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Contextualizing *The Mysteries of New Orleans*

Scholars have explored the serial novel *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans* and its role in Germanophone literature in the antebellum United States from several viewpoints. As some point out, however, studies of the novel would still benefit from discussion of the very specific circumstances of its creation.¹ Here I will discuss unique aspects of life in antebellum New Orleans and the German immigrants' point of view in that society. *The Mysteries* addressed a very specific audience: the German-speaking population of New Orleans during the period shortly before the Civil War. Social circumstances of this group are both reflected and addressed in the novel.

In tying various aspects together, I can clarify both the social context of the novel, which is the only German mystery novel set in the antebellum South, and how the novel itself addressed the hopes and fears of its readers. Slave trading was a part of an active public market; according to the 1853 *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, the New Orleans slave trading industry was worth more than eight million dollars of annual commerce.² *The Mysteries of New Orleans* reveals a pervasive preoccupation with race and enslavement, concepts that German immigrants had not encountered before emigrating. What I hope to show here are the many layers of this preoccupation that *The Mysteries* represented and addressed for its readers.

***Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans*: Publication History**

Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans was first published as a serial in the New Orleans daily *Die Louisiana Staatszeitung* between 1853 and 1855. Steven Rowan published the translated and edited version in 2002, and the original German novel in 2004. The author, Ludwig von Reizenstein, adopted a style of "Urban Mystery" that first became popular with Eugène Sue's *Mystères*

de Paris (1843). *The Mysteries of New Orleans* is one of several German urban mysteries published in the United States at the time, most notably Heinrich Börnstein's *Geheimnisse von St. Louis* (1851) and Emil Klauprecht's *Cincinnati, oder die Geheimnisse des Westens* (1854).³ Antebellum America was experiencing a boom in smaller, local periodicals like the *Staatszeitung*, which focused on a discrete population within a city. Their content was focused on what would sell best to a very specific audience, in this case to the German people of New Orleans.⁴

Rowan reports that *The Mysteries* was both popular and controversial.⁵ It was popular enough not only to run simultaneously in the *Staatszeitung* with a novel by Alexandre Dumas (who had already published *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* at that point), but to eventually feature on the front page, while Dumas' work was relegated to the back pages. From evidence of mudslinging between the *Staatszeitung* and the competing *Deutsche Zeitung* we can deduce that many of von Reizenstein's readers were female. The *Deutsche Zeitung* accused von Reizenstein of corrupting young women, "inducing lustful premature development . . . which besides poisoning the soul will lead them never to find satisfaction in married life with one man."⁶ Von Reizenstein, for his part, wrote that *The Deutsche Zeitung* "will only be read by shy, superannuated virgins unwilling to look any man in the eye."⁷ If we endorse the principle that all publicity is good publicity, the exchange probably provoked contemporaneous interest in *The Mysteries of New Orleans*.

Synopsis of the Novel

The story begins with Emil, a young and beautiful German noble who abandons his wife and family to cavort with an equally beautiful former prostitute, a Creole named Lucy. A spectral, all-powerful Black Freemason named Hiram appears and announces Emil and Lucy's fate: To produce a "Yellow Messiah," who will lead a revolution in New Orleans in 1871. Hiram's plan overarches the novel from beginning to end, controlling many other ongoing stories throughout. He eventually descends on all of the German characters as a specter of death. Only Emil and Lucy survive to fulfill their fate, and their "Yellow Messiah" finally sails off in a boat named after the leader of the Haitian revolution of 1791, Toussaint L'Ouverture.

The Mysteries presents three versions of German domesticity, all doomed to tragedy by the end of the series. Jenny, Emil's abandoned German wife, lives in an incestuous relationship with her (also abandoned) sister Frida in "ein niedliches Häuschen . . . [wo] die größte Ordnung und Reinlichkeit herrscht."⁸ Orleana and Claudine create their own domestic sphere in a chapter entitled "Lesbische Liebe";⁹ and a hapless aristocratic family, whose

“edle Denkungsart”¹⁰ is useless in the face of poverty and disease, embodies their daughter’s complaint about their disappointed expectations: “Das liest man in Auswanderbüchern – Alles sehr schön und gut geschrieben – in der Wirklichkeit ist es aber doch ganz anders.”¹¹ Lustful and unrepentant villains are European-born but not German – the rapist Abbé, the evil and violent Hussar. Von Reizenstein portrays free people of color, primarily females, as crouching like wild animals in their lairs around the city, complicit with these European villains and embodying New Orleans’ threatening new world.

