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2 Violence, Social Status, and Blackness in Early Modern Germany: The Case of the Black Trumpeter Christian Real (ca. 1643–after 1674)

This essay investigates the life of a Black man, Christian Real, who was born in West Africa around 1643, sold into slavery at a young age, and eventually brought to the Holy Roman Empire, where he can be traced from around 1657 to 1674.¹ In contrast to the biographies of many other Black people in early modern Germany, Real's is exceptionally well documented: Printed and archival sources allow a reconstruction of key moments in his life, experiences whose highly ambiguous character beckons a comparison with biographies of other Black Africans in the Empire. After being baptized in the Free Imperial City of Lindau, Real was brought to the court of Duke Eberhard III of Württemberg in Stuttgart, where he served first as court servant ("Hofmohr" or "court Moor" in contemporary terminology) and later as trumpeter – one of the first Black court trumpeters in the Empire as far as is currently known.² Yet while in this prestigious position, he became the victim of a violent attack that almost cost him his life. Walking home from a wine tavern during the night of November 11, 1669, he was attacked by four young men who severely wounded him by disfiguring his face. The criminal investigation of this assault fills over 200 pages of a file entitled "Tödliche Verwundung eines Mohren" (The Severe Injury of a Moor) and kept at the Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart.³

1 I use the terms "Black" and "white" with the understanding that they are modern constructions. For my understanding of the term "Blackness," see my discussion further below.

2 On "Hofmohren" in early modern Germany, see e.g. Anne Kuhlmann, "Ambiguous Duty: Black Servants at German Ancien Régime Courts," in *Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250–1914*, ed. Mischa Honeck, Martin Klimke, and Anne Kuhlmann (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 57–73; Sünne Juterczenka, "'Chamber Moors' and Court Physicians: On the Convergence of Aesthetic Consumption and Racial Anthropology at Eighteenth-Century Courts in Germany," in *Entangled Knowledge: Scientific Discourses and Cultural Difference*, ed. Klaus Hock and Gesa Mackenthun (Münster: Waxmann, 2012), 165–182.

3 Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart (HStAS), A 210 (Oberrat Stuttgart Stadt und Amt) III, Büschel 43, "Tödliche Verwundung eines Mohren." The file consists of thirty-three individual documents, most of them (presumably) in original numbering, although no. 10 and 12 are missing and other documents

Notes: For a musicological analysis of the material presented in this essay, see my article "'Mohr und Trompeter': Blackness and Social Status in Early Modern Germany," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 72 (2019): 613–663. I would like to thank my partner, William Ben Daniels II, for inspiring and encouraging me to explore the history of Black people in early modern Germany.

How can we make sense of this act of brutal physical violence against a Black man in the context of early modern German society? What do the sources tell us about the motives of the young perpetrators? Was the assault racially motivated – an anti-Black hate crime, to use terminology of our own time?⁴ Historian Monika Firla, who deserves credit for drawing attention to these legal court documents, reads them as evidence of social envy on the part of the young attackers, provoked by Real's elevated social status as ducal trumpeter.⁵ Firla, who has researched and published extensively on Black Africans – particularly on trumpeters and drummers at the Württemberg court – contends that Christian Real's identity as a Black African did not play a role as motive for the attack. She argues that the legal court documents do not contain "the slightest allusion prompted by prejudice or racism, for example a suggestion that Real might be partly responsible for the incident due to his supposedly 'savage' character."⁶ Instead, she reads the severe punishment of the four perpetrators as evidence for Real's integration in the legal system of his time and, on a social level, in German society.

It is the aim of this article to revisit and reexamine Christian Real's case through a close reading of these documents. My interpretation draws on interdisciplinary knowledge and methodologies from social and legal history, music sociology, the history of violence, and the history of race formation. In particular, I read the committed acts of violence as bodily forms of communication and explore their symbolic meanings, especially in regard to the intersecting issues of honor, masculinity, social status, and Blackness.⁷ As court trumpeter, Christian Real acoustically and visually

lack numbers. The following citations refer to this original numbering. For an overview and description of the contents of this source, see Spohr, "Mohr und Trompeter," 650–652.

4 Anti-Black violence, especially police brutality, continues to threaten Black lives in both Europe and the United States today, see e.g. Sandra E. Weissinger, Dwayne A. Mack, and Elwood Watson, eds., *Violence Against Black Bodies* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

5 See in particular Monika Firla and Hermann Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana am württembergischen Herzogshof im 17. Jahrhundert," *Tribus* 44 (1995): 149–193; Monika Firla, "Afrikanische Pauker und Trompeter am württembergischen Herzogshof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Musik in Baden-Württemberg: Jahrbuch* 3 (1996): 11–41.

6 "Die Aussagen und Berichte in den Gerichtsakten enthalten nicht die geringste vorurteilsbestimmte bzw. rassistische Anspielung, etwa dergestalt, daß Real vielleicht durch vermeintlich 'wilde' u. ä. Charakterzüge an dem Vorfall mit schuldig sein könnte," Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 162. See also Firla, "Afrikanische Pauker und Trompeter," 23–24.

7 For the symbolic meaning of violent acts against the human face, see Valentin Groebner, *De-faced: The Visual Culture of Violence in the Late Middle Ages* (New York: Zone Books, 2004). On violence as a bodily form of communication, see e.g. Francisca Loetz, "Zeichen der Männlichkeit? Körperliche Kommunikationsformen streitender Männer im frühneuzeitlichen Stadtstaat Zürich," in *Hausväter, Priester, Kastraten*, ed. Martin Dinges (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 264–293. On the issue of honor, see Gerd Schwerhoff, "Early Modern Violence and the Honour Code: From Social Integration to Social Distinction?" *Crime, History & Societies* 17, no. 2 (2013): 27–46. The term "intersectionality" originated in the field of critical race studies and was first

represented the power of his patron, Duke Eberhard III of Württemberg⁸ – yet his past as a former slave from West Africa set him apart from the social backgrounds of other Württemberg court trumpeters. Was his previous status simply forgotten or erased, replaced by his new position of privilege and his social integration in Germany? Or were various forms of “differentiation, prejudice and discrimination” observed by Kate Lowe for Black Africans in early modern Portugal, Spain, and Italy, where Blackness was often associated with slavery and servitude, a social reality for Black individuals in the Empire as well?⁹ Can a perceived tension between former slave status and current position of privilege ultimately explain the violent attack that Christian Real suffered in nighttime Stuttgart?

Through my examination of Real’s case, I will also challenge the notion that Black Africans in the Empire experienced frictionless social integration. A number of historians – in particular Monika Firla, Andreas Becker, and Anne Kuhlmann-Smirnov – have cited Black court trumpeters and drummers to demonstrate that successful integration into early modern German society was possible for Black Africans.¹⁰ Both Firla and Kuhlmann-Smirnov argue that Black trumpeters and drummers were not only legally free but also socially privileged owing to their guild membership and positions at court,¹¹ and that they “seem to have been fairly well integrated into German society; many married local women, and their social standing was sufficiently independent for them to negotiate interests.”¹² Kuhlmann-Smirnov, whose methodology is informed by the history of early modern courts and estate-based society,¹³ emphasizes that Blackness was no obstacle to the integration and professional advancement of Africans in a courtly environment: “Dark skin,” she asserts, “did not determine their social rank.”¹⁴ Becker further claims that Christian baptism guaranteed full legal and social equality for Blacks.¹⁵

coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw; see e.g. her seminal article “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1991): 1241–1299.

8 See e.g. Stephen Rose, “Trumpeters and Diplomacy on the Eve of the Thirty Years’ War: The ‘Album Amicorum’ of Jonas Kröschel,” *Early Music* 40 (2012): 379–392.

9 Kate Lowe, “Introduction: The Black African Presence in Renaissance Europe,” in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. Tom F. Earle and Kate Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7.

