Unsere Neue Heimat: German National Identity In The Pages Of The Südwest Newspaper, 1910–1914

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UNSERE NEUE HEIMAT: GERMAN NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE PAGES OF THE SÜDWEST NEWSPAPER, 1910–1914

A Thesis Presented

by

Patrick Sullivan

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Abstract

In recent decades, historians have increasingly recognized the significance of German colonialism. Though short-lived in relation to other European overseas empires (created in 1884 and dissolved in 1919), the German colonial empire had a substantial historical impact. Historians have drawn particular attention to colonialism’s influence on national identity within the Deutsches Reich. To many Germans in the recently formed nation-state (founded in 1871), the foreign possessions represented Germany’s status as a world power and a mission to spread German culture across much of the globe. The colonial settler press was an especially important institution to such imperialist modes of thought. These newspapers were not limited to their places of origin such as Africa or Samoa, and exported to the metropole as well. Such publications disseminated their colonial perspectives to their mother country, and influenced German national identities in doing so.

The given thesis focuses in particular on one German colonial newspaper: *Südwest: Unabhängige Zeitung für die Interessen des gesamten Schutzgebiets*. Despite its significance, the German colonial settler press has received a limited amount of historical attention, and this thesis is the first historical study to center on the chosen publication. It analyzes the colonial Southwest African paper’s representations of national identity from its beginnings in 1910 until its sudden closure amidst the First World War in 1914, and the manners in which the newspaper’s colonial coverage conveyed a specific sense of German-ness to its readership. Included in the publication’s form of national identity is: a preference for settler-farmers as an ideal economic class, negative stereotypes used to contrast Africans with Germans, and a gendered worldview that extolled “imperial masculinity.” Through a close analysis of the German identity communicated in the pages of *Südwest*, this thesis offers a unique examination of the colonial settler press and the perspectives that it contributed to the German public consciousness.
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Introduction: German National Imaginations and Südwest

Analytical Framework

When the Deutsches Reich acquired its colonial empire in 1884, the first German nation-state had only existed for thirteen years. Although German national imaginations had of course preceded and led to the creation of the German Empire, these years following unification saw crucial developments concerning national identity as Germans sought to define the characteristics of their newly formalized community. Overseas imperialism exerted particular influence on perceptions of Deutschtum (German-ness) during this formative period, as many Germans understood themselves in relation to non-European peoples abroad and in response to interactions between colonists and colonial subjects.¹ National identity was especially relevant to the settler colony of Deutsch-Südwestafrika (German Southwest Africa, hereafter referred to as GSWA), where Wilhelmine authorities sought to settle a permanent German population and thereby create a new German Heimat (homeland) overseas.² The nature of such a project required that its proponents articulate their national self-perceptions. As these overseas imperialists advocated spreading Deutschtum to Africa, they communicated—directly or indirectly—what this German-ness entailed. A close examination of a pro-colonial publication based in GSWA thus offers substantial insight into the form of national identity promoted by German overseas imperialism.

² Ibid., 86–87.
Accordingly, this thesis analyzes the newspaper *Südwest: Unabhängige Zeitung für die Interessen des gesamten Schutzgebiet* in order to draw conclusions regarding colonialism’s influence on German national identity. The publication, which translates as “Southwest: Independent Newspaper for the Interests of the Entire Protectorate,” was a colonial settler newspaper published in GSWA from 1910 to 1914. Its mission, communicated in part by its title, was the success of the German colonial project in GSWA. In the paper’s first issue, founder and editor Rudolf Kindt listed changes to governance that he considered vital to achieving this goal, including compromise between colonial merchants and farmers and a better-funded police force that would fully address indigenous “enemies” living in the mountains and bush. These critiques point to the importance of subjects such as economics and race in relation to the publication’s understanding of *Deutschtum* and its success in Africa, although the newspaper was not limited to these themes. Focusing on recurrent topics in the paper with significant implications for national identity, this thesis analyzes five areas of print discussion: economics, race, gender, distinctions between the colony and the metropole, and international colonial relations. Through an examination of these subjects, this thesis intends to analyze the understanding of *Deutschtum* communicated by *Südwest*, and by extension the form of colonial national identity that it impressed upon its literary consumers.

This thesis uses political scientist and historian Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* as a framework for the concept of nations. Anderson explains that they are

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imagined because a nation’s members will never come into contact with most of their fellow nationals, yet each envisions their association. These perceived relationships are a community because individuals interpret them “as a deep, horizontal comradeship,” regardless of existing inequalities. In other words, Anderson characterizes the nation as a united fellowship that exists in the minds of its believers. Such a description of nationalism has significant implications for understandings of Deutschtum in relation to published texts. As national identities are based in imagination, written ideas and concepts have the power to form and shape these self-perceptions. They can also encapsulate and reflect preexisting national perspectives, thereby reinforcing them in the minds of readers. Anderson explains the particular influence of national newspapers on this manner of public thought. He writes that readers become invested in the narratives and people described within, and thus understand them as part of a shared group. These journals are especially frequent and popular “one-day best-sellers,” thus ingraining themselves in the minds of consumers. As a colonial newspaper that offered its perspective on issues related to Deutschtum, Südwest therefore acted as an important influence on the national identities of its German readership. Through consumption of the national viewpoints contained within the publication, these readers absorbed associated understandings of the German nation and incorporated them into their own.

