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Wir Sind Hier! (We Are Here!): The Impact of 1940s and 1950s African American Media Representation on the Visibility of the German "Brown Babies"

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Abstract

In the midst of the Allied occupation of Germany during and after World War II, the American and German governments both hid from the public a "racial problem." This problem was the mixed race children of black GIs and white European women. These children were known as "brown babies" in the United States and as "Mischlingskinder" in Germany, a pejorative term meaning "mutt children." The German government concluded that the solution to this "problem" was to encourage the mothers of these children to put them up for international adoption. The only news publications in the United States that addressed this adoption process were African American magazines such as *Ebony*, *Hue*, and *Jet*. Mainstream media in the United States at the time remained silent on the stories of Afro-German children and the possibility of transnational adoption. Through the analysis of articles from these publications, this paper serves to exemplify that from the late 1940s to the 1950s, African American newspapers addressed Afro-German adoption because they were human interest stories that depicted racial transgression. Ultimately, these publications both further encouraged transnational adoption of "brown babies" while also serving as a criticism of the racism and discrimination within both American and German culture that resulted in their experienced cultural displacement.

1. Introduction

In the midst of the Allied occupation of Germany during and after World War II, the American and German governments collaborated to hide from the public what was considered to be a "racial problem." This problem was the mixed race children of black U.S. soldiers and white European women. These children were known as "brown babies" in the United States and as "Mischlingskinder" in Germany, a pejorative term previously used for children of half-Jewish parentage under the Nazi regime.[1] The German government concluded that the solution to this "problem" was to encourage the mothers of these children to either abort them or put them up for international adoption in order to preserve German whiteness.[2] The only news publications in the United States willing to address this adoption process for the American audience were African American magazines such as *Ebony*, *Hue*, and *Jet*. Aside from publications such as these, the mainstream media in the United States at the time remained silent on the stories of Afro-German children and the possibility of adoption. This paper will serve to examine the purpose of the articles circulated by African American news publications that covered stories about the German "brown babies" despite the silence on the part of the the U.S. government regarding their existence.[3]

From the late 1940s to the 1950s, African American newspapers addressed Afro-German adoption because they were human interest stories that depicted racial transgression.[4] Ultimately, these publications both further encouraged transnational adoption of "brown babies" while also serving as a criticism of the racism and discrimination within both American and German culture that resulted in their experienced cultural displacement. The compliance of welfare

institutions and mainstream media in the U.S. with the military to overlook "brown babies" fathered by GIs further demonstrated the necessity of these articles.

Within German society, the Afro-German children were immediately identified as illegitimate children of American GIs because of skin color. African American publications would frequently cover the treatment of these children in Germany, along with articles on children being adopted by American families.[5] The initial interest in creating spotlights on the "brown babies" within African American media was sparked by individuals such as Mabel T. Grammer. A journalist for the Washington-based publication *The Afro-American* during the time period in which these developments transpired, Grammer adopted almost a dozen Afro-German children when she accompanied her husband, an Army Chief Warrant Officer, to his postings in Germany after their marriage in 1950.[6] Holding interest in civil rights issues, Grammer also helped facilitate arrangements for the adoption of 500 Afro-German children with American families.[7] Grammer exemplified the efforts on the part of African American journalists to push forward the issue of the difficult social standings placed on these children in Germany as well as with the adoption process in the United States.

The explicitly severe racial discrimination present within the Jim Crow era in the United States did not allow for a significant African American voice in mainstream media outlets. Because of this, magazines such as *Ebony*, *Hue*, and *Jet* provided a unique outlet for African American audiences. Since these three publications were some of the more prominent African American magazines to be published during this time period, many of the pieces covering the German "brown babies" by these publications will be examined, as they maintained wider audiences and held larger opportunities for reaction from both dedicated readers and by the rest of mainstream American media observers. Observing how these publications went about addressing the Afro-German experience as well as helping with the promotion of adoption will benefit the examination of both the Afro-German identity in an international context as well as civil rights issues in journalism in Jim Crow era United States.

2. Historiography

Scholarly interest in the Afro-German children of U.S. soldiers and German white women has seen recent growth from the 1990s and onwards—along with the accessibility of oral histories of now adult German "brown babies". The 1986 book *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out* was the first publication to coin the term "Afro-German". This book was composed of collections of testimonials and other texts that focus on Afro-German experiences.[8] The book pushed forward scholarship on Afro-German history at a time when this was effectively ignored by the wider discourse on German history and culture. The book included testimonials on the adoption proposal by the German government, as well as the intimate struggle of mothers of Afro-German children and the children themselves who were considered a "racial issue" by the wider German audience. This book was not only significant because it was one of the first outlets for an Afro-German voice to be heard, but because it provided some of the earliest published accounts of these experiences.

