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Eugen Zintgraff's Diary as a Document of Theft and Destruction of Art Treasures in the Colonial Context

DCNtR Debate #3. The Post/Colonial Museum

Eugen Zintgraff (1858/Düsseldorf – 1897/Tenerife) was a ›prominent‹ explorer in the early years of German colonization of Cameroon (Nkui Nchoji 1989), whose name is deeply rooted in the local collective or grassroots memory (Tsogang Fossi 2019). It is also linked to many cultural or zoological objects as well as human remains, namely skulls, currently in German museums, like in Berlin, Braunschweig, Detmold, Hildesheim, Leipzig, Oldenburg or Stuttgart. Though not himself a military man, he was in charge of several ›exploratory trips‹ between 1886 and 1892, which he misleadingly referred to as ›punitive expedition‹ and ›pacification warfare‹. These partly very violent exploratory were specifically to the coastal forest area (Wouri, Bodiman, Yabassi, Bakundu, Anyang and Banyang), the Grassland region (Bali, Bafut, Mankon, etc.) and the north of the colony (Adamaua, Banyo, Tibati, Sokoto and Yola).

Despite the enthusiastic support of Baron Julius von Soden[1], the first governor of German Cameroon (1885–1891), the ›excursions‹ were in violation of the 1884 Protectorate Treaty, which forbade the Germans access to the hinterlands. Zintgraff not only met and harassed people during these ›trips‹[2], he also came across many art assets of the forest areas and the Grasslands. These included large drums, wall paintings, carved statues and door frames, sacralized rocks for worshiping, jewelry, and so on. In his diary, *Nord-Kamerun* (1895), Zintgraff describes his attitudes, i.e. his behavior, feelings, and (inter)actions, with African art and cultural objects. As such, the diary appears to provide reliable testimony concerning the loss of these objects. Interestingly, these attitudes showcase different mechanisms of violent destruction or appropriation of cultural objects during colonial times.

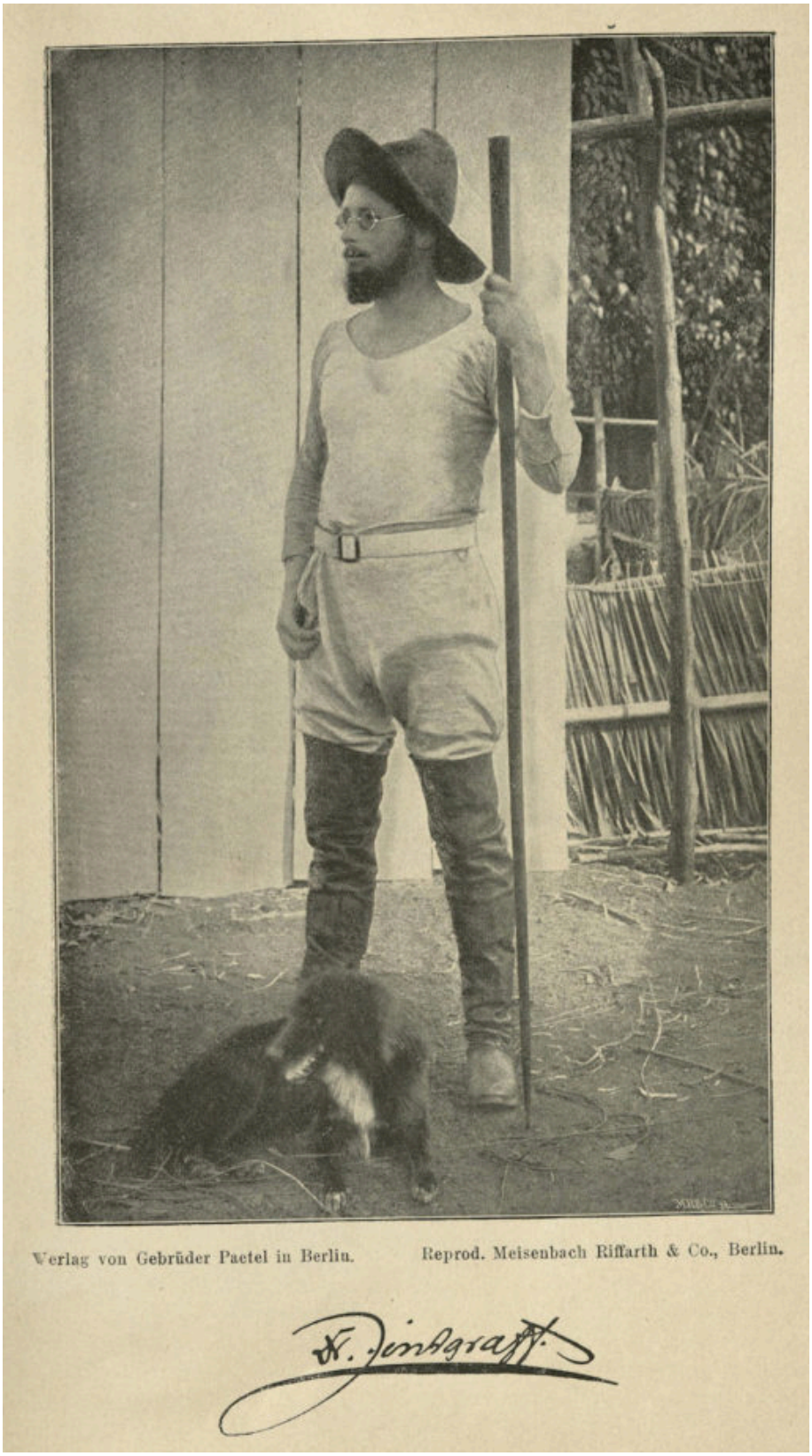

Verlag von Gebrüder Paetel in Berlin.
Reprod. Meisenbach Riffarth & Co., Berlin.
E. Zintgraff.

Fig. 1: Eugen Zintgraff. Photo from his diary Nord-Kamerun (Zintgraff 1895: IX).

Focusing on the art treasures of the Banyang and the Grasslands of Cameroon, the descriptions and narratives to be found in his diaries, and which concern his encounters with such objects, are enriching for at least four reasons. First, they help the different communities he confronted in rediscovering parts of their bygone traditions. Second, they enrich existing insights into the types of encounters that European travelers, colonial officers, traders, scientists, missionaries, administrators, colonial doctors and teachers had with local artistic and cultural treasures. Third, they testify to the importance of diaries for research on the provenance of existing art treasures and, analogously, help to shed more light on lost art objects, which had been destroyed by Europeans simply because the objects were too unwieldy to be transported. Finally, they could help establish a network of (inter)connections to people from the same period, context or location with whom he was in contact, and who shared the same ethnographical or anthropological views. These connections are of great importance for research on the provenance of objects that were collected either without the use of force and constraint, or alternatively in problematic contexts and under questionable circumstances (Grimme 2017).

