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# An Inquiry Into the Harshness of German Colonialism in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland

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An Inquiry Into the Harshness of German Colonialism in Kaiser-  
Wilhelmsland

by

Jessica Rohr

Advisor:

Dr. Doug Dalton

A thesis submitted in fulfillment for Senior Honors Research

In the Cook-Cole College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Anthropology

May 2014

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my faculty sponsor, Dr. Dalton, for all of his help and patience while I was writing this thesis. Thank you for introducing the topic to me and for showing me that historical anthropology is something that I would be interested in pursuing in the future. Without your help and your guidance I would not have been able to complete this work. Your language and culture class made me realize that I want to pursue linguistics in the future, and for that I am truly grateful.

I would also like to thank my committee for their support in my defending of this project. Thank you for dedicating your time to me and for being flexible throughout the process.

A huge thank you to Ms. Perutelli, for helping me through room scheduling crises and for making sure that I would have a place to defend my thesis.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Department of Anthropology for guiding me through my four years at Longwood University. The department has helped me grow and has helped me discover what I am passionate about. The support and compassion that is found within this department is truly something special, and I consider myself lucky to have been able to be a part of it.

## Preface

Some years ago, I discovered that the native people who had, in the early 1900s, violently invaded and merged with the population which I studied in the northeast mountains of Papua New Guinea had left a settlement situated along a river valley immediately behind the colonial plantations along the coast which had been established by the Germans. In view of the history of striking colonial violence in German New Guinea, I am quite certain that the invaders were escaping the colonial turmoil on the north coast, even adopting a style of warfare which they borrowed from colonial punitive expeditions. In a recent conference paper, I speculated that one of the reasons for the marked violence of the colonialists may be related to the frustrations European colonial actors often felt in the attempt to find their way up a social class system by making their way to the colonies.

When Jessica Rohr expressed an interest in undertaking a Senior Honors Thesis, I suggested that she might want to look into the literature on German Colonialism in the Pacific to consider this hypothesis. In the course of developing a thesis proposal, I also mentioned a couple of other theories regarding the reasons behind colonial violence in different culture areas, namely racist stereotyping and the theory of "ethnographic capital." Being an intellectually acute and curious student, Jessica wanted to investigate all three of these forces and even questioned the "harshness" of the violence. She therefore devised a relatively complex and extensive research project investigating several factors underlying colonial violence on New Guinea's north coast and weighing its severity. Her project considers variables which are most often discussed separately from one another and which have never been all applied to the colonial history on north

coast of New Guinea, and certainly not in this way. Jessica has researched and worked through the relevant literature in a most discerning manner, finding the patterns of class and ethnographic capital in other parts of the German colonial empire and then applying them to the evidence which exists for the colonists in German New Guinea. While the results of her research are not definitive because the empirical evidence which exists for the German New Guinea settlements and activities is relatively thin, they are quite positive and a testimony to the diligence and intelligence which she devoted to this project. This thesis has been a very worthwhile and edifying endeavor for both of us, as I expect it will be for her readers.

Doug Dalton

## **Introduction**

Cultural anthropologists have long been haunted by the history of colonialism. During the formative period of colonialism, evolutionary theories were used to rationalize and justify imperial conquests. Thereafter, anthropologists often worked in colonial contexts for colonial governments while nevertheless studying cultures in the “ethnographic present.” They thus sought to sympathetically describe and understand cultures in their indigenous forms, but without focusing on their colonial historical experiences. Over the past few decades cultural anthropology has concentrated on processes of globalization and the focus has shifted to world historical studies. This includes investigations of the histories and cultures of colonizers and their interactions with the native cultures.

One of the classic areas of anthropological studies is Pacific Island cultures. In addition to several different culture areas, it presents a typically complex set of colonial histories involving competing Dutch, British, French, German and American interests. Germany was relatively late in the contest for territory, but its influences were profound. Germans had a reputation for being harsh colonial rulers, yet it is hard to maintain that the practices of other imperialists were less harsh, and the severity of German colonists varied significantly in different parts of the Pacific.

While this was in part due to the different racial categories in which Europeans placed Samoans and Melanesians, recent scholarship has paid increasing attention to the way in which competing interests within the culture and society of colonists has affected the ways in which colonial projects were carried out in different times and places. Steinmetz in particular has suggested that colonists made choices to identify and

characterize native populations in particular ways, and to formulate and implement certain policies in relationship to them, because of the varied outcomes they experienced in the competition for “ethnographic capital” and social status in the German national imperial project.<sup>1</sup>

The harsh punitive colonial policies on the northeast coast of New Guinea may have involved more than symbolic struggles among Germans: it may be inherent in the class situation of the Bildungsbürgertum, or educated middle class, and even more so among German citizens who experienced the frustrations of aspiring and endeavoring to belong to that class by joining colonial ventures, which were particularly acute in certain colonial situations. The following research investigates the interaction between three factors that may have contributed to the harshness of German colonialism in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, racist ideologies, ethnographic capital, and social class frustrations. But it also questions the relative “harshness” of German colonialism and provides an historical background to the German colonial project. While finding the violence employed by the Germans to have been indeed “harsh,” this thesis finds all of these factors to have been in play in particular ways in German New Guinea, but also concludes that more research and data would be required to more clearly delineate and demonstrate the workings of ethnographic capital and class in interactions between colonists and the people of New Guinea.

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<sup>1</sup> George Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Quingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 5-32.



## Chapter 1: Background

It was during the period of massive European imperial expansion in the late nineteenth century that Germany attained its colonies overseas. The most important German possessions were found in Africa, but the Germans also controlled important colonies in the Pacific. Those included northeastern New Guinea, part of Samoa, the Marshalls, the Carolines, the Bismarcks, the Marianas, and Kiaochow on the Shantung Peninsula.<sup>2</sup> Colonialism within the German Empire was relatively short compared to other empires, although the history is substantial. An investigation into the background of German colonialism is important in that it will provide a summary of the important events that led to the decision to pursue colonialism, as well as describe factors that influenced that decision. The origins of German colonialism are important to investigate as they help define historical events and will allow me to set the background of my thesis regarding the reasons for the purported harshness of German colonialism in New Guinea.

### *The Origins of German Colonialism*

The origins of German colonialism are derived mainly from the pressure of other countries colonizing and monopolizing foreign lands. W.O. Henderson, the author of *The German Colonial Empire*, states “In the fourteenth century the trade of the North Sea and the Baltic was dominated by the Hanseatic League, an association of towns in north Germany.”<sup>3</sup> Both colonial and commercial aspects were activities of the League and it had established trading stations in many foreign countries, such as Sweden and Russia. However, the League began to experience a decline in the sixteenth century, fueled by the

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<sup>2</sup> Woodruff D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978), ix.

<sup>3</sup> W.O. Henderson, *The German Colonial Empire* (Portland: FRANK CASS, 1993), 1.

rise of nation states, which strove towards becoming self-sufficient and developing internal industries. Their decline was also driven by Portuguese and Spanish discovery voyages, which opened up trade with far away lands such as with the Americas and India. The League was excluded from the many new markets that were cropping up. When the Hanseatic League declined, wealthy merchants of larger cities such as Augsburg and Nürnberg took over and lent money to financiers in order to promote overseas activities.<sup>4</sup>

It was not until 1884 that successful colonization of Africa and the Pacific began. W.O Henderson states, “In the previous 100 years Germans had been engaged in activities overseas which paved the way to the founding of a colonial empire.”<sup>5</sup> With the founding of the British African Association in 1788, a new phase in the opening of Africa began. It began small, but it quickly reached 100 members. Two years after being founded, a German version of the Association appeared under encouragement of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach. He encouraged explorers to travel to Africa under British sponsorship in 1791. Various German explorers then pioneered many expeditions. Heinrich Barth, Georg Schweinfurth and Gustav Nachtigal were the leading German explorers in central Africa. Gerhard Rohlfs from 1855 to 1865, and Georg August Schweinfurth from 1863 to 1866 preceded their efforts.<sup>6</sup>

Colonial efforts continued after the creation of the German Reich in 1871. Those advocating persistently for overseas colonies founded the German Colonial Union in 1882 with heavy hopes of positively influencing German public opinion for the establishment of colonies. The industries within Germany were rapidly growing. They

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 17-21.

depended on foreign countries for many raw materials, hence many supported the proposition to colonize. W.O. Henderson says “Optimistic reports were received from explorers, traders, and missionaries concerning the economic resources of various parts of Africa and the Pacific, which had not been acquired by any European power.”<sup>7</sup>In response to these reports, the Society for Commercial Geography was established, advocating colonization on economic grounds. The German African Society was also founded, and it sent exhibitions out to explore central Africa.<sup>8</sup> German colonies were finally founded in 1884, and none of them were acquired by war. In two years, the Reich acquired territories in Africa and numerous islands in the Pacific. By 1914 Germany had acquired around one million square miles and a population of circa 12,860,000 people.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Factors that Influenced Colonialism*

Industrialization was one of the major events of German economic history in the nineteenth century and it had a large influence on German colonialism. However, this was not the only factor. Woodruff D. Smith, the author of *The German Colonial Empire*, states “The emergence of colonialism... both as a political movement and as a set of ideologies, resulted from economic and social changes that preceded industrialization.”<sup>10</sup> Agriculture played a large role in creating German colonialism. During the nineteenth century agriculture was being restructured within the country, and the restructuring was attributed to overpopulation. The decision was made to have the ‘excess’ people leave the country for overseas territories. Smith says, “From a more modern standpoint we can perceive that emigration was the product, not of absolute overpopulation, but of the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.,17-31.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 17-37.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 9.

development of German agriculture toward larger-scale capitalistic forms under severe economic pressure, compounded by a gradual reduction in the size of independent farms through their division among the sons of farmers.”<sup>11</sup> The changes in the rural economy also affected other associated groups, such as artisans and shopkeepers. Large numbers of these individuals participated in the *Auswanderung*, the emigration of people out of Germany.<sup>12</sup> Smith states “Most early versions of German colonialism concentrated on the utility of colonies as solutions to the problem of emigration.”<sup>13</sup>

Another factor behind colonialism was the social situation of its early liberal formulations. In the beginning of the 1800s, colonialism had a small support group. Largely upper middle-class groups supported the movement, specifically those whose social status depended on traditional education, such as academics, lawyers, teachers and government officials. There was an uneasy attitude towards economic change in Germany at the time, largely due to the lack of a connection between liberalism and significant business interests that existed in Britain and France until the mid 1800s. According to Smith, “As representatives of a social order to whom economic development had no relevance and was possibly threatening, moderate German liberals were driven to be concerned with the social effects of industrialization even before it appeared on a large scale in Germany.”<sup>14</sup> A result of the apprehensive outlook towards economic change, colonialism and the heightened emigration was based, to some extent, on the upper middle-class’ concern for their social status.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 11.