During this time, German immigrants faced danger from misfortune, disease, and New Orleans’ reputed lawlessness. Ultimately, *The Mysteries* defined the underlying source of these threats as people of color, due to their innately rapacious and hostile characters and their embodiment of confusing racial mores in the city that endangered Germans’ safety and well-being. The narrator repeatedly condemns slavery in *The Mysteries*, but von Reizenstein created a story that characterized people of color as an actively destructive force. Hiram most powerfully personifies this threat, openly claiming not only the responsibility for every German death from Yellow Fever, but also for the coming Black Revolution, which echoes the Haitian Revolution that took place fifteen hundred miles from New Orleans. Conflating race with disease, von Reizenstein portrayed people of color as both responsible for the disease and immune to it.

As a serial, *The Mysteries*’ role in German immigrant lives in New Orleans was significant. We can see this in its popularity compared to other stories in the same periodical, as well as in the controversy that existed about the serial in other periodicals that served the community. *The Mysteries* reflected and characterized that population’s fears and desires as it addressed them. Through *The Mysteries*’ years-long publication, German readers learned and confirmed that people of color were threatening, powerful and alien. In *The Mysteries*’ final installments, the Germans of New Orleans are killed en masse by Hiram, the spectral Black figure who claims responsibility for the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1853, which decimated the New Orleans German population.

The Germans in Antebellum New Orleans

The Mysteries appeared when the German presence in New Orleans was at its height.¹² Between 1851 and 1852 twenty-five thousand Germans landed in New Orleans, but only six months in to 1853 thirty-three thousand had arrived, with the year’s end total reaching over forty thousand. After the population suffered regular losses to Yellow Fever epidemics, the 1857 economic crash provoked anti-immigration sentiment in the United

States, and the threat of Civil War reduced immigration further. After the War Germans were afraid to enter the United States through the South and immigration numbers sank again. New Orleans Germans continued to pursue naturalization and take part in existing government, and by the end of the nineteenth century, “[t]he previous ‘German’ areas of the city had been assimilated into the general economic and political landscape.”¹³

The wave of German immigration to New Orleans in the late 1840s and 1850s consisted of several groups: the industrial proletariat and artisans fleeing miserable working conditions; the poverty-stricken suffering from famine and crop failures in the countryside; and well-educated, upper class liberals who were forced into exile to escape political persecution by the conservative aristocracy. These groups faced various difficulties upon arrival, but shared the new experience of a slave society and economy, and of the Yellow Fever that regularly attacked the city’s population, earning New Orleans the nickname “The Necropolis of the South.”¹⁴

Churches in the German states raised money to send widows, children and the desperately poor to the Port of New Orleans, which was the only port in the United States without laws prohibiting immigrants who were unable to work. Before the *Deutsche Gesellschaft* was founded in 1847 to address the needs of German immigrants, abandoned and orphaned children roamed the streets of New Orleans and girls regularly went into prostitution to support themselves after their arrival. Vulnerable immigrants also became “Redemptioners,” who were sold upon arrival in order to pay their passage to America. They were offered to anyone who would pay the price, and indentured for an average of three to eight years, or whenever their owners deemed their debt paid. These Redemptioners filled the need for cheap labor in and around New Orleans.¹⁵

Those upper-class liberals arriving in the wake of the 1848 revolutions were often called “Forty-Eighters.” Some of them arrived full of revolutionary fervor, prepared to create a new republic according to their concepts, which included abolition. They also arrived mostly penniless, and often lacked the needed skills to prosper in and around New Orleans. Their liberal ideals and ardent abolitionism did not fit into the existing German community, which had adapted to the conservative pro-slavery politics of the region as they sought status and membership in greater New Orleans society. In order to survive, these Forty-Eighters also gradually shifted to conservatism and quieted their calls to abolish slavery as they trained for available jobs. Ludwig von Reizenstein included himself in this, although his active part in the uprisings of 1848 is doubtful; Rowan notes his father’s determination to send him abroad to “cure” his dissipation and homosexuality.¹⁶

The German Society, funded by established and prosperous Germans of the city in 1847, was the first organization to keep accurate annual records of German immigration and residence in New Orleans. The Society also pressed for rights and care for new German immigrants, creating a Work Referral Bureau, placing orphans into German families, and allocating money to the new arrivals to get them established in their new home. They met every ship arriving in the Port of New Orleans and often saved new arrivals from swindlers and thieves.¹⁷