Four main attitudes towards these artefacts are immediately identifiable in Zintgraff 's diary: admiration, the desire for looting, followed by destruction, and finally awareness. I have structured the present article in accordance with these four prevalent attitudes, which I identified as giving a discernible pattern to his actions and strategies.

Admiration

As Zintgraff and his men travelled through the Bakundu region in 1886–87, just two years after the official start of German colonization of Cameroon, they made certain ›discoveries‹. Apart from colorful butterflies and other insects in assorted sizes, which his assistant, lieutenant Zeuner, and later on the entomologist Paul Preuss[3],

collected (Zintgraff 1895: 63-64), they also found in N'Djanga, in the neighborhood of Kumba, in the South-West region of today's Cameroon, very tall columns of rocks, some of them as high as 75 meters. Borrowing his words from European mythology, Zintgraff compares them to »cyclops«, observing them from above: »Most striking were some strange, towering basalt formations in the middle of the forest, which, some 50 to 75 metres high, looked down upon us like giant cyclop's fortresses« (ibid.: 35)[4]. How it was that these basalt rocks, 50 or 70 meters in height, came in this special and somewhat spectacular shape is not mentioned in the diary. Nonetheless, their uncommon shape also gave them a special significance in the culture and beliefs of the region. Hence, they were sacralized and appeared as such in many cults in association with many other accessories (skulls, carvings, calabashes, hats, etc.). This rendered them valuable ethnological finding in the eyes of European ›visitors‹. Depending on which populations were using them, some of these smaller rocks – though still as tall as human beings – were placed in particular positions alongside various accessories at the entrances of assembly halls. In this position, they were given names in accordance with their designated purpose:

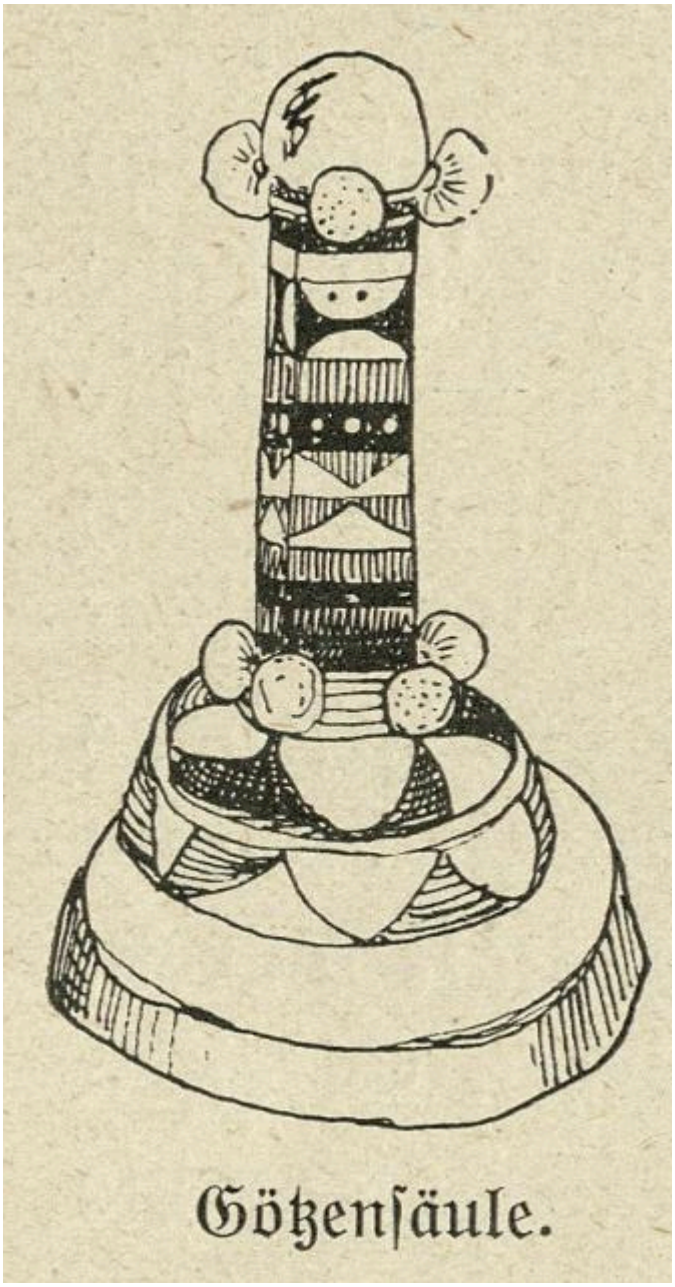


Fig. 2: A Dikoki drawn later by Ernst Vollbehr (Vollbehr 1912: 150).

»Each of these assembly houses in the middle, right at the entry, has a man-sized upright stone, called Dikoki[5], which, together with the small area in front of it, is considered ›taboo‹. This stone is a basalt that at great pains has been dragged over from the western parts of the protectorate that I already had the occasion to

mention. It is painted with brown, white and black squares, a cap decorates its uppermost part while the rest is adorned with many amulets, with sacred objects lying at its feet«.[6]

Zintgraff expressed enormous admiration for artifacts and cult objects when he reached the Banyangland, where he discovered many wall paintings, high quality tools and, in his own words, very large, ethnologically valuable drums. In all his travels throughout the colony, he had never seen wall paintings executed nor homes decorated to such a standard[7]. He writes:

> »There is one thing that the Banyang have the advantage over all negro tribes from Cameroon to the Benue: their dwellings are extraordinarily neatly built and even furnished to a certain comfort. The clay walls and the sofas with arm rests, also made of clay, are meticulously polished, painted in black, frequently also adorned with beautiful ornaments in black, white, red and blue color« (Zintgraff 1895: 121).[8]

The high artistic quality of the objects soon gave rise in Zintgraff to an increased desire for looting, a longing to acquire them for his own anthropological research.

