A transient presence: black visitors and sojourners in Imperial Germany, 1884-1914

AITKEN, Robbie <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3332-3063>

A Transient Presence: Black Visitors and Sojourners in Imperial Germany, 1884-1914

Dr. Robbie Aitken
Reader
History, Sheffield Hallam University
City Campus, Sheffield S1 1WB, UK
tel. +44-(0)114 225 5516
R.Aitken@shu.ac.uk

Abstract

The onset of German colonial rule in Africa brought increasing numbers of Black men and women to Germany. Pre-1914 the vast majority of these Africans can best be described as visitors or sojourners and the Black population as a whole was a transient one. This makes recovering their presence in the archival record exceptionally difficult and it is not surprising that the existing historiography almost exclusively focuses on individual biographies of well-documented lives. Through utilising a number of newly digitised archival materials, particularly the Hamburg Passenger Lists, this article draws upon a database with information on 1094 individuals from sub-Saharan Africa who spent time in Germany over the period 1884-1914 in order to add considerable bread and depth to our understanding of the Black presence as a whole. It provides increasing empirical detail about the make-up and character of this fluid population - where visitors came from, why they came to Germany, their age on arrival - as well as more accurate detail on the temporal and, to a lesser extent, spatial distribution of visitors.

Key Words

Africans in Germany; Migration; Imperial Germany; German Colonialism, Colonial Migrants

A Transient Presence: Black Visitors and Sojourners in Imperial Germany, 1884-1914[1]

The ever increasing global transfer of goods, people and information in combination with the widening reach of European imperialism drew growing numbers of Black people to Imperial Germany from the late nineteenth century onwards up to 1914 and the outbreak of World War One. In particular, the development of direct shipping links to Africa facilitated the small, but not insubstantial, movement of African men, women and children from Germany's newly established African territories of Cameroon, Togo, German East Africa (GEAf) and German Southwest Africa (GSWAf) to Germany. There they were joined by others of sub-Saharan African heritage from further afield such as the United States, South America and the Caribbean. Although in comparison with the Black presence in Britain and France their numbers were not large, reports in local and regional newspapers demonstrate that Germans were increasingly aware of and interested in these Black visitors and that Black people were to be found throughout most of the country.[2] Indeed, the decades prior to 1914 constitute a formative period in the creation of a permanent, visible and progressively networked Black presence in Germany. Who were these visitors? Where exactly did they come from and what or who brought them to Germany?

This article adopts a strategy often used in migration history and migration studies of employing a sample, or in this case a database, in order to provide increasing empirical detail about the make-up and character of this presence as well as the temporal and, to a lesser

[1] I am extremely grateful to colleagues Barbara Bush, Niels Petersson and John Singleton and to the two anonymous reviewers for their advice on the content of this article. Merv Lewis provided invaluable help with ideas on how to construct the database and on how to best present the findings in tabular form.

[2] Among many examples see: "Steglitz," *Teltower Kreisblatt*, 4 July 1885, 4; "Aus Stadt und Kreis," *Freiburger Zeitung*, 12 September 1888, 3; "Todesanzeige," *Mülheimer Zeitung*, 19 August, 1890, n.p.; "Dunkle Existenzen: Aus dem Berufsleben der Berliner Neger", *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*, 13 June 1902, 40

extent, spatial distribution of Africans who spent time in Germany.[3] It focuses exclusively on sub-Saharan Africans who made up the majority of Black visitors to Germany pre-1914 and is based on information on 1094 individuals. The time frame under consideration spans the period from 1884, the onset of realised German colonialism, until 1914 when shipping routes to Africa were disrupted.

The creation of a database requires finding and organising the crucial data which Stephen Small among others recently called for, which can function as a point of departure for further research into 'lives, histories and experiences'.[4] In part this about furthering the recovery of the forgotten presence of both individuals and groups; a process with a long history that gained considerable momentum with the publication of *Farbe bekennen* in 1986.[5] A mixture of personal testimonies, scholarly essays, group discussion and poetry, *Farbe bekennen* presented a first overview of the history of the Black presence in Germany. The work of recovery was continued by one of the volume's editors, Katharina Oguntoye, and by Paulette Reed-Anderson in the 1990s.[6] Both made use of materials found in the German National Archive (*Bundesarchiv*) in Berlin to compile lists of basic biographical information pertaining to around 150 individuals of African heritage who they had uncovered in their research.[7] These have served as an important starting point for much of the work that has followed on Black German history.[8] More recently based partly on the *Bundesarchiv* material Pascal Grosse first in 2002, and again in 2008, estimated the number of Africans and their German-born children recoverable in the archival records at just over 500 for the entire

[3] Among many examples see, Hornsby, "Patterns of Scottish Emigration"; Pooley and Turnball, *Migration and Mobility*; Chamberlain, *Narratives of Exile and Return*.
[4] Small, "Introduction: The Empire Strikes Back," xxxi.
[5] Oguntoye, Opitz, and Schultz (eds.), *Farbe bekennen*. See also the discussion on earlier efforts to trace Black experiences in Germany in Esuruoso and Koepsell (eds.), *Arriving in the Future*.
[6] Oguntoye, *Eine Afro-Deutsche Geschichte*; Reed-Anderson, *Eine Geschichte*.
[7] For the files consulted see Oguntoye, *Eine Afro-Deutsche Geschichte*, 179.
[8] Among others, see, Martin and Alonzo, *Zwischen Charleston und Steckschritt*; Lusane, *Hitler's Black Victims*; Campt, *Other Germans*; Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*.

period 1884-1945.[9] The growing digitisation of printed and archival materials such as newspapers, address books, medical and anthropological journals, and passenger lists now, however, offers up a wealth of new and accessible information on Germany's African presence.[10] This article seeks to take advantage of some of these new materials in order to add to our understanding of this presence in pre-1914 Germany.