The movement was further supported by the response it gained among the lower middle class, which was also threatened by economic change.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the support of the middle class was also strengthened by the Great Depression of 1873-96 within Germany, because this group was threatened with loss of income and social standing through further industrialization. The effect of the depression was an increase of real wages and standards of living for labor, especially for the industrial working class. The lower middle class was hit very hard by the depression because falling profit margins directly struck them.<sup>16</sup> Smith states, “The experience of the *Mittelstand*, during the depression helped to radicalize part of that class, opening it to political manipulation by interest groups willing to capitalize on growing antiindustrial feeling.”<sup>17</sup> The Great Depression played a significant part in the acquirement of colonies by Germany, and it influenced the lower middle class reaction to this historic event. Smith states, “The depression discredited liberal economic thinking among part of the *Mittelstand* and installed the general ideology of protection – domestic and foreign – as the dominant middle-class economic attitude.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, through heavily affecting the traditional middle class way of life, the depression played a role in accelerating and bringing decline to preindustrial social forms. The event also generated a heavy surge of emigration among the lower middle class working groups. Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, the author of *Liberal Imperialism in Germany*, states, “German liberals had, by 1848, reached a broad consensus that expansionism was an integral part of liberal foreign policy and of liberal

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.,11-12.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

national identity.”<sup>19</sup> Emigrationist colonialism was thus developed in order to propagate liberal ideas. Emigrationist colonialism appealed to middle class displeasure with industrialism and provided discrete means to propose actions in order to improve problems of social decline. Emigrationist colonialism did not promote large-scale industrial development, rather it combined opinions over the positive view of German emigration and focused on the strong need to keep emigration open. Middle classes also appealed to German nationalism. According to Smith, “Not only were colonies believed to be a necessary symbol of any nation’s strength, but they also offered a haven against the social effects of industrialization.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore focus was put onto appealing to the traditional virtues of the pre-industrial middle class people. Since these virtues were being threatened with extinction due to a proposed destruction of the modes of social existence that maintained them, overseas colonies seemed like a good solution. These colonies would specifically focus on pursuing preindustrial forms of social and economic activity. Finally, this theory, developed in response to emigration, was put into practice in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>21</sup>

### *Colonization of New Guinea*

The German New Guinea colonies were of great importance. The Melanesian Territory, officially known as ‘The Protectorate of the New Guinea Company’, was acquired in 1884. It consisted of northeast mainland New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago. The Neu Guinea Kompagnie (NKG) is of note. The NGK was founded as an instrument of a financial consortium, which was to regulate economic development,

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<sup>19</sup> Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, *Liberal Imperialism in Germany: Expansionism and Nationalism, 1848 – 1884*, (Berghahn Books, 2008), 27.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 18.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



business and administration. It was a large commercial concern of the area and in charge of making policies. Smith states, “The NGK also sponsored exploration into the hinterland and established, on paper at least, an elaborate bureaucracy based on current principles of colonial administration.”<sup>22</sup> In 1899 the administration by the NGK failed due to economic reasons, and the German government had to take control, which caused the German New Guinea territories to become official colonies. This means that since the NGK was failing economically, they wanted the government to assume the entire weight of administering and protecting the colony. After 1900 the German land possessions were renamed to the Imperial Colony of German New Guinea and they underwent a large expansion.<sup>23</sup> Germany purchased the Mariana and Caroline Islands from Spain, and also added the Marshall Islands to their possession. The territories that the Germans frequented were mostly on the coast. This was due to geographical reasons. The inland territories were treacherous and hard to access. Firth states, “In New Guinea the Germans confronted geographical obstacles far greater than those in Africa, from malarial swamps and flood plains to tropical rainforests, rugged mountains and long stretches of harbourless coastline.”<sup>24</sup> However, since the Germans were in New Guinea first and foremost to make money, they focused less on imposing a system of ordered administration on the inhabitants. Thus the Germans focused on colonizing according to the preferences of the traders and planters, rather than frequenting highly populated areas in the hills and Highlands.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>23</sup> Colin Firth, *New Guinea under the Germans*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1983), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Since this thesis will be focusing on the territory of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, the name which the Germans gave to the northeast New Guinea mainland, as distinct from the islands, when it annexed the area in 1884, it is important to look at the beginning colonization efforts within. In 1884 the NGK sent an expedition to New Guinea in order to explore the area and found a German colony there. This expedition was organized by the director of the company, Adolf von Hansemann. Speaking of cultural artifacts collected for museums in Germany, Rainer F. Buschmann, the author of *Anthropology's Global Histories*, states "Originally, Hansemann did not plan to sell this collection for profit; rather his aim was propaganda."<sup>26</sup> He wanted to attract prospective German colonizers to northeastern New Guinea, which was now called Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, by displaying artifacts in a new ethnological museum.<sup>27</sup> Firth states, "[Hansemann] expected his colony to be a magnet for German immigrants, drawing them away from traditional destinations in North America and Australia to the new Germany of the South Seas, and in September 1885 the NGK announced that conditions would be suitable for settlers within a year."<sup>28</sup> The NGK decided that the colony was to solely be able to take possession of land in the area as well as exercise the sovereign authority of the Kaiser. The first reports from the settlers seemed promising.<sup>29</sup> Kaiser-Wilhelmsland was declared officially open for settlement in September 1888. Prospective colonizers were offered land to buy or lease and were guaranteed that the soil was fertile and that roads and bridges were currently being constructed. However, only a few settlers were interested in

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<sup>26</sup> Rainer F. Buschmann, *Anthropology's Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea, 1870 – 1935*, (Hawaii: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 35.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>28</sup> Firth, *New Guinea under the Germans*, 9.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*



working with the land: instead they wanted to work with the Company. Therefore the colony had to invest in large-scale plantation agriculture because it was the colony's only means of generating returning capital. Hansemann petitioned the German government for help and in 1889, for a trial period of three years, the Reich administered New Guinea at the expense of the NGK. Firth states, "[Hansemann] over-regulated a colony whose only potential attraction to settlers might have been free land and absence of government."<sup>30</sup>

Hansemann focused on creating a plantation colony.

In the absence of a substantial settler colony, then, German New Guinea thus consisted of the administrators of the New Guinea Company, the planters, traders, and labor recruiters who worked for them, the administrators of the German colonial government, and several missionary outposts, only two of which were German. This thesis will not consider the role played by the missionaries in the colonial process, although it was substantial, since their role in colonial violence was indirect. This thesis will investigate the interaction between the several aforementioned colonial actors, New Guinea natives, and the German metropole to explore the interaction between racist ideologies, ethnographic capital, and social class frustrations, in order to examine the harshness of German colonialism on Kaiser-Wilhelmsland.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 27.

## Chapter 2: Harshness

The harshness by the German empire must be established. It is necessary to define and explain the term ‘harshness’ and the harsh nature with which the colonialists treated the natives. ‘Harshness’ was often attributed to colonial empires, especially the German empire, and this ‘harshness’ affected the indigenous population of the areas being colonized. The ‘harshness’ of the German colonial empire is a factor that is often mentioned in literature. For example, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World*, leads into its description of the German colonial empire by saying, “Germany was a relative latecomer to overseas empire and administered some of its colonies quite harshly.”<sup>31</sup> While the term ‘harsh’ often appears in conjunction with the German colonial empire, many other similar terms come up in discussions of the German colonial empire. These include ‘cruel’, ‘severe’ and ‘violent’. For the purpose of this investigation the term ‘harsh’ will be treated to mean violence that is unjustified and unnecessary.

There are multiple opinions regarding the extent of the harsh nature of the German colonial empire. It is important to note that not everyone agrees with the harsh reputation of the Germans. However, a lot of evidence exists that furthers the idea that the colonial empire was particularly harsh, and some scholars even assert that violence is simply a part of colonialism. Furthermore, the accounts of extensive violence and harshness are also exemplified in punitive expeditions. Finally, the harshness by the German colonial Empire varied in different parts of the German colonial empire. This evidence will help establish that the ‘harshness’ of the German colonialists existed and will further the discussion of the reasons for this harshness in German New Guinea.

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<sup>31</sup> *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World*, vol. 3 ed. Peter N. Stearns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 129.

The reputation for the harshness by the Germans on the natives stems from multiple sources, and a new idea has emerged, which Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama outline in the introduction of their book *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*. The authors state, “Along the lines of delineating possible connections or similarities between the German colonial empire and Hitler’s empire, historians are now increasingly locating the Holocaust within a broader frame of inquiry, notably the history of genocide.”<sup>32</sup> This connection would indicate that there was a premise for the harsh nature with which the colonialists treated the natives and it is known as the continuity thesis. The authors analyze how the Herero and Nama war from 1904 to 1907 can be seen as an antecedent to the national socialist war of extermination. This war caused a genocide, which killed between 60,000 and 100,000 indigenous people in German South West Africa, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup>

The anthropologist Mahmood Mandami contends that the link between the Herero genocide and the Holocaust was race. Langbehn and Salama observe that subdisciplines have begun to emerge and shape the historiography of the Holocaust. These subfields include genocide studies and modern anthropology, which have begun to play an integral role in colonialist studies.<sup>34</sup> They state, “A reading of the increased fragmentation into subdisciplines suggests diversity in the study of a possible similarity or continuity

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<sup>32</sup> Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama, “Introduction: Reconfiguring German Colonialism,” in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), ix.

<sup>33</sup> Jeremy Sarkin, *Germany’s Genocide of the Herero: Kaiser Wilhelm II, His General, His Settlers, His Soldiers* (South Africa: UCT Press, 2011), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama, “Introduction: Reconfiguring German Colonialism,” in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), xii.

between Nazi Germany and the German Empire.”<sup>35</sup> The Herero and Nama war and the Holocaust reinforce the idea that the Germans had a reputation for harshness. The continuity thesis explains how this harshness was continuous and that the Holocaust and colonialism are interrelated.

However, it is important to note that not everyone agrees with the harsh reputation of the German colonial empire. Edward P. Wolfers and Hermann Hiery are two scholars who have formed differing opinions on the harsh nature of the German colonial empire. The intellectual Edward P. Wolfers indicates that colonialism was justified. He promotes the idea that the German colonialists, especially under the New Guinea Company, were not especially involved in enforcing policies in New Guinea, and intervened as little as possible.<sup>36</sup> However, he contradicts his idea of neglect, rather than harsh treatment, when he states, “If the German administration of New Guinea was brutal – and it was so, especially under the company – it was at least quite definite as to the rights and status of New Guineans.”<sup>37</sup> While Wolfers focuses on the lack of administration and the neglect, he still affirms that the German colonial empire was indeed harsh.

The second scholar who does not agree with the harsh reputation of the German colonial empire is Hermann Hiery. In his book, *The Neglected Wars: The German South Pacific and the Influence of World War I*, he argues that the Australian colonialists were worse than the Germans and he asserts that the German colonialists were tolerant towards the natives. Hiery states, “One of the most striking features of German colonial rule in the Pacific, and one that, again, has hitherto largely escaped the attention of historians, was

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Edward P. Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia & New Zealand Book Co., 1975), 5.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 64.

its marked tolerance toward indigenous ideas of behavior. In the legal system of German New Guinea, traditional behavior was considered a mitigating circumstance.”<sup>38</sup> He bases this claim on the idea that Albert Hahl and Wilhelm Solf, the two German governors that were largely responsible for making colonial policies, were intent on learning as much as possible from the mistakes made regarding German colonial policy in Africa and by other colonial rulers. Hahl and Solf focused on shaping favorable conditions for the colonies and put a great deal of time into this pursuit. Hiery gives evidence that although the Germans dealt with natives that resisted them firmly, many cases were treated with leniency and that reprimanding was more common than severe punishment.<sup>39</sup> However, like Wolfers, Hiery also makes a contradictory statement by stating, “Admittedly, Germany’s attempt to pacify and unite the fragmented Melanesian cultures under its tutelage was based on the conviction that the use of force was necessary.”<sup>40</sup> Therefore force was present which, when relating back to the definition of harshness, shows that the practices by the Germans on the colonists were, in fact, forceful and violent if not harsh.