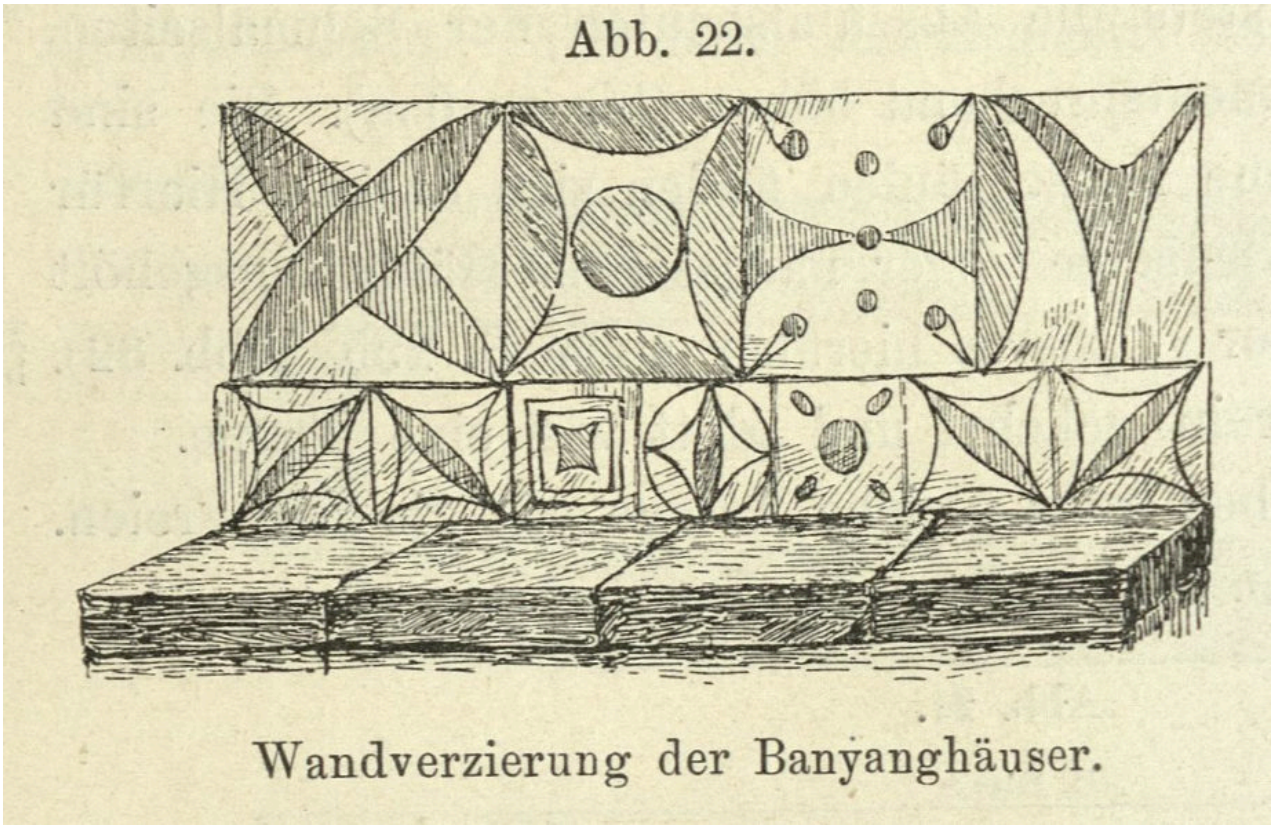


Fig. 3: Wall paintings in Banyangland (Hutter 1902: 278).

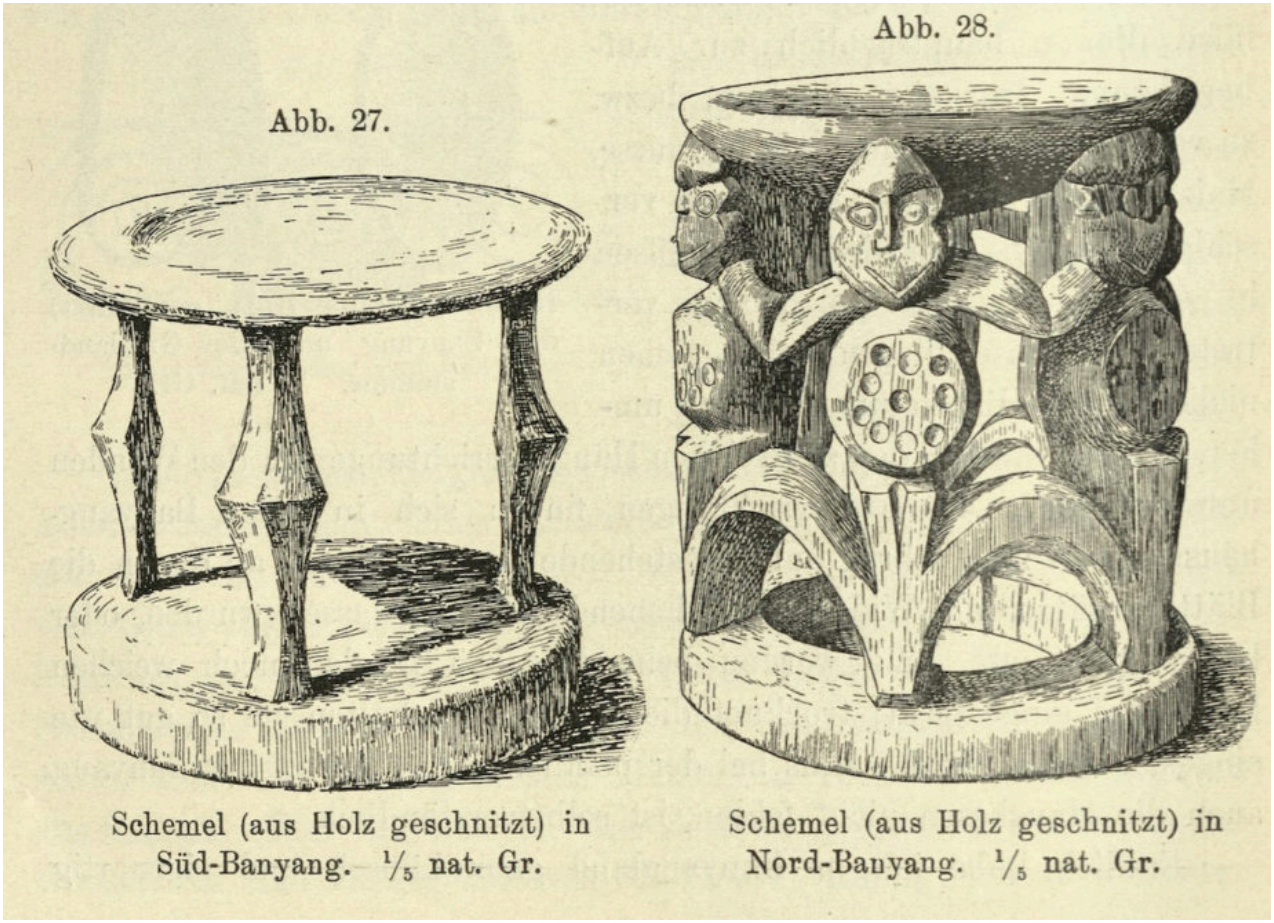


Fig. 4: Carved stools of the Banyangland (Hutter 1902: 278).

