



# Introduction

## Sponsored German Women's Settlement in German South West Africa



[The German government in South-West Africa] reported . . . that if one were to declare marriages between white men and Rehoboth Bastard women legally permissible, then the consequence would be to recognize all the mixed-race individuals and their descendants born from white men and colored women since the declaration of German rule, and to grant them the same legal status as the Rehoboth *Bastards*. The Colonial Division of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin did not respond to our report. From legal concerns, particularly the different race relations in the Pacific colonies and, above all, objections in the homeland, especially in the Reichstag, the colonial division did not want to make such a fundamental decision. However, through a private letter from the worthy head of its legal department, Councilor Schmidt-Dargitz, we in Windhoek discovered with satisfaction that Berlin would grant the colonial government a free hand. In Southwest Africa news of the ban on mixed marriages spread quickly. Most whites, especially the few white women then in the territory, supported it completely. Only a few voices spoke against it, noting that until now such marriages had been tolerated, since there were not enough single white women in the land and many Rehoboth *Bastard* girls came close to the cultural level of whites. But the government stood firm. The building of German cultural traditions and civilization could not be founded on the marriages of German men and women of color. The marriage ban was only the first step; it must unconditionally be followed with an increase in the number of white women.

Former colonial councilor Oscar Hintrager describing  
the origins of the 1905 interracial marriage ban  
in German Southwest Africa, 1941<sup>1</sup>

Speaking during the middle of World War II, Oscar Hintrager cited the history of the interracial marriage bans in German South West Africa (hereafter South West Africa; contemporary Namibia) as relevant to contemporary Nazi theories of race. As Hintrager, a coauthor of the 1905 German colonial ban on intermarriage in South West Africa, makes clear, he and fellow administrators had designed the ban to promote enduring German hegemony in South West Africa. In the Wilhelmine period, many German settler men in Southwest Africa formed relations and sexual ties to women of various African ethnicities, particularly biracial Rehoboth Basters (an historic fusion community dating from the seventeenth century from African and Afrikaner inter-marriages in the Cape Colony). German pseudoscientists, including eugenicists, anthropologists, and racial scientists cited the community as proof of the undesirability of racial mixing.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the ban on intermarriage, Hintrager and other colonial officials redirected and channeled the territory's reproduction along strict racial lines by encouraging extensive sponsored German women's settlement there between 1898 and World War II. Hintrager also acknowledged that, although the colonial administration in Germany could not support the bans directly, colonial officials in South West Africa could enforce de facto policies of racial separation, despite the likely objections from the German public, other German colonies, and anti-imperialist German politicians. Colonial racial politics also drove German women's settlement in South West Africa, even as opponents spoke out strongly against the scheme in Germany. From the turn of the twentieth century, the German state and German colonialists openly collaborated to promote German women's settlement in South West Africa as a means of resolving the so-called *Mischehenfrage* (race-mixing question) in South West Africa through importing white brides to attract male German colonists away from their liaisons with African women.<sup>3</sup>

In my examination of colonial racial-reproductive relations in Germany and South West Africa, I trace the intersections over time of German attitudes toward race, class, ethnicity, gender, and nation. This study begins around 1895, during the Wilhelmine or imperial era (*Kaiserreich*), as Germany consolidated its colonial holdings and aimed to become a global power. Defeat in World War I put an abrupt end to these aspirations. After the German monarchy ended in 1918, a constitutional, Weimar republic governed Germany until the Nazi seizure of power in 1933. In the Weimar and Nazi eras, German colonialists seeking the restoration of the former colony resumed sponsored German women's settlement and pronatalist initiatives in South West Africa up to World War II. This study considers the lasting impact of these efforts. How did the colonial movement in Germany and South West Africa influence German attitudes toward race and reproduction? How did German radical nationalists and Nazis influence South West African settlers? How did the long history of legal bans on intermarriage and state promotion of white pronatalism in South West Africa inform Wilhelmine, Weimar, and Nazi population and citizenship policies?

The ill-conceived intent behind the female colonization program created a false expectation among many promoters of German colonialism that these sponsored white women settlers could solve what they saw as a racial crisis in the territory. In fact, the colony's race-based reproductive policies enabled German men to escape the consequences for their sexual liaisons and rapes through legal bans on intermarriage, and stripped biracial and black individuals of their civil rights and claims to citizenship. The racial and eugenic ideas behind the organized German women's settlement project lay at the root of German imperialist fantasies, in which Germans in the homeland imagined South West Africa as a colony populated by racially pure white families. The new female settlers complicated the tense racial and sexual relations of the territory, particularly by exposing the hypocrisy of settler men. Historians have suggested that the German colonialist movement influenced the evolution of German national and racial identities from the 1890s on, as well as intensifying anti-black prejudices in Germany over time. The growing radicalization of German racial and nationalist identities impacted the self-perceptions of German settlers in South West Africa, in turn. My research is the first to expose the full history of sponsored German women's settlement in South West Africa. In particular, I trace how settlement efforts connected Germans in the homeland to South West Africa but also how settlers disrupted and redirected colonialist ideas. My work attributes much of the conflict and violence in South West Africa to the contradictions between the broad ideological positions of Germans in the metropole, versus German settlers' more nuanced political engagements with class, ethnicity, gender, and race.<sup>4</sup>

## **The Origin of the Scheme to Recruit German Women Colonists**

This is the first in-depth study of sponsored German women's settlement in South West Africa. Radical German colonialists who originated and controlled the effort to sponsor German women to South West Africa self-consciously and openly pursued a racial-reproductive agenda. They aimed to recruit brides for German male homesteaders to reorder race relations in South West Africa, unlike existing British or French private, philanthropic white women's settlement programs in other colonies, which claimed to expand female participants' opportunities. As this book details, most of the initial organizers and proponents of the scheme were ultranationalist German men, who were explicitly antifeminist. Though a few German feminists also advocated women's colonization as a route for greater independence and professional advancement than in Germany, organizers refused to cooperate with them, most notably the Berlin-based moderate feminist Minna Cauer. Nor were colonialists willing to join forces with German missionary groups working in South West Africa, who offered to assist and train worthy German women to serve as moral guides for the African population. In fact, once details of the pro-

gram emerged, German feminists and missionaries, as well as socialist and liberal politicians voiced opposition to its selection and treatment of the sponsored servant women to South West Africa. When the public debate over the program first emerged in the late 1890s, the proposal provoked so much controversy among skeptics in Germany and in Africa that both critics and advocates alike sometimes labeled female colonization as a response to the “women’s question” in Germany. Colonialists advanced the notion of German women’s colonization as the *koloniale Frauenfrage* (colonial woman question), presenting it as a potential solution to German women’s inequality in Germany, yet showing little regard for actual settler women’s welfare. Still, colonial administrators and members of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Society) who first championed sponsored female settlement in South West Africa inadvertently promoted a quasi-nationalist role for German women.<sup>5</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Colonial Society had few female members and displayed no interest in women’s issues. Well-connected, colonialist-leaning professionals, military officers, academics, business people, and aristocrats founded the society, which amalgamated two rival predecessors in 1887. The Colonial Society was a private organization of enthusiasts who lobbied for imperial causes such as further settlement, investment, and infrastructure in the overseas German Empire. They became unlikely leaders of Germany’s active efforts to promote women’s colonization in the 1890s. At this time, the public was consumed in lively and often hostile debates over German women’s proper place in family and society, and public squabbles over the so-called colonial woman question sometimes took place within the larger context of the struggle for women’s equality at home. Among female colonialists, the influence of moderate, maternalist, feminism on female colonialism triggered an ongoing battle to secure recognition of German women as active *agents* of nationalism and imperialism rather than as the mere *servants* of male settlers, colonialist agitators, and the German state. In the Wilhelmine era, German feminists often faced sexism and misogyny from male colonialists, who resisted their ideas and influence on the colonial movement. By 1906 a German women’s colonial organization formed, and soon joined as an auxiliary of the German Colonial Society as its Frauenbund (Women’s League) to assist in the recruitment of German servant women for work in South West Africa, though tensions emerged as the male leaders of Colonial Society increasingly suspected the league of feminist tendencies.<sup>6</sup>