Furthermore, the added empirical breadth and depth this material lends to research will help to normalise the historical (and continued) presence of people of African heritage in Germany from the late nineteenth century onwards. Presently, much of the research into Black German (and Black European) history tends to take a biographical approach which focuses primarily on well-documented individual lives.[11] Such in-depth and imaginative studies offer invaluable insights into individual's experiences, but this frequently make the subjects of the research appear as 'exceptional' and isolated. However, all Black visitors who came to Europe were, by the very fact of crossing the global colour line, 'exemplary individuals'.[12] Similarly, in the German case, it was frequently wishful thinking on behalf of the German authorities that created an image of the isolated African, rather than this matching the reality.[13] The construction of a database to make visible the Black presence should be seen not as an alternative, but as being complementary to the biographical approach. The benefits of this have already been demonstrated by Anne Kuhlmann-Smirnov in her study of Black people in seventeenth and eighteenth century Germany which has helped to complicate our understanding of their opportunities for agency and for social integration within German

[9] Grosse, "Koloniale Lebenswelten," 196; Grosse, "Colonial Migration and the Law," 221.
[10] See for example the digitised address books for Hamburg (1787 to 1966) and Berlin (1799-1943) available at http://agora.sub.uni-hamburg.de/subhh-adress/digbib/start and http://www.zlb.de/besondere-angebote/berliner-adressbuecher.html. Accessed January 6, 2016.
[11] Amongst others see, Bechhaus-Gerst, *Treu bis in den Tod*; Firla, *Der kameruner Artist Hermann Kessern*; van der Heyden (ed.), *Unbekannte Biographien*.
[12] Rosenhaft and Aitken, "Introduction," 13.
[13] Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 64.

princely courts.[14] As her study shows a database can reveal shared characteristics among visitors as well as patterns of migration. This helps us to understand the complex nature of the Black presence in which the lives of individuals and groups can be situated.

Constructing a Database: Methodology

The database constructed for the purpose of this study can best be described as a relational one.[15] At its core is data retrieved from two key repositories. The first of these are the recently digitised Hamburg Passenger Lists.[16] For some time the lists have been of value to migration historians and they have been utilised in studies of German migration to the United States.[17] A record of all passengers sailing on a vessel from Hamburg had to be taken and presented to the police before the vessel would be granted permission to sail[18] Each vessel's passenger list contains important biographical details about passengers: name, gender, age, country of origin, place of residence, occupation and destination. These were adopted as field names around which to organise the key information in the database. The digitized lists have a search function which allows users to search pre-1923 records by passenger name, keyword, ethnicity, name of ship, and destination. This was found not to be fool-proof. Therefore, lists for all ships sailing to destinations in Africa were systematically scrutinised.

Several commentators have pointed out issues of accuracy with the information recorded in passenger lists in general and the Hamburg lists specifically.[19] Some of these are only magnified in connection with information on African passengers, which is often imprecise

[14] Kuhlmann-Smirnov, "Ambiguous Duty" and *Schwarze Europaer*.
[15] Lewis and Lloyd-Jones, *Using Computers in History*, 126
[16] The digitised lists comprise the documents in the file 373-7 I, VIII (Auswanderungsamt I) from the Staatsarchiv Hamburg (StAHam). They have been made available through the subscription website ancestry.com
[17] Among others see Assion, *Über Hamburg nach Amerika*; Östreich, *Des rauhen Winters*; Grubb, *German Immigration and Servitude*.
[18] Gabrielsson, "Das Projekt 'Link to your Roots,'" 378.
[19] Schriewer, "Die Hamburger Schiffslisten"; Weß, *Von Göttingen nach die Valdivia*, 27-8.

and fragmentary. For over 200 individuals no name was given and for several dozen others only a first or second name was listed. This raises the possibility of some people being recorded more than once and information being duplicated. The timings and destinations of travellers, however, suggest that any overlap is limited. Equally, there are also transcription problems with African names, which were often recorded phonetically. This served as a hindrance to finding complementary material about passengers in other sources. A range of racial descriptors were used by those compiling the lists to categorise Black passengers such as *Neger*, *Farbiger* (coloured), and *Eingeborener* (native) - a term reserved for Africans from Germany's protectorates. This was part of the process of racialisation many Black visitors were subjected to. Such descriptors were not always used and in the case of passengers with Arabic names if no racial descriptor was present and no related external documents could be found, it was impossible to determine whether the passenger was of sub-Saharan African heritage. In such instances they were not included in the database. Additionally, information on occupation was frequently missing and for some passengers only an estimated age or no age at all was given. Nonetheless, the information offered up greatly helps with the process of recovering Black visitors whose presence in Germany went otherwise unrecorded. In particular, they make visible visitors such as servants and sailors, whose numerical contribution to the Black presence was significant, but who were rarely captured in other archival records and who, as a consequence, are mentioned only in passing in the existing secondary literature.

The data retrieved can only be at best partial: the lists only record those departing from Hamburg and not those arriving in Germany - this information does not exist. Nor do the lists include those potentially leaving from other border crossings, those who stayed, or those who died in Germany. This deficit can be overcome to an extent through consulting the

Bundesarchiv files identified by Oguntoye in her ground-breaking research. These files, and others located in the *Bundesarchiv,* contain considerable correspondence from and about Africans present in Germany both before and after 1914 as well as identity documents for a number of individuals and various lists of Black residents compiled by state organs in the 1920s and 30s. There is potential selection bias in making use of this material because the files are concerned primarily, but not exclusively, with people from Germany's African colonies. Similarly, these documents are also open to questions of accuracy and they are incomplete, but they significantly add to the hitherto available information and at present they offer up the most comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data on Black African visitors and eventual residents who lived or died in Germany during the period under research.

The combined data from the passenger lists and the *Bundesarchiv* was then further triangulated with archival material from more than seventy national, regional, local and missionary archives from eleven different countries as well as printed material and the existing secondary literature.[20] This included citizenship applications, registration cards, newspaper articles and education records. The aim was to complement, refine, question and fill gaps in the recorded information.[21] In total this produced data on 1094 individuals, 848 whose names have been recovered and 246 who remain anonymous. Not included are their German-born children, who pre-1914 likely numbered several dozen. This supports the estimates of Martin and Alonzo and Aitken and Rosenhaft that the overall Black presence, including also African-Americans, Afro-Latin and South Americans and Afro-Caribbean people, numbered several thousand pre-1914, rather than several hundred.[22] Clearly, the

[20] For a full list of the archival, printed and secondary material consulted in the construction of the database see, Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 329-53. New material from the Provinzarchiv der Pallottiner in Limburg has also been included.
[21] Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide," 358.
[22] Martin and Alonzo, *Im Netz der Moderne*, 9; Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 2. On figures see, Eckert, "Louis Brody of Cameroon," 161.

database and the information it contains reflect the fragmentary nature of the archival record pertaining to the Black presence and the inherent problems that this brings with it.[23] Nonetheless, in view of its size and scope it provides a greater understanding general context against which individual stories can be better interpreted and against which it is possible to assess what is normal and what is exceptional about Germany's African presence.