In order to prove that the German colonial rule in New Guinea was not extensively harsh, Hiery focuses on the Australian colonial rule being much more harsh than the German colonial rule. Hiery emphasizes race as the primary motivator of colonial harshness and links this factor to the unpredictability of the natives as well as the Australian fear of not being able to gain control of the previously German colony. He states, “The stereotype of the dangerous black man who could never be trusted because the wild animal in him could break out at any time was the leitmotiv of the Australian

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<sup>38</sup> Hermann Joseph Hiery, *The Neglected Wars: The German South Pacific and the Influence of World War I* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 6.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Military Government from the start...Fear of Melanesian unpredictability was closely linked with anxiety that the local people might rise up in support of the Germans."<sup>41</sup>

Hiery shows that opinions of race, native unpredictability and Australian angst that the indigenous population would rise up against them were interconnected and all culminated in the extreme harshness of the Australians on the Natives. Hiery also argues that the Australians, who took over from the Germans at the beginning of the First World War, were entirely military leaders and soldiers fresh from fighting the Boar War, and he is able to document some extraordinarily harsh treatment on their part.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, Hiery and his fellow editor Arthur Knoll, provide justification for the colonial violence by the Germans, which strengthens the idea that he did not agree with the harsh reputation of the German colonialists. In the last chapter of their book, *The German Colonial Experience: Select Documents on German Rule in Africa, China, and the Pacific 1884 – 1914*, they judge the German Colonial Performance. Even though obedience was demanded and rendered by the colonial subjects, Hiery and Knoll state that, "The imperialists, including the Germans, provided peace, settled rule, an expanded trade area, infrastructure, bureaucracy, a tax system – the essentials of a modern state which would rule over a wider swath of territory than would have obtained if African and Pacific ethnic rivalries had been allowed to persist."<sup>43</sup> The harsh manner of the German colonialists is downplayed, and focus is put onto the positive outcomes of the colonializing of German New Guinea, which, according to Hiery and Knoll, justifies the

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Hermann Hiery and Arthur Knoll, *The German Colonial Experience: Select Documents on German Rule in Africa, China, and the Pacific 1884 – 1914* (Maryland: University Press of America, 2010), 496.



practices and strategies employed by the colonialists in regards to the native population.

While accounts existed that provide evidence against the harsh German colonial rule, German sources sometimes view themselves as relatively harsh colonialists. For example, Ulrike Lindner writes a chapter in *The German Colonial Experience: Select Documents on German Rule in Africa, China, and the Pacific 1884 – 1914*, titled “German Colonialism and the British Neighbor in Africa before 1914,” in which she asserts that the Germans criticized the British colonialists regarding their leniency towards the indigenous population, saying that the Germans judged the British to be too lenient. When looking at the German view of the British colonization techniques, Ulrike Lindner states, “The German view oscillated between two poles – an admiration of the British as experienced colonizers and a criticism of British colonial policy – in order to define more clearly Germany’s own concept of colonization.”<sup>44</sup> The German administration was pulling from the example set by the British, but they were also driven towards bettering the British policies in their own colony, which drove them to instill harsh practices in order to control their colonies. Lindner states, “There was also a significant critical discourse... demarcating German colonialism from the British example and focusing on the allegedly too liberal and flexible approach of British colonial rule. German colonial experts and enthusiasts connected this criticism with the wish to develop a unique, better, and more rigid style of German colonialism.”<sup>45</sup>

This viewpoint was backed up during colonial times by experts such as Paul Rohrbach, who also championed too much leniency by the British towards the indigenous

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<sup>44</sup> Ulrike Lindner, “German Colonialism and the British Neighbor in Africa before 1914,” in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 256.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

populations.<sup>46</sup> Due to these opinions by the Germans towards the British, the Germans strove to eradicate this leniency in their colonies, which led to increased harshness towards the natives. German colonizers focused on administration and Lindner states, “The British depicted militarism and bureaucracy as important aspects of the German character in general and reproduced these stereotypes in the colonial area. Nevertheless, the colonial discourse added new elements – such as the brutality of German conduct – and applied existing assumptions to a new field.”<sup>47</sup> With the new policies by the Germans the colonial atmosphere was radicalized. The colonists emphasized strict regulations, which promoted the harshness on the natives.

Harshness changed over time and was not equal in New Guinea. Observations by the British lieutenant governor of Papua, Sir Hubert Murray are cited by Wolfers, who states “Sir Hubert Murray later criticize[d] his German counterparts as being comparatively more brutal than his own administration, and more concerned with the development and improvement of towns... although he did have a high regard for Dr. Albert Hahl, who was the Imperial judge from 1896 to 1899 and then Governor (including a brief spell as acting governor) of German New Guinea from 1901 until 1914.”<sup>48</sup> Dr. Albert Hahl built on the efforts by the administration to establish a ‘native administration’ system, wherein which indigenous leaders were recognized.<sup>49</sup> Therefore it can be seen that, by giving the indigenous more power, some of the harshness on the natives was alleviated. This indicates that the harshness in New Guinea changed over

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Edward P. Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, 65.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.



time, with changing administration.

There are not only two sides to the argument of whether or not there was extensive harshness in German New Guinea. There is also a third aspect in that some researchers claim that harsh genocidal violence is simply a part of colonialism. For example, Benjamin Madley, a Yale scholar, writes on the patterns of genocide and shows that this violence is a part of colonialism. In his article “Patterns of frontier genocides 1803–1910: the Aboriginal Tasmanians, the Yuki of California, and the Herero of Namibia” he shows congruent patterns of genocide and violence. By arguing that these patterns exist, Madley is essentially exposing that genocidal violence is a part of colonialism.

Additionally, Mark Levene, the author of *The Rise of the West and Coming of Genocide*, also supports the claim that harsh genocidal violence is simply a part of colonialism. Levene is also quoted by Volker and Langbehn; they state, “Levene’s general study of genocide in the age of the nation-state suggests that genocide is a function of empire and even intrinsic to its very nature.”<sup>50</sup> With his book, Levene strives to demonstrate that the origins of genocide stem from European genocide in the fifteenth and sixteenth century and that it is not only a twentieth century phenomenon. Levene considers genocides within multiple empires and the reasons for these genocides occurring. He states, “The potential for toxicity lay not in the existence of these empires *per se*, but rather in the particular circumstances or conditions of unrelenting change to

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<sup>50</sup> Langbehn and Salama, “Introduction: Reconfiguring German Colonialism,” xi-xii.

which they were being forced to react.”<sup>51</sup> Levene does not try to justify genocide, but he strives to show that it was a part of colonialism and that the fundamental principles that caused genocides then could be seen surrounding other genocides.

The documented punitive expeditions by the Germans are crucial evidence to establish their “harshness”. There were many punitive expeditions by the Germans, which were a response to indigenous “wrongdoings”, and were used to punish the natives. Stewart Firth states, “In the absence of leaders with control over thousands of people, indirect rule through collaborating élites was impossible, and the Company resorted to sporadic and ineffectual punitive expeditions, burning huts and shooting women, children, pigs, dogs, hens, and occasionally a warrior.”<sup>52</sup> This statement shows that the violence through the punitive expeditions were excessive and killed many innocent people, including children and even livestock, which indicates that the punitive expeditions promoted excessive harshness.

Examples of particularly harsh punitive expeditions include the incident at Tobenam in 1891. When setting out to track down a plantation overseer that had fled with five laborers, a party was sent to find them. When Fritz Rose, the Imperial Commissioner, arrived at the scene, everyone was either dead or had fled. Firth states that this was because, “his police were so keen to shoot.”<sup>53</sup> When Rose found four of his New Guinean companions dead, he decided to attack and punish neighboring villages just because they were allies of the Tobenam. This event began a major conflict between the natives and the Germans and it lasted for three months. The punitive expedition was

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<sup>51</sup> Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Vol. 2: The Rise of the West and the Coming of Genocide* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2005), 217.

<sup>52</sup> Firth, *New Guinea Under the Germans*, 43.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

particularly harsh because innocent villages around the target village were looted, burned and punished, which took the lives of many natives, which shows that the punitive expeditions exuded a high degree of harshness.<sup>54</sup>

Firth also writes about a second major conflict between the Germans and the villagers in 1891, at Gorima. In response to overseers being killed, Rose burned and destroyed nearby villages. Firth quotes Rose to have said “The police soldiers had ferreted out fugitives, a man with two women and a child were found lying in a place under fruit trees and bananas, they were all killed.”<sup>55</sup> Cloth from the plantation store was found in the bags of the women, which Rose designated as being enough proof that they were not innocent and that they should be put to death.<sup>56</sup> These actions show excessive harshness and that little substantial evidence was used in order to justify killing innocent women and children.

The New Guinea Company reports shed some light on the punitive expeditions that were taken, however they focus mostly on the deaths of the company members, rather than the natives. However, in the *Annual Report for 1891 – 92 and 1892 – 93* it can be inferred that excessive harshness occurred. The report states, “Repeated attacks on the station were repulsed and considerable losses inflicted on the hostile tribes by expeditions led by the station manager.”<sup>57</sup> These attacks were in response to the station being “seriously threatened by the disturbances which broke out in the summer of the year 1893

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> *German New Guinea: The Annual Reports*, trans. and ed. Peter Sack and Dymphna Clark (Canberra: The Australian National University Press, 1979), 75.

on the Gazelle Peninsula and assumed menacing proportions.”<sup>58</sup> These attacks, coupled with scare tactics involving mortars and missiles, were used to harshly influence the natives. Since considerable losses occurred due to these confrontations, there is evidence that harshness was acted upon the natives.

It is important to note that the degree of harshness not only varied over time with different administrations, but that it also varied geographically in different parts of the colonial empire. George Steinmetz attempts to explain why the harshness varied in different parts of the German colonial state. In his book, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Quingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, Steinmetz seeks to make sense of the colonial variations by the Germans. He argues that that the colonial field is a of field, structured around opposing principles and interests, as well as conflict over certain stakes. He states, “This field’s internal heterogeneity and the fact that a field is “a space of possibilities” with an “immense elasticity” meant that colonial policy was never a smooth, continuous process but was prone to sudden shifts in direction.”<sup>59</sup> According to Steinmetz, colonial policies were affected by precolonial ethnographic discourse, the configuration of the colonial state as a specific type of field, and by colonizers identifications with the colonized on the grounds of race, which caused variations in colonial policies and treatment of those being colonized. The thesis strives to explain the variation found in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, which was extensively harsh, while touching on factors also elaborated on by George Steinmetz, particularly race and ethnographic capital as well as social class.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Quingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 517.

In conclusion, there is much evidence that the treatment of the natives by the German colonists was extensively harsh. In this chapter, the harshness has been established through looking at multiple factors. The German reputation for harshness and being particularly harsh, and opposing views thereof, as well as punitive expeditions and variability give evidence of the severity of the violence present in New Guinea. Ideas on what caused the variability of the harshness in different areas being colonized by the Germans will be expanded on in the following chapters regarding race, ethnographic capital and social class.

### Chapter 3: Race

In order to assess the extent of the harshness exercised on the natives by the German colonizers it is necessary to consider multiple factors. The first factor to investigate is whether or not race and racist ideologies were a reason that drove colonizers to exert harsh practices on the natives of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland. The theories by intellectuals in Germany during the time leading up to colonization and policies within German New Guinea influenced racist ideologies.