By the time of *The Mysteries'* publication, the German population of New Orleans was a significant and tight-knit group in the city. The German community of New Orleans took responsibility for "young and old, unemployed and unemployable" by actively contributing to the German Society and establishing a large number of benevolent aid societies, organizations to support German culture and the arts, and societies for business and trade.¹⁸ German households held grand celebrations and Sundays were for visiting, dances and card games in German homes. German theater houses were known as some of the finest in the United States, and *Turnvereine* exhibitions, beer halls, and shooting contests were regularly and generously attended during this time.¹⁹

It was in this milieu that new immigrants grappled with New Orleans' unwritten and arbitrary concepts of race. The German community in the city was supportive, but immigrants were still sometimes unprepared and unlucky. They came from a society based on traditional and longstanding structures, whereas the new hierarchy they faced was based on both American slave trading and on the structures of Spanish and French colonial slave society. New German immigrants saw domestic spheres that suddenly included men with double families, one European and one of color, as slave owners created part-free and part-enslaved communities based on traditions like *plaçage* and *Quadroon* balls.

The material difference between enslaved and free was clear in antebellum New Orleans; at that time the city overflowed with slave trading posts. Unlike other slave trading cities in the United States, in New Orleans slave markets were held in all parts of the city, in places from open air markets to individual homes. Auctions took place virtually every day, and slaves were often placed on the sidewalk for display and ordered to race around and perform to advertise their talents.²⁰ Outside the slave markets, judging race and enslaved status by appearances was unreliable; New Orleans was renowned for the wide variety of shades of color in its population.

The two cities where contemporaneous German American City Mysteries originated, St. Louis and Cincinnati, did not feature such open and active slave

trade. Since 1841, the law in Ohio allowed automatic freedom to any slave brought into the state. St. Louis was a slave trading city until 1860, but by the 1850s Eastern investors in cities like New York limited their investments in St. Louis, reflecting a deepening North-South divide. The slave market dwindled between 1850 and 1860, in part because businesses predicted that slave trading would “retard economic development.”²¹

Before the Louisiana Purchase, Spanish and French colonists used a three-tier system of enslaved, free people of color, and free whites in Louisiana. In this system, free people of color were permitted to establish their own place in New Orleans’ socioeconomic order. The new American rulers of Louisiana converted the state to their own biracial system, and Louisiana quickly became one of the most active slave trading states in America. The city’s free population of color, meanwhile, struggled to retain their positions and maintain an active and profitable presence in the city. During this time many immigrants came from countries with their own slave systems, as well as from countries that had never relied on slavery, like Germany. This created a wide variety of perceptions of race in one city.²²

Unlike other countries that allowed slavery, the United States recognized only two legal classifications of race: Black and White.²³ The fact that much of the New Orleans population appeared to be somewhere in between the two did not factor into the law. Detailed and arbitrary classifications of color that existed outside of the law were considered authoritative by the non-enslaved, established New Orleans population. These classifications served not only to distinguish between enslaved and free, but to define social rank, individual behavior, and physical constitution in the New Orleans population.

Sally Miller

In this context, Sally Miller’s case exemplifies a concrete threat to the New Orleans German population in particular, and cases such as hers were common. Sally Miller was an enslaved woman who sued for her freedom in 1844, claiming that she was actually Salomé Muller, a German who was orphaned on the journey to New Orleans, became a Redemptorist, and was then somehow sold into slavery. A countrywoman who had traveled on the same boat recognized the adult Sally in a café and urged her to sue. Sally did not testify in her own defense, and “relied on her countrymen and women to tell the story of her life, and this they did with alacrity.”²⁴ In other words, Sally depended on her community’s affirmation of her race to win her freedom. She won her case (although her husband and children remained enslaved), and stood as an example of both the precarious situation German immigrants

faced upon arrival and the importance of local concepts of race to ensure individual freedom.

Sally Miller's case was not unique. Vulnerable groups like children, the poor, and recent immigrants were often victims of kidnapping and enslavement. Sometimes their appearances were altered to make their skin darker, but sometimes their kidnappers didn't bother. America's binary slave law was arbitrary; in Maryland, for example, Mary Gilmore's biological parents were recent Irish immigrants, but Mary herself was considered Black and enslaved because her adoptive family was Black.²⁵ Abolitionists tried to emphasize the danger of enslavement in order to prove its haphazard legality, but free people in established communities usually ignored their efforts. Those who did not fear enslavement had known and longstanding lineage, established professions, and other social roles granted to the free. Those without community to witness and protect their social standing were on unstable ground.