A Heterogeneous Presence

Pre-1914 several key traits characterise the African presence: it was overwhelmingly male, transient and largely, but not exclusively, young. In many other respects it was very heterogeneous. Establishing where African visitors came from is complicated by several factors. Aside from problems of missing or inaccurate data, categorising the place of origin for individuals is in itself problematic. The European division of Africa established borders which did not reflect the wide variety of geographical, religious and ethnic backgrounds of those living within these borders. Consequently, regions identified by Europeans (and in the primary materials) as being a single entity, were often not lived/experienced as such by indigenous populations. Similarly, borders could, and did change over time as European powers swapped territories or expanded their empires. Whilst acknowledging these issues, and remaining mindful of this diversity, the contemporary 1914 European designations for territories have been used both in the database and table 1 in order to capture a sense of geographical origin that is both manageable and meaningful. [table 1 near here]

Perhaps surprisingly just under 50%, of those who came to Germany were from Germany's own African colonies. Of this number around half (24%) came from Cameroon alone; 13% came from Togo which included a stretch of present-day Ghana; 9% from GEAf (parts of

[23] On the archival record, Martin and Alonzo, *Im Netz der Moderne*, 11.

present-day Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda); and only 3% from GSWAf (present-day Namibia). The considerably unequal distribution of colonial subjects can, at a superficial level, be explained by the difference in population sizes of the territories. The indigenous population of GSWAf was estimated at 200 000 in 1901 and it would be decimated by the Herero-Nama genocide of 1904-08.[24] In comparison, in the same year Cameroon had a population of around 3½ million. Given that GEAf had a population of 6 million in 1901, however, population size alone cannot explain these differences. As will become clear below other underlying factors were more significant.

The heterogeneity of the population of German colonial subjects reflected the diversity of the African presence in general. Large numbers came from elite political and trading families based in small, but growing West African coastal towns. These were population groups who were long accustomed to social, political and economic interaction with European businessmen, visitors, missionaries and settlers. Of these the dominant proportion was made up of Duala from the port of Douala, Cameroon, but Christian elite from Victoria (now Limbé), Cameroon and Ewe and Afro-Brazilians from Lome and Aneho, Togo were also present.[25] A range of people came from the capital of GEAf, the cosmopolitan port of Dar es Salaam. Smaller numbers came from the interior like Bali from the Cameroonian grasslands or pastoral societies such as Herero and Nama from GSWAf or Maasai from GEAf. As well as Christian converts from all the German colonies Muslims like the Waswahili from GEAf and a handful of individuals from the sultanates in northern Cameroon also spent time in Germany.[26]

[24] Gann and Duignan, *The Rulers of German Africa*, 71. On statistics see, Stoecker, *German Imperialism*, 185.
[25] On middlemen groups see, Austen and Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers*; Jones and Sebald (eds.), *An African Family Archive*; Amos, "Afro-Brazilians in Togo".
[26] On East Africans see, Bechhaus-Gerst, "Kiswahili-speaking Africans".

The remaining 51% came from almost all parts of sub-Saharan Africa and people from 23 different sub-Saharan African territories are represented in the database. They came in widely varying numbers from coastal, interior, southern and island regions under British, French, Portuguese, and Belgian colonial rule as well as from the independent states of Liberia and Ethiopia. The most substantial numbers came from the Gold Coast (10%, present-day Ghana), Sudan (8%) the Union of South Africa (6% including the Cape Colony, Transvaal and Natal) and Liberia (5%). The place of origin for around 16% (173 people), remains unknown. On the basis of individuals' surnames as well as the destination of those who left Germany it appears that at least 141 of these were West Africans. This heterogeneity was to a large extent dictated by the migration routes that brought Africans to Germany.

Routes to Germany

While many and varied, the reasons for travel that brought almost all Africans listed in the database to Germany can be described as temporary. Consequently they are perhaps better described as sojourners or visitors, rather than migrants. [27] As individuals or in groups Africans arrived for specific purposes which were limited in their timeframe and most, if not absolutely all, had the intention of eventually returning home. The grounds for travel, represented in table 2, can be grouped into six broad categories, the first three categories being the most significant in numerical terms: 1) travel for labour purposes; 2) participation in a human zoo or other performance related activities; 3) educational visits; 4) political visits; 5) clandestine travel; 6) transit migration. [table 2 near here]

The transient nature of the African presence as well as the forms migration routes took were largely underpinned by the policies and practices of the German colonial authorities in Berlin

[27] For a definition of sojourners see, Manning, *Migration in World History*, 8-9; also Henderson and Olasiji, *Migrants, Immigrants and Slaves*, 13

and Africa towards the migration of colonial subjects. At no time did they consider allowing African visitors to take up permanent residency in Germany. In general, they were initially willing to support African travel from the colonies as long as it was beneficial to the colonial project as a whole. From the mid-1890s onwards, however, the various colonial administrations began implementing increasingly tighter travel restrictions.[28] These included would-be visitors and/or their European sponsors requiring written permission from the colonial Governors in order to leave for Europe. Prohibitive penalties would be applied to travellers, or members of their family, who left illegally. These restrictions were motivated by increasing fears over the administrations' inability to control Africans' movements and experiences in Germany. By the mid-1890s there was a growing belief that returnees were being morally corrupted by their exposure to European society and that upon their return to Africa they were potentially a destabilising factor within local politics. Consequently, access to the different migration routes changed over time and so did the geographical origins of those travelling.

Labour visitors

Labour migration was the most significant ground for travel (39%). Without doubt a large proportion of those whose grounds for travel remains unclear (15%) also entered Germany for labour related reasons. In view of their ages many likely came as servants. Out of 425 individuals coming for the purpose of labour 265 were male servants and a further 12 were female servants. These were personal servants (including cooks) who carried out a range of important roles for their European masters in Africa and who were accompanying the latter during their period of home leave. Although this was a particularly heterogeneous group and

[28] Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 37-43, 61-3.

people from 15 different territories can be described as servants, the majority on whom there is data came from Germany's African colonies.