The first important factor is the idea of continuity between the German Colonial Empire and Nazi Germany, which was coined by Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*. This idea was already mentioned in the previous chapter on harshness, however it can also be related to a linking between race and violence. The authors state that, “The ‘continuity’ arguments depend on an understanding of a complex set of relationships between colonial past and postcolonial desire for normalcy in multicultural age.”<sup>60</sup> The idea relates to race because it advocates the fact that Germany’s colonial domination, especially in the realm of southwest Africa with the Herero and Nama genocide, allowed for perceptions of racial differences and superiority within Germany. This built upon a budding nationalism, which progressed to National Socialism and the Holocaust. The continuity thesis related to race and violence, which gives insight into the harsh treatment of the indigenous population by the colonists.

Race played a large role as an organizing principle within the German colonies. Susanne Zantop, the author of *Colonial Fantasies* (1997), states,

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<sup>60</sup> Langbehn and Salama, “Introduction: Reconfiguring German Colonialism,” xvii.

The discovery of the “copper-colored” peoples in the New World, “yellow- or brown-skinned” inhabitants on the Pacific Islands, and “black” aborigines on the Australian continent; the displacement of ever larger numbers of African slaves to the Americas and the subsequent debates on the mortality (or economic profitability) of slave trade; the scientific and pseudoscientific preoccupation with the origins and the genetic transferability of skin color and other bodily properties, and with the connection between physiognomy and character, created an environment in which differences, boundaries, norms, and deviations were discussed in ever more global, extensive and hierarchical terms.<sup>61</sup>

Zantop discusses the idea that different skin colors, directly relating to overall appearance and character, caused German colonizers to reconsider differences between themselves and the natives. Thus it can be seen that racist ideologies were in fact present in the colonies, however it is necessary to find out if and how these affected the harsh nature by the colonists on the natives.

Colonizers saw themselves and natives in the terms of “same” and “different”. Zantop observed that the natives “could be assimilated into fantasies of sameness, or rejected, ignored, displaced in fantasies of difference, depending on the epistemological and political interests of the viewer.”<sup>62</sup> The colonizers viewed the natives as “different” from Western Europeans, specifically focusing on skin color, which was a cause for racial ideologies to surface and be projected onto the natives.

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<sup>61</sup> Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1997), 66.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.



Furthermore the intellectual trends of the time had a large influence on ideas and beliefs that were formulated on race. Racial difference, and theories thereof, were largely surfacing by many theorists, especially in the years leading up to colonialism. These theories were still largely accepted when the Germans became involved in the colonializing of New Guinea, which caused the debate on race to become one of great importance. Zantop mentions individuals with strong opinions on race, such as the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, and states, “They codified a notion of racial difference that linked observations of the physical properties of specific peoples to conjectures about their intellect, moral, and aesthetic value as compared to Europeans and, among Europeans, Germans.”<sup>63</sup> This idea shows that race and moral character were interconnected and influenced the Germans, which in term caused them to treat natives in a certain manner.

Kant’s ideas on race played an important role in influencing German society at the time of colonization. In 1775, he wrote the essay *Von den verschiedenen Racen der Menschen* (On the Different Races of Men), in which he proposed that there are intended and natural causes of different races and that these differences ensue from changing environments, such as climate. He did believe, however, that these differences serve a purpose.<sup>64</sup> Zantop explains that his essay “Is considered the first theoretical milestone in the discussion of physical difference in Germany and the first time the term “Race” – adopted from the English language and from the animal kingdom – is introduced into

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>64</sup> Immanuel Kant, “Von den Verschiedenen Racen der Menschen,” in *Immanuel Kant’s Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Karl Rosenkranz and Friedrich Wilhelm Schubert (Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1839), 315.



German discourse on humans.”<sup>65</sup> Kant observes that having the ability to reproduce with one another makes all humans a single species and he separates humans into four races, which are based on skin color.<sup>66</sup> The four races, according to Kant, are white, meaning the blond whites of Northern Europe, black, being the Senegambian blacks from Central Africa, red-skinned, meaning Huns, Mongols or Calmucks in Asia and America, and olive-skinned, meaning those from India.<sup>67</sup> Kant believes that all other races are derived from the four ‘original’ races, meaning that they are derivations thereof.<sup>68</sup> Zantop further explains,

“The order of appearance not only indicates a hierarchy of importance – whites take precedence – but a natural historical order, since these races supposedly stem from on original race Kant defines as “Weisse von brunette Farbe,” brown-haired (dark-skinned?) whites who lived in the Mediterranean region but changed physical characteristics when they migrated to different environments.”<sup>69</sup>

Thus it can be seen that, since the races appear in hierarchical order, the Melanesians of Papua New Guinea would be considered to be derivations of the four original races, categorizing them very low in the social order, which leads to the idea that the intellectual theories by Kant played a role in the reasoning for the colonizers treating the natives harshly.

Verena Keck, the author of the article *Representing New Guineans in German Colonial Literature* provides information on the classification of different races in

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<sup>65</sup> Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 68.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Kant, “Von den Verschiedenen Racen der Menschen,” 310.

<sup>69</sup> Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1997), 69.

German colonial culture, particularly focusing on New Guinea, which contributes to the argument of colonial violence in relation to race. German colonizing groups focused on creating racial hierarchies, which enabled and supported their colonial projects and interests.<sup>70</sup> Her article investigates the manner in which different groups in New Guinea viewed the natives, such as colonial officials and scientists. She observes that the colonial officials and scientists viewed the natives “Based on a more... formulated evolutionary concept of human differences which classified people into racial hierarchies according to supposed stages of social evolution, based on a biological model of physical evolution.”<sup>71</sup> Again, racial theories were used to shape colonial views of the New Guineans, developed by intellectuals such as Karl von Linné, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, and Ernst Haeckel, who followed Charles Darwin’s theories. These theories inspired the colonizers to place New Guineans on a very low rung of an imaginary ladder of humanity, and this low level was further subdivided into different ethnic groups.<sup>72</sup> Keck states, “This leads to the assumption that a further ranking system for ethnic groups in New Guinea must have existed in the heads of this group of people,” which promoted further colonial violence, due to the ethnic differences of the natives, and this stemmed from views of physical traits, character and mental abilities.<sup>73</sup>

The colonial officials, including the station managers, the district officers, and higher officials, were extremely focused on colonial policies and the means to achieve them, which prompted their interaction with the natives to be emotionless and strict. They

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<sup>70</sup> Verena Keck, “Representing New Guineans in German Colonial Literature,” *Paideuma* 54, (2008) 60.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

viewed the New Guineans as a work force and ‘human material’.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, the cultural diversity of the natives was reduced to their usefulness as workers. Furthermore, colonial officials equated and compared New Guineans to animals, which was an idea, fueled by the racial categorization of the intellectuals. Keck observes, “Two common traits manifest themselves again and again: the stereotype of the ‘savage’ or the cliché of the ‘animal’, and the overlooking of human characteristics... in the connection of rigorous measures taken by the Germans, for example during punitive expeditions.”<sup>75</sup> The colonial officials justified their exploitation of the natives and their violence upon them through the racial theories coined by the intellectuals.

Furthermore, the scientists also viewed the natives in a less than positive manner. Keck asserts, “Even more pronounced than among the colonial officials is the evolutionary mental approach of ‘we up here – you down there’ expressed by the scientists, which was widespread in the intellectual currents and debates of the time”.<sup>76</sup> The scientists focused on a claim of superiority, based on traits of mind and character, as well as body. The scientists also felt superior to the New Guineans, which promoted the scientists to use the natives as study objects, reducing them to measurable physical data. This further supports the idea that a connection between race and violence existed, due to the scientists also following intellectual theories of the time and thus exerting their superiority over the natives.

There were also theories addressing the supremacy of the white race surfaced after Kant published his essay on the races of man. Zantop observes the ideas by

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 67.

intellectuals such as Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, Johann Herder, and Georg Forster and states that despite their attempts, “To caution against facile hierarchical classifications and to suggest the tentative, hypothetical nature of all observations of difference, the radical arbitrariness with which the world was divided into advanced and primitive, beautiful and ugly, white and dark, moral and immoral, “masculine” and “feminine” peoples gained ground.”<sup>77</sup> By 1795 the term ‘race’ had become acceptable to be used in terms of addressing physical and moral differences. The meshing of the physical and moral aspects allowed a racist intertext to develop, which, according to Zantop, allows for “Mixing observations in natural history with aesthetic judgment, and aesthetics with conjectures about the course of cultural-political history.”<sup>78</sup> The intertext promotes the idea that the supremacy of the white, European race depends on biology. Zantop quotes Christoph Meiners by saying that biology explains, “Why a single continent, and certain peoples have almost always been the rulers, whereas all others have been servants.”<sup>79</sup> It is important to note that while these theories were written before the time of German colonialism in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, they played a role in influencing colonialists since they were still the predominant theories present in Germany at the time of colonialism. Therefore the idea that the colonialists exercised harshness on the natives can be supported through the evidence of the existence of the racist ideologies.

In order to further investigate the idea of race playing a role in the harshness exercised on the natives by the colonialists, it is also important to look at race relations

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<sup>77</sup> Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 76 – 77.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

within Papua New Guinea, which will also give an understanding of the structure of colonial society. Edward P. Wolfers, summarizes the issue of race relations between Germans and colonialists in his book, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*. The Germans were not particularly keen on becoming involved in the rule of New Guinea, due to wanting to protect pre-existing German colonies. Germany withdrew itself from direct involvement with the colony and granted an Imperial Charter to the New Guinea Company.<sup>80</sup> Wolfers states, “The New Guinea Company was... concerned with the safety of its own investments rather than pacification as such, and the development of village life. It intervened as little as was necessary for its own security in indigenous society.”<sup>81</sup> Due to these sentiments the primary concern of the administration of the colony was profit, and not focusing on relationships between natives and colonizers. Wolfers affirms, “The protection its land and labor policies afforded to New Guineans was almost inevitably ‘defective’ in that the body which was responsible for their implementation was also to the most likely offender, the company.”<sup>82</sup> Therefore it can be seen that the flawed policies by the German administration played a role in projecting neglect on the New Guineans themselves.

The German government did not like to intervene in New Guinean society. Wolfers states, “The German administration tended to intervene in New Guinean society only when forced to, and then as little as necessary. It tended to do so in retaliation for attacks and raids, or lack of co-operation from indigenous communities, rather than to

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<sup>80</sup> Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, 5.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

extend government control for its own sake.”<sup>83</sup> The colonizers had a lack of faith in the abilities of the natives, which was racially oriented. Almost every aspect of village life was demoralized and the indigenous were not allowed to thrive. The German administration was brutal, especially under the company, but it was definite in terms of the rights and the status that the indigenous held within the society.<sup>84</sup> Wolfers explains, “In New Guinea, the Germans let New Guineans know more exactly where they stood: they had almost no status at all in colonial society, except as labourers.”<sup>85</sup> One example of the harsh policies towards the New Guineans by the German colonizers was the land policy. The government had the ability to alienate land from the natives. It instituted policies that stated that New Guineans, who were not literate in a European language, were not allowed to buy or lease alienated land.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, punishments by the Germans were very forceful and extreme. These included punitive expeditions, hangings, imprisonment, beating, and punishments through enforced labor.<sup>87</sup>

Additional laws affecting the natives were instituted, and these were harsh. For example, the death penalty was instituted for crimes involving murder, killing and arson. Terms that constituted imprisonment were hefty; riots, rebellions, assaults and robberies all led to imprisonment and no less than six months of hard labor.<sup>88</sup> However, there were also laws that involved the colonizers and the natives, which bring in the aspect of race; mixed marriage bans were instituted. Lora Wildenthal, the author of *Race, Gender and Citizenship in the German Colonial Empire*, states “Historians have stressed the mixed

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 64 – 65.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 66.



marriage bans' importance for reiterating the division between colonizers and colonized basic to colonial rule, and as symptoms of larger efforts to align class with status as ruler or ruled."<sup>89</sup> Therefore it can be seen that race played a large role in the policies that were instituted.