Desire to Loot Artefacts and Skulls

If Zintgraff had been relatively indifferent to possessing the ›ethnological rocks‹ to this point, this was no longer the case for the other objects he found in Baduma. Based on his personal account, it was the first time he saw such skillfully carved and highly valuable »idols«. Just as Max Buchner (1914: 269) had secretly wondered how he could obtain the marvelous artifacts from the hut in the Bakundu area, which had been offered him as a sleeping area in 1884–1885, Zintgraff 's own desire to acquire objects grew stronger and stronger. At first, he tried in vain to purchase them. Since the villagers were not at all willing to sell their ›gods‹, Zintgraff devised a plan to »mistakenly« (so he claims) kidnap at least one of them while leaving in the early

morning. Yet, a further obstacle impeded him from realizing his plan, namely the size of the cult objects. Just as with previous »idols« in the Bakundu-land, these were also all as tall as a human being, the carvings however were even more attractive. Zintgraff shamelessly describes his desire to steal the »idols«: »In Baduma I also for the first time saw excellently carved idols, which, however, no money could gain; also their man-sized height did not allow to reap one of them ›mistakenly‹ at the crack of dawn« (Zintgraff 1895: 83)[9]. Did Zintgraff revisit this place during his stay in the colony? It is not mentioned. Yet one such ›idol‹, *Dikoi*, would eventually turn up in Switzerland some ten years later in 1898, brought by a missionary of the Basler Mission named Nathanael Lauffer[10]. At the 1909 Basler Mission exhibition, the ›idol‹ was proudly presented as »Beutestück des Stärkeren« (»looted piece of the strongest«) (Ratschiller 2013), the strongest here referring to the courageous messengers of a Christian God (priests), who considered the religion and beliefs of the local populations as those of pagans or heathens. Such practices were to be destroyed by all means, of which one of the most frequently utilized was destruction by fire (Opoku 2015).

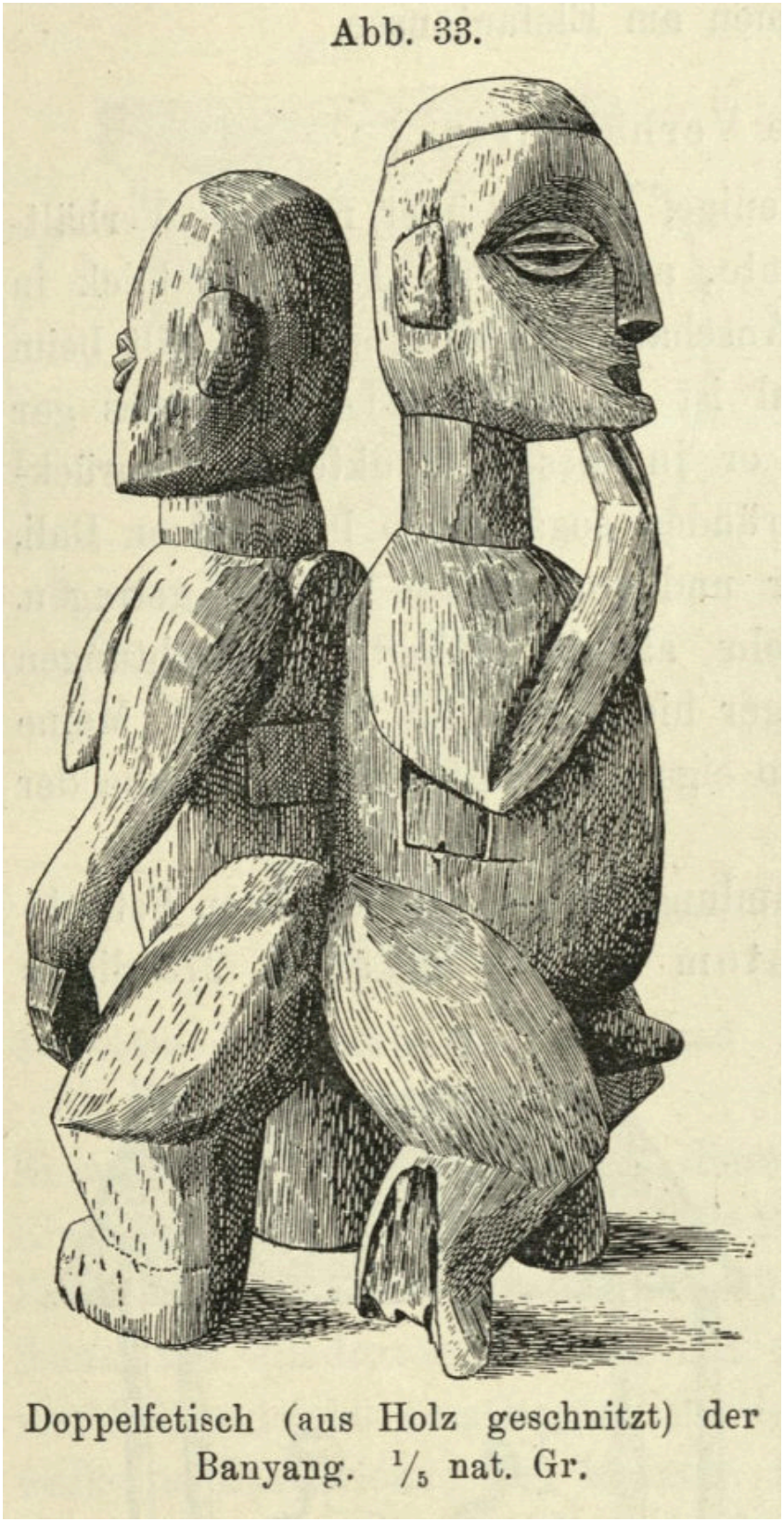
Zintgraff 's expression »no money could gain« clearly indicates that he did his utmost to buy them, and that he must surely have tried to bribe some of the locals. Once arrived in the Kombone village, whose inhabitants were said to be ›cannibals‹, Zintgraff made no attempt to conceal his intention to take human skulls home for scientific analysis. He tried to retrieve skulls from the ashes in a forest where it was rumored that secret ceremonies took place (Zintgraff 1895: 85f.). At that time, the act of collecting cult or art treasures and human remains of the so-called ›inferior‹, ›savage‹ and ›barbaric‹ races was considered part of heroic and patriotic actions destined, so the claim goes, to advance scientific, medical and anthropological research; all of which were to become significant tools of colonialism. Skulls, in particular, were both useful and sought after as according to anthropological convictions at the time they, more than other parts of the human body, could demonstrate through biological anthropology/craniometry the supposed inferiority

of the colonized, specifically by comparing the sizes of the brain cavit for instance. Furthermore, colonial collections were generally intended to raise one's prestige, status and income or that of the domestic institution (Tsogang Fossi 2020). Yet no matter the extent to which resisting peoples were crushed, particularly large artifacts would simply never be looted, and were thus destined to be destroyed.