10 For a more negative view on the social and legal situation of Black Africans, specifically of trumpeters and drummers, in early modern Germany, see Peter Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren: Afrikaner in Bewußtsein und Geschichte der Deutschen* (Hamburg: Junius, 1993), 113–128, 181–193.

11 Firla, “Afrikanische Pauker und Trompeter,” 39; Kuhlmann, “Ambiguous Duty,” 64.

12 Kuhlmann, “Ambiguous Duty,” 65.

13 Kuhlmann, “Ambiguous Duty,” 58.

14 Kuhlmann, “Ambiguous Duty,” 67.

15 Andreas Becker, “Preußens schwarze Untertanen: Afrikanerinnen und Afrikaner zwischen Kleve und Königsberg vom 17. Jahrhundert bis ins frühe 19. Jahrhundert,” *Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte* 22 (2012): 1–32, at 15.

Without denying that Black people in early modern Germany did have opportunities for social integration and professional advancement, I contend that this depiction nevertheless warrants critical examination due to its overly generalizing character: It fails to account for (and theorize) individual experiences of violence and discrimination, does not consider negative theological views on Blackness or the possibility of pre-modern forms of racism, and downplays the fact that Black court servants were exoticized by early modern princes because of the color of their skin.¹⁶ Moreover, this generalizing narrative tacitly assumes that the former slaves' new position of privilege and legal freedom was universally acknowledged and undisputed within German society.

My understanding of Blackness in an early modern European context draws on the work of historians and literary historians such as Kim Hall, Kate Lowe, and Anu Korhonen.¹⁷ Like them, I view Blackness as a social construction of difference and exclusion that emerged within the context of European colonialism alongside the construction of whiteness and ultimately served the self-affirmation of European colonizers. And even though the usage of the term 'Black' runs the risk of homogenizing an ethnically and culturally diverse group of people, as Hall has noted, it can be used productively "as a term that [. . .] foregrounds the role of color in organizing relations of power."¹⁸ The German term for dark-skinned people predominantly used in early modern sources – "Mohr" – warrants some clarification. As Kuhlmann-Smirnov and others have noted, it is imprecise with regard to geographic origin, since it often but not always refers to people from sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁹ Particular meanings can only be determined when individual contexts of its use (such as time and location) are considered.²⁰ Despite this semantic ambiguity, however, it

16 See May Opitz, "Racism, Sexism, and Precolonial Images of Africa in Germany," in *Showing our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out*, ed. Katharina Oguntoye, May Opitz, and Dagmar Schultz (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), particularly 3–18.

17 Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Kate Lowe, "The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe," in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. Tom F. Earle and Kate Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 17–47; Anu Korhonen, "Washing the Ethiopian White: Conceptualizing Black Skin in Renaissance England," in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. Tom F. Earle and Kate Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 94–112.

18 Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 7.

19 Anne Kuhlmann-Smirnov, *Schwarze Europäer im Alten Reich: Handel, Migration, Hof* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2013), 94.

20 Kate Lowe has pointed out that in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe, "Moors could be 'white,' 'brown,' 'black,' or anything in between." See Kate Lowe, "The Black Diaspora in Europe in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, with Special Reference to German-Speaking Areas," in *Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250–1914*, ed. Mischa Honeck, Martin Klimke, and Anne Kuhlmann (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 39. Given this terminological ambiguity, a comprehensive study of the semantic notions of the term *Mohr* is much needed. Such a study would have to investigate a broad variety of sources including travel accounts and dictionary articles (Kuhlmann-Smirnov, *Schwarze*

seems to have been associated more specifically with Black Africans and their skin color during the seventeenth century, when “Mohr” or “Mohrin” (the German female form of *Mohr*) were regularly used for a type of court servant holding a position as member of a princely household. “Hofmohren” were acquired and employed specifically because of their Blackness, and they were exploited as exotic commodities “in even the remotest territories” of the Holy Roman Empire.²¹ The sermon given at the baptism of Christian Real in 1657, entitled *Mohren Tauff* and discussed in more detail below, clearly demonstrates that the use of the word as a signifier for Blackness was becoming customary in seventeenth-century Germany.²²

Beyond seeking to understand Real’s individual case, this article also aims to shed light on processes of identity and race formation in seventeenth-century Germany, following an approach that highlights “historical differences of pre-modern racial thinking [. . .], while also stressing its inseparability from past power structures and politics, and its genealogical connections with modern race and racism.”²³ The following two sections of the article examine *Mohren Tauff* as a source that allows us to reconstruct key events in Real’s life as well as contemporary religious views on Blackness. This discussion provides a framework for the case study on Real, in which I analyze the interconnectedness of Blackness and social status.

Europäer, 84–94) as well as court account books, legal court documents, theological literature, and literary texts (e.g., poetry and librettos) to achieve a fuller understanding of the changing semantic nuances of the term, and specifically of its associations with Blackness in the German language.

21 Juterzenka, “‘Chamber Moors’ and Court Physicians,” 167.

22 Jacob Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff / das ist: Christliche Tauffpredigt Aus der ordentlichen und gewöhnlichen Fest=Epistel des heiligen Pfingsttags / Actor. II, 11–13 bey der Tauff eines bekehrten Mohrens [. . .] gehalten [. . .]* (Nürnberg: Endter, 1658). In this sermon, the Lutheran preacher Fussenegger comments on the skin color of Christian Real: “The inhabitants of the Kingdom of Guinea do not want to be called Moors, but Nigrits, after the black river Nigro [. . .] but because of their black bodies and [skin] color they can be justifiably called Moors.” (“Die Innwohner des Königreichs Guinea, wollen sonst keine Mohren heissen / sonder Nigriten, von dem schwartzen Fluß Nigro [. . .]. Jedoch heissen sie wegen ihrer schwartzen Leibsgestalt und farb / recht und billich Mohren [. . .],” see Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, 8r.). It is significant that Fussenegger simultaneously disregards a term (“Nigrits”) allegedly used by Black Africans for a specific ethnic African group and instead imposes a term (“Moors”) classifying Black Africans based on their skin color. The process of race formation was apparently already well on its way in seventeenth-century Germany.

23 Olivia Bloechl, “Race, Empire, and Early Music,” in *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, ed. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 82. On the question whether the concepts of race and racism existed in Europe before the emergence of pseudo-scientific racism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 6; Francisco Bethencourt, *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

Christian Real's Biography

In some of its structural patterns, Christian Real's biography resembles the "privileged dependency" of many Black Africans living in early modern Germany.²⁴ In 1658, Jacob Fussenegger, a preacher in the Free Imperial City of Lindau, published the sermon he had given on the occasion of Real's baptism the previous year.²⁵ Besides the sermon itself, the book contains a dedicatory preface, a description of the service, and thirteen congratulatory poems by eleven authors ("Amicorum Carmina").²⁶ Fussenegger's sermon is important not only because it illustrates contemporary German views on Blackness, but also because it is one of the rare seventeenth- or eighteenth-century German sources to shed light on the childhood and enslavement of a Black African living in Germany. Fussenegger mentions that Real was 14 years old in 1657, so he must have been born around 1643.²⁷ The Lindau preacher places Real's birthplace in the "Kingdom of Guinea,"²⁸ a political and geographic area often referenced by early modern European explorers and cartographers that largely corresponds to the coastline of present-day Ghana.²⁹ After being abducted from his parents at a very young age, Real was sold, according to Fussenegger, "so many times, nine times in total, among the Barbarian Moors, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and finally to his owner and patron at this place [Lindau]."³⁰ The sermon also mentions that Real spent "several years at sea" (which could mean that he worked as a slave on a Portuguese or Dutch merchant ship), and on the Island of São Tomé, a major center of Portugal's Atlantic slave trade and a site of large sugar plantations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³¹ As is the case with many Black

²⁴ On Real's biography, see Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*; cf. also Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 153–163; Firla, "Afrikanische Pauker und Trompeter," 17–25. On the term "privileged dependency," see Vera Lind, "Privileged Dependency on the Edge of the Atlantic World: Africans and Germans in the Eighteenth Century," in *Interpreting Colonialism*, ed. Byron R. Wells and Philip Stewart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 369–391.