In conclusion, race did play a role in the harsh nature with which the colonizers treated the indigenous population in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland. The continuity thesis connects the harshness of the German Colonial Empire to the Holocaust, which shows that the Germans had a continuous reputation for harshness. This harshness can be traced to race, which is supported by the theories of intellectuals at the time. The theories by the intellectuals in Germany, although written some time before German colonialism, were still predominant in German culture. These ideas, coined primarily by Kant, influenced German society and dominated the ideas of social class and opinions of different races. Since the natives of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland were seen as derivations of the four primary races mentioned by Kant, they belonged to the lowest strata of the social spectrum, which means that colonizers saw them as individuals that had little to no social worth. This mentality could be seen in the German colonies, due to the harsh practices, punishments and laws that pertained to the native populations.

Furthermore, Verena Keck's research into the racial hierarchies by different colonizing groups shows that colonial officials and scientists, two groups with immense power during the colonization of New Guinea, had a large influence of how natives were seen. The colonial officials viewed the natives as animals and as simply a work force.

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<sup>89</sup> Lora Wildenthal, "Race, Gender and Citizenship in the German Colonial Empire," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Laura Ann Stoller (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 268.

They ignored human characteristics and saw the natives as the ‘other’. Scientists built on these common views and clung to prejudices, which they attributed to racial hierarchies and an evolutionary hierarchy in general.<sup>90</sup> Based on all of this evidence it can be seen that racist ideologies were present in the colony and that they affected the natives greatly, subjugating them to not only violent treatments and a lack of respect, but second class status in a scientifically formulated colonial policy which regulated relations between ruler and ruled, colonists and laborers, to the detriment of the latter.

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<sup>90</sup> Keck, “Representing New Guineans in German Colonial Literature,” 74-75.



#### Chapter 4: Ethnographic Capital

The third factor that contributes to the discussion of harshness within the German New Guinea colonial Empire is ethnographic capital. Ethnographic capital is a theory coined by George Steinmetz, a professor of sociology of German studies at the University of Michigan. Steinmetz expands on the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu, a French anthropologist and sociologist, specifically expanding on his conceptions of field and capital in relation to the colonial state. Steinmetz states “Different European social groups competed inside the colonial state field for a specific form of capital: ethnographic capital. This involved exhibiting an alleged talent for judging the culture and character of the colonized, a gift for understanding the ‘natives’.”<sup>91</sup> Steinmetz believes that German colonizers competed with each other for a certain form of ‘symbolic capital’, which is the idea that Bourdieu coined, which is based off recognition.<sup>92</sup> Ethnographic capital is relevant to the thesis because the competition for it involves the protagonists for and against differing policies winning and losing the competition and thus getting one or another policy implemented in the lives of the indigenous people in the colonies.

The idea of symbolic capital, relating to social capital and cultural capital, must be explained further in order to thoroughly be able to understand Steinmetz’ theory of ethnographic capital and ‘field’. Bourdieu theorized that more than just economic capital exists, but also symbolic, cultural and social capital. Economic capital is “wealth that can

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<sup>91</sup> George Steinmetz, “The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire before 1914,” *American Sociological Review* 73, no. 4 (2008) : 589.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

be invested in ownership of the means of production with the goal of increase.”<sup>93</sup>

Symbolic capital is essentially a means of getting ahead, not just with money, but also with symbols. It can also be related to social capital in that using symbols to succeed includes social aspects of success. R. Jon McGee and Richard Warms, the authors of *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*, state, “Symbolic capital refers to the possession of prestige and honor (as well as to the actual symbols of those things), which possession determines the degree to which a person’s words are likely to be taken seriously.”<sup>94</sup> This means that an individual with a wide social network can use it to work on other goals, such as economic goals. Cultural capital means that education, special knowledge, and skills can be used to further one’s goals. These forms of capital comprise a ‘field’, which is a “complex interplay of social, physical, economic, and communicatory connections.”<sup>95</sup>

Steinmetz builds on Bourdieu’s idea of capital, and adds to his theory. Steinmetz believes that symbolic capital characterized the modern colonial state ‘field’.<sup>96</sup> Steinmetz states that the German colonizers,

Demanded from one another recognition of their *ethnographic capital*, of the acuity of their perception and judgment with respect to exotic cultures and indigenous subjectivities. German colonizers jockeyed with one another within the intersubjective ambit of the colonial state, drawing from the stock of inherited

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<sup>93</sup> R. Jon McGee and Richard L. Warms, *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012), 566.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 567.

<sup>96</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, xiv.

ethnographic materials in order to make claims and counterclaims to possess a superior understanding of the native Other.<sup>97</sup>

Steinmetz' main argument looks at the factors that shaped colonial native policy. These are, "(1) precolonial ethnographic discourses or explanations, (2) symbolic competition among colonial officials for recognition of their superior ethnographic acuity, (3) colonizers' cross identification with images of the colonized, and (4) responses by the colonized, including resistance, collaboration and everything in between."<sup>98</sup>

The idea of the colonial state as a social field is important to explain, because ethnographic capital becomes a variable of the social field. The three colonies that Steinmetz focuses on are Samoa, southwest Africa and Kiaochow. Within Samoa, the German government repelled settler demands and furthered their own ideas of traditional native culture, which caused settler rates to decline drastically. However, the indigenous population was handled mildly. The southwest Africa colony was a stereotypical settler colony, within which violence, such as genocide and ethnocide, was common.<sup>99</sup>

Steinmetz states, "This difference seems explicable at first glance in terms of divergent precolonial representations of Samoans and Southwest Africans, but the Kiaochow case undermines the straightforward "devil's handwriting" explanation."<sup>100</sup> The 'devils handwriting' explanation refers to the colonizers views of the natives as following satanic tropes and being influenced by the devil. The Chinese were also seen as heterogeneous and the colonial policies in the area were inconstant.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., xiv -xv .

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

Steinmetz writes that in order to make sense of these historical differences, the colonial state needs to be theorized as a field and situated in relation to the power that existed among the colonizers. It is important to define the term *field*. Steinmetz states, “In addition to offering the tools for constructing a theoretical account of the colonial field of power, Bourdieu’s framework explains why ethnographic discourse is usually multivocal.”<sup>101</sup> Differences of perception and practice organize social fields. Furthermore, links between social divisions and the ethnographic visions vary historically and are conditional. Steinmetz quotes Bourdieu in his article “The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire in 1914”. He states, “Membership in a field is based on tacit acceptance of a set of assumptions and beliefs, on an argument that ‘exceeds the oppositions that are constitutive of the struggles in the field.’”<sup>102</sup> The particular field that Steinmetz addresses includes all state employees that carry out official functions for the state, such as officers, soldiers, policemen.<sup>103</sup> A social field is a space of mutual recognition, in which participants are involved in both recognition and competition. Ethnographic capital fits into this social field because it became a factor in the competition for symbolic capital. Steinmetz explains, “The colonial state began to be characterized by competition for a particular form of symbolic capital: ethnographic capital – a reciprocally recognized talent for making judgments of the colonized.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Steinmetz, “The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire before 1914,” 595.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

It is important to look at ethnographic capital being put into play. Ethnographic capital can be explained through the colonies of Southwestern Africa and Samoa. This will also help clarify the definition of ethnographic capital. Ethnographic capital involves the opposition of two parties, who both believe that they understand the natives better. In the case of Southwest Africa these two parties were Theodor Leutwein, a colonial administrator, and the von François Brothers, who were members of the Prussian nobility and whose father, General Bruno von François had been a Franco-Prussian War Hero. Leutwein became the new Landeshauptman, meaning state captain, essentially usurping the von François brothers. Their opposing viewpoints surrounded the native Witbooi. The Witbooi, led by Hendrick Witbooi, belong to the Orlam groups in nineteenth-century Namibia and the Orlam group is classified under the Namibian Khoikhoi.<sup>105</sup> The struggle involved social class as it is lived and understood. Steinmetz states “The two parties sparred repeatedly, each insisting on the superiority of their ethnographic and colonial-political judgment.”<sup>106</sup>

Curt and Hugo von François, Leutwein’s predecessors, had the goal of subduing the Witbooi militarily and decimating the tribe, or making them leave the colony. They received opposition from Hendrick Witbooi, even after offering to pay him for submitting to a protection treaty. However, Hendrick opposed any and all suppression by German rule. Hendrick convinced Samuel Maherero, a Paramount Chief of the Herero people, to unite with him against the Germans. At first the colonial army, the Schutztruppe, stated that there should be a neutral relationship between all parties involved, however the fear

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<sup>105</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 5.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

that there could be an uprising against the colonists arose, and von François ordered the destroying of the tribes, killing 100 tribal people, most of them being women and children, in thirty minutes, with two hundred rifles.<sup>107</sup> These events largely occurred due to von François seeing the Witbooi as scheming and unreliable, as well as mimics, meaning that they imitated the German colonizers.<sup>108</sup>

Leutwein's approach to the Witbooi, after forcing Hendrick to sign a protection treaty, was showing the natives that the Germans do not always 'shoot' to do harm, which he was trying to assert after Lieutenant von François formulated an extermination plan for the Witbooi and the entire division of the Khoikhoi in general. Leutwein focused on cooperation and ethnic salvage, rather than causing the downfall of the people, as the von François had been trying to accomplish through brutality and violence.<sup>109</sup> Culture was being preserved, however it was being changed in such a way that the power was still focused on the colonizers. The Witbooi were presented as noble warrior-savages. Steinmetz asserts, "The noble savagery frame provided a basis for a positive policy of stabilization."<sup>110</sup> The Witbooi soldiers were praised and seen as courageous and gifted, as well as intelligent.

Another opposition to Leutwein was General Lothar Von Trotha, the commander of the German military campaign. Steinmetz states that he "Issued a 'proclamation' to the Ovaherero, on October 2, 1904 – his infamous 'annihilation order'—which declared that

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 155-157

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 158.



every Ovaherero man, woman, and child had to leave the colony or face death.”<sup>111</sup> The men were executed or lynched and the survivors became prisoners in concentration camps and forced to be laborers.<sup>112</sup> This order of massacre was protested by Leutwein, who argued that colonization without the colonized was a contradiction.<sup>113</sup>

Thus it can be seen that both parties involved, Leutwein and the von François’, followed ethnographic capital in that they thought they knew what was best for the natives, because they each understood them better and saw them in different lights. Both parties thought that they held authority in their ethnographic and colonial-political judgment.<sup>114</sup> Leutwein was characterized to have treated the Witbooi mildly, whereas von François believed that the Germans held the right to subjugate the natives and instill superiority. Ethnographic capital is further demonstrated when Von Trotha stated “My exact knowledge of so many central African tribes... has always demonstrated to me with absolute necessity that the Negro never bows to treaties but only to raw violence.”<sup>115</sup> Von Trotha believed that he knew what the natives needed, which demonstrated ethnographic capital.