Before World War I German feminists failed to achieve their desired influence over the German female settlement program to South West Africa, although female colonists often found opportunity and advancement there. This work’s central narrative explores the images and experiences of German settler women in South West Africa, as women in Germany attained greater political, economic, and social equality. After World War I, radical-nationalist, maternalist feminists increasingly joined with German state and private organizations to seek the return

of South West Africa, which was now a League of Nations mandate under South African administration. German women colonialists and state officials cooperated to promote race-based population policies in the mandate, in various stages up to the 1940s. In the Weimar and Nazi era, renewed settlement programs actively discouraged German women who were too self-interested or ambitious from settling in South West Africa. Organizers restricted funding to German women under the age of thirty because they sought to instrumentalize German settler women as child-bearers to serve their radical nationalist and racial reproductive aims. My research shows that, although organizers often envisioned German settler women as the *servants* of empire, these women did not always heed demands for their subservience. Many of the poor white female settlers who emigrated to South West Africa disrupted bourgeois race and gender relations in the territory. Paradoxically, their very presence contributed to the trenchant sexual and racial violence of the territory. It is time to consider the German settler women of South West Africa, and particularly their role in genocide, National Socialism, or Nazism, and apartheid.<sup>7</sup>

## German Settler Women, Structural Genocide, and Gendered Racial Violence

The biopolitical thinking behind German women's settlement was inextricable from the German colonial racial-reproductive policies, and together, these shaped distinct eruptions of violence that unfolded in South West Africa during the era of German rule. This study draws on biopolitical theories that argue that *settler colonialism* induces ongoing *structural genocide* in which settlers erase indigenous populations over time; as settlers invade, they build their own political and economic institutions while destroying existing ones. Moreover, the politicization of race and pronatalist reproduction in settler societies goes hand-in-hand with the destruction of indigenous populations and the systemic imposition of limits on the reproduction of racialized subjects and their futurity. Scholars of other settler societies have argued that, over history, state control over white and indigenous women's bodies has been central to the establishment of white hegemony within European settler societies.<sup>8</sup> These theories offer a basis for interpreting historical white settlement in South West Africa as an ongoing structural genocide, from its origins through the apartheid era, unlike histories that distinguish the German wars of suppression from 1904 to 1907 against the Herero (Ovaherero) and Nama (Namaqua-speakers) as a single genocidal event. Key studies have centered on the role of the German military and top colonial officials in ordering the annihilation of the Herero and Nama in these campaigns. However, these studies neglect how German settlers contributed to the daily violence that continued to kill Africans and destroy their cultures following the wars.<sup>9</sup> Even more significantly, my research addresses how positive eugenic policies promoting white settlers' popu-

lation growth in South West Africa were intertwined with negative eugenics that systematically undermined Africans' reproduction.

A spate of scholarship also has been exploring connections between the South West African genocide and the Holocaust. I find this literature most helpful where it treats the pervasive anti-black racism and violence in South West Africa as enduring influences on Germany.<sup>10</sup> This study adds to this growing literature on the legacies of colonialist racism by considering the influence of radical German and National Socialist ideas of eugenics, pronatalism, and racism within South West Africa, and vice versa—notably the Nazi movement's spread of anti-Semitism in the territory. From the 1920s on, German settlers in southern Africa colluded with other whites in the subjugation of African populations and lent support to the rise of apartheid policies, in part through the influential tide of fascism throughout the region. My work also considers the German colonial movement's support for expansion in Eastern Europe, including participation of German women from the colonies. However, I see Hitler's foreign policy shift to Eastern European conquest as detrimental to South West African settler interests.

Instead of linking South West African violence directly to the brutality of the Holocaust, I detail how German settlers' efforts to segregate, disempower, suppress, and erase blacks predated Hitler and continued after his defeat. Historians also have made clear that notable German anthropologists and racial scientists who researched in South West Africa before World War I later influenced Nazi racial policies. In part, the German eugenic movement drew on the proven model of the German Colonial Society's pronatalist and race-based population measures in South West Africa to call for public efforts in Germany to promote genetically sound marriages and sterilization of the genetically unfit, as well as to settle healthy Germans within overseas German communities around the world. The evidence suggests that South West African and metropolitan Germans' racial thinking directly influenced each other, but not exclusively.<sup>11</sup>

In particular, this book highlights how Germans developed biopolitical policies in South West Africa in light of neighboring southern African colonies, though their methods sometimes diverged in key ways. German South West Africa's imposition of formal interracial marriage bans and other strict racial reproductive policies differed somewhat in earlier timing and severity from neighboring colonies in British southern Africa. Furthermore, German South West Africa offers local variations on the patterns of racial demarcations, sexuality, and morality typical of white women's franchise colonialism (as opposed to settler colonialism) in Asia and elsewhere. For example, unlike most European colonial territories where settler colonialism did not predominate, German officials in South West Africa strongly discouraged, and finally banned, interracial unions in the territory in 1905, subsequently establishing special racial birth registries recording biracial unions, and classifying most German men's African and biracial wives and children legally

as “natives.” Also, unlike the bourgeois origins of most white women in franchise colonial communities, most German settler women in the territory originated from the German working and peasant classes. Sponsored settler women in South West Africa in particular were often servants, many of whom were far from malleable or circumspect, challenging and disrupting the racial demarcations, sexual mores, and class pretensions of white elites in the colony. Though German women’s settlement in South West Africa failed to stem the numbers of biracial births, growing social stigmatization against racial mixing exposed the hypocrisy of colonial German men’s pretenses of racial and moral superiority. However, German settler men also expressed patriarchal anxiety over the potential for settler women’s infidelity with African men, and reacted violently to protect what they perceived as white women’s honor. These contradictions complicated German women’s encounters with Africans, especially with the servants in their homes.<sup>12</sup>

## Theorizing Gossip and Rumors, Violence and BioPower

Historians find colonists’ everyday beliefs difficult to document. We have limited examples of the daily rumors and gossip that settlers exchanged in South West Africa—fragments published in colonial newspapers or contained in private correspondence uncovered in the archives. I distinguish between settlers’ gossip, rumors, and moral panics, but argue they are interconnected. Gossip refers to when two or more social peers share personal information about a known third party in order to offer a judgment about him or her.<sup>13</sup> German gossip about fellow settlers’ sexual and other transgressions were specific, intimate disclosures targeting the reputations of clearly identified, known individuals. Public gossip politicizes private matters, reinforcing cultural meanings and values within communities. In colonial settings in the early twentieth century, intimacies surrounding race and sex were highly politicized, resulting in close patriarchal control over white women, whose reputations reflected on their male family members’ prestige. When gossip spreads beyond the circle of acquaintances, it may diffuse and aggregate into rumors, which are generalizations and collective stereotypes about entire groups. Rarely, such rumors reveal a white settler community’s deepest fantasies and anxieties.<sup>14</sup>

