play in Cameroon. Production took place in what was then the British colony Tanganyika, and what used to be German East Africa. Apparently the decision not to shoot in Cameroon was for purely technical reasons. The press, however, speculated that renaming the film in “Unser Haus in Tanganjika” (Our House in Tanganyika) would be less “attractive” than using the still valid name of a former German colony.⁹ The film never explicitly makes a reference to German colonial history in the dialogue, but the possessive pronoun in the film’s title leaves no doubt that there still was a German “house” in Africa forty years after Germany’s colonial loss, and that in this house there were still German settlers keeping German entrepreneurship alive.

The Ambrocks are a settler family and their plantation and estate, once referred to as Willemsland, has been theirs for two generations. It is their land and their home. They view themselves as indigenous to the place, belonging to Africa with a legitimate claim to the land. While never clearly stated, it seems apparent that Willem Ambrock must have come to the colony before World War I. There is a photograph of General von Lettow-Vorbeck on the wall of Willem’s office, indicating his admiration for this past colonial soldier, hero, and German expansionist. The movie also suggests that either he or his father once fought in the colonial *Schutztruppe* in German East Africa, and thus were actively involved in the initial violent capture of the land from the Africans. Willem’s nostalgia for the song “Old Comrades,” one of the most popular German military marching song celebrating the solidarity among soldiers in the company and battle, speaks of his possible regret that times are changing and that, with the loss of the colony in World War I, the German settler dream is not what it once was.

Bismarck, the Faithful Askari

The film does not pay any attention to the relations between the Ambrocks and their African workers, though obviously, the plantation would not exist without a sufficient labor force. From the very first scene onward, the film shows the African workers as a diligent, jolly, and singing anonymous mass. The only African in the film who is characterized in any detail is Bismarck, the family's servant. His name goes back to German Reich Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), under whose government Germany became a colonial power. Similar to the real von Bismarck, who was also known as the “Iron Chancellor” of the German Reich, the name of the Ambrock's servant is not mockery, rather it underlines his social status as the custodian of the house. His appearance as tall and dignified, his grey hair, and a set of teeth that he gets back after Georg's visit to town, connote him as an elderly man, maybe the same age as Willem, and his intimacy with each family member suggests that he has been the Ambrocks' servant for decades. His grief for the broken disc “Old Comrades” emphasizes his profound affection for Willem, whereas the claim of playing the song every minute of the day indicates that Bismarck himself is an “Old Comrade.” Curiously, Bismarck's clothing never changes in the film. A red fez and a white kurta with a red sash cast him as a stereotype of an African servant. His faithful service to the family and his fixed image correspond to the image of the “faithful Askari” that turned into a colonial myth after the Versailles treaty of 1919.

After the loss of its colonies in World War I, the notion of Germany as a somehow benevolent colonizing nation was heavily attacked by the victorious



FIGURE 7.1 Bismarck – the faithful servant. Screenshot from *Unser Haus in Kamerun* by the author.

allied powers. It was argued that Germany was never able to administrate its colonies in a civilized way and had therefore lost the right to have colonies. On the German side the discussion became known as the colonial guilt lie (*koloniale Schuldfrage*), and colonial revisionists demanded the return of the lost colonies to German administration. One of their main arguments was that German colonial rule could not have been so terrible because many African mercenaries, the Askari, were willing to support it and had followed General von Lettow-Vorbeck in defending German East Africa during World War I.

How persistent the image of Germany as a benevolent colonizer and the myth of the faithful Askari were in German collective memory in the 1960s is aptly demonstrated by the two-part television documentary broadcast in October 1966, five years after *Unser Haus in Kamerun*.¹⁰ Written and directed by the young German journalist Ralph Giordano, *Heia Safari. Die Legende von der deutschen Kolonialidylle in Afrika* (Heia Safari. The Legend of the German Colonial Idyll in Africa) was based on research in Tanzania and Cameroon as well as official German documents. The documentary clearly attacked the myth of successful German colonialism in Africa. For Giordano, *Heia Safari* was intended to work as a provocation against German colonial myths and the admiration of General Lettow-Vorbeck, who had passed away two years before, but who was still honored in Germany despite his racist and anti-democratic viewpoints.

In his opening speech in the first part of his documentary, Giordano stated that the time had come to realize that there was no reconciliation between colonial reality and colonial legend. Already, the documentary's title indicates that Giordano was ready to provoke. *Heia Safari* was a popular marching song that was written during World War I in German East Africa. In its first verse the song remembers the collaboration of the Askari in the *Schutztruppe*: "How often have we marched on a narrow negro path (*Negepfad*), through the wide steppe, when early morning comes. How did we listen to the sound, the old familiar song of bearer and Askari: Heia, heia, Safari."