Identifying servants' masters is especially difficult, but typically masters appear to have been members of the colonial administration or German citizens with business interests in the German colonies, or in Liberia and the Gold Coast. A handful accompanied missionaries or explorers to Germany and three female servants appear to have been employed by young families based in the settler colony GSWAf. The majority of servants on whom data exists came from Cameroon. It is not immediately clear why this should be the case, but under German rule Cameroon became the largest plantation colony in West Africa and several servants accompanied European traders, factory owners and representatives of plantation firms to Germany.[29] In general, Cameroonian servants were attached to members of the colonial administration including high ranking officials. Examples included Paul Waterly servant of Governor Theodor Leist who visited Germany in 1893 and Albert Mussole who followed his master, Governor Theodor Seitz, to Berlin in 1909.[30]

Servants in particular were young. The average age of 229 male servants for whom data exists was 16½, but some like the West African Essu were as young as 5.[31] Female servants were also on average around 16-years-old, though they ranged in age from 7 to 45-years-old. This was an especially transient population whose period of stay, in line with that of their masters, was usually a matter of weeks or months. 16 servants entered Germany on more than one occasion, frequently, but not always with the same master. In a few cases servants might stay considerably longer, but this was highly unusual. It was normally the result of a

[29] Conrad, *German Colonialism*, 45. Also, Stoecker, *German Imperialism*.
[30] Passenger List, Hamburg West Africa, 6 January 1893, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 083 A; Seitz to Police President Berlin, 25 April 1925, Bundesarchiv Berlin (BArch), R8203 1077a, 152-3.
[31] Passenger List, Hamburg West Africa, 15 September 1902, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 135.

breakdown in the master-servant relationship such as when servants broke from their masters or when they were abandoned to their fate. Alternatively, as in the case of Cameroonians Martin-Paul Samba (Mebenga m'Ebono) and Tongo, both servants of the German officer Kurt von Morgen, their 'reward' for good service was to be put through military training in Potsdam. Tongo died suddenly before his training could begin. In contrast Samba enjoyed a brief, but successful military career in Cameroon, serving in the German colonial forces before rheumatism forced him to retire.[32] He later became increasingly disenchanted with colonial rule and was eventually tried and hung as a traitor by the Germans just after World War One broke out.

By the late 1890s the colonial authorities in Germany were expressing concern about Europeans bringing their African charges to Europe. In 1889 in line with general restrictions being imposed on the migration of colonial subjects to Germany, colonial Governors were asked to scrutinise all such requests before granting permission to travel.[33] A year later a circular from the office of the Imperial Chancellor was issued warning German colonial officers against taking servants with them on home leave.[34] However, the database reveals that these initiatives appear to have had little impact on the numbers of servants, including those from the German colonies, reaching Germany. Nor do they appear to have stopped German officers from being granted permission to have their servants accompany them to Europe. Indeed, the flow of servants to Germany was fairly consistent over the entire period.

[32] On Tongo see *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, 23 (1891), 280–2; Lieutenant Morgen to Colonial Department, 20 April 1895, BArch R1001 5573, 14. On Samba see Zeller and Michels, "Kamerunischer Nationalheld"; Morlang, *Askaria und Fitatfita*, 51-2 and von Morgen, *Durch Kamerun*.

[33] Hellwig to Puttkamer, 16 August 1899, BArch R1001 5576, 30. A similar letter was sent on the same date to the Colonial Governors in GEAf, GSWAf, Togo and New Guinea.

[34] "Runderlass des Reichskanzlers, betreffend die Mitnahme eingeborener Diener vom 3. Mai 1900", in *Die Deutsche Kolonial-Gesetzgebung Band 5* (Berlin: E.S.Mittler, 1901), 73–4. Also, Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 60-3.

A somewhat older, but similarly transient and stable group of labour visitors were Black sailors. The expansion of Germany's merchant fleet and the Woermann shipping line's establishment of regular services to the West African coast from 1882 onwards created increased opportunities for travel. Overall, however, Black sailors made up a tiny proportion of Germany's merchant naval personnel. The German Seaman's Union registered only 205 Africans in 1902 and some German shipping lines serving Africa avoided hiring Black sailors.[35] Only 76 sailors are recorded in the database. This includes both skilled and unskilled workers such as general deck hands and stewards, but most were stokers who carried out dangerous and dirty work in the engine room. Only 17 sailors were from Germany's colonies, 15 alone from Cameroon. Instead, the majority were from Liberia, Sierra Leone or the Gold Coast. These were likely Kru men, 'an ethnic-cum occupational category', whose seafaring reputation was well established by the late nineteenth century.[36] Woermann in particular employed Kru for sections of the journey up and down the West African coast.[37] The evidence in the passenger lists, however, suggests that pre-1914 few actually arrived in Germany or were based there.

Germany's colonial expansion created other new, limited labour migration possibilities. 26 individuals can be grouped as language assistants. These were primarily Africans recruited, often through missionary networks, to teach their native languages to future German colonists at either the Hamburg Colonial Institute or the Berlin Seminar for Oriental Languages.[38] Also included are translators like the four Cameroonian members of the Basel mission, who came to Germany to help with the translation of biblical texts. This group was comprised entirely of men and given the nature of their roles it is not surprising that almost all were from

[35] Küttner, *Farbige Seeleute*, 25, 27.
[36] Frost, *Work and Community*, 7-14, here 8.
[37] Küttner, *Farbige Seeleute*, 27.
[38] See Meyer-Bahlburg and Wolff, *Afrikanische Sprachen*; Stoecker, *Afrikawissenschaft in Berlin*.

Germany's colonies. All but 6 arrived during the final decade of German colonial rule. This was primarily because the Colonial Institute first opened in 1908 and did not start to recruit language assistants until 1910. And; while the Seminar was employing Africans from 1889 onwards, these were frequently men who had been recruited in Germany and not in Africa and who had originally arrived in Europe with another purpose in mind. Although Herero was offered at the Seminar this was taught by European specialists and no Africans from GSWAf appear to have come to Germany as language assistants. Language assistants differed significantly from other labour visitors in that the duration of their stays were considerably longer. Although they too were temporary visitors who were expected to return home they could be contracted to spend several years in Germany and at least one, the Swahili lecturer Mtoro bin Bakari, set up home in Berlin.[39]