Another concept that frames this thesis’ understanding of its subject matter is what historian Corinna Schäfer terms “colonial discourse.” She writes that settler press

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5 Ibid., 7.
6 Ibid., 33–35.
publications were not isolated in their respective colonies, but rather existed within a media network containing each other and the metropole. This information exchange created a global discussion of imperialist concerns, and gave the settler press an influential role in German understandings of colonial matters as an internationally consumed form of print media in direct contact with overseas imperialism.7

Explaining the operations of this information transfer, Schäfer writes that colonial newspaper publishers shipped copies abroad through the German postal system, most often to readers in the metropole. In 1907, for example, 24,000 copies of colonial newspapers (including Südwest) arrived in the old homeland via ship. Metropolitan customers included individuals interested in colonial affairs, as well as coffeehouses and colonial associations.8 Print media transfer also occurred in the opposite direction, and German colonists regularly imported domestic newspapers by boat.9 The Imperial post office subsidized and coordinated with private shipping companies such as Woermann to transport newspapers over the ocean (in the case of GSWA, over the Atlantic and down most of the western coast of Africa) between the colonies and the metropole. By 1914, this delivery process took around twenty to twenty-four days.10 For quicker transfers of information between the colonies and the metropole, telegraph lines provided same-day communication. These lines connected to a British cable that allowed for telegraph transmission with Europe, which the colonial press utilized as a news source.11

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8 Ibid., 72–73.
9 Ibid., 71.
10 Ibid., 98.
11 Ibid., 108.
Moreover, Schäfer writes that the colonial press reached the broader German public through its influence on domestic reporting. Journalists in the metropole, she explains, frequently used settler newspapers as important, firsthand sources of information concerning colonial affairs. Demonstrating this tendency, the metropolitan press regularly copied and pasted text from settler papers in their coverage of colonial matters.\textsuperscript{12} Journalists across the German overseas empire likewise referred to settler newspapers for reports from other colonies.\textsuperscript{13}

Such transfers of information reveal a “colonial discourse” as described by Schäfer. They demonstrate that the German settler press utilized news from the metropole, and that its reporting had a broad reach among Germans in the old homeland and in other colonies. Accordingly, they exhibit the existence of an international print discussion between the German colonies and the metropole, as both sets of newspapers shared information and responded to the other’s news coverage. Within Schäfer’s framework, this thesis analyzes Südwest’s contributions to colonial discourse with particular attention to issues of national identity. As such, it considers the publication’s form of Deutschtum to have influenced Germans not only in GSWA, but also co-nationals around the world. This thesis thus understands its primary source base to have exerted a wide-ranging national influence that encompassed Germans in both the colonies and the metropole.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 78–79.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 85.
Background

After national unification in 1871, the German government under the direction of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck did not pursue colonialism for around a decade. Bismarck considered the consolidation of power in central Europe as a much more worthwhile political endeavor for the new nation-state, and he accordingly rejected the requests of colonialist groups that sought the acquisition of overseas territories. In 1884 and 1885, he reversed this position, and the Kaiserreich quickly obtained a colonial empire during these years. Although the exact reasons for the statesman’s about-face are unknown, historians speculate that Bismarck likely viewed overseas imperialism as a solution to national political difficulties such as inadequate trade and diplomatic competition with England. Overseas expansion also offered the Chancellor an opportunity to build domestic political support among colonialist Germans.14 The resultant German overseas empire was substantial and included territories in Africa, China, and the pacific islands. Nevertheless, it was smaller and significantly less profitable than those of other European states such as England and France.15 The German Empire was an influential colonial power, however, as demonstrated by the Berlin Conference in 1884 and 1885. Bismarck hosted the summit in Germany’s capital, where European heads of state negotiated and legitimized among themselves the division of Africa into colonies.

GSWA was among the colonies recognized at the conference. German state officials first laid claim to the region shortly before the summit in 1884. The territory was

located in southwestern Africa, as indicated by its name, in the area that is today Namibia. GSWA was unique as the Kaiserreich’s only settler colony, that is, the sole German overseas territory that could sustain a large settler population.\textsuperscript{16} To clarify, GSWA’s status as a settler colony meant that imperial authorities deemed it as a site for long-term German settlement and the development of a large, colonial population abroad. Related to this classification, it was the largest Germany colony in terms of both landmass and the size of its German population.\textsuperscript{17} Its hot and dry climate placed limitations on crop growth, but it allowed for substantial livestock husbandry.

Accordingly, the largest indigenous ethnic group in the territory, the Herero people, traditionally led pastoralist lifestyles based on cattle-rearing.\textsuperscript{18} In addition to agriculture, GSWA also became a site for a lucrative colonial mining industry worth hundreds of millions of marks after the discovery of diamond deposits in 1908.\textsuperscript{19}

There are few available statistics that specify the demographics of German emigrants to colonies such as GSWA. One important piece of data, however, demonstrates that the territory’s white population was disproportionately male. In 1913, GSWA had a seven-to-one ratio between men and women who were both unmarried and white (a detail that this thesis expands upon in its section concerning gender).\textsuperscript{20} Secondary sources provide additional information that indicate German colonial demographics. They suggest, for example, that the colony was not overwhelmingly

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 51.
\textsuperscript{19} Steven Press, \textit{Blood and Diamonds: Germany’s Imperial Ambitions in Africa} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021), 4.
\end{flushleft}
Protestant or Catholic. Historian Woodruff Smith notes, for instance, that both Protestant and Catholic missions were active in German colonial politics. In GSWA, ninety-five percent of African students in the colony attended either one of the colony’s seven Protestant schools, or one of its six Catholic schools, in 1911. Such secondary source evidence signals that both Christian denominations had a significant presence in GSWA. Indeed, Südwest’s regular “Church News” section listed upcoming Protestant and Catholic religious events alongside each other, without an evident preference for one group over the other. A lack of denominational predominance suggests, by extension, that GSWA’s colonial population did not overwhelmingly originate from Germany’s generally Protestant north or its generally Catholic south. Unlike gender, neither religion nor region appear to have played a prominent role in colonial demographics.

In addition to men, secondary sources suggest that financially secure Germans comprised an especially large portion of settlers in GSWA. Schäfer explains that working-class Germans with no available capital had little economic prospects in the colony, and often became deportees to the German metropole after colonial authorities had deemed them a drain on the territory’s finances. She notes that the main colonial shipping company Woermann only provided passage to the colonies to customers who carried at least 400 marks, and colonial regulations introduced in 1908 reserved the right to deny entry to hopeful settlers who “could not prove sufficient financial means.” The relatively well-off Germans who settled in GSWA generally sought socioeconomic

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23 For an example, see “Kirchliche Nachrichten.” Südwest, 14 March 1913, 2.
advancement. They hoped that by founding colonial enterprises, they could develop lucrative capital and rule over their African employees.\textsuperscript{25} These Germans typically used their wealth to start businesses as either merchants or farmers.\textsuperscript{26} These two economic groups held divergent and competing interests, which this thesis details in its section concerning \textit{Südwest}'s financial standpoint.