A similar state of affairs can be seen in Samoa between Governor Solf and Richard Deeken, the leader of a German group of settlers. Steinmetz states “Solf’s policy of enforced radical alterity might then seem to flow directly from the dominance of the

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<sup>111</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 10.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>114</sup> Firth, *New Guinea under the Germans*, 162.

<sup>115</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 50.



noble savagery perspective.”<sup>116</sup> Solf saw the Samoans as a higher class of colonized peoples, and thus chose to treat them in a manner that would allow them to develop naturally. He formulated these ideas based on European accounts of the colonized, rather than from interactions with them. Deeken opposed Solf’s ideas; he thought that Solf was encouraging the colonized to think that they were better than any non-government official whites. Deeken wanted the natives to be a work force and demanded native proletarianization. Solf was appalled and had Deeken arrested, after a long battle with him. It is important to note that Deeken and his followers, though being extremely hostile against the natives, did not come up with an alternative to what they thought should develop out of the situation and some even echoed Solf’s opinions, even Deeken, effectively contradicting what they had originally stood for.<sup>117</sup> Therefore both Solf and Deeken and the settlers were trying to advocate their ethnographic superiority, because they thought they understood what the native entity needed, thus propagating the use of ethnographic capital.

The evidence provided shows that ethnographic capital played a role in the colonizers affecting the lives of the colonized. In the case of Southwestern Africa, with the von François brothers and Von Trotha, ethnographic capital played a role in the colonizers exerting violence on the natives and treating them harshly. The idea is to find this type of pattern in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, German New Guinea, which would explain why the colonizers were exceptionally harsh on the natives.

Fritz Rose was the imperial commissioner of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland before the administration of the colony reverted to the New Guinea Kompagnie. Fritz Rose was an

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 347-350.

extreme ruler, who relied on punitive expeditions in order to discipline the native. Many of these punitive expeditions, some of which are detailed in the chapter on harshness, killed many innocent people, and their brutality was immense.<sup>118</sup> From this evidence the conclusion can be reached that Rose's style of government and administration was excessively harsh and his focus was on absolute control of the natives, with little to no consideration for them and simply killing or punishing those that got in his way of colonizing successfully.

One official in New Guinea, Governor Albert Hahl, who governed from 1868 to 1945, focused on the absolute control of the natives. His views were in accordance with the New Guinea Kompagnie, which also wanted strict control in order for colonizers to thrive in the new environment. This was done through forced labor, a regulation passed by Hahl in 1903, under which New Guineans were required to work on roads for up to four weeks per year. A native police force and the luluai, who were village head appointed by the Germans, also helped enforce policies. Punitive expeditions, as described in the "Harshness" chapter, were undertaken, and these were excessively harsh, killing many innocent women and children. Hahl was strict, however Colin Firth states, "One naval commander described Hahl as feared by the New Guineans for his strictness and respected for his impartiality and fairness."<sup>119</sup> Hahl believed that when treated appropriately, New Guineans could survive colonization. He fought with the planters to ensure this proper treatment endlessly, which shows that Hahl wanted to be fair to the

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<sup>118</sup>Firth, *New Guinea under the Germans*, 33

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

natives.<sup>120</sup> Though harsh, he focused on setting up colonial policies that would work, not just decimate the natives.

There was also a third party within New Guinea, Heinrich Rudolph Wahlen, who was a fierce opponent of Hahl's. Wahlen belonged to the planters and he acquired over fifty-six islands as well as a lot of other land. Firth states, "Wahlen grew rich from the palms of a declining population."<sup>121</sup> He benefitted from the depopulation and heavily opposed Hahl's efforts to stop the dying out of the natives. Wahlen's views were mirrored by the planter, who leaned more towards Rose's tactics, once the NGK took over and Albert Hahl became governor. Since Hahl wanted to protect the natives, instituting colonization without decimation, he set up laws pertaining to the natives. These included banning the recruitment of women, stricter labor legislation, more nutritious and expensive rations for workers, encouragement of cash-cropping and the undertaking of village improvement using tax proceeds, all of which made labor more expensive and harder to acquire. This caused the planters to scheme against Hahl, but ultimately conceding to his requests.<sup>122</sup>

The issue between the two opposing individuals or groups comes down to the idea of harsh versus soft. The same issue was encountered between the Germans and the British in regards to leniency by the British, which inspired Germany to utilize strict colonial tactics, in the general harshness chapter of the thesis. In Southwest Africa, Leutwein was the 'soft' party, whereas the François Brothers and Von Trotha were harsher. In Samoa, Solf was the more lenient individual, whereas Van Deeken was more

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 113.

harsh. In New Guinea, Hahl was the softer entity. He undertook punitive expeditions because he felt like he had to, since others in the colonies advocated them and executed them. Rose seemed to be more harsh, because of his advocacy for absolute control. Wahlen and the planters, as well as Rose, were the harsh entity, which focused on violent tactics in order to benefit from depopulation and to institute laws.

It can be seen that these different entities had different opinions on how natives should be handled. Rose' excessively harsh treatment through punitive expeditions furthered his ideas of how natives should be eradicated in order to allow successful colonization. Hahl used harsh tactics, but they proved to be successful and he ultimately relied on fairness once his original policies proved to be successful. This plays into ethnographic capital, because both Hahl and Rose focused on believing that they knew what the natives needed in order to enforce their beliefs and policies. They believed that they understood the native culture and the native other and thus could judge them in such a way that they knew what was best for them, which follows the idea of ethnographic capital and shows that ethnographic capital was present within New Guinea. Therefore ethnographic capital is relevant to the argument because the competition for this type of capital includes the individuals advocating on behalf of and against differing policies, causing them to win and lose the competition, which caused the implementation of one of the policies in the lives of the natives.

## Chapter 5: Social Class

Social class played a large role within Germany during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Life within Germany was structured around social class and it is important to investigate the role that class played on the harshness on the native New Guineans by the German colonizers. The working hypothesis is that social class hierarchies can make life difficult for certain people, in particular working class and aspiring middle class people, and that this difficulty transferred to harshness against the natives in colonial contexts. After defining "class" and exploring the class situation in Germany in the latter part of the nineteenth century, this chapter considers which classes were included and excluded in the colonial empire and which were likely to find their fortunes frustrated. It then reviews Steinmetz scholarship on the German class situation in southwest Africa and Samoa to make the connection between class and harsh treatment of natives, and compares these studies to the situation in New Guinea.

First, it is important to define social class. In his article, "Class, Status, Party", the theorist Max Weber states, "We may speak of a "class" when (1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component in life chances, in so far as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income."<sup>123</sup> He summarizes the idea of class in anthropology as being a group of people that is found in the same class situation. Steinmetz also addresses class as relating to his idea of the social field, meaning that classes fit into the social field

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<sup>123</sup> Max Weber, "Class, Status, Party," in *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History* ed. R. Jon McGee and Richard L. Warms (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012), 98.

because it is an arena in which people make their way in life and in which they negotiate their life circumstances.<sup>124</sup>

Many writers have identified German colonialism with the rise of the middle classes in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These authors include Steinmetz and Matthew Fitzpatrick, Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper. In their book, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Stoller and Cooper address the idea that the bourgeoisie, the wealthy half of the middle class in Germany, supported colonialism. They state, “European bourgeoisies valued technological advance, the growing capacity and rationality of European systems of government, and the very idea of social and economic progress and used those ideas to demarcate more clearly than in previous eras the distinctiveness of what it means to be European.”<sup>125</sup>

Matthew Fitzpatrick relates the rise of the middle classes and imperialism during this period to the rise of liberalism. Liberalism involves the move away from the aristocracies and divine kings of old Europe, towards freedom and liberty. This includes freedom of religion, freedom of press, free elections, civil rights, free trade, and private property. The rise of the middle class relating to free trade and private property, according to Fitzpatrick, leaves out the working class. Fitzpatrick argues that German middle-class liberals supported imperialism as a means to create a unified state and national identity. He states, “What is being asserted... is the symbiosis between nationalism and imperialism as mutually reinforcing concepts deployed by liberals to further consolidate a form of national identity that coincided with their broader program

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<sup>124</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 45-47.

<sup>125</sup> *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Culture in a Bourgeois World* ed. Laura Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 3.



of rule.”<sup>126</sup> Essentially, Fitzpatrick argues that through support from the middle-class, the German nation-state pursued liberal historic expansionist objectives. There was an inherent desire to have the Pacific be identified as ‘German’, which would help Germany be constructed as an imperialist power, which was further supported by the middle-class.<sup>127</sup>

Furthermore, Fitzpatrick also argues that the German middle-class supported imperialism in order to explain the ‘social question’ of working class poverty. Colonialism was to be used as a means to support elements within Germany, especially emigrants. Fitzpatrick gives evidence to this through the Leipzig professor Wilhelm Roscher, who argued that colonialism could function as a way to solve the social question. Fitzpatrick states, “For Roscher, colonies did not mean that the struggling middle and working classes would be beguiled by an imperialist diversion enacted by cynical patrician liberals and conservatives, but rather that the proletariat and its children would become healthy, well-fed middle class adults in the colonies, even as they supplied the raw materials required by German industry.”<sup>128</sup> Therefore, Germany wanted to accommodate the demands for social mobility by the lower classes.

Social class involved class frustrations. These class frustrations and the violence by the colonizers is associated with the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie. The two groups that were losing out from this ascendance were the aristocracy and the working classes. The frustrations of the social classes may have contributed to the colonial violence on the natives by the Germans. There are two factors that could have contributed to colonial

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<sup>126</sup> Matthew Fitzpatrick, *Liberal Imperialism in Germany: Expansionism and Nationalism 1848-1884*, 128.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 60.



violence due to classes. The aristocracy was in the military, which may have led them to accept and employ violence in colonial texts. The social status of the German army was heightened through its aristocratic connections.<sup>129</sup> Furthermore, the lives of the working class were typically more difficult than the lives of those in the middle class, which contributes to their reputation for harshness.

There is evidence that the working classes were not entirely losing out to the rising-middle classes, in fact they were the subject of remarkable ambivalence by the middle-classes. Stoler and Cooper, the authors of *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, show that liberal imperialism was philosophically unifying and all-inclusive. However, it also contained exclusions of the indigenous people and the working classes. Cooper and Stoler argue that the attitudes and policies of a metropolitan ruling class towards the lower, working-classes can be compared to the attitudes and policies toward the natives. Cooper and Stoler state, “The wave of nineteenth-century colonizers prompted Europe’s ruling classes to reaffirm their own distinctiveness at the very moment when European states were emphasizing incorporation of parts of the popular classes into some form of citizenship and recognition of their accepted place in the policy.”<sup>130</sup> The inclusionary principle was founded on tensions of notions and incorporation, and these differed over the years. However, it is clear that the natives and the working classes were often excluded from these principles. The author of the article “Liberal Strategies of Exclusion,” Uday Metha argues “Political inclusion is contingent

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<sup>129</sup> L.H. Gann and Peter Duignan, *The Rulers of German Africa 1884 – 1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), 4.