The first part of the documentary depicted the various armed conflicts between Germans and the African population living in the colonies, while the second part focused on the manifestation of colonial rule through forced labor, expropriation, expulsion, and corporal punishment. Giordano exclusively interviewed Africans and focused on their suffering in the hands of the Germans. To avoid any apologetic or glorifying moments of German colonialism, Giordano abstained from any interviews with German contemporary witnesses.¹¹

Heia Safari evoked an unexpectedly violent storm of protest, especially from older generations. On February 9, 1967, the WDR broadcasted a panel discussion of historians, museum directors, a representative of the Afrika-Verein (a lobby group of the German economy supporting the cooperation between Africa and Germany), Ralph Giordano, the editor in charge, and invited viewers. The most outrageous reactions came from representatives of the older generation, who still had vivid memories of the colonial era and who were not prepared to accept criticism of German colonial rule. The TV discussion did not result in a transformation of their opinion about Germany's colonial past. Public opinion was that the older generation soured the debate. The

discussion “failed primarily because of the obstinacy (*Unbelehrbarkeit*) of the invited guests, who still regarded the colonial era as fundamentally positive and whose interventions had a one-sidedly accusing aggressive character.”¹²

In his analysis of the television panel, historian Eckard Michels points out that the main argument among the protests against Giordano’s take on German colonial history was “that German colonial rule could not have been as bad as claimed in *Heia Safari* because of the Africans’ loyalty, either as bearers or Askari, to Lettow-Vorbeck in the First World War.”¹³ As one viewer wrote:

How do such malicious agitators want to explain that in the First World War not only our Askari but also the simple bearer...thousands of them remained faithful to the last day in distress and death when often only a leap into the bush would have given them freedom and return to their homeland?¹⁴

The discussion about Germany’s benevolent role in Africa that characterized the public discussion about *Heia Safari* is also visible in *Unser Haus in Kamerun*. The representation of Africans as grateful workers and Bismarck’s devotion to the family shares this line of thinking from the critics of *Heia Safari*. Still, in the 1960s many viewers’ understanding of German colonial rule in Africa boiled down to this: German colonialism had been, above all, an economic benefit and a blessing for the local population.

Benevolent German Settlers

The benevolent character of the Ambrock family is epitomized in Aunt Edith’s commitment to improving local lives. Photographs of colonized Africans that are lining up in front of a colonial doctor’s desk to get medical treatment are legion in colonial photography and they usually illustrate the good intentions of Europeans devoted to civilizing and helping the locals. It is exactly the same motif that reappears in *Unser Haus in Kamerun*: Edith is a medical doctor, who cures African women in the Ambrock’s garden.

Furthermore, the viewer learns that Willem has donated the regional hospital to the people, where Edith also works. When Doris arrives at the Ambrock plantation Edith gets an emergency call from the hospital about an impending birth, and she invites Doris to join her. At the hospital, Edith asks Doris to hold the newborn, and when she takes it up, an African doctor comments: “You are holding the baby very skillfully – like a mother.” These words remind Doris of her own child and her neglect as a mother. However, the scene puts Edith and Doris in a particular role in regard to German medical support in Africa: Doris and Edith deliver and take care of the newborn. Doris does not just behave like a mother, she is “Mother Africa,” the symbolic ancestor and origin of the human race.

The film brings forth another important colonial trope that is represented through a female protagonist, even though, in this case, it comes with an interesting twist. In his lucid analysis of racial representation in the Weimar cinema, film scholar Tobias



FIGURE 7.2 Dr. Edith Ambrock. Screenshot from *Unser Haus in Kamerun* by the author.

Nagl writes that in colonial revisionist films such as *Allein im Unwald. Die Rache der Afrikanerin* [Alone in the Jungle. Revenge of the African Woman] (dir. Ernst Wendt, 1922), or *Ich hatt' einen Kameraden* [I Once Had a Comrade-in-Arms] (dir. Conrad Wiene, 1926), the African female protagonists are never perceived as sexual partners. In both films, an African woman loves a white protagonist but they have to accept that their love goes unfulfilled. These women are either relegated to deviant sexual relations and/or they are doomed to death.¹⁵

The exclusion and/or the invisibility of the black desiring woman can be seen in another Heimatfilm that was shot three years before *Unser Haus in Kamerun*. *Noch einmal die Heimat seh'n* [See the Heimat Once Again] (dir. Otto Meyer, 1958) tells the story of a rivalry between young forest wardens, Michael and Bertl, who both love the same woman, Gerda. To get rid of Michael, Bertl accuses Michael of having shot a man. Michael escapes to his old wartime comrade Robert, who lives in Africa. Homesickness drives Michael and Robert back to the Alps, where Michael's innocence finally is proved.