The most consequential development in the history of the colony was the Herero-Nama War. In response to oppressive colonial policy that dispossessed Africans of agricultural capital in order to build white settlements, Herero armies revolted against German rule in 1904 by killing over one hundred Europeans, most of whom were German settler farmers. This event began a revolt, which the Nama population (the second largest indigenous ethnic group in the territory) joined in 1906. The \textit{Schutztruppe} (the German colonial army) used brutal methods to crush the rebellious populaces, including a policy of driving populations into uninhabitable stretches of desert and the usage of concentration camps.\textsuperscript{27} Such severe measures killed over eighty percent of the Herero people and over fifty percent of the Nama people in the colony by the conclusion of the war, which ended in German military victory in 1908. The German government acknowledged in 2004 that these actions constituted a genocide.\textsuperscript{28} Although the exact death toll of the genocidal war is unknown, at least 60,000 Herero and Nama died as a result of the conflict.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, 140.
\textsuperscript{26} Smith, \textit{The German Colonial Empire}, online ed., 23–24.
\textsuperscript{27} Smith, \textit{The German Colonial Empire}, 63–65.
In the Wilhelmine metropole, the conflict brought the colonial project into the national spotlight through the Reichstag elections of 1907. During the electoral campaign, the chief dividing issue was whether or not to fund the ongoing overseas military effort. Indicating widespread German support for colonialism, the parties in favor of funding the *Schutztruppe* won decisively.\textsuperscript{30} GSWA underwent particular and long-lasting change as a result of the war. Towards the end of the conflict, colonial authorities expropriated the lands of rebellious African populations and sold them at low prices to settlers. As a result, the white population of the territory nearly doubled from 7,110 in 1907 to 13,962 in 1911. Although these colonists profited from inexpensive land, they also experienced a labor shortage due to the wartime genocide.\textsuperscript{31} Additionally, the conflict fostered an uneasy attitude among GSWA’s German populace, as colonists remained in fear of renewed resistance to their rule.\textsuperscript{32}

It was within this context amid the aftermath of the Herero-Nama War that *Südwest* began publication in 1910. Founder and editor Rudolf Kindt had previously edited the *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung*, another settler newspaper in GSWA, but left to start his own paper because he felt that the territory’s press represented individual interest groups such as merchants or farmers. By contrast, he wished for the new publication to advocate the overall good of the colony as communicated by the subtitle “Independent Newspaper for the Interests of the Entire Protectorate.”\textsuperscript{33} Indeed, the first issue of *Südwest* accused competing settler newspapers of expressing the views

\textsuperscript{31} Prein, “Guns and Top Hats,” 103.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 100.
\textsuperscript{33} Schäfer, “The Colonial Settler Press in Africa,” 118.
of either the colony’s merchants or its farmers. A journalist wrote that the new publication instead represented all colonial groups in order to promote the general success of GSWA. Kindt’s biography indicates a genuine belief in the German settler colonial project in line with the paper’s raison d’être. He was both a colonial merchant and farmer, which suggests that he did not have an economic incentive to prioritize one group over the other. Additionally, he was a member of the Landrat—an official body in GSWA that advised the local government, headed by a state-appointed governor, as well as the national Reich government. This political involvement reflects a sincere desire to influence the colony and to play a role in its development. Even after the Treaty of Versailles dissolved Germany’s overseas empire in 1919, he continued to advocate its imperialist endeavors by authoring two colonialist books concerning GSWA. Although the individual role of Kindt is not central to this thesis’ analysis of Südwest, his commitment to the German colonial settler project informs this study’s understanding of the newspaper. Under his staunchly and above all pro-GSWA leadership, the publication promoted the general success of the settler colony and the advancement of a permanent German Heimat in Africa in accordance with its foundational mission.

The paper’s content was straightforward. It primarily reported on news within the colony and provided relevant journalistic commentary in line with its mission to represent the overall interests of GSWA. Recurrent topics included colonial economic reports, laws

34 “Gemeinsame Arbeit, keine Fehden.” Südwest, 2 December 1910, 1–2.
36 See: Rudolf Kindt, Deutsch-Südwest und die Heimat! Gedichte aus der deutschen Kolonialzeit (Gießen: v. Münchow'sche Verl, 1922); and Das Erste Märchen: Die biblische Schöpfungsgeschichte in einer Überlieferung aus Südafrika (Darmstadt: Ernst Ludwig Presse, 1927).
passed by colonial authorities, and the development of societal debates among colonists. *Südwest* also reported on news from outside of GSWA, such as Reichstag discussions in the German metropole and the actions of neighboring colonial governments in southern Africa. Likewise, the writers often provided their relevant perspectives regarding the relationship of such news items to the interests of GSWA as the journalists understood them. The newspaper published on a biweekly basis from December 1910 until the outbreak of the First World War. Germany’s colonial press relied on infrastructure (such as informational channels with the metropole and a steady inflow of paper) that collapsed at the start of the war, and *Südwest* (along with most of the German settler press) ceased publication in July 1914 as a result.\(^{37}\) GSWA only lasted a year longer, and the military of neighboring South Africa (an English protectorate) forced the *Schutztruppe* to surrender and subsequently began its occupation of the colony beginning in July 1915. The Treaty of Versailles officially ended the German territory’s existence in 1919 and formally recognized South Africa’s annexation of the region.