Zintgraff's Destruction of Art Treasures by Burning and ›Recycling‹

In the colonial history of Cameroon, the Tange was, of course, the first notable object to have escaped destruction by fire. The Tange was a beautiful and colorful ship bow that served as an emblem for the King of Hickory Town (today Bonaberi), Lock Priso. It continues to be a bone of contention between the Bele Bele community (led mostly by Kum'a Ndumbe III) in Duala and the Bavarian State (Splettstösser 2019) up to this day. In July 1884, Lock Priso had already refused the German flag to be hoisted on his territory and to submit himself to the German colonial power. In December 1884, following an attack of the Lock Priso's men and Joss people against King Bell, an ally of the Germans, on the grounds that King Bell had sold the land to the Germans for his sole interest, the German navy waged war against Lock Priso and the Joss people. Priso's palace was then set ablaze and heavily shelled and bombarded under the orders of German admiral, Knorr, who sought thereby to »enhance psychological effects« as he put it at that time. Max Buchner, acting as representative of the German civil administration, searched the palace before it was burnt down. He discovered the Tange, which he described as his most prominent find and sent it to his homeland Bavaria (Buchner 1914: 194). Terming it a most prominent find suggests that he did indeed find other objects, but that the remnants were consumed in the fire. It is difficult for me to qualify and quantify them as Buchner kept no inventory. Thus, Buchner's book title – *Aurora Colonialis* – entailed also indescribably difficult times for peoples, art and cult treasures in Cameroon and throughout the colonies.

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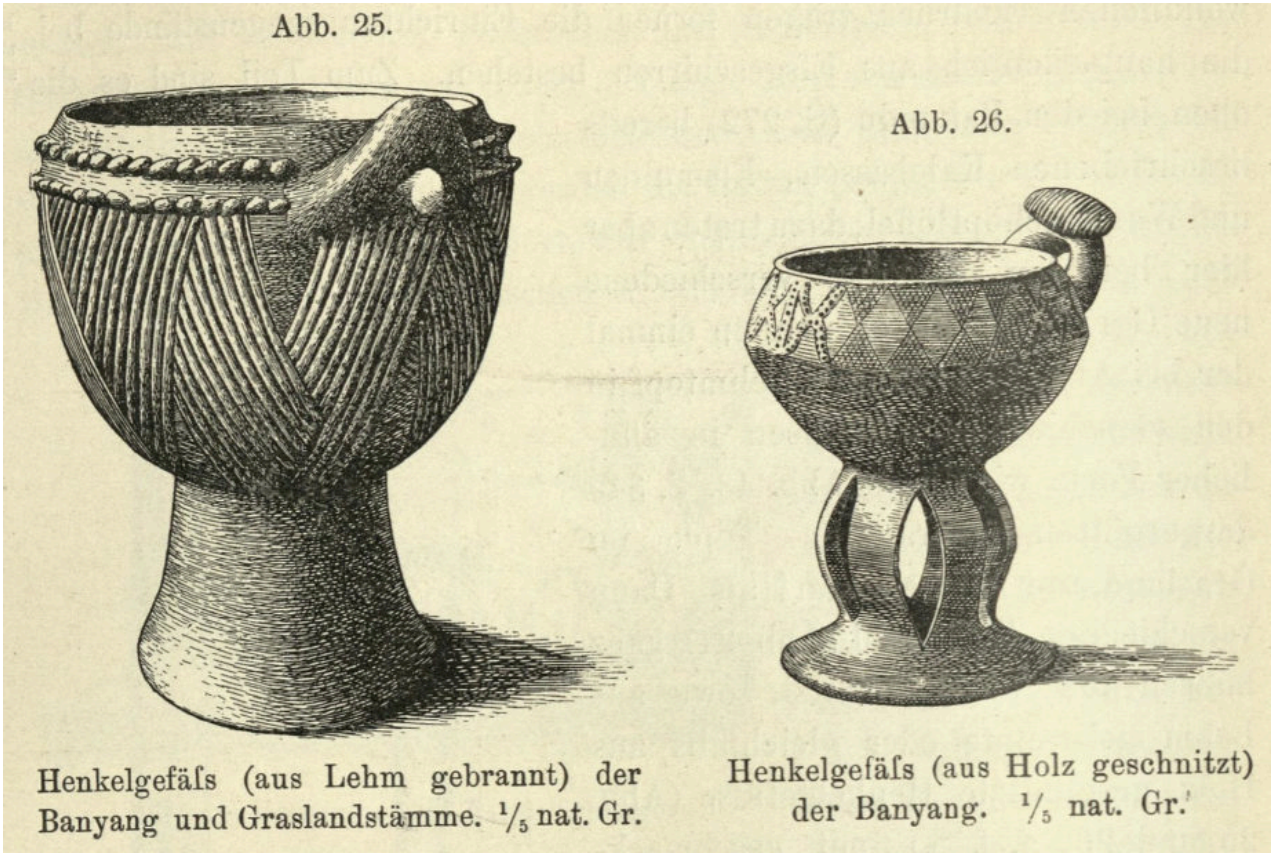


Fig. 5 and 6: Double ›idol‹ figures of the Banyang (Hutter 1902: 296) and tools of the Banyang (Hutter 1902: 280).