As this study explores, the settler community’s hearsay and rumors offer evidence for a deeper understanding of the eruption of particular colonial scares and vigilantism in the territory. Though Germans often discussed rumors of black rape scares in other colonies, the most distinctive moral panics that took precedence in South West Africa fit local circumstances and social anxieties. Such panics sometimes exploded into racial violence: white settler vigilantism and police-sanctioned violence erupted in the face of these tales, and white paranoia compounded over time.<sup>15</sup>

White settlers' fears were fluid; they played out in unique patterns as Africans influenced how settlers viewed and spoke about them. German settlers in South West Africa were sometimes skeptical, and even referred in racist terms to the many outlandish gossip and rumors they heard as "African stories" or, tall tales "that emerge somewhere, circulate rapidly from word of mouth from one African to another, and occasionally by whites, until they find their way to the press or officials in wildly exaggerated form." However, such rumors were more credible to whites when they confirmed what many settlers already believed, especially during and after the Herero War and Nama War, that local Africans were engaged in a deadly but secretive existential race war against them. White settlers shared the stories that made sense in the local context and that explained both their lived experiences and their subconscious anxieties, many of which were sexual in nature. I argue that these rumors must be interpreted and understood within the logic of the German community in South West Africa. In particular, the lingering trauma of the wartime assaults on white settlers in the Herero and Nama Wars may help explain the intensity of settler paranoia and impulses toward vigilantism in South West Africa.<sup>16</sup>

Ultimately, this book underscores how intersections of race, class, ethnicity, gender, and national identity fed evolving patterns of violence in South West Africa from the 1890s to World War II. As the narrative makes clear, German settler women sometimes participated in horrific acts of colonial violence in the territory, but they also suffered the traumas of war, including African attacks on settler homesteads and South African invasion of the territory during World War I. German racial violence in the territory reached its pinnacle with the slaughter of the Herero and Nama populations in the wars of 1904 to 1907, followed by harsh German administrative policies and unsanctioned violence against the surviving Africans through the end of German rule. However, Germans instead highlighted Africans' destruction of settler homes and their victimization and defilement of settler women and children. The Germans in South West Africa faced defeat in World War I, including mass internment, destruction, and bloodshed on all sides. South Africa assumed military control in 1915 and secured the power of League of Nations mandate administration over the territory in 1919. From the 1920s South Africa gradually expanded its apartheid policies of racial segregation and control in the territory, through state violence in the face of mass African resistance. German settlers in the mandate were complicit in supporting polices for African dispossession, disenfranchisement, and segregation, as well as strict regulation of race and reproduction under apartheid. I contend that German settlers' anxieties over racial pollution and preserving white women's purity provoked and justified local patterns of colonial violence in South West Africa, but I also consider, in turn, how the biopolitical rationales behind German women's sponsored settlement influenced much broader and evolving German radical nationalist views of the state and its regulation of race and reproduction.<sup>17</sup>

## Sources and Chapter Outline

This book is the result of extensive archival research in the collections of the German Colonial Society, German Colonial Division of the foreign ministry (after 1907 Colonial Ministry), and German administration in South West Africa in the German Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv), as well as documents in the National Archives of Namibia. These files enabled me to follow the history of German women's settlement up to World War II. Besides the documents preserved in archives, I consulted contemporary colonialist literature and journals, especially those from the German Colonial Society and its Women's League. These sources published in Germany gave me valuable insights into their propaganda and popular influence. South West African newspapers from the late 1890s to the 1940s offer rich information on German settler society and politics, including reports of local gossip, rumors, and violent incidents. Because the sources for the years after Germany lost the colony in 1919 through World War II are less plentiful, however, I rely for this period heavily on Women's League's and Reichs Kolonial-Bund (Reich Colonial League) publications, which together detail sponsored German women's settlement. In addition, the mandate administration in South West Africa seized documents from suspected Nazi organizations, including the Women's League, in the 1930s. These archival records detail how Nazi sympathizers within the German women's colonial movement corresponded with and mentored German settler women, sponsoring some independent and sexually emancipated women, as well as ardent Nazis, to South West Africa. These documents directly implicate the German women's colonialist movement in the spread of Nazi propaganda to German settlers, especially youths.<sup>18</sup>

The book proceeds chronologically, beginning with part I, which examines the controversy about German women's settlement in South West Africa, the welfare of female settlers, and the explosion of the Herero and Nama Wars. In chapter 1, I outline the debate surrounding the first, fanatical proposal to organize women's colonization in South West Africa and the myriad popular criticisms and anxieties that shaped the early trials of the female colonization program between 1896 and 1900. Chapter 2 details the failures and missteps that plagued the early attempts at German women's settlement in South West Africa. Chapter 3 situates German women's sponsored colonization within the context of the rapid settlement of the frontier in South West Africa from 1898 through the Herero and Nama Wars, from 1904 to 1907.

In part II, chapters 4 through 6, I emphasize the solidification of the white settler community as revealed in gossip and moral panics in the final years of German colonial rule, from 1907 through 1914. All three chapters highlight the expansion of white settlement, intensification of colonial state control over race and reproduction, and tensions among white women employers, German domestic servants (hereafter "maids"), and black and biracial African servants. Chapter 4 outlines the

formation of the Women's League and the expansion of the female colonization program, along with the German South West African colonial administrations' efforts to stem interracial unions in the wake of the colonial wars. Chapters 5 and 6 examine rumors and accusations of poisoning and rape made after 1910 against African servants in German settler homes in light of the significant social changes and tensions within the white community.

Finally, part III explores the tumultuous period from World War I to the Weimar and Nazi eras. Chapter 7 traces the colonialist work of the Women's League in Germany and South West African female colonists during World War I. Chapter 8 details the opportunities and crises facing the German colonialist movement in a postcolonial era, as the Women's League resumed sponsored German women's settlement in Africa. Chapter 9 follows the organization's embrace of Nazism and gradual absorption into the Nazi state within the umbrella Reich Colonial League. A brief concluding chapter gauges the historical significance of sponsored settlement, as well as Nazi women's colonial movement during World War II. In what follows, I offer an encapsulated history of the overseas empire, the German colonial movement, and German settlement and racial policies in South West Africa at the turn of the twentieth century as background for general readers.

## Background on the German Colonial Empire

The history of Germany's late-acquired, comparatively small, and widely dispersed network of overseas colonies has seemed peripheral to scholars of the much larger and longer-lived European empires, particularly those of Great Britain and France. Elder Prussian conservative chancellor Otto von Bismarck led the drive to unify the German nation from 1864 to 1871; he had hoped to expand the new but late-formed German nation's global power. As German chancellor, he asserted German control over territory in Africa between 1884 and 1885, though some of his motives are unclear. He indicated economic interest in obtaining raw materials and overseas markets, but perhaps also sought to distract workers from the growing socialist movement through appeals to popular colonialist fervor. He soon lost interest, remarking to one German colonialist, "Your map of Africa is very fine, but my map of Africa is here in Europe." He made clear his diplomatic pursuit of European-centered alliances was a greater strategic priority than acquiring colonies.<sup>19</sup>

Although this and other historical studies use the term "colony," the official German term in use, *Schutzgebiet* more correctly translates as protectorate because at first the lands were German zones of trade influence with military protection rather than subject to direct rule. After 1899 Germany claimed concessions in Asia, including several small Pacific islands: northeastern New Guinea, part of Samoa, the Bismarcks, Marshalls, Carolines, and Marianas (excepting Guam). The German navy even took a Chinese concession in Jiaozuo in the Shandong Peninsula

of China (which the Germans called *Kiautschou*). Imperial Germany established formal control over lands without considering how to control or administer these claims or its much larger territories in Africa: Cameroon, East Africa (roughly covering the area of present-day Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi), Togo, and South West Africa (now Namibia). Long after Germany acquired colonies, ordinary Germans barely noticed these far-flung possessions.<sup>20</sup>