²⁵ See note 22.

²⁶ For a discussion of these poems, see Monika Firla, "'Amicorum Carmina': Gelegenheitsgedichte anlässlich der Taufe des 'Mohren' Christian Real am 17.V.1657 in Lindau am Bodensee," *Etudes Germano-Africaines* 15 (1997): 135–144.

²⁷ Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 8r.

²⁸ Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 8r: "Königreichs Guinea."

²⁹ Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 154.

³⁰ Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 35v: "[. . .] daß er so vielfältig / biß zum neunenden mal ist verkauft worden / unter die Barbarische Mohren / die Portugesen / die Hölländer / und letztlich diesem / seinem alhie beysitzendem Herren und Patronen." "Barbarian Moors" may refer to slave traders from the Barbary Coast of North Africa.

³¹ Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 35v: "etlich Jahr auff dem Meer." Because Fussenegger mentions the Island of São Tomé and Portuguese slave traders in connection with Real's enslavement, Firla and Forkl speculate that Real was originally born in the borderlands of today's Angola (which was a Portuguese colony at the time) and Zaïre, see Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 154.

Africans brought to Europe, his original name is not known. According to Fussenegger, he received his name “‘Real’ or ‘Regal’ from the Dutch: That means king, because his father was deemed to be a king.”³² The different versions of this name likely reflect the linguistically and culturally different zones of influence (Portuguese, Dutch) that Real spent time in before arriving in Germany.³³ The etymology associated with his name, which points to royal descent, may have been based on facts – or it may have been intentionally fabricated to increase his prestige and value to make him more appealing to potential aristocratic patrons. He received his other name, Christian, in the course of his aforementioned baptism in Lindau on May 17, 1657; it was a name shared with many other baptized Black Africans who lived in Germany, as it signified both their new existence as a Christian and the erasure of their previous religious and cultural identity.

Beyond Real’s biography, Fussenegger’s *Mohren Tauff* also sheds light on the involvement of Württemberg and Lindau in the Atlantic slave trade during the second half of the seventeenth century – a research topic outside the scope of this article, but certainly worthy of further investigation. Real’s first German owner, Joß Kramer, was a native of the Free Imperial City of Lindau on Lake Constance, vice commander of the Swedish Africa Company from 1656 to 1657, and commander of the Frederiksborg Fort of the Danish Africa Company from 1659 until his death in 1662.³⁴ According to Fussenegger, he had bought Real together with three other “poor souls / of Moors / out of paganism, to lead them into Christendom”³⁵ – allegedly as a “sacrifice of thanks to Christ” for the salvation of four Europeans saved from a perilous situation, which may have been an epidemic or a war-like conflict Kramer experienced while on the Gold Coast. He brought Real to Lindau, where he had him instructed in the Christian faith by his friend Fussenegger, whom he knew from his student days at St. Anna College in Augsburg in 1638/39.

After receiving his instruction, Real was baptized by Fussenegger in the presence of a “large congregation” of Lindau citizens. Both the spectacular dimensions and the public character of the ceremony resemble the public baptisms of other “heathens” in early modern Germany – not just Black Africans, but also Muslims (who were frequently brought to the Holy Roman Empire as war captives) and Jews.³⁶

³² Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 8r: “[. . .] und von den Holländern Regal oder Real genennet worden: dieweil sein Vatter für einen König gehalten wird.”

³³ The legal court documents from Stuttgart, discussed below, frequently refer to him as “Rojal,” see e.g. HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 9.

³⁴ On this and for further information on Kramer’s biography, see Firla and Forkl, “Afrikaner und Africana,” 153–157.

³⁵ Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 5v: “so hat mein geliebter Herr [i.e. Kramer] [. . .] vier arme Seelen / von Mohren / aus dem Heidenthumb erkaufft / mit sich heraus in die Christenheit geführt / und solche gleichsam zu einem Heb- und Danck-Opffer Christo dargestellt.”

³⁶ See e.g. Mark Häberlein, “‘Mohren’, ständische Gesellschaft und atlantische Welt: Minderheiten und Kulturkontakte in der Frühen Neuzeit,” in *Atlantic Understandings: Essays on European and*

Fussenegger's publication renders the sermon as well as specifying liturgical and other ceremonial details: Polyphonic music (presumably vocal) with organ accompaniment was performed during the service,³⁷ and Real's faith was publicly examined before the proper act of baptism, demonstrating that it conformed to Lutheran religious orthodoxy. As I will discuss in more detail below, Real had to wear white clothes in place of a white christening gown in public for the period of a week. The mayor of Lindau, Amadeus Eckholt, and the lawyer and diplomat Valentin Heider (who had represented Lindau and other Free Imperial Cities at the negotiations preceding the Peace of Westphalia) acted as godfathers.³⁸ Significantly, as stated by Fussenegger, Real's legal status was still that of a slave ("Sclav") at this time, and the baptism itself did not change this status.³⁹ Over the course of the same year, Kramer (who eventually departed for the Netherlands) "gifted" Real to his friend (and Real's godfather) Heider,⁴⁰ who in turn took the boy to Stuttgart and "gifted" him to Duke Eberhard III. As Heider wrote in his own poem in *Mohren Tauff*, "the Court of the Prince of Württemberg now refines and ennobles his [Real's] youth and behavior."⁴¹

Soon after his arrival in Stuttgart, however, Real ran away and had to be forcibly returned to the court, where he was likely made a servant to Duchess Maria Dorothea⁴² – a circumstance that casts doubt on any generalizing assumption that the arrival of Black people at German courts was always conflict-free. Around 1665, Real became an apprentice to court trumpeter Marcell Kerbs, and he was appointed

American History in Honor of Hermann Wellenreuther, ed. Claudia Schnurmann and Hartmut Lehmann (Münster: LIT, 2006), 86.

37 After the sermon and before the act of baptism, a Lutheran hymn for Pentecost, "Komm heiliger Geist," was sung (likely by the congregation), and then polyphonic music was performed with organ accompaniment ("Figuraliter zu der Orgel Musicirt"). At the end of the service, Psalm 117 ("Lobet den Herrn alle Heiden") was sung, likely again by the congregation, followed by more polyphonic music: Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 38r and 42r. Fussenegger does not specify the size and character of the ensemble that performed the music, but it presumably consisted of professional musicians institutionally attached to the church of Saint Stephen and the Free Imperial City of Lindau.

38 On Heider, see Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 157.

39 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 35v. The context makes it clear that the word "Sclav" is used here in a legal and not a religious sense (i.e., with the meaning "slave of his sins").

40 Firla claims that the practice of "gifting" young Black Africans among princes in the Holy Roman Empire should not be understood as slavery; rather, she contends, as a form of adoption through which the young Africans were accepted into the ducal family and educated there. I would argue that this positive interpretation is contradicted by the precarious situation that Black African servants often experienced after their patrons died, a fate that children of princes surely did not suffer. See Monika Firla, *Exotisch – höfisch – bürgerlich: Afrikaner in Württemberg vom 15. bis 19. Jahrhundert: Katalog zur Ausstellung des Hauptstaatsarchivs Stuttgart* (Stuttgart: Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, 2001), 13.

41 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 47v: "Württembergiadum nunc Principis aula juventam ejus ut & mores excolit atq; polit."