In addition to these three key groups the passenger lists also provided information on several other individuals and smaller groups who, broadly speaking, could be categorised as labour visitors. This included 7 men who were zoo keepers, 2 attendants, and over two dozen Sudanese men listed as soldiers.[40] The latter were in Germany between 1894 and 1895 and left Hamburg for either Dar es Salaam or Port Said. No information could be found to explain what brought them to Germany. They would not have served there and it is unlikely that they would have been trained there. It is possible, but unlikely that they were participating in a human zoo or a military victory parade. Given the timing of the sailings it is also possible that they were recruited in the Ottoman Empire and were now being sent to serve in GEAf. 15 of the men who left in September 1894 would have arrived in time to join the Germans' renewed military offensive against the Hehe in Iringa.[41]

[39] On Bakari see Wimmelbücker, *Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakrari*.
[40] See examples, Passenger List, Hamburg East Africa, 13 September 1894, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 088 A; Passenger List, Hamburg East Africa, 2 January 1895, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 089.
[41] Pizzo, "'To Devour the Land of Mkwawa,'" 167-9

Human Zoos and Performers

The second largest group of African visitors (33% or 362 people) was made up of Africans who arrived to be put on display in human zoos or to participate in similar ethnographic spectacles.[42] This can be seen as a unique form of travel for labour purposes. By the late nineteenth century such shows were commonplace in larger European cities and they had become one of the key 'vehicles for transnational mobility' for Africans.[43] Impresarios such as Carl Hagenbeck and Gustav Marquardt were among those who recognised the commercial potential of putting non-Europeans on display to German audiences and they actively recruited Africans from various parts of the continent for this purpose. This helps to explain the large numbers of Ghanaians and Sudanese as well as the smaller numbers of Somalis in the database. Similarly, 65 South Africans were sponsored by the Transvaal Republic to appear in Berlin in 1897 as part of the Transvaal Exhibition of 1897.[44]

Just over a third of these visitors came from Germany's colonies, though only 9 came from GSWAf. The vast majority were recruited by the German authorities to participate in the propaganda celebration of German colonialism at the 1896 Berlin Colonial Exhibition.[45] While the exhibition drew large crowds, the authorities were increasingly concerned with what they saw as the negative impact of the metropolitan experience on colonial subjects.[46] In keeping with measures to tighten migration opportunities, from 1901 onwards the transportation of Africans from the German colonies to Germany for the purposes of display

[42] The numbers are likely to be much larger. See, Thode-Arora, "Afrika-Völkerschauen in Deutschland," 27.
[43] Gouaffo, "Prince Dido of Didotown," 19
[44] van der Heyden, "Die Kolonial- und die Transvaal-Ausstellung," 138. Passenger List, Hamburg East Africa, 13 October 1897, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 097 B.
[45] See, Meinecke and Hellgrewe (eds.), *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*; Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism*, 24-36.
[46] See views of D. Strauch, "Zur Frage der Ausfuhr von Eingeborenen aus den deutschen Kolonien zum Zwecke der Schaustellung," *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 17, no. 44-46 (1900), 500, 511, 520.

was prohibited.[47] Human zoos continued to be staged in Germany, but now they rarely featured Africans from Germany's colonies. A notable exception were the various incarnations of a Togolese show organised by the Aneho notable J.C. Bruce. Bruce, who had participated in the 1896 Colonial Exhibition, recognised the popular demand for ethnographic spectacles. He returned with a group of his own to Germany in 1898.[48] This accounts for the large number Togolese participants in human zoos in comparison to Africans from the other German territories. Bruce's group included two wives and other relatives who had also been at the Colonial Exhibition.

Touring ethnographic shows like Bruce's could enjoy considerable mobility and it was not unusual for participants to enter Germany on more than one occasion, sometimes as part of different shows.[49] Bruce and his compatriots toured large parts of Germany and Europe up to 1914. For others, such as the majority of the participants at the Berlin Colonial or Transvaal exhibitions, their experience of Europe was fleeting. They were contracted to spend several months in Germany and their freedom of movement outside of the exhibition areal was limited. Once their contracts were up they were to be returned home. Data on the ages of those involved in human zoos is especially incomplete making it impossible to give an average age with any kind of accuracy. Nonetheless, participants appear to have been considerably older than servants and educational visitors. They ranged in age from children as young as 2 to men and women in their fifties.

Educational Visitors

A further 11% of Africans, almost exclusively young men and boys, came to Germany to be educated; to attend a German school, undertake an apprenticeship or to receive instruction

[47] Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 69.
[48] Brändle, *Nayo Bruce*, 202.
[49] Thode-Arora, "Afrika-Völkerschauen in Deutschland," 37.

from a religious mission active in Africa. All but 9 of the 116 recorded came from either elite Cameroonian or Togolese families and they were almost exclusively children of traditional and religious leaders, notables or merchants. This was dictated by the costs involved and by opportunity. Wealth accumulation through trade with Europeans as well as interior indigenous populations enabled coastal middlemen to finance a European education for their children. Such middlemen like the Duala also exploited established relationships with European firms or Christian missions to secure sponsors for their children to be educated or trained in Germany.[50] This fed into their ambitions of increasing their political and social influence within the new formalised colonial system and in their relations with other African populations. Equally, it linked into a tradition on the West African coast of sending children to Europe for educational purposes that predated German rule and which was not found in the other German African territories.[51]

The desires of families, like the Bells and Akwas of Douala and the Garbers of Aneho, initially matched those of the German authorities in Cameroon and Togo, who helped facilitate movement through arranging stays with German families and institutions. This was on account of both political and economic factors. Firstly, both administrations hoped to tie these elites more closely to their own aims and to integrate the children into the administrative structure upon their return. Secondly, in Cameroon the German administration was concerned by a lack of skilled European craftsmen in the colony and by related fears that Europeans would struggle to acclimatise there. Until training facilities could be set up in the territory selected youngsters were sent to Germany to learn trades geared towards them working within the colonial economy upon their return. In contrast, in Togo workshops to train craftsmen had been established by both the Basel Mission and North German Mission

[50] See Aitken, "Education and Migration".
[51] Killingray, "Africans in the United Kingdom," 7-9.

long before the territory had come under German rule.[52] This explains why so few Togolese arrived in Germany as apprentices. The North German Mission in particular was also involved in the training of young Africans for religious service and twenty men were educated at the mission's 'Ewe school' in Ochsenbach and later at Westheim.[53] Of the missionary societies active in Cameroon both the Catholic Pallottine Mission and the Berlin Baptist Mission brought smaller numbers of African youngsters to Germany to be educated to Limburg and Berlin respectively.[54]