Zintgraff 's decision to reduce the compounds of Banyang paramount chief N'Tok Difang to ashes (»levelled to the ground«), – following N'Tok Difang's obstruction of Zintgraff 's path inland – draws a similar pattern. The wall paintings he had earlier admired, as well as the drums and other artifacts that were fated to disappear in the fire, including the compounds 10 km around, encompassed nearly the whole Banyang land. This was a difficult spectacle for Zintgraff, above all because, as he himself laments, he could not transport the treasures he was destroying[11]. Ten people were killed on N'Tok Difang's property, as well as a further seventy people in Bahuang, another Banyang settlement. What became of the art treasures? Zintgraff, his own words, watched »the very valuable ethnological objects disappear in the fire«. Again owing to their great size, he was unable to transport them. As he relates in his own

personal account:

> »The number of people killed was later given as 70 by themselves whilst about 25 hamlets within a radius of 10 kilometres were levelled to the ground. *Many remarkable objects, precious for anthropology, like big drums draped with human skulls with jaws rattling when beaten, had to be destroyed since, to my greatest distress, it was not feasible to drag them along*« (Zintgraff 1895: 152; my emphasis).[12]

Yet, fire was not the only employed by Zintgraff in his dealing with the art and artifacts of the region. His attitude toward women's jewelry should also be highlighted. During the war against N'Tok Difang, 20 of his richly adorned wives were taken hostage. As queens, they wore many brass jewels. Brass figured significantly in weddings, while the jewels from them also served to indicate status, as is the case with ivory bracelets in the coastal Duala community. As a matter of fact, women of noble descent, as well as queens, could be adorned with more than eight kilograms of such jewels at a given time (Skolaster 1910: 49–50). We can therefore surmise, at no risk of exaggerating, that the twenty queens may well have been wearing more than 160 kg of brass jewels!

Yet Zintgraff was lacking in ammunition; he took the unprecedented and incredible decision of harshly and ungentlemanly seizing the jewels, which he then recycled by transforming them into bullets. Very cynically, he goes so far as to hope that the families of these queens would soon regret their generosity to them because the jewels were to become bullets for the extermination of the generous donors:

> »To remedy this sensitive need of ammunition we had to use the serpentine rings of the captured womenfolk that were made of strong brass wire and worn as jewellery around their arms and legs. We

> ungallantly pulled them from their limbs and had them smashed with a chisel into buckshot size pieces by the carpenter who used his axe as an anvil. In this shape they were fired, as lethal greetings, towards their fathers, husbands and brothers, who in view of this unexpected and fatal use we made of their former generosity, may have bitterly regretted it« (Zintgraff 1895: 151–152).[13]

Such destruction of African artifacts and art would occur both during and after the German colonial period. It was equally enacted by different missionaries, who understood the practice as a sign of conversion from ›paganism‹ to Christianity. The new convert would passionately take part in such apostasy as proof that he had changed life and was newly born in Christ. Paul Steiner reports cases around the Muyuka, Balong and Bombe areas, where new converts either developed an interested in selling their former carved ›gods‹ as »curiosities« to the Europeans, or where they simply allowed the objects to perish in missionary fires:

> »Bit by bit idol worship also began to lose its reputation and the national heathendom received a heavy blow. People started to sell their carved or clay baked Losango (human and animal figures) as curiosities or had them burned. Notably the downfall of an important Balong chief, who, as a dreaded Losango-man, had exerted great pressure on the people by means of his magic, lead to idol burning fires flaring up in almost all Balong and Bakundu villages« (Steiner 1909: 77).[14]

Jakob Keller, a missionary who dwelled in the Bakossi lands from the 1890s, also witnessed and actively encouraged public apostasy as accompanied by the destruction of objects belonging to local cults. The objects in question were either cast into flames or thrown into rivers. Through this ›trick‹ however, he was also able

to save certain objects that he later took to Basel. He reports:

> »As it was, the Bakosi tribe had bidden farewell in corpore to heathendom. At a large public gathering they officially bade farewell to heathendom. Mountains of skulls, bones etc. were burned and thrown into the river Mongo. Few things could I save and bring to Basel« (in Gardi 1994: 56).[15]

However, it is obvious in these instances that the iconoclastic attitude of the population is a result of their recent inclusion in the new church and is, as such, not precisely forced, though not totally entirely voluntary or free from the manipulation and intimidation of the colonial and missionary administration. In some cases, certain rituals and cults were even banned, while in the same stroke missionaries insisted that Sundays be institutionalized as a holy day (see Steiner 1909: 116; Wurm 1904: 27f.). In such cases, no other cult or religious practice was allowed, and the complaints of missionaries against offenders would lead to punitive police or military interventions, whereby the offenders were imprisoned and their cult objects seized. Some leaders of the secret society were also hanged. This exemplifies another aspect of the collaboration and mutual help that coexisted between the missionary societies and the colonial administration (see Berger 1978: 81). Seizing cult objects in such instances also became a means for administrators and European missionaries to provide collectors with so-called curiosities, in cases where they were not themselves interested in the objects.

The fourth attitude of Zintgraff towards art treasures of the regions he »visited«, may be termed »awareness«.

›Egoistic‹ Awareness

Upon arrival in the Western Grasland of Cameroon, Zintgraff was warmly welcomed by one of the great rulers of the area; Fon Galega of Bali. Fon Galega dreamed of

expanding his domination over the neighboring kingdoms Bafut and Mankon, and decided to protect Zintgraff from his notables and other rulers, who were urging him to kill the stranger. He saw in the modern technology that the visitor displayed (weapons) a solid chance to achieve his plans for hegemony in the region. Zintgraff, for his part, viewed the ruler, who had an unlimited power over his subjects, as an ideal partner for his colonial pro- jects. Both men would eventually sign a blood pact by mixing their blood and drinking it, swearing mutual and infallible assistance. Zintgraff would later seek out and sign a formalized contract with Galega, thus rendering the local ruler harmless for colonial power (Tsogang Fossi 2019).

Zintgraff 's view was that the artistic practices of the people inland were undergoing a constant, yet dramatic change due to contact with the European world. As a result, he claimed, a visible loss of originality or authenticity in African art was occurring. We can thus summarize: ›Culture‹ (›Kultur‹) seemed to be destroying ›nature‹ (›Natur‹ or ›die primitive Kunst der Naturvölker‹), i.e. the art of the African ›savage‹. One way or the other, the position is paradoxical, given that the colonizers, and thus Zintgraff himself, arrived with the assumption that they had been assigned a sort of divine mission to civilize the ›savage‹. His position, however, conflicts with an assumption known as ›the white Man's burden‹ insofar as he claims to be the ›apostle‹ of civilization, while at the same hoping that the ›savage‹ remain authentic, that is, consistently ›savage‹. He did not want European ways of life to be imitated, giving way to what were derogatively referred to at the time as »Hosennigger«, that is, those who were; »too civilized to be authentic but not able to do more than mimic true civilization« (Aitken/Rosenhaft 2013: 14). Despite this underlying contradiction, Zintgraff rather accurately articulates – as one of the first colonizers – the start of a form art trafficking in the early years of European colonialism. Though the African's ›authenticity‹ appeared to be waning, certain European art dealers were keenly aware of the increasing value of African art and artifacts in Europe. They were unscrupulous and rather a little too eager to engage in producing the ›exotic‹ at/ from home (Europe) in order to lure unsuspecting African art collectors:

> »Like with all tribes in inner Africa, who have been touched by culture, here too there is a gradual transformation of indigenous customs and craftsmanship taking place. The Bali already have started to digress from their old patterns and to imitate European ones, and the time, when a sword forged from indigenous iron will be a rarity, is probably not far away, since they can get better things equally cheap by way of trade from the coast. The weapons of the Haussa and Mandingo in West Africa as well as Massai spears from East Africa even now are already partly counterfeited in Europe and sold to inexperienced collectors as genuine« (Zintgraff 1895: 218).[16]

Yet it should be emphasized that Zingraff 's concern here is not the fate of the African, but that of the poor European collector, who would probably become the victim of this trick. In this sense, Zintgraff, in his capacity as an eager collector of African artifacts, was acting in defiance of what could well have become his own fate.