42 On this and the following information on Real's biography, see also Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 153–163.

court trumpeter in 1668 after completing his two-year apprenticeship. His pay was not equal to that of other Württemberg court trumpeters, however: He received a salary of 37 gulden and 30 kreuzer per year, a little more than half of the 62 gulden the other trumpeters were paid.⁴³ As mentioned previously, he was nearly killed only a year later when he was attacked most violently and cruelly by four young court servants of the lowest rank (“Jägersjungen” or hunter’s boys) while he and a friend were walking back to his lodgings from a wine tavern during the night of November 10–11, 1669. This incident will be discussed in further detail below. Real survived the attack and remained a member of the courtly trumpeter ensemble until 1674, when he took part in the funeral procession for Duke Eberhard III. Interestingly, he is depicted as a white man in an engraving of the procession (see Fig. 2.1).⁴⁴

This has been cited as evidence that Real had been so thoroughly integrated in Stuttgart’s society that his Black skin was no longer even noticed.⁴⁵ Judging from the overall style of the engraving, however, one could argue that the artist was not concerned with individual likenesses, instead choosing to represent all participants in the procession in a rather uniform fashion.

After 1674, Real disappears from the Württemberg records. While the Württemberg court music suffered significant budget cuts following the duke’s death, all trumpeters listed in the 1669/70 accounting book remained in service under Eberhard’s successor Wilhelm Ludwig – except for Real and another man who had died before 1674.⁴⁶ It seems plausible that Real suffered a similar fate to other Black court servants in the Holy Roman Empire, who were often among the first to be dismissed when a new ruler took over or when an economic crisis necessitated spending cuts.⁴⁷ Kuhlmann-Smirnov discusses the possibility that Real went back to Africa after 1674, inviting comparison with the remigration of the Black philosopher Anton Wilhelm Amo around 70 years later.⁴⁸

⁴³ Real may have been paid a lower salary because he appears to have received both free lodging at the house of his former teacher Marcell Kerbs and free meals at court, although it is not clear if this fully accounts for the difference. After he was attacked in 1669, his payment was raised to 50 Gulden annually, perhaps as a form of compensation for his injuries. HStAS, A 256, vol. 153 (Jahresband der Landschreiberei 1669/1670) – vol. 156 (Jahresband der Landschreiberei 1672/1673).

⁴⁴ See Thomas Wagner, *Die Sechste Christ-Fürstliche Leich-Predigt / Über Das Seelige Ableiben Deß [. . .] / Herrn Eberharden / Hertzogen zu Würtemberg und Teck* (Stuttgart: Johann Weyrich Rößlin, 1675). For a reproduction and brief discussion, see Firla, *Exotisch*, 44. Real can be identified from the textual description of the engraving, in which the second trumpeter from the left in the group is listed as “Christian Real Mohr.” See Fig. 2.1.

⁴⁵ Firla, *Exotisch*, 44.

⁴⁶ See HStAS, A 256, vol. 158 (Jahresband der Landschreiberei 1674/1675), no. 519–526 (“Besoldungen den Trompetern”).

⁴⁷ See e.g. the cases of the Black kettledrummers Carl and Pauli, who were dismissed from the Braunschweig court in 1768 following severe spending cuts enacted by the court administration, see Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren*, 158–159.

⁴⁸ Kuhlmann-Smirnov, *Schwarze Europäer*, 240.

Fig. 2.1: Christian Real (second from left) at the funeral procession for Duke Eberhard III, 1674. Detail of an engraving in *Sechs Christliche Leich-Predigten* (Stuttgart: Weyrich, 1675). Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel: Lpr. Stolb. 23350:6 (CC BY-SA).

Religious Views of the Black Body in Early Modern Germany

Fussenegger's *Mohren Tauff* is important not only in that it allows the reconstruction of aspects and contexts of Real's biography, but also because it provides insights into contemporary theological justifications of slavery. Moreover, it sheds light on how Blackness was viewed in German society, and thus provides a framework for my later discussion of the violent assault on Real. Previous scholarship has read the text as evidence that religious – and by extension social – integration of Black people into early modern German society was possible.⁴⁹ As I will attempt to show, however, this integration was only possible under the condition of the Black body being 'whitened.'

Scholars have frequently emphasized the integration of Black Africans into Christian communities through instruction in religion and baptism, but they have often left unquestioned the contemporary argument that the enslavement of Black Africans by Christians served as a means of 'saving souls.'⁵⁰ The sermon and several of the poems in *Mohren Tauff* are concerned with this common contemporary justification. Fussenegger describes the violence and bodily pain associated with Real's abduction from his parents as well as the erasure of his religious and cultural identity as necessary for the salvation of his soul. In this view, slavery is theologically justified as a requirement for achieving spiritual freedom (that is, salvation) and integration into Christian society:

⁴⁹ Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 153–157.

⁵⁰ See Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 154; Becker, "Preußens schwarze Untertanen," 15.

But when he [Real] considers and justly contemplates in his heart that he has come from the heathen and nonbelievers to a Christian owner [i.e., Kramer], that this owner has brought him into Christianity [. . .], his heart should cry with joy and consider all that has previously hurt him as pure joy and destiny provided by God.⁵¹

The color symbolism used in the theological argumentation of the sermon, which juxtaposes the concepts of ‘Blackness’ and ‘whiteness,’ is rooted in a centuries-old “symbolic order in which good, purity, and Christianity itself are associated with light and whiteness, while evil, sexuality, and difference are linked with darkness.”⁵² Accordingly, the Blackness of Real’s skin is associated in the sermon and poems with religious ignorance, worship of the devil, paganism, and sin. He is described as

an unbelieving heathen and barbarian boy [. . .] who was born to pagan, noble parents, raised in the pagan religion, and had thus been blinded by pagan darkness, so that he knew as little of the true triune God, and Christ the Savior of the World, and the true path to salvation as an unreasoning beast. [. . .] The [. . .] Moors pray to a sanctum and false idol they call “Fetisso.” This, however, is the vexatious Devil himself, who appears to them often in the guise of a black dog or a little black figure [. . .] but now he has converted, through the grace of God and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, from darkness to light.⁵³

Several of the congratulatory poems explicitly associate the Black body with sin. According to the first poem, for instance, the souls of pagan Black Africans are affected by the physical Blackness that surrounds them (“mud of sin”) and have thus become “Blackened.” The sinful Blackness of the body can be redeemed, however, if the soul is turned “white” through baptism: “The blackness does no harm / provided a white faith peers out through the black skin.”⁵⁴ The notion of the “sinful, pagan” Black body in the poems and the sermon is thus connected with that of ‘Washing the Ethiopian White.’ This image originating in one of Aesop’s fables⁵⁵ was disseminated throughout

51 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 35v–36r: “Aber / wann er dagegen gedencken / und rechtschaffen in seinem Herten betrachten thut / daß er von den Heiden und unglaubigen / zu einem Christlichen Herren kommen ist / daß ihn sein Herr in die Christenheit gebracht / [. . .] da soll sein Hertz für Freuden weinen / und alles was vorher wehe gethan hat / für eitel Freud / und Gottes Schickung achten.”

52 Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 69.

53 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 8r–v: “[. . .] ein [. . .] ungläubige[r] Heide [. . .] und Barbarische[r] Knabe [. . .] welcher von Heidnischen vornehmen Eltern geboren / im Heidenthumb erzogen / und durch Heidnische Finsternus also verblendet worden war / daß er von dem waaren Dreyeinigen Gott / und Christo dem Heiland der Welt / wie auch dem waaren Weg zur Seeligkeit so wenig gewust / als eine unvernünftige Bestia [. . .] Die [. . .] Mohren dienen einem Heiligthumb und Götzen welchen sie Fetisso nennen; der ist eben der leidige Teuffel selbs / so ihnen oftmal in gestalt eines schwartzen Hundes oder kleinen schwartzen Männleins erscheint [. . .] nunmehr aber hat er sich durch Gottes Gnad / und des Heiligen Geistes Erleuchtung / von dem Finsternus zu dem Liecht [. . .] bekehrt.”

54 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 42v “Die Schwärzte schadet nicht / Wann durch die schwartze Haut ein weisser Glaube sicht.”