Unfortunately, there are no available circulation numbers for newspapers published in GSWA.\(^{38}\) It is thus difficult to quantify the scope of *Südwest*’s influence and the size of its readership. Certain aspects of the publication, however, indicate a considerable degree of popularity. Firstly, it competed with multiple preexisting papers for an audience in the colony. By December 1910, GSWA had four other prominent newspapers.\(^{39}\) *Südwest*’s existence within this crowded journalistic field (in a colony with


\(^{38}\) Ibid., 65, footnotes, Schäfer writes that “[t]he *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Zeitung* [a settler newspaper published in German East Africa] is the only settler newspaper that circulation figures are available for.”

a settler population of less than 14,000 at the start of its run) suggests that colonists were interested in its mission to promote the common colonial good and were willing to support it despite the existence of longer-running colonial publications. Furthermore, the paper listed dozens of advertisements in each issue. Their inclusion in the publication demonstrates that these advertisers considered the newspaper to have a substantial readership and accordingly deemed the purchase of space within the paper as a worthwhile investment. Moreover, advertisements of businesses based in the German metropole signal that interest in Südwest was not limited to the colony. Although most of the paper’s advertisers were colonial, some were located in the old Heimat.40 These overseas advertisements reflect Kindt’s desire to foster a readership in the metropole in order to convey the interests of GSWA to colonial policymakers in Europe.41 Further indicating the existence of a wide-ranging German audience, each issue of the newspaper listed the separate monthly subscription prices inside and outside of the colony on its first page. Subscriptions within GSWA cost 1.5 marks, and subscriptions within the other German colonies as well as those “für Deutschland” cost 3 marks.42 The continued pricing for both colonial and metropolitan customers throughout the course of the paper’s run signals that it had a readership among both groups. Though circulation numbers remain elusive, such pieces of evidence suggest that Südwest played an important role in colonial discourse. They indicate that the publication impressed its understandings of Deutschtum upon a substantial German readership in both the colony and the metropole.

40 For some examples of metropole-based advertisements, see: “Richard Bauer, Schneidermstr.” Südwest, 29 December 1911, 4; “Rud. Sack,” Südwest, 7 June 1912, 6; and “Musik-Instrumente,” Südwest, 21 July 1914, 8.
42 For one example, see “Bezugspreis,” Südwest, 2 December 1910, 1.
Historiography of the German Colonial Empire

Despite its nineteenth-century origins, the German colonial empire remained a marginal historical subject until around the turn of the twenty-first century. During the past few decades, historians have increasingly recognized its significance, resulting in a growing body of scholarship concerning German colonialism. Such works document the manners in which the overseas empire played an influential role in history in spite of its relatively short existence. This section examines seven scholarly works, all written by historians of Germany, in order to outline the historical subfield of the German colonial empire, including its critical areas of analysis and debate as well as its development over time. In doing so, this section seeks to demonstrate the historical importance of Wilhelmine colonialism, and to contextualize the thesis’ research within the relevant historiography of the German colonial empire.

Although the Deutsches Reich’s overseas territories received little historical interest prior to the 1990s, the subject had a historiographic presence before its relatively newfound recognition. For example, Woodruff Smith’s The German Colonial Empire, published in 1978, provides a political analysis of its titular concern. Smith argues that Wilhelmine colonialism’s chief importance for Germans was its influential role as a source of support and controversy in domestic politics. In defense of his thesis, the author examines key developments during the course of the German colonial empire in relation to the political sphere. He discusses, for instance, Chancellor Bernhard von Bülow’s decision to utilize an ongoing colonial war as a patriotic rallying issue, and the massive electoral success that the statesman’s Reichstag bloc achieved in 1907 as a

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43 Smith, The German Colonial Empire, x.
result. Such evidence supports the author’s overarching argument that the overseas empire exerted its greatest influence in the realm of domestic politics, as it indicates the effectiveness of colonialism as a mobilizing political issue in the metropole. Smith’s book is an example of an historical work prior to the 1990s that demonstrates the importance of the German colonial empire and its impact on German society.

*The German Colonial Empire*, despite its historiographic contributions, was an outlier during a period in which many historians dismissed Germany’s overseas empire as insignificant. Describing this tendency in an article published in 2001, Thaddeus Sunseri writes that historians of Germany often considered the colonial territories “a mere sideshow that warrants little consideration.” Those who held such a view premised their conclusion on the colonies’ lackluster material output, and Sunseri acknowledges that colonial cotton, for instance, never exceeded more than half of a percent of the metropole’s consumption. Beginning in the 1990s and particularly after the turn of the twenty-first century, however, historians have taken a new interest in the German colonial empire. One reason for this shift is the rising prevalence of postcolonial studies—an historical field that began developing in the 1990s in the age of globalization, and which focuses on the impacts of colonialism. Another influential factor was the centenary in 2004 of the German colonial genocide of Herero and Nama peoples. The anniversary sparked a national discussion in Germany, which in turn directed substantial

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44 Ibid., 191.
attention towards the country’s colonial past. As a result of developments such as the rise of postcolonial studies in the 1990s and the centenary in 2004, the body of historical scholarship concerning German colonialism has grown immensely during the past three decades. Many, though not all, works within this subfield center on German cultural subjects including identity and national mentalities.

One article that demonstrates the prominence of cultural history in studies of German colonialism since the 1990s is Lora Wildenthal’s “‘SHE IS THE VICTOR’: Bourgeois Women, Nationalist Identities and the Ideal of the Independent Woman Farmer in German Southwest Africa.” The work focuses in particular on Clara Brockman—a middle-class German feminist, a colonist, and an author of two well-received travel books. Using Brockman’s early-twentieth-century writings as evidence, Wildenthal illustrates the manners in which colonialism influenced national identities and women’s gender identities in the German Empire. She writes, for example, that Germans often stressed orderliness as a national virtue in contrast to the supposedly chaotic nature of non-white colonial subjects. Brockman utilizes this theme in her books, in which she describes women as effective colonists and naturally tidy homemakers who bring organization to colonial households. Wildenthal concludes that these writings provided Brockman’s female, middle-class, German audience with a colonialist and feminist sense of self. This mentality praised German women as capable and self-sufficient colonists

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49 Ibid., 74.
who patriotically served the nation in its colonial mission abroad.\textsuperscript{50} Wildenthal’s article highlights the overseas empire’s influence on Wilhelmine culture and German self-perceptions of nationality and gender.