Like servants educational visitors were young. On average school children were 14-years-old, while both those educated by missionary societies and apprentices tended to be three to four years older. Like language assistants they differed somewhat from other African visitors. While the duration of their stay in Germany was already set before departing Africa it was still anticipated by both the administrations and the families involved that youngsters spend several years there. An apprenticeship lasted around three years, while school children, depending upon their age on arrival, could stay considerably longer.[55] From the mid-1890s onwards this migration route was in decline. By this time the administrations in Cameroon and Togo had withdrawn their support for the venture and wealthy African parents were more reliant on their links to missions and trading firms in order to send their children to Europe. This was part of the colonial authorities' general retreat from support for the presence of colonial subjects in Germany. Opponents of African migration frequently pointed to European educated Africans as being prime examples of 'unruly' and 'disruptive' elements within local communities.[56] In addition, with the establishment of workshops in Cameroon

[52] Klose, *Togo unter deutscher Flagge*, 264.
[53] Bazlen, "Die Mohren von Westheim".
[54] Aitken, "Education and Migration"; Aitken, "Selling the Mission".
[55] For an example see, Contract F.H. Schmidt with Mungu, Ekwalla, Monsy and Bell, 8 May 1887, BArch R1001 5571, 119-21.
[56] Aitken, "Education and Migration," 221-3

there was less of a need to train African youngsters in Germany. Consequently, while 59 youngsters first arrived in Germany to be trained or educated between 1884 and 1894, over the next twenty years only a further 57 made the journey.

Political, Clandestine and Transitory Visitors

Together less than 3% of Africans (30 men) first arrived in Germany as political, clandestine or transitory visitors. The costs of travel involved and restrictions on travel likely explain the small numbers. Visits of African political deputations from the German colonies to Germany were highly unusual. In 1889 four representatives of the Chagga leader Rindi, based on Kilimanjaro, accompanied the German explorer Otto Ehlers to Berlin to meet the Kaiser.[57] For strategic reasons Rindi had recognised German influence in East Africa and this was part of cementing the relationship.[58] For the Kaiser, however, the visit appears to have turned into an embarrassment, reported on in foreign newspapers, on account of German officials grossly overestimating the extent of Rindi's power as well as that of his deputation.[59] Thirteen years later a delegation of Duala notables came to Berlin to protest at German violence in Cameroon. This time the visitors, while meeting high ranking officials, were not granted an audience with the Kaiser. When in 1913 the Duala again sought to protest about German plans for expropriation of their lands, the administration in Cameroon denied their leaders permission to travel. In response, their representative, Ngoso Din, entered Germany without permission from the authorities.[60]

Din was one of four men known to have entered Germany illegally. Overall, there is little evidence of clandestine visitors in the archival material largely because they only become

[57] "Die Gesandschaft des Sultans," *Teltower Kreisblatt*, 18 May 1889, 6; report in *Wochentliche Anzeigen für das Fürstenthum Ratzeburg*, 17 May 1889, 6. Rindi is referred to as Mandara.
[58] Altena, *'Ein Häuflein Christen'*, 67.
[59] "William the Victim," *Daily Alta California*, 1 July 1889, 8.
[60] See file Landesarchiv Berlin A Pr. Br. Rep 030 Nr. 16118 (Ngoso Din, 1914).

visible if they came into contact with local authorities in Germany, such as when they required identity papers or when they were challenged by policing authorities to produce such documentation - a situation Din experienced. In all likelihood larger numbers of clandestine visitors did enter Germany, but it appears that migration restrictions imposed by the German colonial administrations in Africa were largely effective in minimising this.

Finally, just over a dozen Africans recorded in the database can be described as transitory visitors. These were individuals who entered Germany en route to their final destination and all were either heading to or returning from the United States via Hamburg. Most were influential Liberians, including a small delegation composed of the former Liberian President G.W. Gibson and the Vice-President J.J. Dossen who passed through Hamburg in 1908. They were on their way to Washington to discuss independent Liberia's position in colonial Africa.[61] It is unclear what if anything they saw of Germany.

Gender Imbalance

Given the migration routes that brought Africans to Germany it is not surprising that there is a clear gender imbalance amongst visitors. Women make up fewer than 10% of the database (104 individuals) with the majority coming from Germany's African territories (61 individuals). Most of the main migration routes to Germany excluded women; women were not employed to work as either sailors or language assistants and, with three notable exceptions, they did not enjoy a European education in Germany.[62] This was due largely to the traditions and expectations of the population groups involved in this form of migration who placed more emphasis on male education and women's role within the domestic

[61] Passenger List, Hamburg New York, 7 May 1908, StAHam 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 200.
[62] On these women see, Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, 177-93.

sphere.[63] Equally, outside of GSWAf it was highly unusual for African women from Germany's colonies to be employed as personal servants. Of the few female servants who did come to Germany half came from out with the German empire. It is also possible that growing racial anxiety over mixed relationships, particularly in GSWAf, impacted on female migration. In the aftermath of mixed marriage bans in GSWAf and GEAf in 1905 and 1906 respectively, only a further 6 African women from Germany's colonies arrived in Germany.

The vast majority of women who visited Germany did so as participants in human zoos, arriving before or around the turn of the century. Most were from Togo and came either for the 1896 Colonial Exhibition or to perform with Bruce's touring group. With the exception of a handful of participants in ethnographic shows, like Bruce, as well as the Cameroonian language instructor Karl Atangana, no African men brought their African wives to Germany. Indeed, as outlined above most male visitors were young and unmarried. Even if they should have an African partner they were unlikely to be in a financial position to bring them to Germany (or to receive permission to do so). At the same time given that a few mixed marriages took place in Germany's African colonies, primarily in GSWAf, it is possible that some German men might have brought their African wives back with them when they returned to Europe. Such instances were likely few in number and the wives remain disguised in the available material by the fact that they would have a German name and nationality.[64]

Spatial Distribution of African Visitors

It is difficult to reach any firm conclusions concerning the spatial distribution of African visitors on account of two key factors. Firstly, because of the short-term nature of many Africans' stays there is no archival record as to where they actually spent time. Secondly,

[63] Orosz's comments on education for the early 1920s in Cameroon are equally applicable to the earlier period. Orosz, *Religious Conflict*, 263
[64] El-Tayeb, *Schwarze Deutsche*, 142–3.