55 Aesop’s fable no. 393 (Perry Index). For the complete index of Aesop’s fables assembled by Ben Edwin Perry, see e.g. Aesop, *Aesop’s Fables*, trans. Laura Gibbs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

early modern Europe as a proverb (“To wash an Ethiopian white is to labor in vain”) and was frequently represented in contemporary poetry and emblem books. Christian readings of the proverb emphasize that even though the body cannot be whitewashed, the soul can be ‘whitened’ and thus saved through baptism. This idea also occurs in Fussenegger’s sermon and several of the poems:

The blood of Christ cleanses me of my blackness of sin
And lights in me a pure candle of faith
Through which I become as white, in my soul, heart, will, and mind
As I have ever been black on my body.⁵⁶

A heathen Moor will never be white
Unless he, for the praise of God,
Is born anew through spirit and water.⁵⁷

Reading this process of ‘whitewashing’ the soul as integration into Christian society is problematic, since it can only be maintained if the Black body is disregarded. And even in such an interpretation, the body remains silently present as a sign of a Black person’s former sinful, pagan, and thus inferior state. The importance of the Black color of Real’s *real* body, and the anxieties it caused even after the act of baptism, can be discerned from the fact that he had to wear white clothing (in place of a christening gown) in public for a week, thereby turning his body white in a very literal sense. Fussenegger’s theological justification of this religious spectacle as a venerable practice of early Christianity reveals that he anticipated ridicule and mockery aimed at the Black boy by members of the general public, and that he tried to preempt such a response:

He will also walk amongst us in such white clothing, from today for eight days, if it pleases God: Not that we, as rude and uneducated people might judge, wish to stage a new African pageant with him, or laugh at his black body and use him for entertainment [. . .] instead this white clothing, the white shoes, socks, ribbon, trousers, doublet, collar, hat and gloves he has donned, is his christening gown [. . .].⁵⁸

Despite Fussenegger’s assertion to the contrary, the public display of Real in his white clothes *did* of course have all the character of a spectacle. It was reminiscent

56 Poem I, in Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 42v: “Mich wäschet Christi Blut von meiner Sündenschwartz / Und zündet in mir an ein reine Glaubens-Kertze / Dadurch werd ich so weiß / an Seel / Hertz / Muht und Sinn / Als schwartz an meinem Leib ich je gewesen bin.”

57 Poem III, in Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 43r: “Ein Heiden Mohr wird nimmer weiß / Es sey dann daß er zu Götts Preiß / Durch Geist und Wassr / werd neu geboren / .”

58 Fussenegger, *Mohren Tauff*, fol. 32r: “[Er] wird auch in solchem weissen Kleid/ biß heut über acht Tag / geliebt es Gott / unter uns gehen und wandlen: Nicht daß wir wie etwan grobe unverständige Leut urtheilen möchten / einen neuen Africanischen Aufzug mit ihme machen / oder seiner schwartzen Gestalt spotten / und ein kurtzweil anrichten / [. . .] sondern diß weise Kleid / seine weise Schuh / Strümpff / Band / Hosen / Wammes / Kragen / Hut und Handschuh / damit er angelegt ist / seynd sein Tauffkleid [. . .].”

of the public stagings of Black court servants in pageants and processions, like the appearance of twenty-four “Mohren” in white clothes at the wedding of Electoral Prince Friedrich August (the future Elector August III) and Archduchess Maria Josepha in Dresden in 1719.⁵⁹ One might say that Real’s display visually emphasized the very contrast between Blackness and whiteness that it tried to eliminate at the level of theological symbolism.⁶⁰

“The Deadly Injury of a Moor”

The previously mentioned attack on Real’s person that occurred in 1669 sheds further light on the visibility and vulnerability of a Black man in the public sphere in seventeenth-century Germany. The extensive legal case file contains a wide range of documents:⁶¹ notes from the interrogations of the four young men who attacked Real, of witnesses of the incident, and of Real himself; reports written by Württemberg court lawyers and councilmen recommending specific forms of punishment; the final sentence decreed and signed by Duke Eberhard III of Württemberg; a petition written by the convicts themselves as well as several others written on their behalf; and a report written by the court surgeon detailing the nature of Real’s injuries. These documents not only allow a partial reconstruction of the incident (inasmuch as this is possible 450 years later), they also represent a fascinating source for the study of *Alltagsgeschichte* (history of everyday life), legal history, and, more specifically, cultures of masculinity and violence in early modern urban spaces.⁶² They also provide a rare glimpse into the life and environment of a Black man living in seventeenth-century Stuttgart – for instance on issues such as his network of friends, his duties at court, and the use of his leisure time. Monika Firla describes these documents in some detail,⁶³ though she largely summarizes and paraphrases their contents. My study is therefore based on my own transcription of the sources, a critical edition of which is unfortunately still lacking and overdue.

⁵⁹ Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren*, 111.

⁶⁰ See also Korhonen, “Washing the Ethiopian White,” 99.

⁶¹ See note 3.

⁶² On *Alltagsgeschichte*, see e.g. David F. Crew, “Alltagsgeschichte: A New Social History ‘From below?’” *Central European History* 22 (1989): 394–407. For early modern cultures of masculinity and violence, see e.g. Barbara Krug-Richter, “Von Messern, Mänteln und Männlichkeit: Aspekte studentischer Konfliktkultur im frühneuzeitlichen Freiburg im Breisgau,” *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit* 4, no. 1 (2004): 25–26; Norbert Schindler, “Nächtliche Ruhestörung: Zur Sozialgeschichte der Nacht in der frühen Neuzeit,” in *Widerspenstige Leute: Studien zur Volkskultur in der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1992), 215–257.

⁶³ See Firla and Forkl, “Afrikaner und Africana,” 157–162; Firla, “Afrikanische Pauker und Trompeter,” 22–24.

My summary of the event follows the statements by Real himself and the key witnesses.⁶⁴ Real spent most of the day with a friend, the footman (“Lackai”) Marcus Brandshagen. During the afternoon, the pair went to a local wine tavern, whereafter Real returned to his lodgings in his former teacher’s house for a nap before heading to the Ducal court to attend the daily dinner ceremony. After that, he returned to the wine tavern, where he spent more time drinking with his friend Brandshagen and an unnamed nobleman. He conversed with the latter about war-related topics, as they were “commonly talked about among trumpeters and kettledrummers.”⁶⁵ Around midnight, when Real and Brandshagen decided to go home, the tavern keeper offered to walk them home with a torch, implying that walking through seventeenth-century Stuttgart at night was a dangerous business for anyone.⁶⁶ Real declined the offer, replying that it was not necessary since “he had now been living in Stuttgart for more than twelve years, everyone knew him, and he did not intend to harm anyone.”⁶⁷ On their way, with Brandshagen walking a few yards behind Real after stopping at a corner to urinate, they ran into the four men who were “hitting the stones,” presumably the paving stones and/or the stone walls of buildings, with their daggers (“Hirschfänger”). This was a common activity at the time and frequently practiced by groups of young men at night. As Barbara Krug-Richter has shown, together with other noise-making activities such as shouting (“Jauchzen”), “hitting the stones” functioned as a symbolic form of communication to intimidate others and provoke conflict with other groups or individuals, often over issues such as honor and status.⁶⁸ Brandshagen requested them to stop, stating that “they perhaps served the same master,”⁶⁹ to which the four responded that “he should be silent, this wasn’t about him, they knew Christian well.”⁷⁰ The latter is a key detail repeatedly denied by the four perpetrators during the ensuing three police interrogations: They insisted they had not known Christian personally prior to the incident. According to Real and one of the witnesses, Gassner, who observed the events from his window, the four

64 For Real’s statement, see: HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 1. For a transcription and English translation of this source, see Spohr, “‘Mohr und Trompeter’,” 652–656.

65 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 1: “der habe mit ihnen getruncken, und von kriegs-sachen wie es mit trompetern und pauckern gehalten werde, discurrirt [. . .].”