In Von Reizenstein's story, people of color boast an unnerving vigor and vitality. For his readers' education, he describes a taxonomy of negritude, where race ("Blut") dictated character. His descriptions range from the "zambo Negro," the offspring of a man of color and a biracial woman, to the "Pale Chino Zambo Chola," ("eine verfärbte Creirung mit scheußlicher Genus-Verwechslung – erbärmliche Race.")²⁶ Women and girls of color, according to *The Mysteries*, were oversexed, animal predators. "Ein weiblicher Zambo Negro ist das *non plus ultra* einer rasenden, unersättlichen Sinnenunflätherei. Bei der Kreuzung des farbigen Blutes kann man den weiblichen Negro *cum emphasi* 'mannestoll' nennen."²⁷ These predators commandeered dens of vice ("Orte . . . wo das Verbrechen und die Schande triumphieren") that corrupted the rest of the city. The debauched nature "der erhitzten Bestialitäten," wrote von Reizenstein, is evident by the age of seven ("dieser Typus florirt nur zwischen dem siebenten und eilften Jahre."²⁸) Von Reizenstein pictured people of color as true beasts: Merlina, the owner of the brothel The Hamburg Mill ("eine Höhle der scheußlichsten Laster und Verbrechen"), "mit einer breiten Tigersterne . . . mit den Tigern und Pantheren in eine Cathegorie fällt, ja dieselben in manchen Fällen sogar noch übertrifft."²⁹

The Mysteries idealized vulnerable and innocent Germans, who are easily identifiable by "jenes edle Ensemble, . . . das sich – und sollten sie auch noch hunderte von Generationen überleben – nie ganz verwischen wird."³⁰ Von Reizenstein portrayed German-born women and girls in particular as aglow with angelic purity. Arrived from their homeland, "woselbst sich Herz und Geist auf die schönsten Weise entfalteten und veredelten,"³¹ they all succumb to despair, disease, and "zum Opfer . . . der Romatik auf dem verfluchten

Boden Amerika's [sic]."³² Emil, however, escapes death in Lucy's arms. Having landed in "jenem morastischen Abgrunde, in den müßige Roués unaufhaltsam stürzen,"³³ Emil's association with Lucy and Hiram seems to protect him from the fever that kills the rest of his family.

Yellow Fever

Yellow Fever conflates with race as another threat to immigrants, who were more susceptible to the disease. Von Reizenstein started publishing *The Mysteries* during a particularly savage outbreak of Yellow Fever in New Orleans that resulted in between eight and twelve thousand deaths, two-thirds of which were German. The numbers showed that "foreign born" and recent immigrants were especially vulnerable.³⁴ The cause of the disease was unknown at the time, but it was commonly held that people of color were naturally immune to the disease. This both justified, and added another dimension to, their mysterious and threatening characters.

Germans in New Orleans and abroad were understandably interested in their own susceptibility.³⁵ If people of color were immune to Yellow Fever because of their race, and if foreign-born could acclimate to acquire immunity, it followed that acclimatization could lead to racial "degradation" in the foreign-born.³⁶ With this understanding, German immigrants were confronted with a Catch-22: if they resisted the disease, they became more like people of color, and if they didn't, they died. Any chance at surviving the epidemics was desirable, of course, but acquired resistance (in other words, acclimatization) carried with it the ominous concept of racial mutability.

Americans and Europeans believed in "climate" as a source of disease, "a racialized discourse of 'climate' largely informed by the susceptibility of bodies to Yellow Fever."³⁷ The understanding of the time was that disease originated in both the physical and the social climate. This meant that disease was brought not only through contagion, but also through crime, prostitution, and debauchery in general. German travel guides cautioned against New Orleans' frequent and deadly epidemics at the same time that they condemned New Orleans' slavery traffic and brothels, swindlers and thieves.

In *The Mysteries*, von Reizenstein decries New Orleans' "unwholesome" climate, a space full of decadent and hostile forces. He portrays its Black and Brown inhabitants as strange and excessive. Lucy, for example, declares, "wenn ich Richter wäre, würde ich nur die Halbheit bestrafen – consequente, systematische Bösewichter hätten von mir nie etwas zu befürchten."³⁸ Hiram claims himself as the sole source of the epidemic, unleashed on the city as a punishment for slavery and the city's general depravity, "eine schreckliche

Seuche Ich gebrauche sie als Rachemittel.”³⁹ He literally controls the climate in order to punish his victims: after “eine riesige schwarze Wolke” appears over the Freemasons’ Hall and creates “ein feines schmutziges Gewolke, das bis auf den Horizont herabhing,”⁴⁰ the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1853 begins.