When Chancellor Otto von Bismarck first established the protectorate in South West Africa in 1884, the German Reich recognized trader Adolph Lüderitz's colonial company, the *Deutsche Kolonial-Gesellschaft für Süd-West Afrika* (German Colonial Company for South West Africa), as the primary agent of colonial development. Bismarck sought to shift the costs of administering and defending colonial enterprises onto official colonial trading, real estate, and mining companies and similar territorial enterprises, following somewhat the model of the British East India Company. However, the policy of relying on small, private companies to administer, defend, and develop colonial lands yielded poor results. Lüderitz soon went bankrupt, forcing the German government to intervene. The German Empire awarded a handful of land concessions and mineral rights from the late 1880s and well into the 1890s to further speculative companies that hoped to discover diamonds, gold, or other valuable resources. These companies' tax payments to the German state, however, never offset the expenses of colonial administration and defense. Although these companies set high prices on land, hoping to spur land speculation, they pursued almost no active economic development through 1896.<sup>21</sup>

From the 1830s missionaries had been active in the regions Germans claimed as their protectorate in 1884. The most prominent, the Lutheran Rhenish Missionary Society, headquartered in Barmen, Germany, established its first outpost in the future colony; by 1890 it had expanded to include eighteen mission stations. The Rhenish missionaries negotiated intertribal relations and advised the German administration in its policies with native Africans. White settlers in the colony tended to view missionaries with suspicion, since they advocated the interests of the indigenous population, however minimally. Long before the Germans' protectorate, many local Africans were familiar with Western languages, customs, and religions through contact with *Afrikaner* and British traders. The Herero were a Bantu-speaking population who had migrated into southern Africa, while their rivals, the Nama, had local origins. A dominant subgroup, the *Witbooi Nama*, spoke *Oorlam*, a fusion of *Khoekhoe* and Dutch. Both the Nama and Herero were nomadic, with large cattle herds, which they exported through the British port at *Walvis Bay* and southwards across the Orange River into *Cape Colony*. Besides cattle, local Africans also traded with Europeans in ostrich feathers, ivory, and a small amount of copper in return for modern rifles, textiles, and other goods. Hostilities between the two dominant ethnic groups were pervasive and often played out in the area around *Windhoek*, where the missions provided material aid to the Herero, and early missionaries married Herero women. By contrast, *Ovambo*

in the colony's Northern territory were oriented toward Portuguese Angola and had little contact with German colonial occupiers. Several other predominantly nomadic ethnic groups displaced by the Nama and Herero over the past century also populated the territory such as the Khoekhoen and !Kung populations who traditionally foraged and hunted. They and the Damara, another traditionally nomadic and pastoralist Khoekhoe group who were clients of the Herero, also took part in colonial politics and conflicts.<sup>22</sup>

A small garrison of German protectorate forces (*Schutztruppe*) comprised the sole German authority in the early years of the territory, under the successive commands of two imperial commissioners: Dr. Heinrich Göring from 1885 to 1890, and Curt von François from 1890 to 1894. Ongoing hostilities between the Nama and Herero and periodic Nama guerilla attacks against German occupying forces and settlements left the territory too unstable for colonial trade or other enterprises to flourish. In 1890, as German relations with the Nama worsened, fighting increased. The commander of the German Protectorate Forces, François requested reinforcements, which grew from 21 to 216. In 1893 the German colonial administration in Berlin sent further troops and ordered him to suppress the Witbooi, following signals they might unite with the Herero to defeat the Germans. François led a small detachment of German soldiers against the main Witbooi compound in Hornkranz, massacring about one hundred, mainly women and children. However, the Witbooi leader, Hendrick Witbooi, escaped with most of his soldiers and continued to harry Windhoek in small skirmishes.<sup>23</sup>

Back in Berlin, Bismarck's successor, Chancellor Leo von Caprivi, regarded the deteriorating security of the colony with alarm and chafed at the increasing expense of the conflict. Suspecting that François's aggressive actions might provoke a wider war with the African population, in late 1893 Caprivi dispatched Major Theodor Leutwein to review the situation and empowered him to relieve François. As the new territorial commissioner, Leutwein arrived with further reinforcements and pursued hostilities until Witbooi sued for peace. In September 1894 Witbooi recognized German sovereignty, became its military ally, and resettled southward from Windhoek to Gibeon. In 1895 Leutwein even enlisted the Witbooi fighters as a supplement to the Protectorate Forces. The period of calm that followed was by no means the end of African resistance against the Germans, but Leutwein used the peaceful interval to consolidate German control.<sup>24</sup>

Governor Leutwein's brief suppression of the African population encouraged more white settlers to move into South West Africa—chiefly arriving from Cape Colony including German transplants, Afrikaners, and British. The German Colonial Society had been instrumental in promoting additional settlement to date, though their numbers still remained below five hundred in 1891, when the society sent an agent to investigate possible sites for a farming community. In 1892 the organization obtained a land concession from the German Reich for a settlement syndicate, which in 1896 became a full-fledged colonial company, Siedlungsge-

sellschaft für Deutsch-Südwest Afrika (Settlement Company for German South West Africa). By 1895 the syndicate had arranged a charter with the Woermann Shipping Line to establish a profitable regular steamship service from Hamburg to ports in Swakopmund and Lüderitzbucht, permitting more regular immigration from Germany. The Colonial Society's sponsored female settlers benefitted from the organization's negotiated fare reduction with the Settlement Company. The society's discounted passage to South West Africa serves as one of many examples of how close ties with the German Imperial government benefitted the society, and vice versa.<sup>25</sup>

### Cooperation between the Colonial Society and German State

Faced with outright opposition to the colonies from the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, or SPD (German Social Democratic Party) and massive indifference overall, the Wilhelmine state might have been forced to concede its overseas territories if not for the cooperation of these German colonial enthusiasts in the government and in the Colonial Society. These organizations propagandized overseas power (*Weltmacht*) among middle-class nationalists in support of a range of causes. Some of these grassroots supporters of empire no doubt emerged from the avid readers of colonial adventure tales. German colonial supporters even argued that South West Africa had the potential to attract settlers from Germany who would otherwise emigrate to rival foreign lands such as the United States. After 1895 several revitalized Wilhelmine nationalist associations expanded their mass nationalist agitation in Germany. Of these, the German Colonial Society stood as a less notable member when compared to the more radical Alldeutscher Verband (Pan German Society) and the more popular Flottenverein (Navy League). The populist nationalist movement gradually revived and refashioned German popular, romantic imperialism through ambitious schemes aimed at the development of South West Africa. The mass organizations lobbying for Germany to become a naval power amplified the clamor for colonies. In 1897 they succeeded, thereby inciting a devastating arms race with Great Britain.<sup>26</sup>

Kaiser Wilhelm II's campaign to increase Germany's international prestige through a more aggressive foreign policy benefited from the populist fervor. In 1894, after the aged prince Hohenlohe-Langenburg had stepped down from the presidency of the Colonial Society, his relative, elder statesman Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst, became chancellor. Dynamic foreign minister Bernhard von Bülow stood in line to succeed him as chancellor in 1900. Despite this support in high places and considerable enthusiasm from nationalists, including from the National Liberal Party that favored overseas economic development, the SPD objected to imperialism as further capitalist expansion, while left liberals decried the expense and inefficiency of colonial administration and wars. Their opposition

intensified from 1904 to 1907 during the Herero and Nama Wars in South West Africa as well as the 1905 to 1907 Maji Maji rebellion in German East Africa, although these wars spurred popular patriotic campaigns among the masses. The Colonial Society's middle-class rank-and-file membership set out to recruit a mass following for overseas expansion, but few workers could afford their dues.<sup>27</sup>