66 Firla and Forkl, “Afrikaner und Africana,” 159. On violent crime at night in early modern European cities and towns, see Craig Koslofsky, *Evening’s Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 170–174.

67 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 1: “der lengler habe Ihnen wollen heim zünden lassen, er aber hab es abgewendet, mit vermelden, er seye nun uber 12 iahr in Stuttgart, iederman kenne ihn, und begehrt er niemand nichts zuthun, sie wollen den weg schon finden.”

68 Krug-Richter, “Von Messern, Mänteln und Männlichkeit.”

69 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 6: “sollten innhalten, villeüchten sie eines herren broth essen theten.” This was reported by another witness, the Feather Maker [“Federschmücker”] Hieronymus Gassner.

70 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 6: “[. . .] er sollte schweigen, hetten mit Ihme nichts zue thun, Sie khenneten den Christian wohl [. . .].”

men then ran directly towards the victim. Another witness said that Real unsuccessfully tried to deter them by asserting his status as a prince's servant ("Herrendiener").⁷¹ One of the young men struck his dagger at Real's head, hitting him so hard that his cranium splintered and his "green hat" (presumably the hat belonging to his attire as court trumpeter) fell to the ground. Only at this point did Real attempt to defend himself with his sword, but someone quickly held him from behind and tried to take it by force. This shows that the men did not intend to give Real a fair chance to defend himself. Judging by contemporary standards of fairness frequently observed in such situations of conflict, their action clearly qualified as dishonorable ("schelmisches Schlagen").⁷² Thus immobilized, Real was stabbed with a dagger a second time. According to the court surgeon's report, he suffered a cut from the forehead through the left eye and the nasal bone, so severe that his eye was irreparably lost. He was then stabbed a third time in his left arm. Even as Real was already lying defenselessly on the ground after all this, one of the four men was still forcibly trying to take his sword while insulting him: "Give me your sword, you dog."⁷³ According to a statement made by Real during a second interrogation, the assailants then picked him up and carried him to a nearby horse watering place ("Wette," a south German word for "Pferdetränke"⁷⁴) to drown him – he was convinced they intended to kill him – but were stopped by city guardsmen: "God knows what would have happened to him," he said according to the interrogation report, "if the guardsmen had not come to his aid."⁷⁵ The four men then ran off in a different direction, continuing to hit pavement stones with their daggers. Before separating to return to their lodgings, one of the attackers boasted to the others that he had "bravely cured the Moor."⁷⁶

Soon afterwards, the four men were arrested and interrogated by the authorities. They were all young hunter's servants between twenty and twenty-two years of age and thus very low-ranking court employees.⁷⁷ They claimed that Real had insulted and attacked them first, and that they had only fought back to defend themselves. They also asserted that they did not know Real personally; in fact, they stated that they initially did not even realize it was Real they were fighting with because it was so dark.

71 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 6, statement by Jacob friderich Haller, one of the witnesses: "Er [i.e., Real] were ein Herrendiener und der Christian, thue ja niemand nichts solten ihme mit friden laßen."

72 Krug-Richter, "Von Messern, Mänteln und Männlichkeit," 31.

73 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 4: "Du hundert gib mir den deeg." See also HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 3.

74 Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 161.

75 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 6: "Gott wiße wie es ihm gangen, wann die Wächter nit darzue kommen weren."

76 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 5: "[. . .] daß er unterwegs im heimgehen gegen Ihnen sich gerühmet, wie er den Mohren so prav curiret hette." The same statement is repeated at least twice in the same account, and "Hirschfänger" (daggers) are also mentioned there.

77 As payment records from around the time of Real's employment show, hunters' servants in courtly service received salaries within a range from ten to twenty-three Gulden, significantly lower than Real's (still relatively low) wages of thirty-seven Gulden and thirty Kreuzer. See HStAS, A 256, vol. 151

During the three interrogations, however, they entangled themselves in several contradictions; one of them, Johann Krafft, finally admitted to stabbing Real. In the end, the four men were sentenced to pay a fine of one hundred and fifty gulden in total (with fifty of these going to Real for his “doctor’s bill, pain, and injuries”).⁷⁸ Since they were poor and unable to pay immediately, they were sentenced to heavy construction work (“opera publica”) at Hohenasperg fortress. Moreover, they were exiled from the country after their release – two of them indefinitely. In their summary of the case, the ducal councilors stated that “the nightly tumults, roving through the streets, and trouble-making” had become so threatening of late that an example had to be made of the young men by imposing a harsh punishment.⁷⁹ Formally, the sentence was based on the 1655 Württemberg *Hofgerichtsordnung*, according to which the crime was classified as a “verbal and/or physical aggression” (“Schlaghandlung”) that did not lead to death, along with causing public disorder in the state of drunkenness.⁸⁰

The court case attracted some public attention. Joseph Cullen, a steward (Vogt) in Stuttgart at the time, reported that the transfer of the young men from the city prison to the fortress on February 2, 1670 was witnessed by a large crowd of people.⁸¹ Several petitions were written on behalf of the convicts – most of them on behalf of Johann Krafft, who had been sentenced to the highest fine and also had the comparatively highest social status, since his father served as forest supervisor (Forstmeister) in the neighboring territory of Öttingen. One petition was addressed to Duchess Maria Dorothea by “seven young daughters.”⁸² The convicts also authored a petition of their own addressed to Duke Christian Ludwig of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in which they denied any wrongdoing and claimed that they had been forced to defend themselves against the “drunken Moor,”⁸³ who alone was to blame for his injuries. Interestingly, they asserted that they had been “dishonored” and subjected to “derision” both by his actions and the sentence, and signed their letter as “poor, captive slaves” (“arme gefangene Slaven”), alluding to Real’s legal status prior to his employment as court trumpeter in Stuttgart to make a rhetorical point about their own perception of the absurdity and injustice of the sentence. Real’s former slave status had apparently not been forgotten; together with his Black skin color and the eminent status of his princely employer, it appears to have been one of the reasons for the public attention

(Jahresband der Landschreiberei 1667/1668), no. 360–364. The four perpetrators were labeled as “poor” in some of the documents, see my discussion below.

78 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 9: “vor arztlohn, Schmerzen, und schaden.”

79 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 9: “daß nächtliche tumultuiren, gaßenschwirren und händelanfangen.”

80 *Deß Herzogtums Württemberg allerhand Ordnungen* (Stuttgart: Johann Weyrich Rößlin, 1655), part 3, paragraph 25, 108–111.

81 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 24.

82 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 25.

83 HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 18: “[. . .] da wihr unstiglich bejahren, gedachter Mohr unß trunckhener weiß angreifen, und zuer gegen Wehr genötiget habe.”

the case received – as well as for the large number of petitions written on the perpetrators' behalf, suggesting that the public considered the sentence to be too severe.

Firla interprets the legal court documents as evidence of Real's successful "integration in court and civic society."⁸⁴ Indeed, the archival sources amply illustrate that Real was socially integrated, relying on a network of friends and professional relations (such as his former teacher Marcell Kerbs); that he was part of a military milieu as trumpeter (as evidenced by his knowledgeable conversation about war-related topics); and that he acted within the framework of a local culture of masculinity with its specific behavioral norms and codes. Firla also cites the circumstance that the owner of the wine tavern was concerned about his guests' safety and offered to walk them home, as well as the African's casual response, as indications of Real's high degree of integration. But the sources also illustrate his high visibility: As one of the very few Black Africans in a relatively small community (Stuttgart had only around 4,500 inhabitants in 1648, although the number was likely higher in the 1660s), Real would have been known at least by sight to almost every inhabitant.⁸⁵ However, the fact that he had been living in Stuttgart for twelve years and "everyone knew him" because of his high visibility as a Black man did not guarantee his safety, as he optimistically assumed. Rather, it implied an increased vulnerability in the public space, particularly at night. Contrary to their own assertion, the young men had known Real prior to the incident. Their statement, "they knew Christian well,"⁸⁶ makes it seem likely that both the attack and its cruelty were intentional. Perhaps one of them had been thinking about attacking Real for some time – a suspicion mentioned in the interrogations and not satisfactorily dispelled by any of the four perpetrators.⁸⁷

The sources do not mention a concrete motive for the crime; in fact, the question of a motive is barely raised. Pages upon pages are concerned with a detailed reconstruction of the incident (who did and said what) and the details and reasoning of the sentence (who had to pay how much and why). This lack of immediate information makes it necessary to read between the lines to understand unwritten implications. Even though Real's Blackness is never explicitly discussed in the documents, I argue that it is present in his appellation as "Mohr" – a designation which, as discussed previously, was becoming increasingly associated with Blackness in seventeenth-century Germany. It is important to recall in this context that German princes

⁸⁴ Firla and Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 158.