Another significant historical topic concerning self-perception is national identity—the main analytical focus of this thesis. Whereas some historians such as Wildenthal primarily focus on German gender identity, many others center their analysis on German national self-images. One important work within the latter area of study is \textit{German Colonialism and National Identity}, an edited volume published in 2011. The book is comprised of twenty-two articles concerning the relationship between colonialism and German identity from 1848 to the twenty-first century, though editors Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer note that the primary focus of the volume is the overseas empire created in 1884 and its lasting impact. Perraudin and Zimmerer write that, taken together, the articles “demonstrate conclusively” the important role that the colonies played in the German imagination during their existence, as well as the continued national influence of Germany’s colonial legacy several decades after the overseas empire officially dissolved in 1919.\textsuperscript{51}

One study in the volume that supports this central claim is Volker Langbehn’s examination of postcards depicting black people around the turn of the twentieth century. He writes, for example, that postcard illustrations of black racial caricatures provided Germans with an implicit, idealized self-image in contrast to the unflattering portrayal of

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 84–85.
\textsuperscript{51} Perraudin and Zimmerer, eds., \textit{German Colonialism and National Identity}, 2.
“uncivilized native Africans.” Based on such evidence, Langbehn concludes that the German postcard industry circa 1900 contributed to a sense of national unity through its depictions of a discrete black outgroup. In another article, Ingo Cornils analyzes the toppling of a colonial monument during the West German student movement of the late 1960s—a left-wing protest movement that challenged the country’s political authority and sought societal denazification. Using primary sources including student flyers as evidence, he writes that protesters at the University of Hamburg tore down a statue honoring a colonial governor because they saw it as a symbol of the capitalist oppression and nineteenth-century imperial ambition that led to the rise of National Socialism. Cornils’ study demonstrates that the German colonies continued to play a role in national self-perception long after the overseas empire ceased to exist, as student protestors of the 1960s actively rebuked a monument to colonialism as antithetical to the left-wing, denazified Germany that they desired. Articles such as those of Langbehn and Cornils substantiate the overarching argument of the volume provided by editors Perraudin and Zimmerer: that the German colonies influenced national identity for several decades following their creation. As such, *German Colonialism and National Identity* offers a detailed examination of the overseas empire’s historical significance and the many ways in which colonialism impacted German self-perceptions during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

52 Volker Langbehn, “The Visual Representation of Blackness During German Imperialism Around 1900,” in *German Colonialism and National Identity*, eds. Perraudin and Zimmerer, 90–100; here 94.
53 Ibid., 98.
Related to issues of identity, a small but critically important area of colonial German historiography concerns the German settler press. For this thesis, the most important of these studies is Corrina Schäfer’s “The German Colonial Settler Press in Africa, 1898-1916: A Web of Identities, Spaces and Infrastructure,” published in 2017. The Ph.D. dissertation analyzes German newspapers published in African colonies in order to examine comprehensively the German colonial settler press in Africa and its impact on the German public. Schäfer explains that this press reached beyond its geographic origins in the overseas empire, as colonial newspapers published lists of their availability in cities and towns across the metropole. Although she examines issues of national identity in her analysis, her overall focus is the general mindset that the colonial press in Africa fostered among its German readership. Due to the international nature of colonialism, such manners of thought included but were not limited to Germans’ sense of self, and frequently concerned the country’s relationships to indigenous peoples and competing imperial powers. The author writes, for instance, that colonial journalists frequently described the neighboring African colonies of other states, including Britain and France, as competitive threats to Germany’s overseas empire, thereby contributing to a national sense of Einkreisung (encirclement)—the belief that hostile powers surrounded Germany and inhibited its development. Such printed discussions of German colonialism, Schäfer concludes, demonstrate that the country’s overseas empire shaped national imaginations in significant ways. Schäfer’s dissertation demonstrates colonialism’s impact on Wilhelmine public thought. Colonial perspectives were not

56 Ibid., 92–93.
57 Ibid., 213–214.
limited to overseas territories such as those in Africa, but instead proliferated through a colonial press. Consumption of these newspapers encouraged Germans across the Empire to share the views of their colonist writers, such as a feeling of international rivalry with competing imperial powers.

Furthermore, the dissertation is significant because it points to a dearth in colonial German scholarship regarding the settler press. Schäfer notes that hers is the first work to examine comprehensively the German colonial press in Africa. The lack of even one book to date focused on German settler newspapers indicates that the subject remains relatively unexplored. She additionally writes that historical works involving the German settler press typically either use newspapers as evidence in support of a broader point, or primarily center on the relationship between editors and colonial governments. Such analyses of colonial journalism leave important gaps that this thesis seeks to address. Specifically, this study intends to build upon an understanding of the settler press and its relationship to national identity through a close reading of an individual publication. Through an examination of the newspaper’s coverage of critically relevant subjects (namely: economics, race, gender, relations with the metropole, and international affairs), this thesis articulates and explains some of the key qualities that defined the publication’s colonial form of nationalism. As the views of the settler press spread to the metropole through colonial discourse, such an imperialist worldview was an important influence on German national identity during the country’s colonial period.

58 Ibid., “Summary,” no page given.
59 Ibid., 7.
Although many historical works concerning the German overseas empire center on German cultural subjects, such as Wilhelmine-era identities and national attitudes, important historiographic outliers contribute to German colonial scholarship by analyzing largely unexplored areas of this subfield. Steven Press’ *Blood and Diamonds: Germany's Imperial Ambitions in Africa* is a particularly noteworthy example of such a case because it challenges a longstanding historical consensus concerning the finances of the German overseas empire. In his book, published in 2021, Press argues that the impact of the Southwest African diamond trade indicates the economic significance of German colonialism. Acknowledging the “scant historical attention” that historians have given to Wilhelmine colonial economics, he writes that GSWA’s diamonds had a powerful influence on markets.60 Historians of German colonialism dismissed the commercial importance of the colonies as early as 1978, when Woodruff Smith wrote that they were “economically unprofitable” and comprised an “insignificant” amount of Wilhelmine commerce.61 Using colonial financial documents, including business reports and governmental economic records, as his primary source base, Press provides a rebuttal to such claims of economic unimportance. He explains, for example, that GSWA exported 59,000,000 marks worth of licit diamonds in 1913, which is a greater amount of wealth than the infamously profitable Belgian Congo colony extracted in the same year. Press adds that evidence of an unofficial and illicit diamond trade suggests a total value of diamond exports in 1913 that was twice the given number of marks.62 Such findings suggest that, contrary to previous and widespread conclusions that the German colonies

61 Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, ix.
were unprofitable, the Wilhelmine overseas empire played a significant role in domestic and international trade. Three decades after historians generally began to recognize the importance of German colonialism, *Blood and Diamonds* demonstrates that economics are a crucial aspect of this history that many still dismiss—incorrectly, according to Press—as inconsequential.

