

Carnival Parade in Weimar (c. 1912-1914)

Abstract

Carnival has a long tradition not only in the Rhineland and southern Germany, but also in Thuringia. This film footage shows a carnival parade in Weimar, Thuringia, which probably took place between 1912 and 1914. It is not known who filmed the footage. We see costumes modeled on various historical uniforms (many from the eighteenth century) and other historical clothing styles, along with costumes of fraternal orders and the dueling fraternities. We see many, many clowns wearing white conical hats with black or red spots. The parade also features people dressed as Arabs (of the “Orient”), as Africans (Somalis in white robes as well as “savage” Africans), as Ceylonese and Indians, and a few as Native Americans [“*Indianer*”], almost all wearing blackface. Since the mid-1880s, colonialism and the enthusiasm for the “exotic,” which was awakened by Germany’s colonial ventures and commercially promoted by so-called *Völkerschauen* (ethnographic shows, which could range from formal shows to “human zoos”), were also reflected in carnival celebrations. The interest in “exotic” peoples usually found its expression in displays of racial (and sometimes racist) stereotypes such as those seen here. Another reflection of German colonialism can be seen in the costumes modeled after the uniforms of German colonial troops and signs such as one carried by participants in the parade labeling them as the “Colonial Troops of New Weimar, Africa.” Juxtaposed against these exotic African and Oriental costumes were Pegasi (white horses with fake wings) and floats featuring elephants, dragons, and new modern marvels such as an aeroplane or a modern car with a (fake) movie camera.

Source

Source: Kostümparade in Weimar (archive title), c. 1912-1914. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv;
<https://digitaler-lesesaal.bundesarchiv.de/video/8262/666927>

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