<sup>130</sup> *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Stoler and Cooper, 10.

on a qualified capacity to reason.”<sup>131</sup> Since the views on the working-class party and the natives were less than positive, this leads to the idea that they were excluded.

Middle-class colonial societies also endeavored to promote the idea of an empire and colonialism to the working classes. John Short, the author of *Magic Lantern Empire: Colonialism and Society in Germany*, shows how the middle classes simultaneously included and excluded the lower classes in the empire. While the middle classes were ambivalent towards the working classes, they still wanted to sell the lower classes the idea of an empire in order to include the lower classes, however they still ended up excluding them. The middle class sought to teach the knowledge of the empire to the working classes through shows, lectures, and expeditions. The attention of the working class was especially gathered through magic lantern shows, where reduced tickets were offered for the working classes. Short states “The limitless appetite for such magic lantern slide lectures was striking. As late as 1913, colonial propagandists confidently predicted the ‘main means to education will always be lectures and, in connection with them, the showing of slides illustrate the landscape, life, and activities in the colonies’.”<sup>132</sup> While the middle class sought to gain the support of the working classes for colonialism, the middle class was still not particularly including the lower classes in their goals. Short states, “The universal appeal of the lantern-slide lecture did not, however, signify the submergence of class. The Colonial Society remained keenly aware that the cultural and linguistic effects of class difference and their implications for disseminating

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<sup>131</sup> Uday Metha, “Liberal Strategies of Exclusion,” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Culture in a Bourgeois World 1997*, ed. Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 68.

<sup>132</sup> John Phillip Short, *Magic Lantern Empire: Colonialism and Society in Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 54.

colonialism.”<sup>133</sup> For example, the middle class believed that the ‘right’ lecturers had to be found, so that the lower-class worker would be able to definitely understand what was being said. The slide show itself also made sure that there were pictures, which were a necessary alternative to words because the lower working classes had a lower level of education.<sup>134</sup>

However, there is also evidence that shows that the working classes were excluded from the colonial empire. Higher classes believed that the lower classes had no access to symbolic resources or colonial knowledge, due to not having access to material resources or capital. Short states, “The colonies seemed to be a way out of the straightened circumstances, *déclassement*, bankruptcy, professional obsolescence, or failure that beset many Germans in a period of economic change and inflexible social hierarchy.”<sup>135</sup> Many working class people were excluded from colonialism because they were deemed to have no means, which made them unsuitable as settlers.

There is evidence that the working classes were not against colonialism. Short describes the idea that the Hottentot Election, in which colonialism became a contentious issue following the Hottentot massacre in Africa, indicated that the working classes were not against colonialism. During the elections, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), which was anti-colonial and working class oriented, campaigned against colonialism and tried to win votes and seats in the Reichstag. While the SPD did win the most votes, they also lost seats and dropped anti-colonialism from its campaigns. The fact that they won votes but lost seats shows that the working class was not against colonialism, rather they

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 65.

supported the empire, even though they were largely excluded from it in the beginning phases of colonialism, since the government did not want to send low class people to the colonies. This mentality, however, changed. Short states, “Already, with the lapse of the antisocialist laws and the rise of the SPT in the 1890s, colonial discourse had changed. Whereas previously the lower classes represented an object of collective anxiety, as pauperized, deracinated “dangerous classes” in need of homes overseas (colonialism as what “we” need to do about “them”), by the later 1890s they were increasingly the targets of colonial propaganda.”<sup>136</sup> There was a shift in attitudes toward the lower classes, and the lower classes became an increasing target to be persuaded that the overseas empire would offer them solutions to the troubles of industrial society.<sup>137</sup>

Thus it can be seen that there were many contradictions present within the German Empire when it came to the lower and working classes being both included and excluded. Short asserts, “Colonial knowledge – social scientific, racial, economic – not only reproduced class distinction, in the form of cultural capital, but inscribed it in a political economy of empire predicated on the objectification and subordination of labor in both colony and metropole.”<sup>138</sup> The idea that colonies could help Germans without means start over was rapidly disseminated. Ironically, the determination of such fantasies by the lower classes marked their exclusion from the colonial movement. Short points out, “Contemporary socialists, of course, pointed out the symmetrical oppression of both German and colonial labor.”<sup>139</sup> This can also be seen as a symmetrical exploitation.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

There were also exceptions to the exclusion of working classes in the colonies. There was a small white working class in Southwest Africa, which was Germany's only true settlement colony. This working-class was an exception. Large problems were encountered in the settler colony, mainly settler miscegenation, which is interracial concubinage, or even marriage, which caused the development of a half-caste underclass. This hybridization was seen as taboo, since the ideal of 'Germanness' was not being upheld in the colonies. Short states, "The prospects of settlement for the working classes were never very good, even before the miscegenation debate. People without means were by and large excluded, and efforts made to limit unsuitable settlers."<sup>140</sup> The exceptions however, included some former soldiers, who were deemed to do better in the settler colony. Women's emigration was also an exception. In order to transform social, racial, and sexual relations in the colonies, the Colonial Society set up a female emigration program in 1898, in order for these working women to reproduce a respectable group of foreign Germans, and put a halt to interracial reproducing.

L.H. Gann and Peter Duigan describe further exceptions in their book, *The Rulers of German Africa 1884 – 1914*. In regards to the settlers they state, "They were at best men of middling degree, for the rich did not emigrate to make a hard and risky living in the bush."<sup>141</sup> The men of this middling degree were more likely to have harsh attitudes towards the Africans. This attitude was shaped by their position in society. The commoner element in the colonial civil service became more important later in the colonies, due to the need for bureaucratic and technical skills. Furthermore, Gann and Duigan state, "During the colonial period, service in the colonial forces provided an

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>141</sup> Gann and Duigan, "The Rulers of German Africa 1884 – 1914, 152.

avenue by which ambitious commoners could acquire a much-envied patent of nobility.”<sup>142</sup> This furthered the exceptions made for commoners in the colonies. Those with a military career grew up in a harsh environment, which contributed to strictness of discipline in encounters with the natives. Gann and Duigan state, “Such men saw nothing wrong in ruling with an iron fist.”<sup>143</sup> This shows that lower classes exerted violence and harshness towards the natives.

In contrast, middle class colonial governors had a much less harsh attitude towards the natives than the aristocrats or the working class. According to George Steinmetz, the colonial field was made up out of the nobility, the propertied bourgeoisie, and the Bildungsbürgertum, also known as the educated middle class.<sup>144</sup> Fitzpatrick also focuses on the Bildungsbürgertum, and its compliment, the Wirtschaftsbürgertum, also known as the mercantile class.<sup>145</sup> These divisions of the classes were more humanistic in working with the natives in the colonies. Steinmetz points out, “Middle-class intellectuals prevailed in most of the cultural fields, and they were also well represented in the overseas colonial administrations. This was partly because these posts were considered relatively unimportant, but in some instances middle-class “academics” were preferred because of the emphasis on understanding foreign cultures.”<sup>146</sup> Therefore, the Bildungsbürgertum was more likely to humanize natives because of their educational background. Steinmetz further asserts that the colonists leaned towards a specific vision

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>144</sup> Steinmetz, “The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire before 1914,” 597.

<sup>145</sup> Fitzpatrick, *Liberal Imperialism in Germany: Expansionism and Nationalism 1848 – 1884*, 5.

<sup>146</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 49.



of the colonized, according to their socially constructed strengths. For example, the educated middle class focused on interpretation of the natives based off of hermeneutic and linguistic skills.<sup>147</sup> This class was a lot more humanistic when compared to the aristocrats. Steinmetz states, “Aristocrats and army officers tended to describe the colonized using military or crudely racist categories. Their preferred native policies emphasized the arts of coercive command – the traditional specialization of the German nobility – but they still framed this in terms of a superior grasp of the natives.”<sup>148</sup>

The ideas presented in the ethnographic capital chapter of the thesis also support the idea that the Bildungsbürgertum was more humanistic, and the aristocrat military and the working class settlers were more harsh. In Southwest Africa, Leutwein was a part of the Bildungsbürgertum, and Von Trotha was aristocrat military. Von Trotha used his aristocratic military background to set the Herero Genocide into motion. His practices were harsh and he supported the annihilation of the natives, whereas Leutwein protested his claims and felt that colonization without the colonized was contradictory.<sup>149</sup>

Additionally, in Samoa, Solf was a part of the Bildungsbürgertum. He was more humanistic than his counterpart Richard Deeken, who was a planter, associated with the working class settlers. Solf and Deeken often clashed over their differing opinions. The author of *German Women for Empire, 1884-1945*, Lora Wildenthal states that, “Solf was a paternalist advocate of “native protection” who was committed to reforming colonialism, and his proudest achievement as governor was the establishment of Samoan

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<sup>147</sup> George Steinmetz, “From Native Policy to Exterminationism: German Southwest Africa, 1904, in Comparative Perspective,” *Theory and Research in Comparative Social Analysis*, (2005): 22.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 44.



colonial subjects' – not colonists' – self-administration."<sup>150</sup> Deeken on the other hand, was the leader of the German settlers who arrived in Samoa with little capital and found a local labor shortage.<sup>151</sup> He advocated for the natives to be put to work and saw the colonies as purely a business venture. He saw the dying out of the natives as a good thing, since a superior labor force could then staff the colonies.<sup>152</sup> Thus it can be seen that the idea presented in the ethnographic capital chapter of the thesis can also contribute to the class debate, since all four abovementioned individuals stem from different classes. Those of the Bildungsbürgertum, Leutwein and Solf, had more humanistic stances than their counterparts, von Trotha from the aristocrat military, and Deeken with working class affiliations.

German New Guinea's governor, Albert Hahl, had a similar background to Solf. They both had law degrees and similar policies towards the natives. Sebastian Conrad, the author of *German Colonialism: A Short History*, states, "In contrast to Germany's African colonies, there were no serious violent clashes in New Guinea or Samoa. This was due not least to the circumspect approach to colonial rule adopted by governors Hahl and Solf, both well educated representatives of the bourgeoisie and not part of the military hierarchy."<sup>153</sup> Hahl, like Solf, aimed to achieve cautious modernization while focusing on leaving indigenous customs alone. Firth confirms that, "Hahl... belonged, like Solf in Samoa, to that minority tradition of German colonial thought which found

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<sup>150</sup> Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884 – 1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 122.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*, 349.

<sup>153</sup> Sebastian Conrad, *German Colonialism: A Short History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 56-57.

expression in the views of Bernhard Dernburg and in the *Koloniale Rundschau*, a journal founded by the German Society for the Protection of Aborigines in 1909 to promote a humane approach to colonial policy.”<sup>154</sup> Therefore it can be seen that Hahl’s educated background follows the trend of treating the natives better than individuals from other classes.