Although the argumentation is not central to this thesis, it is important to note in this context the most significant field of historical debate concerning German colonialism: its relationship to National Socialism. One side of this discourse argues in favor of continuities between the two periods in German history, often drawing parallels between the colonial and Nazi empires to support this position. Joachim Zeller articulates such a stance regarding the Wilhelmine overseas empire and the Third Reich in a book chapter titled “‘Ombepera I Koza — The Cold Is Killing Me’: Notes Towards a History of the Concentration Camp at Swakopmund (1904–1908).” The chapter appears in an edited volume concerning the Herero-Nama War. Zeller focuses in particular on the colonial concentration camp in Swakopmund that incarcerated indigenous populations during the conflict. Using firsthand colonial witness accounts, he describes the camps’ brutal conditions, which included thin clothing that did not protect from the cold and meager rations that failed to meet caloric or nutritional needs. In light of his findings regarding the inhumane treatment of captives, the author concludes that the Swakopmund concentration camp had conditions largely similar to Nazi camps such as Buchenwald.

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and Dachau. He additionally writes that the Swakopmund camp proves the “totalitarian power complex” of German colonists, who sought complete control over African lives.\textsuperscript{64} Zeller’s connection of the Swakopmund concentration camp to Buchenwald and totalitarianism indicates that colonial policy during the Herero-Nama War is an important historical precedent for the Third Reich. He thus suggests the Wilhelmine colonies as a chronological starting point for understanding National Socialism, as he describes the colonial concentration camp system as a comparable precursor to the concentration camps and totalitarian forced labor of the Nazi period.

In contrast to historians such as Zeller, the other side of this debate argues against continuities between German colonialism and Nazism. In support of this position, such historians focus primarily on evidence that the Nazis generally did not look back to the colonies as a reference point. Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski provide an exemplary perspective in “Hannah Arendt’s Ghosts: Reflections on the Disputable Path from Windhoek to Auschwitz,” published in 2008. Gerwarth and Malinowski examine the connections between the colonial empire and Nazi Germany proposed by historians in the twenty-first century, as well as similar analyses dating back most famously to German-American philosopher Hannah Arendt. They explain that Arendt articulated in 1951 the view that European colonialism abroad produced racist attitudes and authoritarian state practices, which returned to Europe in the form of Nazism. The authors contend that such a claim remains historically unsubstantiated.\textsuperscript{65} As a rebuttal to

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 78–79.

these alleged continuities, Gerwarth and Malinowski analyze historical evidence that challenges the credibility of proposed connections between the Wilhelmine colonies and the Third Reich. For example, they write that a lack of colonial experience within Nazi ranks disproves these assertions of continuity. Supporting this view, they explain that even if every colonial veteran who had served in GSWA took part in the Nazi war effort (which the authors note was almost certainly not the case), they would number only a few thousand out of millions. Such arguments provide a basis for many of those who hold Gerwarth’s and Malinowski’s position in the historical debate. They find the proposed connections between colonialism and National Socialism to lack convincing proof, and they consider the reasoning for continuity as erroneous. This thesis limits its scope to the years of Südwest’s publication from 1910 to 1914, and thus does not take a position regarding the connections, or lack thereof, between the colonial and Nazi empires. Nevertheless, these two opposing stances comprise the main field of debate within the historiography of the German colonial empire, and are thus important to mention within a relevant historiographic study. They demonstrate the continued presence of German colonialism in the public conscious, and the possible (though contested) links between Wilhelmine and Nazi imperialisms.

In short, scholarship concerning Germany’s overseas empire demonstrates the subject’s historical importance and leaves substantial room for new research. Historical analyses of Wilhelmine colonialism have provided ample evidence of its significant global impacts. Studies have focused in particular on German cultural issues of identity, but even this more popular area of research is still largely unexplored as indicated by the

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66 Ibid., 291–292.
dearth of scholarship regarding the colonial settler press. This thesis conducts original analysis within this largely unexplored area of German history through a close study of *Südwest* in relation to national identity. The following research is additionally original because no published historical study to date has examined the newspaper’s content as its central focus, which makes this thesis the first study to do so.
Agrarian Economics and the Ideal of the Settler Farmer

Commercial matters were the predominant political concern in the pages of Südwest as explained by the newspaper’s editorial department, which wrote that the publication’s political orientation was “more of an economic policy.”67 This financial approach to the governance of GSWA considered the settler farmer as the key to the colony’s development and economic success. An introductory article in the paper’s first edition explicated such a viewpoint. Although the writer stated that the newspaper offered a balanced perspective that reconciled the competing interests of farmers and merchants, he or she chiefly emphasized the importance of the former group. Referring to agriculture as “the future backbone of the colonial economy,” the journalist wrote that the colony must prioritize the cultivation of its infinitely renewable farm resources such as livestock in order to achieve long-term profitability.68 The article clarifies the paper’s guiding financial principle: the centrality of the settler farmer to the German colonial project.

Economics played a divisive role in GSWA, as farmers and merchants (who comprised the colony’s two predominant socioeconomic groups as noted in this thesis’ background section) competed for colonial resources. Press explains that the latter group stood to profit primarily off of trade from the territory’s diamond deposits, but the former group considered state investments in these minerals to draw wealth away from the colony’s agriculture. Settler farmers worried that a large mercantile industry based on mining yields would create additional competition for African labor, a particularly

68 “Gemeinsame Arbeit, keine Fehden.” Südwest, 2 December 1910, 1.
important and limited financial resource in the aftermath of the genocidal Herero-Nama War. These agrarians argued that although the colonial mineral trade offered a more lucrative (but expendable) source of income, farming provided greater long-term economic stability to both the colony and the broader national community. GSWA’s agricultural industry was largely livestock-based, and colonial farmers contended that the territory could best support the Reich by becoming an exporter of meat and animal products to the metropole, thereby bolstering German population growth through the proliferation of foodstuffs.\textsuperscript{69} Conflict between the colony’s two prominent economic groups extended into the settler press, and many of its newspapers represented specific commercial interests. Opposite to the concerns of settler farmers, the Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung, for example, advocated mercantile desires and supported investments in mining companies and industrial development. Other publications, such as the Südwestbote, openly championed agricultural demands. Historian Corinna Schäfer writes that Südwest’s founder and editor Rudolf Kindt created his own paper as a counter against such individual interest groups, and instead wished to represent the whole colony.\textsuperscript{70} Although the newspaper did indeed advocate the overall good of the territory as its writers viewed the goal, this thesis section argues that the publication’s understanding of GSWA’s financial success chiefly emphasized the concerns of settler farmers.