In order to better provide context for the population of Afro-German children at the time, Tina Campt and Pascal Grosse's article "Mixed-race Children in Post-War Germany: On the Relationship Between Psychology, Anthropology and Social Politics After 1945" helped by providing statistical data such as the approximate number of children of U.S. soldiers and mothers in occupied countries during World War II, as well as how many were specifically the children of African American soldiers and German woman.[9] The article stated that about 5,000 of the total approximate 37,000 children born under these circumstances in Germany were identified as the children of black U.S. soldiers and German white women.

The context of having an African American GI presence in Germany was necessary to better understand why and how the Afro-German experience was molded within German society within this time period. Heide Fehrenbach's 2007 book *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* focused on how the introduction of U.S. soldiers in Germany affected the German cultural perception of race after 1945.[10] In particular, Fehrenbach addressed how the biracial children of U.S. soldiers and German woman were seen as a catalyst of the antisemitic focus shifting toward racism based on skin color. The author analyzed what caused German society to seek African Americans to adopt Afro-German orphans as a means of not having to integrate them into German society, and detailed the political push for this "solution."

The Afro-German identity, within the 1940s and 1950s, maintained a unique place both within German society and American society. Sabine Lee's article "A Forgotten Legacy of the Second World War: GI Children in Post-War Britain and Germany" discussed the treatment of Afro-German children in Germany in a wider social context about individual identity within a national identity.[11] The discussion of the way in which these children experienced living

with a "conflicting" identity within the social whiteness being pushed by their home country was significant to understanding both the reasons why international adoption was encouraged by the German government as well as differences and similarities in the treatment of black and mixed race citizens in American society and German society during the 1940s and 1950s.

Historiographical work on the American component of the international adoption of the Afro-German children is still much less prevalent than the focus on the children's racial identity and how it came into play within German society at the time. Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria provided one of the more in-depth examinations of the American adoption of Afro-German children from the 1940s to the 1960s in her article ""Germany's 'Brown Babies' Must Be Helped! Will You?": U.S. Adoption Plans for Afro-German Children, 1950-1955."[12] The author explained how the mixed race status of these children made adoption by European families of other nations highly improbable, as they were generally viewed as less "desirable" by the European public.[13] The author also described how, while there were many African American families in the United States willing and interested in adopting children from this background, the U.S. government made this option difficult since there was no desire by the white audience in America to draw attention to these children or allow them into the country. This text provided significant detail on the challenges faced by both the children as adoptees and Americans interested in adopting them.

Utilizing the Afro-German adoption as a human interest story to undermine Jim Crow laws was not the only way in which German culture was used to criticize American racial inequality. Maria Höhn examined how African Americans used the U.S. condemnation of German Nazism as a means to exploit the contradictions of doing so within the Jim Crow era, starting in 1933 in her article "We Will Never Go Back to the Old Way Again: Germany in the African-American Debate on Civil Rights."[14] Höhn's article provided an analysis of other ways in which German relations and policies were used as a tool to criticize Jim Crow laws, as was done by African American publications by publishing frequent information about the Afro-German children. The article gave a contextual framework of how German racism and antisemitism was used as a tool against the American Jim Crow laws by those who had to endure this era.

With regard to identifying the purpose of the African American publications' coverage of the Afro-German children, Brenda Plummer's 2003 book *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* encompassed details on this as well as the United States Civil Rights Movement within the scope of global human rights.[15] An entire chapter in her book is devoted to the German "brown babies." This chapter included significant speculation on how the African American publications utilized stories about the Afro-German children as human interest stories for their audiences. This not only brought attention to the children in a society that otherwise actively pushed to ignore their presence, but it was also used as a means of "thumbing their nose" at Jim Crow laws in the 1940s and 1950s. It was implied by Plummer that acknowledging their presence not only provided leverage for discourse on an individual's identity and its relation to race, but also opposed the intentional evasion of acknowledging the Afro-German children's existence by mainstream American society.

While the Afro-German "brown babies" have progressively seen more extensive coverage within historical and sociological scholarship, there is little to no focus specifically on publications covering the Afro-German adoptions within the United States. However, when examining the social context of the time and the reaction to these articles, it can be concluded that these articles focusing on the German orphans were a subversive attempt to bring attention to the "racial problem" that the U.S. government and military attempted to divert attention from. In order to more fully understand the role these publications played in the transnational adoption of Afro-German children, their purpose of "thumbing the nose" at United States segregation laws and racial inequality must be examined.