The position of colonial director, which after 1907 became the independent office of the colonial minister, changed hands nine times before World War I. The German Colonial Society remained ultranationalist, and yet it hesitated to criticize the German state openly for its weakness. Herzog Johann Albert zu Mecklenburg Schwerin, who led the society from 1895 to 1920, energetically promoted German imperialism. Mecklenburg, a hereditary aristocrat who ruled over an elite executive board, dominated the Colonial Society's agenda and often overrode suggestions from the rank and file. And yet, as the head of the Colonial Society and the director of a private German charity fund for colonial welfare, he exercised more influence than the colonial directorship. As the book also makes clear, Mecklenburg did not originally welcome the proposal to send women to South West Africa, though he wanted to prevent intermarriages between German men and African women.<sup>28</sup>

## The Racial Order in South West Africa at the Turn of the Century

Historians often treat the racial policies in South West Africa uniformly from the 1890s until 1915, but I emphasize how racial thinking in the colony evolved over time. By the late 1890s, many Germans in the homeland believed that the mixing of races was undesirable, and anthropologists and racial scientists had begun to argue that biracial offspring inherited the negative genetic traits of both races. Because German administrators in South West Africa treated Rehoboth Basters as part of the native, subaltern population, they also opposed intermarriages with German men because these unions contradicted their subordinate status and potentially granted German citizenship to non-whites. Local German colonial law defined all individuals with African forebears as "native," and similarly ignored many Rehoboth Basters' claims to Dutch and British citizenship, despite internationally recognized treaties recognizing their claims.<sup>29</sup>

In South West Africa, more than in other German colonies, officials discouraged racial mixing by developing and enforcing a set of ad hoc legal policies, notably the interracial marriage ban of 1905, which retroactively invalidated all existing interracial unions as well as forbidding new ones. Whenever possible German administrators denied access to marriage for interracial couples to prevent conferring citizenship to individuals with African heritage. Even though some biracial persons circulated socially in South West Africa as "white" and "respectable," they counted as "native" under German law, even if they claimed Dutch or British legal protection.<sup>30</sup>

Some German administrators, such as Keetmanshoop district officer (*Bezirk-samtmann*) Dr. Angelo Golinelli, continued to voice the long-established toleration for interracial marriage in the region. Golinelli, an old-timer in southern Africa who later became the Colonial Ministry's top advisor on South West Africa, insisted that there was no shortage of white or almost-white women in South West Africa and that male colonists did not want or need German women as servants or as wives because local brides of color were more suitable, less demanding of comforts, and more experienced with local languages, households, and agricultural conditions. German colonial administrators also continued to treat the Rehoboth Basters as reliable allies, despite misgivings over their supposedly unstable racial backgrounds.<sup>31</sup>

The contradictions between Rehoboth Basters' legal and social position in South West Africa became more controversial with every passing year. German officials worried as growing numbers of Rehoboth Baster brides married male colonists. Despite officials' efforts to prevent intermarriages, however, some German and other European men who wanted to marry women of color successfully won redress in the colony's appeals court in Windhoek. Despite pressure to relent, Leutwein steadfastly ordered colonial district administrators to continue to deny registration of interracial unions.<sup>32</sup>

Hoping to avoid the looming legal confrontation, Leutwein began to promote the recruitment of German women settlers. A pool of white brides for unmarried German men might accomplish what the colonial legalists could not. However, not everyone agreed that these German women would be superior wives to local women. Many historians point to the controversial impact of colonialist efforts to restrict German settler men's sexual autonomy, especially within the hypermasculine white colonial culture of South West Africa. They note that the debates over racial mixing also influenced German society's conception of race. Grosse in particular argues that the debate demonstrates how, in Germany, eugenic principles of racial purity did not supersede white men's fundamental sexual autonomy.<sup>33</sup> In South West Africa, I contend that the bans cannot be understood in isolation from efforts at German women's settlement. As the book explains, the more white families who settled in the territory, the more that community gossip and scandal impinged on German settler men's sexual prerogatives. Placing these bans in a larger context demonstrates they are only one aspect of the larger and more significant reordering of class, ethnicity, gender, nationalism, and race in South West Africa that followed from the gradual consolidation of white settlement in the territory.

This introduction has outlined many crucial events and dilemmas within the German colonialists' radical racial reproductive policies in South West Africa. Among many themes that stand out in the work is the radicalism of the German colonialist movement, which worked in tandem with the German state over decades to enact controversial pronatalist policies in the territory through the settlement of white women as prospective brides, while enabling the systematic genocide against

the local African population. Throughout the early twentieth century German women willingly supported male colonialists' and state officials' racially motivated reproductive policies in South West Africa, even when these diverted them from their own goals and interests. I allege that, although organized German women colonialist women masqueraded as apolitical, charitable clubwomen, they often aided and abetted these Weimar and Nazi state population policies in South West Africa through unacknowledged state funding for Germans in the territory. This subterfuge was necessary because South African authorities would not have permitted German state-subsidized settlement and political agitation in the mandate. Finally, German settler women were complicit in enabling and supporting the ongoing structural violence against Africans that culminated in the apartheid rule in South West Africa.

In tracing the long history of white women's sponsored settlement in South West Africa, the book expands on the existing histories of German colonialist women's movement. Previous works fully demonstrate the assertiveness of German women as colonialist leaders, particularly in advancing and expanding women's colonial and nationalist roles in the homeland. However, my research elaborates on how German colonial officials sought to dictate women's settlement policies in South West Africa in pursuit of radical racial and population policies, constricting the autonomy of the German colonialist women's movement. Within these constraints, however, the Women's League forged powerful diasporic ties with German settler women in Africa that expanded the global reach of the German radical nationalists and Nazi movements. Furthermore, in detailing German women's colonialist movement's complicity in German state's intrusions into overseas German settler households, this book broadens and complicates our understanding of German colonialist women.<sup>34</sup>

## Notes

1. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's. Oscar Hintrager, "Zur Rassenfrage in den Kolonien," *Afrika-Nachrichten* 22, no. 2 (Feb. 1941): 19. Clipping of the article found in the author's papers housed in the Bundesarchiv, Koblenz. The German Federal Archives guide for Colonial history offers an overview the biography of Hintrager (1870–1960), the author of the ban, available online at [https://archivfuehrer-kolonialzeit.de/index.php/hintrager-oskar-bestand?sf\\_culture=en](https://archivfuehrer-kolonialzeit.de/index.php/hintrager-oskar-bestand?sf_culture=en) (accessed Jan. 2022). See note 2 on the pejorative term, *Bastard*.
2. Though the name Baster has demeaning origins, modern Basters have reappropriated it as a sign of ethnic pride, Rudolph Britz, Hartmut Lang, Cornelia Limpricht, *A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990*. (Windhoek: Klaus Hess Publishers, 1999), 12. Timothy Deegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 21, 24, and 31–32 depicts how the Griqualand Bastards of the Cape Colony moved northward from the Central Cape around 1770 to the Trans-Orange to escape conscripted military service. There, they became wealthy and influential trade intermediaries between whites and Nama and formed their own state institutions. Some of their territory on the Western frontier was later annexed by the British, while others became