Socioeconomic divides grew particularly under the administration of Reichskolonialamt (Imperial Colonial Office) Secretary of State Bernhard Dernburg from 1907 to June of 1910, during which he greatly prioritized the development of the

\textsuperscript{69} Press, Blood and Diamonds, 108–109.
As a brief clarification, the Imperial Colonial Office was a governmental body that administered the overseas empire from Berlin and managed aspects of colonial governance such as economic planning and infrastructure projects. Indicating Südwester’s agrarian financial stance, the newspaper repeatedly criticized Dernburg’s management of GSWA, and the publication regularly described his administration as antithetical to their preferred manner of colonial governance. In an article reflecting on the year 1910, for example, a writer attributed an underproduction of crops during the previous year to the former Secretary of State’s lack of commitment to securing colonial farm labor. The journalist expressed the wish that 1911 would see the end of the Dernburg era, and that his successor would increase agricultural output. Similarly, another article argues that the economic policies of the former Secretary of State were destructive because they transferred money to private interests rather than developing the colony itself. Such sentiments demonstrate the publication’s opposition to Dernburg’s commercial approach that focused on mercantile profits in the diamond trade, and a preference for agriculture-centered economics that would develop a permanent colonial farm industry. Although Südwester did not attack the two subsequent Secretaries of State in the same manner as it did Dernburg, likely due to his particular unpopularity among settler farmers, it pushed for a more agriculture-based financial policy throughout its run. In doing so, it further communicated its agrarian vision of German colonialism.

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73 Paul Rohrbach, “Kolonie und Heimat.” Südwester, 11 July 1911, 1.
One recurring topic in the pages of the newspaper that relates to this economic focus is land credit. Since nearly the beginning of the publication, its writers continuously advocated for an institution to provide mortgages for the Reich’s colonial holdings. By offering German colonists easier financial access to territory in GSWA, the paper hoped to support settler farms in the colony. Expressing this view, a writer for Südwest explained that the colonial agriculture industry needed a land credit institution because settler farmers struggled to pay land costs alongside the price of creating a farm and the long time before these investments returned substantial results. He or she stressed the importance of agriculture to the colony’s economy, and called on the Reichskolonialamt to recognize the “necessity of quick help” to create such a lending agency.74 Another journalist similarly praised the effort and money that settler farmers put into the territory, and argued that they deserved a land credit institution with favorable terms due to their Meliorationsbarbeiten (ameliorative work).75 Although the article did not explicate why agriculture was beneficial, it emphasized the role of colonial farmers as societally beneficial. Such a perspective possibly rested on abovementioned beliefs that overseas farms could provide long-term financial stability to GSWA and food to the nation as a whole. Sentiments concerning the issue of credit reinforced the important role of settler farmers in Südwest’s understanding of the German colonial project. Colonial farmers, according to the newspaper, were responsible for improving and developing the land, and thus deserved assistance and economic investment in order to further their work. In an article looking back at the year 1912, for example, a journalist reflected on the continued

74 “Das staatliche Bodenkredit-institut u. der Kolonialkongreß.” Südwest, 9 December 1910, 1.
importance of farm work as the backbone of colonial development and listed land credit as the first and foremost way to support agriculture. After the national government founded a colonial Landwirtschaftsbank to provide credit in 1913, the publication continued to push the issue. One writer praised the bank as a positive development, but also noted that it had taken a long time to come into existence and expressed the desire for quicker utilization of capital to distribute loans in the future. Südwest’s emphasis on land credit, even after its initial demands for a relevant institution were met, further indicate the importance of settler farms to the paper’s colonial vision.

Another agrarian cause advocated by the paper was access to water. Settler farmers in GSWA were particularly interested in the topic, as the colony’s dry climate placed limits on its agricultural markets and production. Colonial farmers were dissatisfied with the government’s irrigation efforts and made attempts to drill for water to support more crops and livestock, to little success. In line with its agrarian economic stance, Südwest frequently pressed for increased access to water as a key element of the colony’s development. This topic was present in the newspaper’s first issue, in which a journalist implored the reader to support every form of water development available, reminding him or her that the agricultural industry was in a precarious position due to the threat of drought. The paper’s solution to the Wasserfrage (water question) was a series of government-funded dams that would control the flow of GSWA’s rivers and thereby provide more effective irrigation. Unlike the issue of land credit, the water question

77 “Jahresbericht der Handelskammer Windhuk: Bodenkredit.” Südwest, 30 January 1914, 5.
78 Press, Blood and Diamonds, 68.
79 “Kein Regen.” Südwest, 2 December 1910, 6.
80 “Zur Wasserfrage.” Südwest, 13 June 1911, 1.
generally remained unanswered. *Südwest* repeatedly criticized the colonial authorities for their inaction concerning the important agrarian matter. In a piece concerning a meeting of a colonial council, for instance, a writer noted the significance of irrigation to the colony’s agricultural industry. He or she closed the article by remarking upon the council’s unfortunate *Flauheit* (insipidness) regarding the questions of water management.81 Such criticisms continued into 1914, as demonstrated by an article in which a journalist expressed doubts that the council would pass an important law to facilitate the building of dams in GSWA.82 The topic of water development serves as another example of *Südwest*’s agrarian vision of the German colonial project. It indicates that the newspaper aligned itself with the interests of settler farmers as its chief economic concern, and it viewed the strength of settler farms as the key to its financial success.