3. The Birth of the German "Brown Baby"

After World War II, the Allied occupation of Germany led to the division of the country by occupational zones controlled by the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France from 1945 to 1952.[16] This period of military occupation allowed for the interaction between foreign soldiers and the Germans living under the joint-lead occupation of their country. During the American occupation of Germany, directives that called for non-fraternization with German officials and civilians were issued in September of 1944 and April of 1945.[17] The directive issued on April 26th, 1945 stated the basic objectives of the occupying soldiers while focusing on the Non-Fraternization Policy:

> Germany will not be occupied for the purpose of liberation but as a defeated enemy nation. Your aim is not oppression but to occupy Germany for the purpose of realizing certain important Allied objectives. In the conduct of your occupation and administration you should be just but firm and aloof. You will strongly discourage fraternization with the German officials and population.[18]

Despite the policy against fraternizing with German civilians, many children were born to German mothers and American GIs. In the beginning stages of the occupation of Germany, U.S. GIs were not allowed to pay maintenance for a child they admitted having fathered, since to do so was considered "aiding the enemy."[19] It is also important to acknowledge the wide variety of circumstances that contributed to the birth of mixed race children in occupied Germany, thus there is no one specific situation that could be used as representative of all of the experiences and relationships between black soldiers and German women. While some black soldiers were determined to remain present in the lives of German women and the children they had with them, others chose to return home without any intent to father children born during the occupation.[20] Because of the potential reprisal black soldiers feared for fathering children with "the enemy," many chose not to admit to fathering children with German women. Despite Germans being white as well, U.S. GIs stilled viewed them as the enemy, and the consequences faced for fathering children with German women were likely more severe for African American GIs given how the racial discrimination within the U.S. military conformed with the racial climate of Germany.[21] This gave incentive to not admit to fathering "occupation babies," as well as the fact that the U.S. Army prohibited interracial marriage until 1948.[22] The policy against fraternization with civilians implied a lack of support given to women who mothered children of American GIs, as summarized by the American military newspaper *Stars and Stripes*:

> Girls who are expecting a child fathered by an American soldier will be provided with no assistance by the American Army... If the soldier denies paternity, no further action will be undertaken other than to merely inform the woman of this fact. She is to be advised to seek help from a German or Austrian welfare organization. If the soldier is already in the United States, his address is not to be communicated to the woman in question, the soldier may be honorably discharged from the army and his demobilization will in no way be delayed. Claims for child support from unmarried German and Austrian mothers will not be recognized. If the soldier voluntarily acknowledges paternity, he is to provide for the woman in an appropriate manner.[23]

Along with a lack of acknowledgment of paternity for fear of its resulted consequences, there were many cases of children resulting from rape of civilian women by occupying soldiers within all of the Allied forces. The significant prevalence of rape in occupied Germany by foreign soldiers of all occupying nations warrants the recognition of rape potentially playing a role in some of the births of Afro-German children, however there is no statistical evidence to factor into the possibility that this happened in the cases of children born to black U.S. soldiers. While there were acts of rape committed by African American GIs that were reported by Germans during this period of time, many reports were revealed to be false.[24] This was likely related to the immediate racial discrimination that black GIs experienced in a heavily white European country.

Other soldiers returned to the United States without any knowledge that they had fathered children with European women. Segregation in the United States and the resulting reluctance on the part of the U.S. military officials in Germany to grant permission to black GIs to marry the German women with whom they fathered children meant that almost all of the children of German women and black GIs were born illegitimately. The policy at the time in Germany that children without a male guardian became wards of the state made it so that many of the "brown babies" experienced institutional involvement.[25] In total, an estimated 67,770 children were fathered by Allied soldiers during the occupation of Germany from 1945 to 1955.[26] An estimated 37,000 of these children were fathered by American soldiers, with almost 5,000 of these children having been fathered by African American soldiers.[27] Afro-German children were viewed as a social phenomenon because they were born in a country that had a very predominantly white population.

Germany was not the only country that experienced the births of children fathered by occupying American soldiers after World War II. By 1952, a Jet article stated that Japan's then-biggest newspaper *Yomiuri* claimed that approximately 200,000 children were reported to have been born to American GIs and Japanese mother in Japan.[28] *Jet* released articles that focused on half African American and half Japanese children that faced similar social ostracization that Afro-German children did. One published on December 31st, 1951 titled, "Heartbroken Brown Babies (Interracial Babies of War) in Japan," was paired with a photograph of two mixed race children in Piso, Japan who were crying because they were taunted by fully Japanese children.[29] The articles states that Japanese orphanage officials claimed that the Japanese children disliked the Japanese "brown babies." These articles exemplify how the

difficulties faced by mixed race orphans of American GIs were not isolated to German society, but other cultures that were more racially homogenous than the United States.

4. Responses to Afro-German Children

U.S. policy at the time was oriented toward rejecting paternity claims of German women as well as refraining from acknowledging the birth of mixed race children.[30] The children of white American GIs also struggled with the lack of child support offered to mothers who had children with foreign soldiers during the occupation of German by the government. The children of African American fathers suffered more so, as they were unable to conceal their mixed race identities, forcing the children and their mothers to face severe social ostracism.