- subjects of the newly-formed colony of Southwest Africa in 1884. Helmut Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 6 estimates their population at the turn of the century at between 3,000 and 4,000. The current population is around 35,000 according to Jarmila Brezinová Švihranová, “Germans and Rehoboth Bastards in the German Southwest Africa” *Studia Historica Gedanensia* 8 (2017), 42–58 (p. 46). The term means “cross-bred” in Afrikaans but also “illegitimate.” German commentators often misapplied their name as *Bastard* to underline the illegitimacy of all biracial individuals in Southwest Africa, as I retain by italicizing the term in source quotations. Please note that throughout the work I refer to the indigenous population of the colony interchangeably as Africa, black, and native.
3. The first to draw this connection between white women’s settlement and racial policies overtly was Richard V. Pierard, “The Transportation of White Women to German South West Africa, 1898–1914,” *Race* 12 (1971): 317–22. Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), esp. chaps. 3 and 4, conceives of distinct male and female debates over race mixing and the so-called colonial woman question in Wilhelmine Germany, which women engaged in as a means of expanding their colonialist activism. Likewise, Ute Planert, *Antifeminismus im Kaiserreich. Diskurs, soziale Formation und politische Mentalität* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998), 232–33 cited the colonization program’s role as part of the growing antifeminism and the politicization of German women’s reproduction in the Wilhelmine era. By contrast Pascal Grosse, *Kolonialismus, Eugenik und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland, 1850–1918* (Frankfurt and New York: Campus, 2000), suggests the failure of female emigration and legal hindrances to resolve the race mixing in the colonies led the eugenic movement in Germany to a new and more intense discourse on the meaning of masculine sexuality in preserving the reproduction of the German nation within its ethnic boundaries.
 

Birthe Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten: Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Cologne: Bohlau Verlag, 2003) explores the controversy over law and race in Germany and its colonies. Other key works include Fatima El-Tayeb, *Schwarze Deutsche: Der Diskurs um “Rasse” und nationale Identität 1890–1933* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2001); Cornelia Essner, “Wo Rauch ist, da ist auch Feuer: Zu den Ansätzen eines Rassenrechts für die deutschen Kolonien,” in *Rassendiskriminierung, Kolonialpolitik und ethnisch-nationale Identität* (Münster: LIT, 1992): 145–60; Cornelia Essner, “Zwischen Vernunft und Gefühl. Die Reichstagsdebatten von 1912 um koloniale ‘Rassenmischehe’ und ‘Sexualität,’” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 45, no. 6 (1997): 503–19. 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 Ann Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 263–83, offers an overview of citizenship policies in South West Africa, allowing comparison with Ann L. Stoler’s chapter in *Tensions of Empire* on the policies in the French and Dutch colonies, “Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Southeast Asia,” 198–237.
  4. Many recent studies have explored related questions about German colonialism, radical nationalism, gender, and race, including Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 39–49 on colonialist influences on German racial attitudes; Claire Venghiattis, “Mobilizing for Nation and Empire: A History of the German Women’s Colonial Organization, 1896–1936” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2005) and Wildenthal, *German Women* provide overviews of the German women’s colonial movement and the Women’s League, and their engagements with race and national identity. Karin Boge-Smidt, “Germania führt die deutsche Frau nach Südwest: Auswanderung, Leben und soziale Konflikte deutscher Frauen in der ehemaligen Kolonie Deutsch-Südwestafrika, 1884–1920” (PhD diss., University of Magdeburg, 1995) reviews the history of German women and racial policies in South West Africa through 1914. A classic study of German colonial publications, Martha Mamozai,

- Herrenmenschen: Frauen im deutschen Kolonialismus* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982) examines the relationship between German and black women in the colonies; Nancy R. Reagin, *Sweeping the German Nation: Domesticity and National Identity in Germany, 1870–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) chapter 2 discusses domesticity as well reproduction as essential to German ethnic and racial identity in the colonies.
5. This is the first book to focus on the German women's colonial settlement initiatives. Some of the best known accounts of German women's colonization and its importance in Germany are found in Roger Chickering, "Casting Their Gaze More Broadly: Women's Patriotic Activism in Imperial Germany," *Past and Present* 118 (Feb. 1988): 156–85; Anette Dietrich, *Weißer Weiblichkeit: Konstruktionen von "Rasse" und Geschlecht in deutschen Kolonialismus* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2007); Venghiattis, "Mobilizing"; Katharina Walgenbach, "Die weiße Frau als Trägerin deutscher Kultur": *Koloniale Diskurse über Geschlecht, "Rasse" und Klasse im Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2005); Lora Wildenthal, "Colonizers and Citizens: Bourgeois Women and the Woman Question in the German Colonial Movement, 1886–1914" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1994); Wildenthal, *German Women*; Wildenthal "She Is the Victor: Bourgeois Women, Nationalist Identities and the Ideal of the Independent Woman Farmer in German South West Africa," in *Society, Culture and the State in Germany, 1870–1930*, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 371–95. See also my dissertation for detailed statistical and archival material about the prewar female settlement in South West Africa: Krista E. O'Donnell, "The Colonial Woman Question: Gender, National Identity and Empire in the German Colonial Society Female Emigration Program, 1898–1914" (PhD diss., Binghamton University, 1996). See table 2 in the appendix for specifics on this group, which was nearly 2,200 by 1914 and more than 461 after 1926. Tallies for South West Africa do not include a much smaller number of German women subsidized as colonizers to various overseas territories from China and the Pacific to Cameroon, Togo, and East Africa, among other German imperial territories that fall outside the scope of this work. Livia Loosen, *Deutsche Frauen in den Südsee-Kolonien des Kaiserreichs: Alltag und Beziehungen zur indigenen Bevölkerung, 1884–1919* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2014) offers a useful overview of German women in the Pacific Islands. On the British and French colonial settlement movements, see Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000); and my recent article: Krista E. O'Donnell, "French and German Women's Colonial Settlement Movements, 1896–1904," *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 40, no. 1 (2014): 92–110.
  6. On the Colonial Society, see Richard V. Pierard, "The German Colonial Society, 1882–1914," (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1964). More recently, John Philip Short, *Magic Lantern Empire: Reflections on Colonialism and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012) explores the popular colonial movement in the Wilhelmine era. On the Colonial Society's position vis-à-vis other nationalist organization in general, see especially the classic works of Roger Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German. A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League* (London and Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984); and Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980). On maternalism in moderate, middle-class, German feminism, see Ann Taylor Allen *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe, 1890–1970* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 34; and Wildenthal, *German Women*, 145.
  7. The Colonial Society also imposed this age limit in 1914. Venghiattis, "Mobilizing," chap. 7; Britta Schilling, "'Deutsche Frauen! Euch und Eure Kinder geht es an!': Deutsche Frauen als Aktivistinnen für die koloniale Idee," in *Frauen in den Deutschen Kolonien* ed. Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2009), 70–80, discuss the Weimar state-funded German women's settlement program.

