Source: Enemy Images: Race and Gender Stereotypes in the Discussion on Colonial Troops, A Franco-German Comparison, 1914-1923 by Christian Koller in Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany Edited by Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schuler-Springorum, 139-157

In the First World War more than 600,000 non-white soldiers from the French and British colonies fought in the European theatre of war, among them 270,000 Maghrebians, 153,000 Indians, and 134,000 West Africans….

Before the war and even during its outbreak, the image of the colonial soldier as a bloodthirsty savage was common all over Europe…. During the war, the image of African soldiers developed in a different way on both sides of the western front. In France beginning in 1915/16, officials propagated an image of infantile and devoted savages. This was done to counter German propaganda as well as subdue the French population’s reservations about the African troops’ presence in their native country….

In Germany, on the other hand, representation had further developed along the lines of prewar imagery, even reaching the extremes of representing African soldiers as beasts.