many visitors, particularly those in touring ethnographic shows but also individuals who spent several years in Germany, moved around frequently. Yet, based on information pertaining to just over half of those in the database it is clear that Africans were to be found in almost all states of the empire during 1884-1914. Men, women and children spent time in over 90 German villages, towns or cities. Foremost of these was Berlin and its environs, including the independent city of Charlottenburg. Among many other reasons, as the seat of German colonial authority, the setting for the 1896 and 1897 Colonial and Transvaal Exhibitions and the home of the Oriental Seminar the city was at least a short-term home for several hundred Africans. Similarly, Hamburg (including Altona) on account of its international port, Colonial Institute and Hagenbeck's *Tierpark* drew, voluntarily or otherwise, significant numbers of Africans. Several Africans, largely servants, were found in larger towns such as Bremen, Dresden, Rostock and Kassel, while over two dozen mission-educated youngsters temporarily lived in Westheim in Bavaria and Limburg an der Lahn. Africans also came to a wide variety of smaller towns and villages such as Guben in Brandenburg, Spöck in Württemberg, or Marggrabowa (now Olecko) in East Prussia. This geographical distribution was a reflection of the fact that Germans involved in the colonial project - missionaries, civil servants, military officers and businessmen - lived throughout Germany. It was also a consequence of the colonial authorities' policy that educational visitors were sent to smaller towns, where it was hoped greater control could be exercised over their experiences.

Conclusion

Helmut Walser Smith has described Imperial Germany on the eve of World War One as an 'immigrant nation'.[65] Over one million foreign migrants, largely from Eastern and Southern

[65] Smith, "Authoritarian State," 312.

parts of Europe such as Poles from Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire as well as Italians and Russians, were present in Germany, primarily drawn by labour opportunities in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the German economy. Many were seasonal workers whose presence was to be only temporary and was subject to growing migration controls.[66] Millions of other transitory migrants, again largely Eastern Europeans, also passed through newly unified Germany between 1871 and 1914. German industrialisation alongside a complex series of 'global entanglements'; foremost an increasingly integrated international economy and Western imperial expansion, which helped bring these Europeans to Germany also drew a small, but heterogeneous population of Africans to villages, towns and cities throughout the Empire.[67] These Black migrants were almost exclusively visitors, whose stay was similarly subject to increasing restrictions. Their presence was largely conditioned and constrained by the global colour line and the unequal power relationship between the metropole and the colony.[68] The vast majority entered Germany under the guardianship, care or supervision of white Europeans, such as representatives of the colonial administration, missionaries, businessmen or employees of ethnographic shows. Most would remain under this supervision for the duration of their stay. This raises the question as to what extent travel was voluntary, coerced or forced.[69] Given the heterogeneity of those involved and the multiplicity of reasons bringing Africans to Germany it is impossible to write of a common experience just as it is equally difficult to access individual motivations for travel because the majority of existing sources were written not by the travellers themselves, but by Europeans. This allows only tentative comments to be made. Even under conditions of servitude and as performers in human zoos some Africans used this as means of reaching Germany and/or to seek diplomatic and commercial opportunities in Europe. Increasingly, participants in

[66] Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labour*, chapter 1; Conrad, "Globalization Effects."
[67] Conrad, "Globalization Effects," 45.
[68] See Hoerder's comments on migration in the nineteenth century, Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, 5-6.
[69] Ibid, 14-15

ethnographic shows were actively working as performers for whom overseas travel was part of a job.[70] Others appear to have undertaken temporary employment as sailors with the explicit intention of coming to Germany.[71] At the same time it is unclear how much say African youngsters had in decisions taken by their parents to educate them in Germany, though evidence does exist that some youngsters aspired to reach Germany.[72]

The various migration routes produced primarily a young, single, male population which was highly transient. With the exception of educational visitors and language instructors few Africans spent a prolonged period of time in Germany and the vast majority returned to Africa. It is difficult to assess to what extent indigenous Germans were aware or indeed even interested in the presence of these visitors, and again only tentative remarks can be made. Without doubt it was within the environment of the human zoo that most Germans would have had any contact with these African men, women and children. The largest of such shows could attract tens of thousands of people daily. Many more Germans would experience imagined encounters with Black performers through the dissemination of promotional posters and souvenir postcards featuring images of these participants. In this context the presence of African visitors served to underscore ideas of racial difference, white European superiority and German colonial power. These were, however, not the only ways in which the African presence could be understood. Local and regional newspapers as well as missionary publications often brought stories about black servants or educational visitors from the German colonies staying with local families or institutions. Such coverage, including the publication of African school children's progress reports, hinted at their abilities and achievements. Equally, baptismal or confirmation ceremonies for African youngsters in smaller localities such as Limburg in Hesse, St Ottilien in Bavaria, Lauterberg in Lower

[70] Gouaffo, "Prince Dido of Didotown," 30-2; Thode-Arora, "Afrika-Völkerschauen in Deutschland," 37.
[71] Firla, *Der kameruner Artist Hermann Kessern*, 31-2.
[72] Wilhem Bell to Governor, 29 April 1891, BArch R175f 81939, 186.

Saxony or even larger cities like Cologne could become moments of public spectacle, celebrating not only the success of the civilising mission, but also African religiousness.[73] Similarly, the deaths of some African visitors were commemorated by respectful public services such as the well-attended funeral of the Togolese youngster Eque Solomon James Garber in Berlin in 1892, while small communities in Hersfeld, Hesse and Mulheim on the Ruhr established more permanent memorials to Africans who died during their stays.[74] In general, such examples suggest that in at least some parts of Imperial Germany the presence of African visitors likely reinforced Germans' sense of now living in an increasingly global and imperial world in which Germany played a key role.

Only 7.5% (82 individuals) of those in the database were still present in Germany after 1914 and all but 6 were German colonial subjects. In a sense, in remaining in Germany, either through choice or otherwise, their experiences were exceptional and they formed the core of a Black community in development. The eventual transformation of the African presence in Germany from a transient to a stable population was the result not of government legislation, but rather of two interlinked processes. Firstly, the outbreak of war in 1914 effectively ended travel from the colonies, though well over two dozen newcomers would arrive either during or immediately after the fighting. Secondly, under the subsequent peace settlement Germany's African colonies were placed under the mandate control of the Allies, largely the French and the British. Those Africans still resident in Germany, largely from the former colonies, were now confronted with changed political and economic circumstances and their opportunities for returning to Africa were greatly reduced.[75]

[73] Aitken, "Selling the Mission;" "Negertaufe in Deutschland," *Stern von Afrika*, 10, no.4 (1903): 55; "Fourth Edition," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 20 January 1891, 4.
[74] Aitken, "Education and Migration," 226.
[75] For the post-war situation see Aitken and Rosenhaft, *Black Germany*, chapters 2 and 4.