Excellent works on settler violence underplay German women's participation and influence: Martin Eberhardt, *Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und Apartheid: Die deutsche Bevölkerungsgruppe Südwestafrikas, 1915–1965* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007) suggests long continuities

- as Germans in the territory contributed to the rise of National Socialism and apartheid there. Most influential of works on the extensive violence of the territory have been: Jürgen Zimmerer, *Deutsche Herrschaft über Afrikaner: Staatlicher Machtanspruch und Wirklichkeit im kolonialen Namibia* (Hamburg: LIT, 2001); and Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller, eds., *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Der Kolonialkrieg (1904–1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2003) provide a detailed account of officials' and colonists' violence. A popular history David Olusoga and Casper Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011) has spread awareness of linkages between the German colonies and National Socialism. The many works of Robert J. Gordon, especially *The Bushman Myth. The Making of a Namibian Underclass* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992) document male German settlers' pattern of genocidal violence against Africans, highlighting atrocities against Khoekhoen and !Kung.. The excellent Gesine Krüger, *Kriegsbewältigung und Geschichtsbewußtsein. Realität, Deutung und Verarbeitung des deutschen Kolonialkriegs in Namibia 1904 bis 1907* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999); and Gesine Krüger, "Bestien und Opfer: Frauen im Kolonialkrieg," in Zimmerer and Zeller, *Völkermord*, 142–59, offer a detailed account of Herero women, and compare their roles to the roles of German women in the conflict.
8. Patrick Wolf, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Studies* 8, no. 4 (Dec. 2006): 387–209; Scott Lauria Morgensen, "Theorising Gender, Sexuality and Settler Colonialism: An Introduction," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (2012): 2–22; Penelope Edmonds and Jane Carey, "Australian Settler Colonialism over the Long Nineteenth Century," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. Edward Cavenaugh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 371–89. Eva Bischoff, "Heimischwerden Deutscher Art und Sitte: Power, Gender, and Diaspora in the Colonial Contest," *Itinerario* 37, no. 1 (2013): 43–58 connects German biopolitics through the settlement of German women in the South West African case to the German diasporic movement as a whole, to critique Veracini's formulation of a triad of colonial power in British settler colonies, between metropole, settlers, and indigenous populations, and to argue for the colonial movement's global and transnational ideological impact.
  9. George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) attributes colonial violence to German administrators' ethnographic understandings of indigenous populations. Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) treats the German forces' atrocities in the 1904 native wars as the result of extremist German military culture rather than as colonialism or virulent German racism.
 

A scholar who frames the German violence in South West Africa as a settler genocide is Elisa von Joeden-Forgey. Her "Women and the Herero Genocide," in *Women and Genocide: Survivors, Victims, Perpetrators*, ed. Elissa Bémporad and Joyce W. Warren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018), 36–57 argues that at the point of General Lothar von Trotha's extermination order in 1904 against the Herero, German military policies did not distinguish between the killing of men and women, but after the kaiser rescinded the extermination order, the genocide reverted to a "gender-selective type, in which men and boys of battle age are killed outright, and women and children subjected to sexualized violence and genocide by attrition" (51–52).
  10. The debate over the comparative violence between the colony and other empires already began during the era in question, from the Blue Book on the subject, British Foreign Office, *Report on the Natives of Southwest-Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1918). This work served as part of a British and South African propaganda campaign to establish both German colonists and officials as brutal and unfit colonial overlords and to deny Germany the restoration of the territory after World War I. In the wake of the Holocaust, Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt

- Brace Jovanovich, 1973) posited that the imperialist character established links between the racist history of European colonialism and the evolution of totalitarianism. Her arguments have weighed heavily on the historiography of South West Africa, as for example in Helmut Bley, *South-West Africa*, 282 and more recently in Pascal Grosse, “What Does German Colonialism Have to Do with National Socialism? A Conceptual Framework,” in *Germany’s Colonial Pasts*, ed. Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz, and Lora Wildenthal (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 115–34. A number of further works investigate the connections between colonialism and Nazism, such as Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (New York: Cambridge, 2011) and various essays in Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama, *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011). Birthe Kundrus critiques approaches approaching Nazi expansionism in the East as a form of imperialism, “Colonialism, Imperialism, National Socialism: How Imperial Was the Third Reich?” in *German Colonialism in a Global Age*, ed. Bradley Naranch and Geoff Eley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). The review article, Uta Poiger, “Imperialism and Empire in Twentieth-Century Germany,” *History and Memory* 17, no. 1–2 (2005): 117–43, challenges historians to think more flexibly, “If imperialism has any potential as a broad paradigm in German history, it needs to encompass periods of formal as well as informal German empires.” (118).
11. Grosse, *Kolonialismus, Eugenik*, 168–76, 186–90, on Philaethes Kuhn and Eugen Fischer. Kuhn’s tract, “Die Zukunft unserer Rasse,” *Öffentliche Gesundheitspflege* 6 (1921): 414–15, a transcript of his speech delivered at the meeting of the Deutschen Vereins des öffentliche Gesundheitspflege (German Association for Public Health Care) in Nüremburg, Sept. 1921 calls for the spread of colonial pronatalist policies to Germany; Kuhn details the significance of German women’s colonial settlement in South West Africa as a successful case study of eugenics in “Eheforderung und Rassenhygiene in den Kolonien,” *Öffentliche Gesundheitspflege* 4 (1919): 152–57. Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire*, 191–92, acknowledges the colonial influence on German eugenics but argues that Nazi race policies did not evolve from these precedents alone.
  12. Wildenthal, “Race, Gender, and Citizenship”; Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 223–50; Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Ann L. Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995) suggest that transgressing bourgeois morality in colonial communities spurred racial conflict and violence, but racialized and sexualized conflicts in South West Africa followed local dynamics. On the German memetic policies of South Africa, see both Ulrike Linder, “German Colonialism and the British Neighbor in Afrika before 1914: Self-Definitions, Lines of Demarcation and Cooperation,” in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar German*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011): 254–72; and Birthe Kundrus, “German Colonialisms: Some Reflections on Reassessments, Specificities, and Constellations,” 36, in Langbehn and Salama, *German Colonialism*.
  13. Definition from Jörg Bergmann, *Discreet Indiscretions: The Social Organization of Gossip* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1994), 49. Max Gluckman, “Papers in Honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Gossip and Scandal,” *Current Anthropology* 4, no. 3 (1963): 307–16 depicts how gossip escalates to scandal when it attempts to lower the social position of an individual in the eyes of the community (p. 12).
  14. Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2000), 59, argues somewhat differently that gossip and rumor are somewhat overlapping terms, but she defines “rumor” as “events analyzed and commented upon” (58). Most importantly, however, she indicates an escalation and broadening that seems to build rumors from gossip: “Rumors, more than gossip, move between ideas about the personal and the political, the local and the national.” (62). Regarding white settler fan-