As an occult and all-powerful, all-controlling Black figure, Hiram destroys everything. He appears and states his purpose, “Tod und Verderben [zu] verbreite[n].”⁴¹ Von Reizenstein calls him an “allmächtiger Zauberer.” “[S]o hielt der rätselhafte Alte die Fäden des Schicksals in seiner Hand und verwebte sie nach einem unergründlichen Willen zu einem großen Leichentuche.”⁴² He is an “unwiderstehlicher Gewalt”⁴³ who controls readers’ fate. His gaunt, ominous form resembles contemporaneous depictions of Death as “Yellow Jack,” the symbol of Yellow Fever.

New race rules and disease characterized the perils of New Orleans, where German-born immigrants were particularly vulnerable. A strange and nonsensical slave society dictated Germans’ success and freedom, and the threat of race mutability accompanied a new and deadly disease. Von Reizenstein translates these immigrant fears into a fear of people of color, and the events and characters in his novel illustrate how people of color like Lucy, Merlina and Hiram destroy German domestic spheres and lives.

Conclusion

As we know, classifications and definitions of race exist to serve the societies that invent them. American history is made up of the struggles that emerge between differing concepts of race, and antebellum New Orleans’ own version of this struggle existed to enforce the practice of slavery and to distinguish Black from White in a way that allowed White Southerners’ security. New Orleans’ racism in the nineteenth century could only exist within the intricate social hierarchy that justified it. German immigrants, as newcomers to this hierarchy, would be understandably baffled by its specificity, but also aware that White status was imperative to freedom and success.

The “curse of slavery” that brings Hiram to New Orleans is actually a curse that the enslaved wreak upon von Reizenstein’s readers, the Germans of New Orleans. People of color attack, and German-born immigrants suffer and die. Like most Forty-Eighters, von Reizenstein condemns slavery. Because Hiram is responsible for punishing New Orleans for its slave trade, however, there is no temptation to active abolitionism in *The Mysteries of New Orleans*. Hiram’s plans made New Orleans’ doom a *fait accompli*, couched in a sense of unavoidable fate personified in this magical figure.

In examining the unique social circumstances surrounding the Germans in antebellum New Orleans, we can see real and perceived threats that the population must have been aware of. This adds new dimensions to certain elements of *The Mysteries of New Orleans*: von Reizenstein's florid and threatening portrayals of people of color; his detailed taxonomies of enslaved and free people of color who populated New Orleans; and his condemnation of slavery that is ultimately diffused into the unwholesome miasma of New Orleans, created by people of color. Von Reizenstein offered scanty comfort in his assurance that German immigrants were distinguished enough, if not to physically survive the city, at least to die nobly: "Es giebt nichts Erhabeneres und Majestätisches, als ein Frauenherz, das auf fremden Boden . . . verblutet."⁴⁴ This consolation accompanied the understanding that the Germans of New Orleans had to socially assimilate to survive, and that active abolitionism would not help them thrive in antebellum New Orleans.

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Notes

¹ Daniel Stein, "Serial Politics in Antebellum America: On the Cultural Work of the City-Mystery Genre," in *Media of Serial Narrative*, edited by Frank Kelleter (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2017), 58. He writes that "[i]n order to grasp the affective and evocative power of Ludwig von Reizenstein's novel, we must reinsert it into the dialogue about the nation's racial and sexual politics in which it intervenes in a concrete historical moment."

² Quoted in Richard Tansey, "Berhard Kendig and the New Orleans Slave Trade," *Louisiana History* 23, no. 2 (Spring 1982), 159.

³ Daniel Stein, "Transatlantic Politics as Serial Networks in the German-American City Mystery Novel, 1850-1855," in *Traveling Traditions: Nineteenth-Century Cultural Concepts and Transatlantic Intellectual Networks*, edited by Erik Redling (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 247-65. See also Stein 2017, 53-71. According to Stein, several almost simultaneous appearances of German urban mystery novels across America form "perhaps the earliest example of a Western popular literary genre in the modern sense of the term" (Stein, "Transatlantic Politics," 260).

⁴ For example, *The Mysteries* featured primarily German-born characters and people of color (one character, only called "the American," is peripheral and contemptible).