In New Guinea, Hahl fought a ceaseless battle with planters to secure proper treatment of the natives in order to ensure New Guinean population survival. The battle that Hahl faced refers to the dividing issue of depopulation between Hahl and the planters of New Guinea. As mentioned in the ethnographic capital chapter, Hahl’s stand against depopulation made labor more expensive and less easy to come by for the planters. Firth notes that for Hahl, “The New Guinean people were a resource, like land or rainfall, a resource of ‘inferior quality’ but not one to be wasted carelessly.”<sup>155</sup>

However, it is important to note that New Guinea was different from the colonies in Africa and Samoa. New Guinea was not purely a settler colony; rather it was a plantation colony. Traders did not precede the New Guinea Company in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, in fact, the indigenous populations had no experience of Europeans at all. New Guinea did not have indigenous political hierarchies as the Samoans or the large tribes in Africa did. Rather, they had small independent tribal groups that spoke a wide array of languages. Ingrid Moses, the author of “The Extension of Colonial Rule in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland,” states that in New Guinea, “The population, Melanesians on the offshore islands and costal fringe of the mainland, and Papuan further inland, is divided into numerous small tribes living in isolated communities based on kinship and language,

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<sup>154</sup> Firth, *New Guinea Under the Germans*, 111.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

some being as small as a few dozen people.”<sup>156</sup> This factor made the indigenous groups hard to control and govern.

In New Guinea, the main colonial interests were by the government administration and the planters. There was a hierarchy present among colonial officials. Gann and Duigan state, “German service was rigidly divided along functional and educational lines.”<sup>157</sup> Those who were hired by the Berlin banker Adolph von Hansemann were government officials who administered the colonies. These included labor recruiters, traders, and plantation managers, who ran the company. These were generally people who had already had experience as traders and planters in the Pacific Islands. The traders were generally uneducated and tended to treat the natives more harshly. They were often also the targets of native revenge. The officials were middle class, but from the lower ends of the administrative hierarchy and not the sort of educated middle class that Hahl and Solf represented.<sup>158</sup>

The first imperial commissioner of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, Fritz Rose, was similar to Hahl and Solf. This was before the German government took over the running of the colonies and before Hahl took over as governor. Firth details how Rose let go of Julius Winter, the officer in charge of the Finschafen station, who was a recruiter of mainland laborers. Firth states, “Rose, punctilious, aloof and an upholder of the law who believed that labor recruiting was ‘in truth nothing other than the sale of human beings’, was appalled that this ‘rough uneducated man’ Winter should have the responsibilities and

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<sup>156</sup> Ingrid Moses, “The Extension of Colonial Rule in Kaiser Wilhelmsland,” in *Germany in the Pacific & Far East 1870-1914*, ed. John Moses and Paul Kennedy (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1977), 288.

<sup>157</sup> Gann and Duigan, “*The Rulers of German Africa 1884 – 1914*, 93.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 91-93.

disciplinary authority of an officer-in-charge.”<sup>159</sup> This example shows that Rose looked down on the labor recruiter in regards to social class.

Adolph Hansemann, after seeing the fiasco that surrounded colonialism in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland in regards to crops and sickness, decided that he no longer wanted to have any part with the colony. Firth shows that Hansemann appealed to the government for help, in order to extricate his companies from the area. Firth states, “He now wanted to withdraw permanently from the colonial administration, have the imperial charter revoked and allow the German government to assume administrative authority.”<sup>160</sup> After the German government took over, Hahl was appointed acting governor of New Guinea in 1901, and stayed on as governor until 1914. Hahl belonged to the Bildungsbürgertum, and his actions underline the idea that those belonging to the Bildungsbürgertum class were more humanistic and educated in regards to the natives. Firth states, “The NGC had so failed to protect foreign life and property that the islands’ firms carried out their own private punitive expeditions or added their forces to the police to make official action possible.”<sup>161</sup> Hahl set out to change the wrongdoings and catered to the natives in a humane way, by setting up ‘native reserves’ that were protected from foreign invasion as well as appointing chiefs to give them the power to settle minor village disputes in the name of the government. Thus it can be seen that Hahl’s background contributed to his more humanistic views in regards to the natives, whereas the higher class NGC did not keep the natives interests in mind.

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<sup>159</sup> Firth, *New Guinea Under the Germans*, 31.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

New Guinea Natives often carried out reprisals against recruiters, planters and traders. The natives also had reprisals directed against them by the government, and they blamed the traders and settlers. The New Guineans had many serious complaints against the traders and planters and they followed the logic of payback where reprisals did not have to be carried out against the precise perpetrator of the infraction against them. There were many abusive labor practices present in New Guinea. For example, labor-recruiting practices in New Guinea were particularly harsh. Force and intimidation were extremely widespread. Firth states, “When the professional recruiters entered Kaiser-Wilhelmsland in about 1908 a government official complained that they caused ‘the most enraged confusion’ in the villages, presumably because they employed more violent methods than the NGC recruiters with a permanent interest in the villagers’ willingness to enlist.”<sup>162</sup> Further violent behavior by the traders and planters included flogging village men for misdemeanors such as laziness and loitering, or even having dirty rifles.<sup>163</sup>

Furthermore, abusive and fraudulent land acquisitions also contributed to the anger of the natives. Peter Hemenstall, the author of “Resistance in the German Pacific Empire” states, “The process of social and political change... led decisively to an uprising against members of the German administration in October 1910.”<sup>164</sup> Mutual anger existed between the Germans and the natives, which each group took out on one another. Hemenstall shows that the protests by the natives “Were the product of overwhelming frustration at European presumptions, the tendency to make demands or

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>164</sup> Peter Hemenstall, “Resistance in the German Pacific Empire: Towards a Theory of Early Colonial Response,” *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 84 no. 1 (1975): 8.

exploit resources without reference to the local people or without offering some form of compensation.”<sup>165</sup>

It is important to note that the Navy and administrators often chose not to conduct punitive reprisals because they blamed the planters for the violence and they had a lack of resources and abilities for the expeditions. However, punitive expeditions were undertaken against the natives for problems caused by planters and lower administrators. For example, Firth describes an incident during which a Tolai man had been provoked by a planter. Hahl sentenced a Tolai man to death because the Tolai was convicted of the murder of a white man, but then Hahl reprieved his sentence. Hahl decided that the Tolai had been provoked, and gave him a year's hard labor on a plantation instead.<sup>166</sup>

Another example of punishment on natives due to problems caused by planters or lower administrators occurred with an incident between the planter, Rudolf Wolff, and the indigenous people. The indigenous people were mad at Wolff because he wanted to reclaim land, which was being disputed. The indigenous people reacted to his inability or unwillingness to control laborers, which were pilfering their poultry and killed Wolff's wife and his baby. As Firth (page 79) describes the situation, "Hahl lay ill with black-water fever, and the responsibility for taking action fell to the Imperial Magistrate, who immediately took his police to the hills." Hempenstall states, "Wolff interpreted the murders as proof of wide-ranging, acute resentment against white rule... Instead of mounting a quick police raid to seek out the ringleaders... Wolff responded by arming

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>166</sup> Firth, *New Guinea Under the Germans*, 64.



and releasing onto the Varzin districts 2000 labourers offered by white planters.”<sup>167</sup> The colonial department later said that this incident was injudicious, and that Wolff had turned this local incident into a racial campaign, which caused the leaders of the indigenous to cease any belief in coexistence.<sup>168</sup> Hahl would probably have acted differently, showing that lower classes of administrators were more likely to be harsh.

A further violent reprisal by the indigenous in New Guinea occurred in response to Peter Hansen, a planter, and his wrongdoings, there was an indigenous uprising during which the islanders attacked Hansen’s trading post when he was away and murdered nine of his laborers. The counter raid resulted in the deaths of fifteen islanders which, in turn, led the Germans to pursue the indigenous people. Firth states, “Hahl blamed Peter Hansen for the uprising. Islanders accused him of rape, cruelty to his laborers, keeping people prisoners until he was paid in ransom... and of having deceived sellers of land by telling them that he was buying only the coconuts, not the soil in which the palms grew.”<sup>169</sup>

In conclusion, social class played a role in influencing the harshness of the colonists on the natives. The evidence points out that the Bildungsbürgertum was less harsh than the aristocratic classes and the lower working classes. This may in part be due to the fact that the Bildungsbürgertum had less to lose than the aristocratic classes and the working class. In fact, the rise of the middle-class was largely due to colonialism, whereas the working class and the aristocracy were essentially losing out due to the rise

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<sup>167</sup> Peter Hempenstall, *Pacific Islanders Under German Rule: A Study in the Meaning of Colonial Resistance* (Australia: Australia National University Press, 1978), 146.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Firth, *New Guinea Under the Germans*, 82.



of the bourgeoisie. The evidence shows that the aristocracy and the working classes were more harsh in regards to the natives, whereas those from an educated middle class background took a more humanistic approach to the natives. Therefore, social class did play a role in influencing the harsh treatment of the natives by the colonizers in New Guinea, however there is more research that should be done on this topic to more clearly define the role that class distinctions played.

## **Conclusion**

The main question answered in this thesis is whether colonialism by the Germans in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland was particularly harsh, which, for the purpose of this paper, means violence that is unjustified and unnecessary. Within the 'harshness' chapter, much evidence of the harsh treatment of the natives by the colonists is presented which establishes that a factor of harshness was indeed present within New Guinea. While some scholars, such as Edward Wolfers and Hermann Hiery do not agree with the extensively harsh reputation of the German colonists, others, such as Ulrike Lindner and Paul Rohrbach contend that German colonialism in New Guinea was especially harsh. The many punitive expeditions that were undertaken underline the idea of the harshness by the Germans. The three main concepts used to explain the harshness by the colonists are race, ethnographic capital and social class.

Race was an important factor in the harsh treatment of the native New Guineans. This was due to the intellectual trends of the time being largely race-oriented, and setting up the idea of the supremacy of the white races. Since New Guineans were grouped into derivations of the four original races, they were considered to be extremely low in the social hierarchical order. Since these intellectual theories were the driving force of social interactions, the New Guineans were treated more harshly by the German colonizers. The colonial officials and the scientists especially viewed the natives based on a more defined evolutionary concept of human differences, which evoked a sense of harshness. Race relations within New Guinea were also driven by the intellectual theories of the time and the lack of faith that the colonists had in the natives was racially oriented.

Ethnographic capital also contributes to the harsh treatment of the natives by the Germans. Ethnographic capital existed within New Guinea, however it was not as defined as in Samoa and Southwest Africa. Governor Albert Hahl functions as the more humanistic entity within New Guinea, in opposition with the planters, led by Heinrich Wahlen. Hahl and Wahlen exhibit the idea of soft versus harsh, which is common within the overarching idea of ethnographic capital. Both parties had different ideas of how to treat the indigenous populations and ultimately thought that they understood the natives better, thus being able to better colonize than the other. Therefore ethnographic capital contributed to the harsh treatment of the natives by the German colonizers, particularly those who claimed that the natives only understood violence.

Social class also affected how harshly the Germans treated indigenous populations in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland. The working classes and the aristocracy took to treating the natives more harshly than the Bildungsbürgertum. Both of these classes had more to lose than the Bildungsbürgertum; the aristocracy had to worry about the middle classes rising up and taking over their class status, whereas the working class had to work hard in order to be included fairly in colonialism and to not be boxed out by the middle class. The fact that much of the aristocracy had military training also contributed to violence being exerted on the natives, due to the aristocracy being more experienced with militaristic ideas and violence. However, the aristocracy were hardly present in German New Guinea. The working class recruiters, planters and traders within Kaiser-Wilhelmsland were the ones who had to deal with native reprisals, which caused them to react excessively harshly against the natives, with punitive expeditions and violence. Thus class status did play a role in how harshly the natives were treated, with the harsh

treatment coming mainly from the working classes, including the planters and laborers. Therefore, there is evidence that the factors of race, ethnographic capital, and social class influenced how harshly the German colonizers treated the natives within Kaiser-Wilhelmsland.

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