Conclusive Remarks

The above-described attitudes of Zintgraff toward Cameroonian cultural assets demonstrate the fate of African art and cult objects from the early years of European colonialism until today. Debates on the restitution of art treasures from colonial contexts, which presently appear to some, erroneously, as new motives (Savoy 2020) continue in the absence of any meaningful action or result. Despite measures and resolutions taken by UNESCO and ICOM (Le Courrier de l'UNESCO 2020) to protect cultural heritage and discourage art trafficking, art dealers prove to be very inventive. These attitudes also unveil some challenges that await researchers of the provenance of art and cult treasures from questionable contexts. Apart from the insects which Zintgraff openly admits to collecting, he does not, at any point in his diary, clearly state whether or not he collected artifacts or not, admitting only to their destruction. His silence on these activities as a collector is certainly misleading,

until one considers the diary in relation to other sources, either from the same author or those who accompanied him, such as Franz Hutter (letters and reports to the colonial administration, letters with museum institutions). In point of fact, there is no more room for doubt: not only did he collect artifacts and insects – to be found in Braunschweig, Detmold, Berlin, Oldenburg, Leipzig, Stuttgart, and Hildesheim – but human remains as well, namely skulls. Although no word of this appears in the diary, the first contingent of artifacts collected, received or looted by Zintgraff arrived Europe as early as 1887, that is, from the very beginning of his ›trips‹ in Cameroon. Is there any specificity to the ›objects‹ he collected? When, where and how did he collect these art assets? Is there any identifiable network of collectors, or links to specific museums? These are some of the questions in the next steps to gain greater insight into the collection history of this ›explorer‹.

Seeking to determine the provenance of art treasures that were simply transported, taken forcibly, or looted as booty from their original owners helps us understand the asymmetrical relations of power of colonial times. Furthermore, the failure to consider objects that had been voluntarily destroyed by the conquerors may contribute to erasing collective memory and the cultural heritage of a given population. Future discussions should be extended to various forms of destroyed artifacts, which need comparative studies of different historical materials and records. Reconstruction of a bygone artistic know-how appears to be a symbolic reparation of the wrongs endured by source communities. It also helps in nation-building narratives as a counter-discourse to the colonial assumptions that legitimated colonial ideology and practices as a humanitarian enterprise, casting colonialism as a ›divine‹ mission of the ›civilized‹ Europe to the benefit of the ›uncivilized‹ local African.

The print version of this text is published in the Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften, issue “The Post/Colonial Museum”, 2022, p. 77 – 92. In order to make the issue “The Post/Colonial Museum” available to a wide readership, specifically on the African

continent, we decided to use the long standing collaboration between boasblogs and the Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften to successively publish all contributions in print and online (as DCNtR debate). We thank the editorial boards of both, the Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften and the boasblogs, as much as the publishing house transcript for embarking on this project together. Furthermore, our thanks go to the participants of the conference on Museum Collections in Motion, which was generously supported by the Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne, the research platform "Worlds of Contradictions", University of Bremen, the Museumsgesellschaft of the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum and the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany. Most of all, we thank the contributors to this debate for four years of exchange, debate and intellectual companionship.

Footnotes

[1] In recognition of his ›loyal‹ services to the German Nation, a street still carries his name in Düsseldorf-Urdenbach (Soden-Straße), an urban quarter whose streets have been especially devoted to former ›prominent‹ colonial actors (Adolf Woermann, Lüderitz, Julius von Soden, Carl Peters, etc.). Julius von Soden, who also supported one of the first putsches in an early African kingdom (Bimbia), harassed local rulers and embezzled some lands of the Duala for colonial and personal purposes, is another such example. He is, however, surprisingly recast in the city narrative of Düsseldorf as a »harmless colonialist«. See Michels (2017); Linden-Museum (2021).
[2] Zintgraff 's rather masculine and narcissistic stance in this portrait from his diary is somewhat reminiscent of the Colossus of Cecil Rhodes striding from Cape Town to Cairo, and is symptomatic for the colonial gaze of the man. Zintgraff considered himself superior to the colonized, whose sole right was to bow to his ultimate authority and to be at his mercy. As a result, he frequently sentenced people to fifty strokes with the colonial cane (shambock or kimboko), thus going beyond the limit of corporal punishment by flogging permitted at that time (twenty-five strokes). He

even sentenced some local people to death, such as one of his translators, Soppo Bell. Moreover, Zintgraff went as far as signing a contract with the Bali ruler, Fon Galega, taking entirely into his own hands »the power of life and death« over any Bali native. See Zintgraff (1895); Tsogang (2019).

[3] Paul Preuss became the director of the Botanical Garden in Victoria (today Limbe), founded under the support of the then governor Baron Julius von Soden around 1890– 1891. Initially, it functioned as a center for the collection of a wide variety of objects of zoological and botanical interest until the surge in German plantations, when it came to serve more as a laboratory for analyzing crops diseases or for experiencing new varieties of plants. See Notizblatt des Königl. Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin, No. 21, (1900); Michel (1970).

[4] »Auffallend waren mitten in dem Walde seltsame, hohe Basaltformationen, die an 50 bis 75 Meter hoch wie ungeheure cyklopische Burgen auf uns herabschauen.«

[5] The name Dikoti certainly refers to a deity for the Losango cults and practices (Losango also stood for different local cult societies, sing.: Isango) that were widespread in this region and even to people alongside of the Wuri- and Cross-Rivers. See Bureau (1962).