⁵ Baron Ludwig von Reizenstein, *The Mysteries of New Orleans* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), Steven Rowan's Introduction.

⁶ Von Reizenstein *The Mysteries of New Orleans*, xxi.

⁷ Von Reizenstein *The Mysteries of New Orleans*, xx.

⁸ Reizenstein, Ludwig Freiherr von, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, edited by Steven Rowan (Shreveport: Éditions Tintamarre, 2004), 41.

⁹ Sarah Klotz, "Black, White, and Yellow Fever: Contagious Race in The Mysteries of New Orleans," *Mississippi Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (Spring 2012), 231-60. Klotz discusses how a trope of lesbian relationships protects Reizenstein's readers from the perceived threat of revolution in New Orleans society. She writes that the constant and life-threatening specter of Yellow Fever is a metaphor for black revolution.

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¹⁰ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 223.

¹¹ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 227.

¹² Ellen C. Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2005), 51. “German immigration reached its zenith in the 1850s.” Merrill cites records that listed Germans as forty percent of the New Orleans population in 1850.

¹³ Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 79.

¹⁴ Carol Wilson, *The Two Lives of Sally Miller: A Case of Mistaken Racial Identity in Antebellum New Orleans* (Chicago: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 50.

¹⁵ Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 50.

¹⁶ In a letter, von Reizenstein’s father calls him “our ever-trembling reed” and writes that, had he stayed in Europe, “he would never have achieved autonomy or grasped the necessity for a man to lift himself up by his own efforts.” Rowan also discusses the possibility of Ludwig’s unacceptable sexual liaisons. Von Reizenstein, *The Mysteries of New Orleans*, xviii.

¹⁷ Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 56-69.

¹⁸ Between 1850 and 1860 records show that twelve Benevolent Aid Societies, thirty-four Societies and Organizations for Culture and the Arts, and fourteen Societies for Business and Trade were newly established in New Orleans. Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 275-286.

¹⁹ Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 269-307.

²⁰ In comparing the slave-trading industries of Richmond and New Orleans, Maurie D. McInnis (“Mapping the Slave Trade in Richmond and New Orleans,” *Buildings and Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* (Fall 2013): 102-21) describes how the New Orleans slave trade was markedly noticeable and pervasive, a “theatrical performance. . . . [The New Orleans] slave trade boldly asserted itself as part of the competitive commercial landscape.”

²¹ Jeffrey S. Adler, *Yankee Merchants and the Making of the Urban West: The Rise and Fall of Antebellum St. Louis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, , 1991), 135.

²² Nathalie Dessens, “Re-Writing Race in Early American New Orleans” (*Miranda* [Online], 5 | 2011, Online since 29 November 2011, connection on 16 February 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/miranda/2296>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/miranda.2296>), 9. Dessens notes that solidarity among various nationalities sometimes competed with American color separation. “This sense of community blurs racial boundaries, makes color lines more flexible, and suggests that there were many different ways of perceiving and writing race in early postcolonial New Orleans.”

²³ Carol Wilson and Calvin D. Wilson, “White slavery: An American paradox” (*Slavery and Abolition* 19:1, 1-23, 1998, DOI: 10.1080/01440399808575226), 1. The Wilsons note that South Africa allowed three racial categories: Black, White and Coloured, and that colonial Brazil had a complex system to classify races.

²⁴ Wilson, *The Two Lives of Sally Miller*, 11.

²⁵ Wilson and Wilson, “White slavery,” 2.

²⁶ Von Reizensten, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 681.

²⁷ Von Reizensten, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 236-37.

²⁸ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 307-8.

²⁹ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 303.

³⁰ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 264.

³¹ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 125.

³² Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 625.

³³ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 51.

³⁴ Merrill, *Germans of Louisiana*, 64.

³⁵ “German fascination with the disease was not *how many* yellow fever killed, but *whom* it killed . . .” Paul Warden, “Ungesund: Yellow Fever, the Antebellum Gulf South, and German Immigration” (*Southern Spaces* (<https://southernspaces.org/2017/ungesund-yellow-fever-antebellum-gulf-south-and-german-immigration/>), May 2, 2017), 6.

³⁶ Warden, “Ungesund,” 4.

³⁷ Warden, “Ungesund,” 4.

³⁸ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 30.

³⁹ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans*, 96.

⁴⁰ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans*, 665.

⁴¹ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 587.

⁴² Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 591.

⁴³ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 583-84.

⁴⁴ Von Reizenstein, *Die Geheimnisse von New-Orleans*, 123.