Most instructive are the first images of Michael's new life in Africa. It starts with a shot of little Koko, a small African child that sneaks into Michael's tent, where she takes a chocolate bar out of Michael's first aid kit, while her mother, Amada, is preparing food at a campfire for Michael and Robert. Amada is soon in love with Michael, especially after he saves her life from an attacking leopard. Amada is portrayed through the most simplistic racial stereotypes of an African woman. She wears a grass skirt and a necklace with a predator's teeth, and is mostly shown topless. This stereotypical racial representation did not go unnoticed in the reviews. The *Filmdienst* wondered why "a pretty Negro woman (*Negerfrau*), who, despite civilized manners, is the only one who has constantly to walk around uncivilized, that is to say

undressed.”¹⁶ Michael, however, is immune to her physical attraction, her caring, and her devotion. He never responds to Amada’s affection and she finally has to accept her unfulfilled love when Michael and Robert return to Germany.

Unser Haus in Kamerun did not cast a black female actor, yet this does not mean that similar denied sexual relations and tensions do not exist in the film. The Italian film poster of *Unser Haus in Kamerun*, released as *Mal d’ Africa, mal d’amore* (Sick of Africa, Sick of Love), shows a female body, neither black nor white, wearing a black slip with some glittering fringes, huge earrings, and arm rings, who ecstatically dances at night at a campfire in front of white men and women. The illustration has no reference to the film as no such scene exists in *Unser Haus in Kamerun*. However, if there is any resemblance to a female protagonist in the film, it is Manuela, the neighbors’ daughter, who is the only female that corresponds in her physiognomy to the graphic body.¹⁷

In contrast to Doris, who is presented as a reserved, slightly conservative woman, Manuela is characterized as an athletic, impulsive young woman who is ready to explore her sexuality. She is never shown in a domestic context like Doris, but appears exclusively on her horse and in the wilderness. All her attributes connote Manuela as a girl who lives outside the social norms; she is wild and unsuited to becoming a respectable settler wife. She has perhaps “gone native,” being Africanized by her environment. At her first meeting with Georg, Manuela is depicted as a modern Amazon. She is riding a black horse and stops Georg and his African workers on their way back to the plantation. She tells Georg about her vacation in Switzerland, where she has learned to kiss. Georg remarks that her breasts have grown since they met the last time, and Manuela shows Georg how good she has become at kissing and tells him that she loves him.

With her attitude of a sexually curious young woman, Manuela corresponds to the image of the young pubescent women (*Backfisch*), who appears in a number of films to challenge the conservative sexual morals of the 1950s and early 1960s. One can also read her role as a substitute for the black desiring woman who has to accept her rejection in favor of the educated, professional, motherly Doris. Nagl notes that Weimar cinema often used German black-face actors to avoid controversial debates about the role of black female actors in a white patriarchal sexual economy: the more attractive a character was supposed to be, the more white she had to be.¹⁸ Having said this, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* offers colonialism’s *ultima ratio* in racial purity. Manuela is a white black woman who can only attract Georg’s attention in the jungle as long as he has not met a real white woman in civilization.

Conclusion

The presentation of German colonial history after World War II went hand in hand with a significant change in the media landscape. Cinema was going to lose its position in shaping public opinion in favor of television. Whereas the German cinema audiences halved between 1956 and 1962, television was able to increase its

spectator numbers almost tenfold during this period. In his analysis of *Heia Safari*, Michels shows that the controversy about the documentary could not have been possible without television's growing significance in public debates and its ability to polarize opinion. The "TV scandal" was above all a generational conflict in which only the younger viewers were prepared to deal with the colonial past alongside, and in addition to, the more recent past of Nazi rule and the Holocaust. This does not mean that the older generation was pro-colonial as such, but rather that many television viewers did not want to be deprived of yet another illusion pertaining to their country's already checkered history in the twentieth century.¹⁹