Without a clear "solution" to the presence of the racially mixed children of American soldiers and German women and a lack of aid given to their mothers, many Afro-German children were placed in orphanages or with foster families. Because of the stigma associated with their race, few were adopted by German families.[31] The loss of their American fathers through the soldiers being assigned a different location or otherwise often left the children's mothers to struggle economically. Because of these difficulties as well as the awareness of the "brown babies" mixed race identity, the German government sought to develop a solution to the "problem." Therefore attempts at a pragmatic solution had to be formulated as a race-related policy that was distanced from the racist discourse of Adolf Hitler in the years before the end of World War II.[32] Many children were offered for adoption to African American families within the U.S. military that were stationed in Germany or African American civilian families in the U.S. under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 authorized for a limited period of time the admission into the United States of 200,000 European displaced persons for permanent residence.[33] This was overseen by the Displaced Persons Commission from June 25, 1948 through August 31, 1952.[34]

Under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, it was generally assumed that the Afro-German children immigrating to the United States would "more easily assimilate into the culture."[35] This was assumed because of the much more prevalent racial diversity of the United States in comparison to Germany. Germany effectively judged itself incapable of assimilating the "brown babies" into German culture because of the lack of a racial diversity within the postwar German population. What this notion neglected was the acknowledgement of the severity of racism as well as the consequences experienced by people of color living under Jim Crow laws at the time. The cultural displacement experienced by the Afro-German children would be experienced regardless of which country they resided in due to the alienation from mainstream culture and lack of understanding given to their racial identity by both countries.

The United States government was particularly reluctant to open up international adoption beyond the Displaced Persons Act for the "brown babies." This was precluded by the U.S. military's policy of rejecting paternity claims made by the mothers of "war babies."[36] The reason for this reluctance could be connected to the overall racial climate and discrimination faced by African Americans and other marginalized racial groups in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s. Because of this reluctance by the government, it wasn't until individual adoptions of "brown babies" by African American families stationed in Germany were focal points in African American publications that attention was brought to the children in the American public.

5. African American Adoptions

Reports of adoptions by African American families stationed in Germany allowed for the developing interest in adopting Afro-German children by others in the United States. Mabel T. Grammer, an African American journalist for the *Washington Afro-American* in the 1940s, was one of the first to adopt Afro-German children while her husband was stationed in Karlsruhe, Mannheim and later Stuttgart.[37] While living in Germany, Grammer and her husband, an Army Chief Warrant Officer, had adopted a dozen "brown babies" before later moving back to the United States.[38] Grammer later used her connections with the *Washington Afro-American* as well as other contacts to promote adoption to potentially interested American families. Grammer was also responsible for the development of the Brown Baby Plan, an adoption program that arranged for the adoption of several hundred more Afro-German children to African-American adoptive parents.[39] Through her connections, Grammer helped facilitate the adoption of over 500 Afro-German children to predominantly African American families.[40] Grammer's actions exemplified how the use of media could affect the adoption of "brown babies" despite having no assistance from an unwilling government, social service agencies, or other institutions.

Another publicized adoption of Afro-German "war babies" by an African American journalist was the adoption of Schoni "Johnny" Krus by Jimmie Hicks, who was a war correspondent for the *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper. A *Jet* article (Figure 1) from June 18th, 1953 showcased a photograph of Hicks with his wife and their newly adopted Afro-German child.[41] The prevalence of African American journalists adopting Afro-German children could imply an internal influence within publications for focusing on "brown babies". The piece that focused on Hicks's adoptions further exemplified the use of media coverage as a means of promoting further acknowledgement of the Afro-German children to the African American community in the United States.

Newsman Adopts "Brown Baby": New York reporter James L. Hicks and wife, Daisy, get first look at German "brown baby" they adopted when 2½-year-old Schoni (Johnny) Krus arrived at New York's Idlewild Airport. Hicks, a former war correspondent, is reporter for the Baltimore Afro-American newspapers.

Figure 1. "Reporter Jimmie Hicks and Wife Daisy Adopt German Brown Baby (Interracial Child of War)." *Jet*, June 18, 1953.