[6] »Jedes dieser Versammlungshäuser hat in der Mitte gleich am Eingange einen aufrecht stehenden Stein von Manneshöhe stehen, Dikoki genannt, der mit einem kleinen Platz davor als ›tabu‹ gilt. Dieser Stein ist Basalt, der oft mit vieler Mühe aus den westlichen Gegenden des Schutzgebietes, die ich bereits im ersten Kapitel zu erwähnen Gelegenheit hatte, herangeschleppt wird. Er ist mit braunen, weißen und schwarzen Vierecken be- malt, eine Mütze ziert sein oberes Ende, während ihn im Übrigen zahlreiche Amulette schmücken oder geweihte Gegenstände zu seinen Füssen liegen« (Zintgraff 1985: 46). On these rocks as symbolic representations of the royal ancestors, see Brain (1981: 357); on the culture and belief systems of the region, see also Mansfeld (1908: 212, 218f.).

[7]Some wall paintings were also reported for the Yabassi region, where Zintgraff had sojourned during his first trips into the interior of »Cameroon« in the outgoing 1886/7. See Ziemann (1907: 135).

[8] »Eines haben die Banyang sämmtlichen [sic!] Negerstämmen von Kamerun bis zum Benue voraus: ihre außerordentlich sauber gebauten und mit einer gewissen Bequemlichkeit eingerichteten Wohnhäuser. Die Lehmwände sowie die gleichfalls aus Lehm gefertigten Sophas [sic!] mit Armlehnen sind tadellos glatt poliert, mit schwarzer Farbe bemalt, oft auch mit schönen Verzierungen in schwarz, weiß, roth [sic!] und blau ausgestattet« (Zintgraff 1895: 121). Editors' note: The terms n****/N**** are highly discriminatory and are therefore generally avoided today. But to delete them from colonial sources would obscure the violence and racism of colonial regimes.

[9]In Baduma sah ich auch zum erstenmale [sic!] ausgezeichnet geschnitzte Götzenbilder, die indessen für kein Geld zu erhalten waren; auch gestattete es ihre mannshohe Größe nicht, eins etwa morgens in aller Frühe beim Aufbruch ›aus Versehen‹ mit einzupacken« (Zintgraff 1895: 83).

[10] A photograph of the Dikoti can be found on the website of the Basler Mission Archives (International Mission Photography Archive, n.d.), or in Gardi 1994.

[11] The destruction of villages was both a human and an artistic catastrophe. With significant insight, Oskar Nuoffer (1926) later described the art of the grassland region. This art equally suits the case of the Banyang, as is attested to in the following citation: »Comprehensive palaces were created with domed roofs and galleries of pillars, the portals flanked by posts richly embellished with figures, the walls with ornamental friezes; in the chambers there were thrones, majestic beds and sedan chairs, portable stretchers with human and animal sculptures both in the round and pierced; big drums with lavish ornaments, not to think of the numerous wooden dance masks. The whole people takes a vivid delight in beautifully carved house ornaments, in stools, dishes, bowls, drinking horns and other fine household goods, especially pipes« (»Umfangreiche Paläste erstanden mit Kuppeldächern und Säulengallerien, die Tore von figurenreichen Pfosten flankiert, die Wände mit Ornamentfriesen; in den Gemächern Throne, Paradebetten und Sänften, Tragbahren mit Menschen und Tieren in Rundplastik und durchbrochener Arbeit; große Trommeln mit reichem Ausschmuck, der zahlreichen hölzernen Tanzmasken nicht

zu gedenken. Im ganzen Volke lebt die Freude an schöngeschnitzten Hausverzierungen, an Hockern, Schüsseln, Schalen, Trinkhörnern und anderen feinen Hausrat, besonders der Pfeife«; Nuoffer 1926: 32).

[12] »Die Gefallenen wurden später von ihnen selber auf 70 angegeben, während etwa 25 Weiler im Umkreise von 10 Kilometer dem Erdboden gleichgemacht waren. Viele merkwürdige, für die Völkerkunde werthvolle [sic!] Gegenstände, darunter große Trommeln mit Menschenschädeln behangen, die beim Trommeln mit den Kinnladen klapperten, mussten vernichtet werden, da deren Mitschleppen zu meinem größten Kummer nicht angängig war« (Zintgraff 1895: 152; my emphasis).

[13] »Um nun dieser empfindlichen Geschoßnoth [sic!] abzuhelfen, mussten die aus starkem Messingdraht gewundenen Ringe der gefangenen Weiber herhalten, die sie als Schmuck um Arme und Beine trugen. Wir zogen ihnen die Reifen sehr ungalanterweise von den Gliedern und ließen sie dann durch den Zimmermann auf einer als Ambos dienenden Axt mit einem Meißel in rehpostendicke Stücke zerschlagen. In solcher Gestalt flogen sie als todtbringende [sic!] Grüße ihren Vätern, Männern und Brüdern entgegen, die wohl Angesichts dieses unerwarteten und verhängnisvollen Gebrauchs von ihrer einstigen Freigebigkeit solche bitter bereuen mochten« (Zintgraff 1895: 151–152).

[14] »Allgemach verlor auch der Götzendienst an Ansehen, und das nationale Heidentum erlitt einen starken Stoss. Die Leute fingen an, ihre geschnitzten oder aus Lehm gebrannten Losango (Menschen- und Tierfiguren) als Kuriositäten zu verkaufen oder sie verbrennen zu lassen. Besonders der Fall eines bedeutenden Balong-Häuptlings, der als gefürchteter Losangomann durch seine Zaubermittel einen großen Druck auf das Volk ausgeübt hatte, führte dazu, dass fast in allen Balong- und Bakundudörfern die Götzenfeuer emporloderten« (Steiner 1909: 77).

[15] »Der Bakosistamm hatte nämlich in corpore dem Heidentum den Abschied gegeben. An einer großen Volksversammlung wurde offiziell dem Heidentum Abschied gegeben. Ganze Berge von Schädeln, Knochen etc. wurden verbrannt und in den Fluss Mongo geworfen. Wenige Sachen konnte ich retten und nach Basel bringen« (in Gardi 1994: 56).

[16]»Wie aber bei allen Stämmen im Inneren Afrikas, die von der Kultur berührt werden, so vollzieht sich auch hier eine allmähliche Umwandlung der einheimischen Gebräuche und Kunstfertigkeiten. Bereits fangen die Bali an, von ihren alten Mustern abzugehen und europäische nachzuahmen, und die Zeit ist wohl nicht mehr fern, wo ein aus einheimischem Eisen geschmiedetes Schwert eine Seltenheit sein wird, da sie bessere und ebenso billige Sachen auf dem Wege des Handels von der Küste erhalten. Die Waffen der Haussa und Mandingo in Westafrika, sowie in Ostafrika die Speere der Massai werden zum Theil [sic!] schon jetzt in Europa nachgeahmt und an unerfahrene Sammler als echte verkauft« (Zintgraff 1895: 218).

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