Unser Haus in Kamerun was promoted as a "grand family film of international standard." It was Rialto's first color film and, together with Martin Böttcher's intriguing soundtrack, the film offered its audience an entertaining visual and acoustic experience. Reviews, however, almost unanimously criticized the colonial context of the film and the stereotypical representation of Africa and Africans, especially Bismarck's role. The *Deutsche Zeitung und Wirtschaftszeitung* criticized the film for ignoring Africa's "hot political reality" that does not any longer allow for a "house and garden film about a planter's good and bad times."²⁰ The *Deutsche Volkszeitung* wondered what Alfred Vohrer and his scriptwriter wanted to say with the film: "Do you want to go back to those times when we were still proud colonial masters?"²¹

The film invites a reading of colonial nostalgia, but considering the historical context of the film's release, it demands a more complex answer. In contrast to the 1920s, in which films about the German colonies supported a colonial revisionist discourse, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* could not ignore that the times had changed. In a short but significant scene when Georg returns to Africa we see a group of Africans singing and dancing at the airport. One expects that they are waiting for Georg but their welcome is for an African leader who is on the same plane as Georg (and Doris). At that moment, the film shows the new political context of an independent Africa. Thus, seeing the film solely as through colonial nostalgia turns out to be too short-sighted. Instead, the film posits that Germany, even without colonial territories, was still a significant economic and stabilizing political power on the African continent.

Film scholar Tim Bergfelder notes that anecdotes, legends, and myths abound as to why the Rialto film company embarked on the adaption of Karl May novels.²² Whatever the answer is, if Rialto planned to continue with productions in an African-colonial settler setting, *Unser Haus in Kamerun* proved to be the wrong formula. Karl May's imagined Wild West turned out to be a much safer place than Germany's colonial past. The attempt to make colonial settler ideology part of Germany's new international profile in the world was a failed one. *Unser Haus in Kamerun* was not only an ideological minefield but colonial history, in general, was not a subject that German cinema was ready to critically deal with, not in the 1960s and not today.

Notes

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- 2 Schulze, "German Settler," 86.
- 3 Tim Bergfelder, *International Adventures: German Popular Cinema and European Co-Productions in the 1960s* (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 138–171.
- 4 Johannes von Moltke, *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 235.
- 5 Johannes von Moltke, "Evergreens: The Heimat Genre." In *The German Cinema Book*, eds. Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter and Deniz Göktürk (London: British Film Institute, 2002), 18.
- 6 Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema*, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2008), 118.
- 7 Wolfgang Fuhrmann, "Fortschritt, Modernität und Lebensentwürfe. Brasilienbilder im westdeutschen Kino der 1950 Jahre." In *Kulturdialog Brasilien – Deutschland: Design, Film, Literatur, Medien*, eds. Geane Alzamora, Renira Rampazzo Gambarato, and Simone Malaguti (Berlin: edition tranvía, 2008), 321–334.
- 8 Michael Flitner, "Das Mädchen aus dem Urwald. Über Geschlecht und Nation in einem Filmhit der 1950 Jahre," *Geographische Revue* 7 (2005), 7–24.
- 9 N.N.: Fahr'n Sie nicht nach Kamerun..., *Film Revue* 26 (1961), 9–11.
- 10 Eckard Michels, "Geschichtspolitik im Fernsehen, Die WDR-Dokumentation 'Heia Safari' von 1966/67 über Deutschlands Kolonialvergangenheit," *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 56, no. 3 (2008), 467–492.
- 11 Michels, "Geschichtspolitik," 478.
- 12 Michels, "Geschichtspolitik," 488.
- 13 Michels, "Geschichtspolitik," 483.
- 14 Michels, "Geschichtspolitik," 484.
- 15 Tobias Nagl, *Die unheimliche Maschine: Rasse und Repräsentation im Weimarer Kino* (München: edition text und kritik, 2009), 438.
- 16 *Filmdienst*, 20.11.1958. Supplement to *Noch einmal die Heimat seh'n*. DVD, Kinowelt 2006.
- 17 https://rateyourmusic.com/images/all?type=F&assoc_id=170847 (accessed 12 November 2019).
- 18 Nagl, *Die unheimliche Maschine*, 494.
- 19 Michels, "Geschichtspolitik," 482.
- 20 Günter Seuren, "Nur die Hyäne kläfft nicht deutsch," *Deutsch Zeitung und Wirtschaftszeitung*, January 30, 1962.
- 21 Pk, "Alte Kameraden," *Deutsche Volkszeitung*, February 9, 1962.
- 22 Bergfelder, *International Adventures*, 181.