In January of 1951, an article published by *Ebony*, another African American publication, focused on Margaret Ethel Butler, an African American teacher, and her attempts since 1947 to adopt and facilitate the immigration of two Afro-German children.[42] After her story was chronicled by *Ebony* through the article titled "Butler Case," Butler was later able to finally arrange the immigration of her children from a Rheingau orphanage to Chicago on October 4th, 1951.[43] While there were cases of German families adopting "brown babies" prior to this, Butler's children were considered to be the first successful adoption of Afro-German children to arrive to the U.S. after World War II. Butler stated that she had first learned about the precarious circumstances surrounding "brown babies" in Germany from an article in the *Chicago Tribune* in 1947, which ignited her interest in adoption. The article chronicling Butler's story and long struggle including petitions and visits to Germany became a phenomenon heavily documented in German and the African American press. This, along with her indication that the *Chicago Tribune* inspired her interest in adoption, both exemplify how the coverage through African American publications played a pivotal role in unveiling the presence of the children to a society whose government actively avoided bringing the existence of such children to light. Butler's experience, among many other articles from various African American publications, played the most crucial roles in attracting later transnational adoptions of German "brown babies." This further facilitated the development of the Brown Baby Plan.[44] While more adoptions took place with U.S. families stationed in Germany during this time, the estimated number of children adopted through the Brown Baby Plan ranged from 50 to 500 children.[45] The development of this program was heavily influenced by the public endorsement of adoption through news and magazine publications.

Another circumstance that indicated the impact of African American publications on the attention drawn to German "brown babies" was the lack of interest in the adoption of American born mixed race orphans. A 1959 *Ebony* article titled "The Problem of America's Brown Babies," implied that there was little to no attraction to adopting children that had a similar racial background to the Afro-German children that were seeing a growth of transnational adoption in the United States. The article quoted Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society's assistant executive director Rita Dukette who stated: "They are what we call unusual babies, children of mixed parentage who are harder to place because of their unusual looks. They are too fair for many Negroes and too Negroid for most whites."[46] This implied

that, despite the lack of interest in the adoption of American born mixed race children, the attention drawn to the destitution faced by Afro-German children in a culture that had even less resources for racial minorities than the United States were strong enough human interest stories to create interest in children with "unusual looks."

6. Coverage of the Adoptions in the African American Magazines

Media segregation during the 1940s and 1950s influenced the development of African American magazines and the separate spheres of white and black news outlets. Johnson Publishing Company, founded by African American businessman John H. Johnson in 1942, began to circulate *Ebony* in 1945, *Jet* in 1951 and *Hue* in 1953.[47] There were a plethora of newspapers that were tailored for African American audiences that had circulated for years prior to this time period, including *The Chicago Defender* and *The Afro-American Newspaper* which had editions in Washington D.C. and Baltimore. The segregated state of American society and media at the time effectively ensured that many consumers of media that were white would either ignore or not be aware of news focused on African American communities. Enoch P. Waters, an editor at one of the leading black newspapers *The Chicago Defender*, described the state of black publications in the early to mid twentieth century: "To most white Americans the black press was a voice unheard, its existence unknown or ignored. It was possible for a white person, even one who believed himself well informed, to live out his three score years and ten without seeing a black newspaper or being aware that more than 150 to 250 were being published throughout the nation."[48] The segregated conditions of American media during the 1940s and 1950s indicated how little attention white audiences paid to news published by and focused on African American communities. This further implied how little attention was brought to the circumstances surrounding the German "brown babies," to white news consumers as African American newspapers and magazines were the only news outlets in the United States that published articles about them.

By 1968, Americans had adopted about 7,000 "brown babies," not only from Germany but from other countries that were under American military occupation after World War II, such as such as Italy and Britain, either through individual adoption or the Brown Baby Program.[49] The articles produced by African American media publications that covered Afro-German orphans in Germany perceptively used the articles as a means of promoting further U.S. adoptions. *Jet*, *Ebony* and *Hue* magazines, all publications that were marketed toward African American audiences and published through the Johnson Publishing company, all circulated frequent articles highlighting adoptions of Afro-German children by black families in the U.S. and stationed in Germany throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Utilizing photographs of the children alongside their newly adopted families as well as in various German orphanages and foster homes, the articles aimed at not only bringing to light the existence of the "brown babies" to African American audiences but to promote transnational adoption as well. With little to no coverage of this within mainstream publications in the United States, these publications played a crucial role in acknowledging the Afro-German identity to an audience who viewed their circumstances as compelling human interest stories.

The earliest examples of the articles highlighting Afro-German adoption include an article titled, "Home Needed for 10,000 Brown Babies Interracial Children of War," (Figure 2) from the October 1948 issue of *Ebony*.[50] This issue included a front cover image of a Afro-German child hiding behind a wall in an attempt to sympathetically appeal to the audience with regard to the Afro-German children's' narrative of mistreatment and neglect by German society. Articles concentrating on the children relied on imagery portraying either the desitution that many orphaned "brown babies" faced in Germany or the innocence of the children themselves, having been placed into burdensome circumstances out of their control.