- tasies and anxieties, Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 11, and 55; and on the historical impact of gossip, Kathleen A. Feeley and Jennifer Frost, "Introduction," in *When Private Talk Goes Public: Gossip in American History*, ed. Kathleen A. Feeley and Jennifer Frost, 10–12 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
15. John K. Noyes, "Geschlechter, Mobilität und der Kulturtransfer: Lene Hasses Roman *Raggy's Fahrt nach Südwest*" in *Phantasiereiche: zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus*, ed. Berthe Kundrus (Frankfurt: Campus, 2003), 220–39. Jill Suzanne Smith, "A Female Old Shatterhand? Colonial Heroes and Heroines in Lydia Höpker's Tales of South West Africa," *Women in German Yearbook* 19, no. 1 (2003): 141–58, remarks on gossip's role in exerting settler community social discipline against white women. Scholars of colonial racial violence in German South West Africa from Helmut Bley onward have underscored the causative role of white paranoia in eruptions of conflict. In the postwar era, Robert Gordon and fellow contributors remark on this theme repeatedly in *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility & Containment 1915–46*, ed. Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Marion Wallace, and Wolfram Hartmann (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1998); Mattia Fumani explores the treatment of a white woman for paranoia in "A German Whore and No Money at That: Insanity and the Moral and Political Economies of German South West Africa," *Cultural Med Psychiatry* 44, no. 3 (2020): 382–403. See also my article: Krista O'Donnell, "Poisonous Women: Sexual Danger, Illicit Violence, and Domestic Work in German Southern Africa, 1904–1915," *Journal of Women's History*, 11, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 32–54; and K. Molly O'Donnell, "The Public Danger of Rumor-Mongering: News in German Colonial South West Africa during the First World War," *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture*, 19: 69–89.
  16. Former captain and company commander in South West Africa, Oberst a. D. Willeke, "Am Okavango," quoted in Willy Bolsinger und Hans Rauschnabel, eds. *Jambo wata! Das Kolonialbuch der Deutschen* (Stuttgart: Verlag Christoph Steffen, 1926), 139, defining the term "African story." Jeremy Krikler, "Social Neurosis and Hysterical Pre-Cognition in South Africa: A Case-Study and Reflections," *Journal of Social History* 28, no. 3 (Spring 1995): 491–520 argues that Afrikaners' racial trauma of the Boer War of 1899–1902 gave rise to a spate of paranoid rumors of African insurrections in 1904; Zimmerer, *Deutsche Herrschaft*, 161–67 examines "hysterical" settler rumors in Gibeon of a Berseba Nama insurrection in 1909.
  17. On the mandate in the 1920s and 1930s, see Marcia Wallace with John Kinahan, *A History of Namibia, From the Beginning to 1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 213–36. Key studies of the intersections of German race, class, ethnicity, gender, and national identities within the colonial movement include Dietrich, *Weißer Weiblichkeiten* and Marcia Klotz, "Memoirs from a German Colony: What Do White Women Want?" in *Eroticism and Containment: Notes from the Floodplain*, ed. Carol Siegel and Ann Kibbey (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 154–87. Marcia Klotz, "Memoirs from a German Colony," describes contemporary German women authors' individual relations to gender, race, and colonial violence. They draw from broader research on white women as signifiers of race, ethnicity, and nationalism. Specific to German colonialism, see Katharina Walgenbach, "Die weiße Frau als Trägerin deutscher Kultur: Koloniale Diskurse über Geschlecht, 'Rasse' und Klasse im Kaiserreich" (Frankfurt: Campus, 2005). Walgenbach, "Die weiße Frau," 138–40, describes German women in the colonialist movement's colonial maternalism to explore middle-class German women's empowerment through colonialism and racism. Dietrich, *Weißer Weiblichkeiten*, 378–80, discusses the significance of colonialist German women for the construction of German notions of white racial purity and power and the growing influence of racially focused reproduction. Dietrich and many others have noted the influence of colonialism within the German campaign against French occupation troops' alleged rapes of German women in the Rhineland after World War I, in which Germans worked through the traumas and humiliation of defeat (Dietrich, *Weißer Weiblichkeiten*, 363). Similarly, Iris Wigger, *The "Black Horror" on the Rhine: Intersections of Race, Nation, Gender and Class in 1920s Ger-*

- many (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 30–32 and 325–30, highlights the international power of the campaign for popularizing of racism, as well as its impact in solidifying German ethnic and national unity across class lines.
18. National Archives of Namibia (NAN), A.221 90, Private Accessions: Confiscated Documents of the Frauenbund der Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft, 1934–39.
  19. Lynn Abrams, *Bismarck and the German Empire, 1871–1918*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 4, 20–22. Quotation, 21.
  20. Woodruff Smith's classic work *The German Colonial Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978) provides an excellent general history of German colonialism; see esp. 108–15.
  21. Smith, *German Colonial Empire*, 55–56, 159.
  22. Bley, *South-West Africa*, xvxi–xxii; Wildenthal, *German Women*, 86–87; Alan Barnard, *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa: A Comparative Ethnography of the Khoisan Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4–12; Steinmetz, *Devil's Handwriting*, 7. J.H. Esterhuysen, *South West Africa, 1880–1894* (Capetown: C. Struik, 1968). Readers can also refer to excellent general backgrounds in Bley, *South-West Africa* and Smith, *German Colonial Empire*. For relations between Africans in the territory, many of these earlier works depend on the contested writings and opinions of missionary and scholar H. Vedder's *South West Africa in Early Times* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938). I refer to Namibia's traditional foraging populations of Khoekhoen and !Kung, in preference to the ethnographic terms Khoi San or Bushmen.
  23. Steinmetz, *Devil's Handwriting*, 151; Wilifried Westphal, *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonien* (Munich: C. Bertelsmann, 1984), 157–68; Udo Kaulich, *Die Geschichte der ehemaligen Kolonie Deutsch-Südwestafrika, (1884–1914)* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2003), 86–88. Dr. Heinrich Göring was the father of notorious Reichsmarshall Hermann Göring.
  24. Westphal, *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonien*, 157–68; and Bley, *South-West Africa*, 4, list biographical particulars for Leutwein (1849–1921), who was commissioner for South West Africa after 1894 and appointed as governor in 1898, as the colony's administration was transformed from its military standing to a civil government. Refer to his autobiography for more details: Theodor Leutwein, *Elf Jahre als Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler, 1906).
  25. Pierard, "German Colonial Society," 154–57. The white population is detailed in the appendix, table A.1.
  26. Smith, *German Colonial Empire*, 40–47; Daniel Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad: Cultural Policies and Identity in Namibia* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002), 9–17.
  27. Pierard, "German Colonial Society," 106, 161–62.
  28. Smith, *German Colonial Empire*, 40–47. Duke Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg Schwerin (1857–1920) was a younger son of the grand duke of Mecklenburg. President of the Colonial Society from 1895–1920, the duke was well-traveled and fiercely nationalistic. His activities were not restricted to the Colonial Society, and he eventually became an avid member of both the Pan Germans and the Navy League. He served in the German military, rising to the rank of cavalry general before his retirement. He also held several prominent political roles, twice serving as regent of Brunswick; he achieved perhaps his greatest notoriety as the honorary head of the infamous radical nationalist party, the Deutsche Vaterlandspartei (German Fatherland Party). Pierard, "German Colonial Society," 165–67, outlines his background.
  29. Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 219–23, 234–50.
  30. Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 244, on the ban's purpose in delegitimizing biracial children; Woodruff Smith, "Colonialism and the Culture of Respectability," in Ames, Klotz, and Wildenthal, *Germany's Colonial Pasts*, 15.
  31. BAB, South African Microfilm Collection of the records of the *German Southwest African colonial administration*, Signatur R 151. (Collection name abbreviated as DSWA), file L.II.k.1, Bd. 1, [stamped pagination], 11, Colonial Government circular, dated 28 Feb. 1898.

- On Golinelli's background see Bley, *South-West Africa*, 69, fn. 157. See also the article on his career in *DSWAZ*, 12, no. 92 (16 Nov. 1910). Steinmetz, *Devil's Handwriting*, 225–30, describes the evolution of German ethnographic writings about the Rehoboth Basters.
32. One such case resulted in an 1897 legal ruling in favor of a plaintiff's right to intermarriage. Marriage guidelines are spelled out in the document DSWA, F.IV.r.1, Bd. 1, 11–12 from colonial director Paul Kayser, on behalf of the chancellor, Berlin, 24 Sept. 1893 to Colonial Commissioner Curt von François, Windhoek. and (17), Leutwein on his current policy of forbidding state registry for intermarriage even before the 1905 ban, 23 Aug. 1898. Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 241–42.
  33. Grosse, *Kolonialismus, Eugenik*, 192; Wildenthal, *German Women*, 86–107; Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 221.
  34. Boge-Smidt, "Germania"; Katharina Walgenbach, "Die weiße Frau; Wildenthal, *German Women*; Venghiattis, "Mobilizing."