Table 1: Geographical Origins Men and Women, 1884-1914

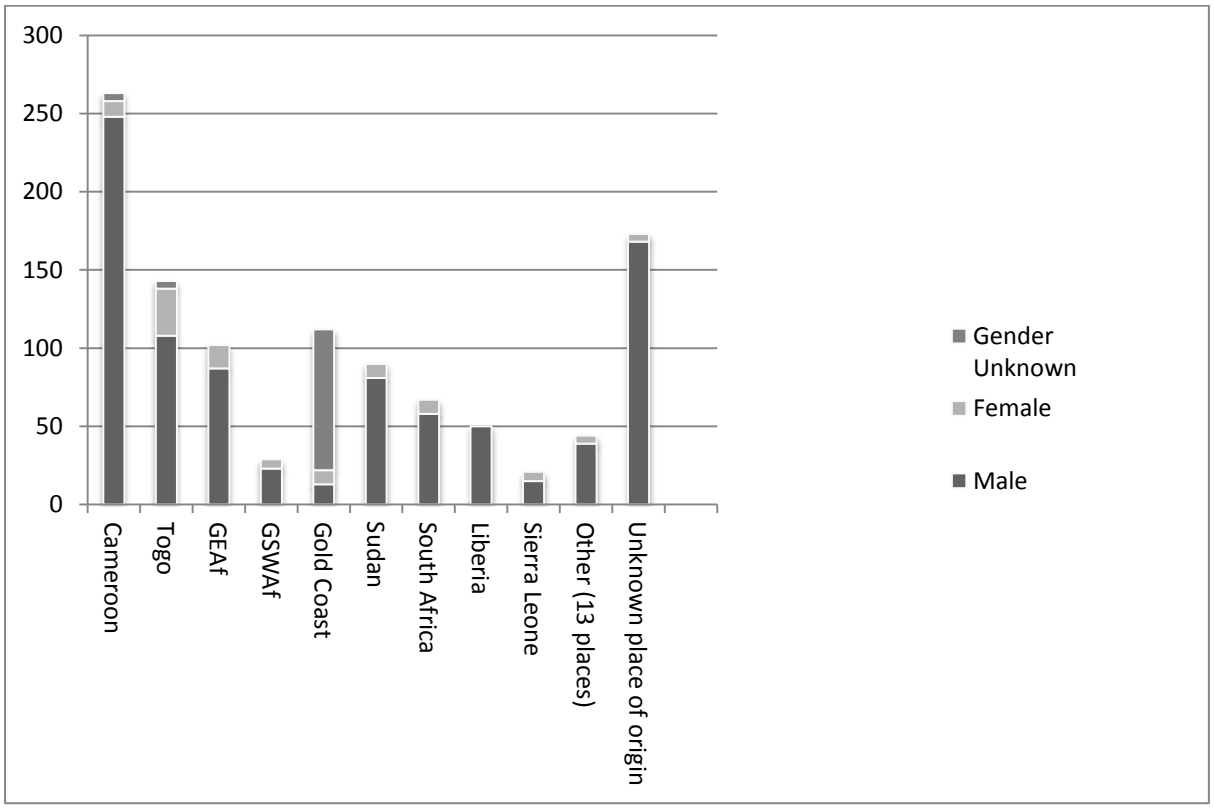
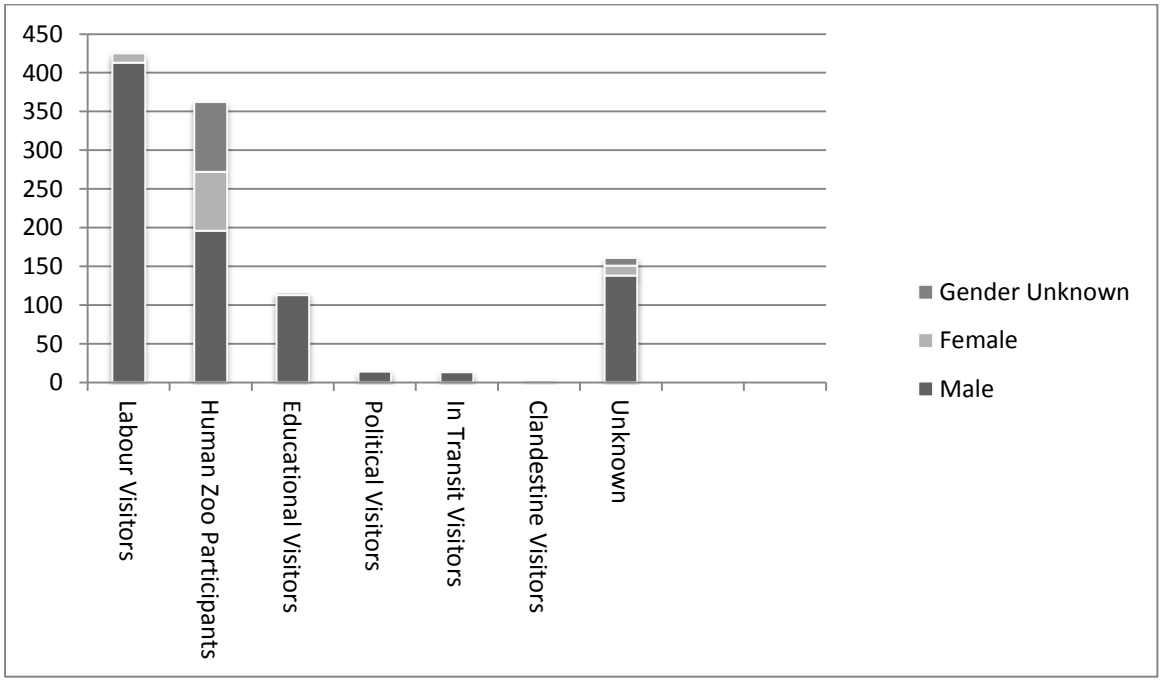


Table 2: Grounds for Travel to Germany by Gender, 1884-1914



Note: 42 individuals entered Germany on more than one occasion, sometimes for different reasons. The graph only records the first reason for travel.

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