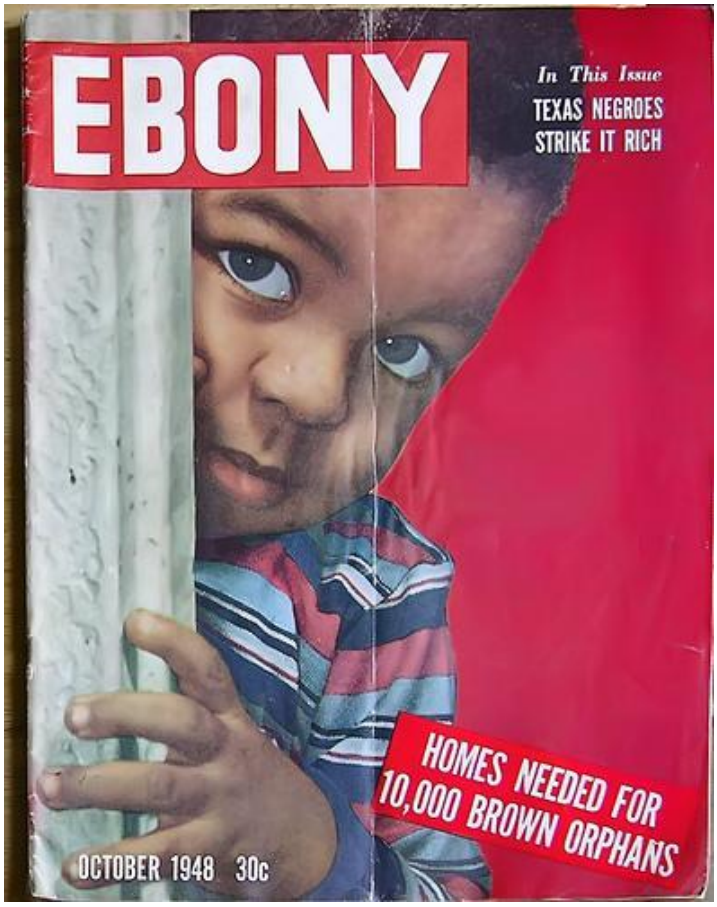

Figure 2. "Home Needed for 10,000 Brown Babies Interracial Children of War." *Ebony*, October 1948.

An article that discernibly attempts to emphasize the innocence and amiability of the Afro-German orphans to its audience is an article titled, "German Brown Baby in a Water Lily," from the January 1955 issue of *Hue*.[51] The wording of the *Hue* article heavily accentuated the childlike wholesomeness of the child in the photograph it was coupled with, which exemplified the attempt to remind the audience that despite the often disconcerting circumstances experienced by Afro-German orphans in Germany, they were ultimately still children who could engage in the acts of normality that children generally should be exposed to. The article, paired with a photograph of a young Afro-German girl at a botanical garden in Berlin, Germany, stated:

> Waving happily as she floats serenely on the surface of a botanical gardens pond in Berlin, Germany, bright-eyed daughter of Negro GI and German mother belies the fable of the child found in proverbial gooseberry bush by perching in the flower of an enormous Victoria Regia lily.[52]

Another article with a similar approach to its depiction of Afro-German children was one titled "Small Talk in Mannheim, Germany" (Figure 3) from the March 1954 issue of *Hue*.[53] The article drew attention to an Afro-German girl interacting with a white German friend after an Army parade in Mannheim, Germany, demonstrating the causal interaction between white and mixed race children for the publication's audience. The photograph provided the visualization of a lack of tension within the conversation held between two children unburdened by the complexity of racial issues in Germany at the time. The image posed a thought provoking suggestion that those who have not been fully exposed to the social consequences associated with racist ideology are capable of interacting without prejudice. This allowed for a reflection on the discrimination that had been imposed not only on the Afro-German children by their surrounding community, but on other marginalized groups such as the African American audience observing the children's interaction.