⁸⁵ On the number of inhabitants in seventeenth-century Stuttgart, see Firla und Forkl, "Afrikaner und Africana," 159.

⁸⁶ HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 6 (see note 70).

⁸⁷ See e.g. HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 3: "Hanß Niclas [Johann Nicolaus Lehmann, one of the four perpetrators] does not deny that he suggested to the others to keep walking beyond the Falconer's House [i.e., to the place where the crime later took place], but he refuses to give the reason, for what purpose he wanted to lead them there, and to which house." ("Hanß Niclas läugnet nicht, daß er sie vom falkenhauß weiter zu gehen aufgemuthet, er will aber die ursach nicht anzeigen, zu was ende er sie dahin oder in welch hauß zuführen begehrt.")

acquired such Black servants on the international slave market in order to exploit their Black skin as an exotic commodity. Significantly, the legal court documents label Real as a “Mohr” in most cases.⁸⁸ The few instances in which Real is referred to as a “Trompeter” or, in the combination of both terms, as a “Mohr und Trompeter,” mostly occur in documents written by or addressed to the Duke of Württemberg.⁸⁹ This usage seems to suggest that Real’s racial and professional courtly position as a “Mohr” was not superseded by his new position as trumpeter but continued to be seen as relevant, and that the authors of most of the documents – predominantly court and city officials – apparently viewed his role as “Moor” as the more important of the two. The choice of terminology hardly seems accidental given the highly stratified character of early modern German society, in which distinctions of social rank and status were extremely important.⁹⁰ A similarly ambiguous usage can be observed in the case of another Black trumpeter and contemporary of Real, Christian Gottlieb (fl. 1675–1690), who is also frequently labeled as “Mohr” in legal sources.⁹¹

With this in mind, the statement by one of the perpetrators that he had “bravely cured the Moor” not only referred to Real’s professional position at court but also implied his Blackness. More specifically, it was apparently grounded in a (perceived) tension between “Mohr” as a racial marker associated with a lower social status and “Trompeter,” a courtly position associated with a much higher status.⁹² It seems significant that Real was wearing his “green hat” (“grüne Kapp”) that night, which was probably part of his livery as court and military trumpeter, as well as his sword, a symbol of both his association with the military sphere and his free legal status.⁹³ These symbols may have provoked the attackers’ envy and aggression; they may have thought that the “Moor” Real had to be “cured” of the hubris causing him to

⁸⁸ See e.g. HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 3–7 and 9.

⁸⁹ See e.g. HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 32a and 31.

⁹⁰ See e.g. Thomas Weller, *Theatrum praecedentiae: Zeremonieller Rang und gesellschaftliche Ordnung in der frühneuzeitlichen Stadt: Leipzig 1500–1800* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006). I would like to thank Volker Bauer for pointing out this important study to me.

⁹¹ Spohr, “‘Mohr und Trompeter,’” 642–650. Tellingly, the son-in-law of Christian Gottlieb’s employer complained about the Black trumpeter in a letter to the local ducal court, stating that Gottlieb had been placed “in a position above his actual social rank” (i.e., that of a “Moor”), see Spohr, “‘Mohr und Trompeter,’” 644–645.

⁹² According to Friedrich Carl von Moser, trumpeters, kettledrummers, and “Mohren” all belonged to the category of lower-ranking court servants (“nidrigen Hof-Bedienten”), see Friedrich Carl von Moser, *Teutsches Hof-Recht*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt and Leipzig: J. B. Andreä, 1755), 210–226, here 210. In the list provided by Moser, which is organized according to rank, the trumpeters and kettledrummers (§ 6) are ranked above the “Mohren” (§ 10).

⁹³ On the right to bear arms as an indication of legal status, see Ann B. Thust, *The Martial Ethic in Early Modern Germany: Civic Duty and the Right of Arms* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). The “Degen” is mentioned several times in the interrogation of the injured Real by Stuttgart court officials, see e.g. HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 1. Further research would be necessary to clarify whether Black court servants who were still slaves were allowed to bear arms (such as a sword) publicly.

wear his green hat and sword publicly as courtly and military status symbols, which they apparently perceived as inappropriate for a former slave. This reading is supported by the fact that the four young men seem to have felt socially marginalized due to their age and economically tenuous positions: One of them was unemployed, and one of the documents describes them as “poor.”⁹⁴ Real’s attempt to ward them off by referring to himself as a princely servant may thus have further fueled their aggression. Another of Real’s statements reveals that he considered the four young men to be of lower social rank than himself: He asserted that he had never seen them prior to the incident and thought they were “Schuhknechte” (cobbler’s servants), a term denoting a very low social status.⁹⁵ As Firla rightly notes, Real’s statements reveal a strong sense of pride regarding his own social status.⁹⁶ His frequent references to his green hat and sword suggest he was well aware that his clothing publicly signified his social status and position as trumpeter.⁹⁷

The fact that the assailants aimed directly for Real’s face further supports the interpretation that intersecting issues of Blackness, status, masculinity, and honor were indeed at the core of this violent act.⁹⁸ At least two of the young men used their daggers, while one held him so that he could not defend himself. The symbolism of their weapons is significant: The young men attacked with knives commonly used to kill animals, which could imply a sense of degradation. The fact that they carried these daggers because of their profession as hunters’ servants does not necessarily contradict this interpretation. As Valentin Groebner has pointed out, according to early modern theological and legal views, “the face [. . .] was the noblest part of the body and expressed a person’s honor.”⁹⁹ Disfiguring a human face therefore meant dishonoring the entire person. The report by the court surgeon Johann Nicolaus Knaus provides a detailed description of Real’s injuries:

First, a lengthy wound on the right side, along the upper part of his head, the upper skullcap splintered and injured; the other wound went through the left side, straight from the forehead

⁹⁴ See HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 9, a letter by ducal councilmen recommending a specific sentence for the four perpetrators, in which the young men are called “poor fellows” (“arme[...] Gesellen”), implying an economically destitute and socially marginal position.

⁹⁵ HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 1; Jakob Ebner, *Wörterbuch historischer Berufsbezeichnungen* (Berlin and Boston: de Gruyter, 2015), 675. Real’s remark also implies that he doubted that the four young men were associated with the court.

⁹⁶ Firla and Forkl, “Afrikaner und Africana,” 161.

⁹⁷ On the social significance of the public display of clothing in early modern Europe, see e.g. Heather Morrison, “Dressing Angelo Soliman,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no. 3 (2011): 364.

⁹⁸ For the connection between violence and honor in early modern German society, see e.g. Schwerhoff, “Early Modern Violence.”

⁹⁹ Groebner, *Defaced*, 76.

through the left eye, as well as over and through the nasal bone; injured by this stroke, the eyeball leaked out and [was] destroyed.¹⁰⁰

The fact that the attackers aimed for Real's face, destroying one of his eyes and a part of his nose, strongly suggests that they not only wanted to dishonor him but also to destroy him personally, socially, and professionally. Further details of the crime corroborate this interpretation: that one of the men tried to take away Real's sword even though he was already defenseless; that he called the gravely injured man a "dog"; and that they jointly tried to drown their victim in a horse trough. Like the daggers, the animalistic associations of these details likely functioned as symbolic attempts to strip Real of his perceived privilege by dehumanizing him.