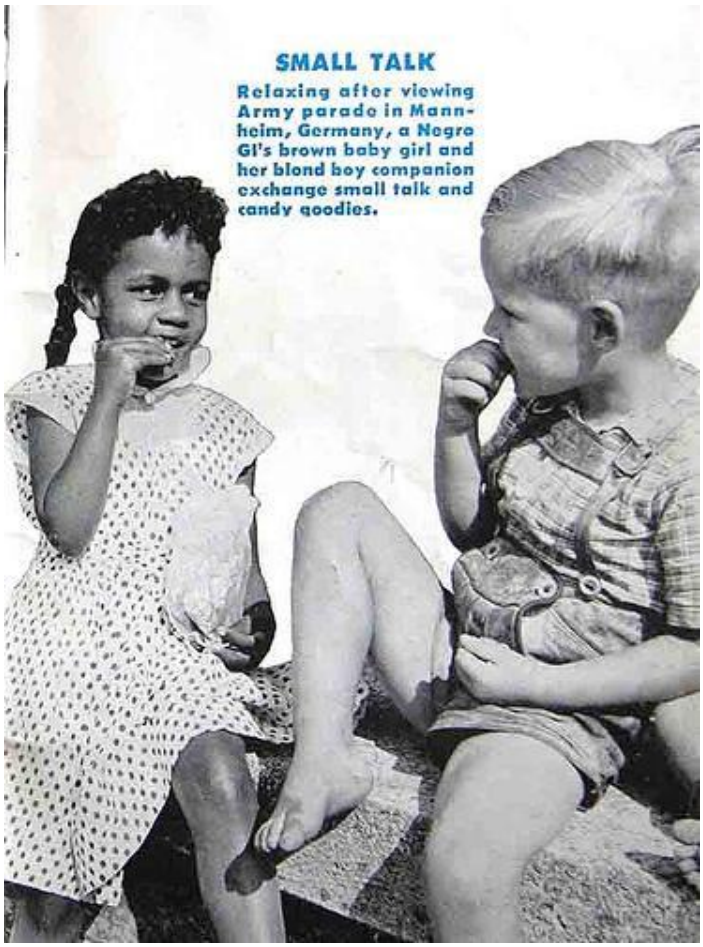

Figure 3. "Small Talk in Mannheim, Germany." *Hue,* March 1954.

The article titled "Tan Tots Attend German Schools" (Figure 4) from the July 24th, 1952 *Jet* issue depicted an Afro-German child attending school in Germany.[54] The article states that German school officials debated as to whether or not the children would "fare" better in a segregated school environment. The article affirmed to its predominantly African American audience that the political dialogue regarding Afro-German children within German society was influenced by the prevalence of discrimination based on the children's' racial background. This further reminded the audience that racism toward individuals with African American parentage was prevalent outside of the United States, while also establishing a connection to African American readers within the context of a shared experience of racial marginalization.

Figure 4. "Tan Tots Attend German Schools." *Jet*, July 24, 1952.

With the examination of articles that concentrated on the adoptions of Afro-German children, common approaches included the usage of photography of the children with their newly adopted parents, who were typically African American, as well as affirmative language when describing the adoptions. One example of this was the *Jet* article (Figure 5) published on January 29th, 1953 titled, "Two Brown Babies (Interracial Babies of War) Adopted by Edward Cardwell and Wife Hattie."[55] The article focuses on Edward and Hattie Cardwell, an African American couple who adopted two Afro-German children after journalist Mabel T. Grammer wrote to a Baltimore newspaper asking for other African American families to consider adopting the German brown babies. The reference to Grammer repeated the evident significance that African American publications had on influencing transnational adoption of Afro-German orphans.

Mr. and Mrs. Cardwell and "brown babies."

German 'Brown Babies' Arrive In U. S.

Two German "brown babies"—illegitimate children of white mothers and Negro GIs—arrived in Washington, D. C., from Frankfurt to become legal wards of an American Negro couple. The waifs, five-year-old Eduard and four-year-old Sonya (not related), were met at New York's Idlewild Airport by their new parents, Washington postal clerk Edward Cardwell and his wife Hattie, a nurse at Freedmen's Hospital. The Cardwells first learned of the youngsters through Mrs. Oscar G. Grammer, an Army wife living in West Germany who wrote to a Baltimore newspaper, asked for aid in finding Negro families willing to adopt brown babies.

Figure 5. "Two Brown Babies (Interracial Babies of War) Adopted by Edward Cardwell and Wife Hattie." *Jet*, January 29, 1953.

Another instance of the tendencies of articles focused on "brown baby" adoptions was the *Jet* article "German Brown Babies (Interracial Children of War) Get Arkansas Home with Dr. DW Young in Arkansas" (Figure 6) published on June 4th, 1953.[56]

'Brown Babies' Get Arkansas Home: German-American war babies Juanita Ruth Schoelich and Jonasch Monsees found a new home in Pine Bluff, Ark., after being adopted by Dr. D. W. Young (r.). Also on hand to welcome them from Germany was their new priest, Rev. W. J. Jans.

Figure 6. "German Brown Babies (Interracial Children of War) Get Arkansas Home with Dr. D.W. Young in Arkansas." *Jet*, June 4, 1953.

The photograph and article depicted two newly adopted Afro-German children greeting the African American man who became their legal ward, standing with his priest. Similarly, the Jet article "Brown Babies Find New Homes In America,"(Figure 7) which was published on October 8th, 1953, was coupled with a photograph of Afro-German

children who had been adopted by three African American families in Washington D.C., showing them walk through customs at a New York airport.[57]

Figure 7. "Brown Babies Find New Homes In America." *Jet*, October 8, 1953.