Similar to the motive, the issue of honor is never explicitly mentioned in the documents. The four young men were not punished because they violated Real's honor; they were punished to cover his medical bills and provide compensation for his physical suffering. Perhaps even more importantly, the authorities used the sentence as a deterrent to maintain law and order. Significantly, however, the issue of honor is brought up in the perpetrators' petition to Duke Christian Ludwig of Mecklenburg-Schwerin: They claimed that they had been dishonored by Real's alleged attack and that they also felt dishonored by the sentence, their incarceration, and their new role as "slaves" – a remarkable role inversion.

Conclusion

The case of the Black trumpeter Christian Real casts doubts on the notion of frictionless social integration and a universally recognized free legal status of Black court trumpeters and kettledrummers in early modern Germany. For sure, Real was integrated in social networks: He lived with his former teacher, had friends among the other court servants, enjoyed privileges as a court and field trumpeter, and was apparently legally free. The documents also show that he was well integrated in a local culture of masculinity and interacted socially with other court servants and military personnel. However, his case study also illustrates that his social and legal status did not go unchallenged and unquestioned within this social framework. As demonstrated by my close reading of the sources, his Blackness and visible role as trumpeter associated with princely power were at the core of these challenges. Real strongly identified with his profession and the social status and prestige that came with

¹⁰⁰ HStAS, A 210 III Bü 43, no. 7: "Erstlich eine lange wunden auff der rechten seit oben lang wehrts uber den Kopf die obere Tafel d[er] Hirnschale gespalten und Beinschrötig; die andere verwundung giengen auf d[er] lincken seiten gleich von der Stürne durch d[a]s lincke auge zu gleich über und durch das Naßbein, von solchen streich alsbalden der stern im auge verletzt auß gelofen und verdorben."

it; he also clearly looked down on the lower social position of his attackers, whom he quite tellingly labeled “cobbler’s servants.” Yet his strong identification with his profession and social position – evidenced, for example, by his assertion that he was a prince’s servant – did not help him in this situation; on the contrary, it may have fueled his opponents’ resentment and aggression. His attackers saw him as a “Moor” to be “cured” of his hubris by defacing, dishonoring, and dehumanizing him. They subjected him to acts of violence aimed at reducing him to animal status. In their own petition letter, they not only blamed the victim, citing the racially charged stereotype of the “drunken Moor,” but also strategically recalled his former but evidently not forgotten slave status to challenge the validity of their punishment.

Significantly, this conflict arose when the trumpeter moved beyond the boundaries of the courtly sphere in which he was privileged and protected. Outside the court’s clearly defined social hierarchies, regulated interactions, and daily ceremonies, Real’s association with the trumpet as an instrument of princely power – as visible in his court livery, the precious materiality of his instrument, and the status markers such as a sword and hat that he wore – apparently had little validity. Rather, it seems to have contributed to his vulnerability in the dangerous, violent space of nighttime Stuttgart, despite his integration in a local culture of masculinity. The privilege and honor associated with his position as “Herrendiener” were challenged by a roving group of young men from the social margins, who likely viewed him as an easy target for establishing dominance and superiority and proving their masculinity. Although the limited scope of the legal court documents analyzed here makes it nearly impossible to reconstruct the specific motives for their attack, the dehumanizing, dishonoring symbolism of their actions suggests that the young men viewed his Blackness as a sign of inferiority, associating his skin color with his previous slave status.

This case study illustrates how perceptions of Blackness intersected with issues of honor, masculinity, and social status in early modern German society. It also demonstrates that the common association of Blackness with servitude and slavery not only occurred in countries directly involved in the transatlantic slave trade, but also in a “slavery hinterland” such as seventeenth-century Germany.¹⁰¹ Additional case studies comparing the present example to other incidents of violence and discrimination against Real’s Black (and white) contemporaries may offer deeper insights into German views on Blackness and the experiences of Black people in the Holy Roman Empire. They may also shed further light on structures of social integration, patterns of discrimination and exclusion, processes of race formation, and the contributions of members of the African diaspora to German music culture. Finally, I concur with Kate Lowe’s call to intensify our search for archival records that allow “for some notional black African voices to be heard.”¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ On the term “slavery hinterland,” see Brahm and Rosenhaft, “Introduction.”

¹⁰² Lowe, “Introduction,” 14.

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3 Slavery and Skin: The Native Americans Ocktscha Rinscha and Tuski Stannaki in the Holy Roman Empire, 1722–1734

“Two Renowned and Wild Indian Princes”?

In early January 1722, an unlikely group of four travelers arrived in Frankfurt am Main and made their way to the “Imperial Crown” guesthouse.¹ The man in charge was English, styled a sea captain. The oldest of the group, he spoke no German and communicated through an interpreter later described as “a Jew in German clothing” or “an Englishman who speaks German.”² The two others – young men in their twenties – were the reason the group was traveling: “they were decorated everywhere on their bodies with hieroglyphic figures and characters [. . .] and one could view them for eight Kreuzer.”³ Marked from head to foot with extraordinary images of suns, moons, snakes, as well as other figures and complex patterns, they were also battle-scarred. No one had ever seen anyone like them in this part of Europe.⁴

1 Newspaper references to the travels of the “Princes” indicate that they arrived in Frankfurt from Mainz between January 6 (the Munich *Mercurii Relation, oder wochentliche Ordinari Zeitungen von unterschiedlichen Orthen*, January 31, 1722) and January 10 (January 20, 1722 edition of the *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, reporting from Brussels). On their lodging, see Johann G. Batton and Ludwig Heinrich Euler, *Oertliche Beschreibung der Stadt Frankfurt am Main*, vol. 6 (Frankfurt: Verlag des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde zu Frankfurt am Main, 1871), 73: “Reichskrone, ein Gasthaus, das aus mehreren zusammengekauften Häusern besteht, und hinten in die Schäfergasse eine Ausfuhr hat. Es hiess sonst die alte Krone, denn in der Chronik I. 432 wird von einer Bären- und Ochsen- Hatze gemeldet, die 1701 von einigen Engländern auf der Friedbergergasse in der alten Krone gehalten wurde. Der Name Reichskrone kömmt aber [. . .] 1704 schon zum Vorschein.”

2 *Sammlung von Natur- und Medicin- wie auch hierzu gehörigen Kunst- und Literatur-Geschichten so sich von 1717–26 in Schlesien und anderen Orten begeben [. . .] und als Versuch ans Licht gestellt* [for 1722] 21 (1724): 311, and *Acta Lipsiensium academica: oder, Leipziger Universitäts-Geschichte* 1 (1723): 87.

3 Johann Adolph Stock, *Kurtz gefaßte Franckfurther Chronik: In welcher das Denck-und Merckwürdigste, so sich vom Jahr 742. nach unsers Heylandes Geburt biß auf unsere Zeiten allhie zugetragen* (Frankfurt: Stock und Schilling, 1745), 166: “Im Jahr 1722 den 12 Jan. waren allhier in der Reichskron zwey americanische Prinzen zu sehen, Sie sind an ihren Leibern durchaus mit hieroglyphischen Figuren und Charactern bemahlet gewesen, sie hatten Pechschwarze Haare und eine braune Haut, waren aber nicht gar groß von Person. Man konte sie vor acht Kreuzer zu sehen bekommen.”

4 We know very little about Native Americans in German-speaking Europe before 1750. I have documented two instances prior to the arrival of Ocktscha Rinscha and Tuski Stannaki: In 1708, the wealthy young Bostonian Jonathan Belcher visited Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover and mother of the future King George I, at her court and presented her with a Native slave boy named “Io” as a gift. And in September 1720, an “Indian prince and princess” from Florida (whose names