The visualization of the children freshly entering the U.S. reflected a growing interest in the adoption of these children in the United States, further encouraging the interest surrounding their narrative by the African American public. Comparably, the *Jet* article "Brown Babies Become Americanized" (Figure 8) followed suit with the depiction of the normalcy of the Afro-German children being children regardless of their background.[58] The article, published on May 21st, 1953, was paired with the image of two Afro-German children that had recently been adopted by a couple in Washington D.C. watching television, stating that the children had only been in the United States for four months and were already adapting to American habits. This both normalized the children to the publication's audience while concurrently depicting their transition to American culture as somewhat of a salvation from the hardships experienced as mixed-race orphans in Germany.

Wide World

'Brown Babies' Get Americanized: In the U. S. only four months, German "brown babies" Annelise, 4, and Eduard, 5, adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cardwell of Washington, D. C., have quickly caught on to American habits, especially that of watching their favorite program on TV.

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Figure 8. "Brown Babies Become Americanized." *Jet*, May 21, 1953.

An article unique within the expositions focused on Afro-German adoptions was the *Jet* article "Brown Babies Adopted By Kind German Families" (Figure 9) published on November 8th, 1951.[59] The article focused on Afro-German children that had been adopted by an elderly German couple, paired with a photo of the family walking past bombed ruins in Munich. The article states that this family symbolized the growing concerns within Germany over the Afro-German children. The article also served as an example of adoptions apart from the focus on African American families adopting mixed-race war children.

Figure 9. "Brown Babies Adopted By Kind German Families." *Jet,* November 8, 1951.

Overall, the appeal to the disadvantages faced by Afro-German children based on their racial background as well as the emphasis on the potential to provide them an improved life with a family and within a society with more exposure to other people of color were both methods utilized by African American publications to promote transnational adoption to the United States. The emphasis placed on Afro-German adoptees also allowed for increased awareness of their presence in Germany despite being the only publications to do so in the 1940s and 1950s. The unwillingness of mainstream media and institutions within the U.S. to draw attention to "brown babies" in Europe made these publications essential for the recognition of the children in United States, one of their countries of origin. Mixed-race families were subject to disapproval and contempt from the general white American public, and people of mixed race identities were not allowed the agency to embrace individual cultural identities because of the lack of "whiteness" regardless of their overall racial origin.[60] Influenced by both the military's initial rejection of "brown babies" and the evasiveness of the U.S. government, American social workers joined in attempting to mitigate the arising issue, with claims made against African American publications acknowledging the children stating that the articles were tastelessly sensationalizing the subject matter.[61] At a time when African American public opinion endorsed black participation in the U.S. armed forces, many critics, civilian leaders and military officials also feared that the brown babies would be used to achieve domestic notoriety. The compliance of welfare institutions in the U.S. regarding the neglect of Afro-German children demonstrated the uncooperative behavior of the overall American community based on entrenched racism.

One of the major facets of the Afro-German narrative throughout the 1940s and 1950s that was delineated by African American publications was the fundamental need to bring awareness of the Afro-German identity to the American public in order for any level of acceptance or understanding to occur. Despite the concurrent problematic racial climates of both Germany and the United States during this period of time, the blatant evasion from recognizing the Afro-German's American connection by American institutions hindered the agency of the children to explore a part of their identity.

Many of the "brown babies" did not learn of their German ancestry until adulthood.[62] This contributed to the cultural displacement experienced from a mixed-race identity not fully accepted or understood by either country of origin's societies. It wasn't until much later that scholarship and narrative publications focusing on the Afro-German children began to flourish. The 1986 book *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out* was comprised of testimonials of Afro-German women born under these circumstances who remained in Germany, focusing on the hardships rooted in racism and sexism in German culture in the mid-20th century.[63] Ultimately, the attention brought to the Afro-German identity through African American publications allowed for the exposure and development of scholarships and personal narratives of the transational Afro-German community.

7. Conclusion

The use of articles focusing on Afro-German children in American news publications allowed for discrete subversion of Jim Crow era racism and the depiction of racial transgression to the American public. As mixed raced children with an identity that was actively overlooked by both the government and the general populace of their countries of origin, the exposure of the Afro-German children by African American news publications allowed attention to be brought to their identity and the racial stratification that was experienced in Germany. The combined racial climates of the United States and Germany in the mid-twentieth century created difficult environments for the children of African American GIs and German women. The conditions of these social environments were what made the articles focusing on the "Brown Babies" of Germany significant to African American journalism and the acknowledgement of mixed race identities to American culture. The overall struggle of the cultural displacement experienced by the Afro-German children exemplified the racism and discrimination of both countries during the 1940s and 1950s and served to identify them as major issues in both Germany and the United States. The articles published by African American publications ultimately demonstrated an initiative made by a marginalised community to recognize a hybridized identity that lacked agency within their own racial climate. These publications drew attention to a disenfranchised group that struggled with racial stratification and difficulties with constructing a cultural identity under discriminatory American and German social and welfare institutions.

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