Although the publication favored farmers over merchants, this is not to say that it opposed the latter group, or that it solely acted as a mouthpiece of colonial agriculture. *Südwest* also advocated mercantile interests, particularly those related to the GSWA’s mineral resources. It criticized the *Reichskolonialamt*, for instance, because it had interfered in the colonial diamond trade by not allowing companies to inspect diamond fields in order to evaluate their content.83 Similarly, the paper strongly opposed government quotas on diamond extraction as a threat to the colony’s diamond industry and its economy in general.84 Such concerns, however, had a secondary importance in relation to agrarian interests. While explaining the significance of settler farms as the

81 “Ein Rückblick auf die Landesratstagung.” *Südwest*, 20 May 1913, 1.
82 “Die Landwirtschaftsbank und das Wasserrecht.” *Südwest*, 17 February 1914.
83 “Wer hat die Schuld?” *Südwest*, 13 December 1910, 2.
84 “Kontingentierung der Diamantproduktion?” *Südwest*, 26 August 1913, 1.
colony’s economic backbone, a journalist wrote that in contrast to agriculture, diamonds were a limited resource that would eventually become depleted.\footnote{An der Jahreswende.} As such, the paper repeatedly communicated the viewpoint that profits from the colonial mines were positive, but that it should facilitate the development of agrarian enterprises. For example, an article concerning the discovery of tin in a western region of the colony concluded with the hope that increased activity in the area would result in a new market for colonial agriculture.\footnote{Das Zinn am Orongo.} Another article similarly wished for another fifteen years of massive diamond profits in order to fund a water development plan.\footnote{Die außerordentliche Tagung des Landesrates und die dort gefaßten Beschlüsse.} Despite the newspaper’s support for the colony’s mining industry, \textit{Südwest}’s descriptions of these trade concerns reinforced the greater importance of settler farms. Whereas mineral wealth such as diamonds offered a lucrative but extractive and finite source of wealth, agriculture represented the development of the colony’s natural resources and a long-term manner of economic stability according to the publication’s writers. Accordingly, the newspaper chiefly communicated mines as important to the extent that they could benefit agrarian interests.

The financial viewpoint expressed in the pages of \textit{Südwest} corresponds with a prevalent German perspective during the country’s colonial period that considered settler farmers as ideal colonists. In GSWA, this model image was the farmer who cultivated his land through his own labor (with the assistance of African agricultural workers).\footnote{Birthe Kundrus, \textit{Moderne Imperialisten: Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien} (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 49.}

\footnote{An der Jahreswende.} \textit{Südwest}, 31 December 1912, 1.  
\footnote{Das Zinn am Orongo.} \textit{Südwest}, 2 June 1911, 2.  
\footnote{Die außerordentliche Tagung des Landesrates und die dort gefaßten Beschlüsse.} \textit{Südwest}, 18 November 1913, 1.
Although the newspaper did not frequently describe this viewpoint in explicit terms, some descriptions of settler farmers indicate such an understanding. An article concerning the colony’s agricultural progress, for instance, credited “the energy of our farmers” as the foremost reason for the development of farmland. In light of the significance that Südwest assigned to agrarian matters, the phrasing communicates that the labor of settler farmers was the main force advancing the all-important colonial agricultural economy. A poem published in the paper provided a more explicit description of this economic group’s status as hardworking, ideal colonists. The central figure is a diligent farmer who loses his capital as a result of colonial challenges such as a lack of water. Nevertheless, he remains in the colony and continues to work odd-jobs in the hope of better days. Such a portrayal of an industrious and suffering settler farmer reflects the newspaper’s primary focus on colonial agriculture. The poem stressed the paper’s understanding of settler farmers as a hardworking and productive group that required advocacy regarding issues such as water development and land credit. Südwest viewed support of these concerns as critical to the creation of a flourishing agrarian industry through the negation of impediments to colonial agriculture such as limited access to water and the cost of colonial farmland.

An article concerning the potential white population of GSWA particularly clarifies the publication’s long-term agrarian vision for the colony. The writer proposed that if the Imperial government took steps to assist the colony’s agriculture, such as the creation of dams to control water resources, a massively increased farm system could

89 “Farmwirtschaft.” Südwest, 30 January 1914, 5.
support a much larger settler population. The author wrote that if the colony underwent such a transformation, it could hold a colonial populace of 600,000 within the next several years. Going a step further, the journalist added that if the mining industry assisted the agricultural industry in such colonial settlement efforts, the German population in GSWA could reach the millions within the next fifty years.\textsuperscript{91} Such goals appear lofty in light of the fact that in 1912, two years before the German colonial project in GSWA ended, the white population of the colony was only 14,816.\textsuperscript{92} Regardless of the extent to which the writer’s ambitions were realistic, they indicate the desired culmination of \textit{Südwest}’s agrarian approach to the colony’s economics. The newspaper’s proposed agriculture-oriented colony necessitated widespread German settlement, since a proliferation of settler farms would entail a growing colonial population in GSWA, as the article acknowledges.

Such a vision of the German colonial project’s future fits Corinna Schäfer’s description of \textit{Kulturarbeit} (culture work). Explaining the term, she writes that the German colonial press advocated the “transform[ation of] the land and the people according to racist principles in order to gain profit and to build a new \textit{Heimat} in the colonies.”\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Südwest}’s agrarian economic stance adheres to the concept, as it promoted German settler farms and the development of the colonial agricultural industry. In doing so, it pushed for the widespread conversion of African territory into colonial farms, as well as substantial changes to the racial demographics of the colony through the mass influx of settler farmers. As indicated in the abovementioned newspaper article

\textsuperscript{91} “Wieviel Weisse können in Südwest leben?” \textit{Südwest}, 22 July 1913, 1.  
\textsuperscript{92} Smith, \textit{The German Colonial Empire}, 51.  
concerning the white population of GSWA, this agrarian perspective sought not only financial gain, but also a new Heimat in Africa. The permanent settlement of colonial farmers in a large agricultural industry necessitated a new German homeland abroad. This imagined German territory included hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of potential nationals. In accordance with the period’s colonialist racial beliefs (which this thesis discusses in the following section in greater detail), colonists such as the writers of Südwest viewed these pushes for greater German dominance in Africa as Kulturarbeit. Expressing such a view, one journalist wrote that settler farmers required government intervention to support their efforts to enact kulturelle Entwicklung (cultural development) because they faced difficulties in the colonies that were generally not found in Kulturstaaten (cultured states). To rephrase, the paper viewed its economic stance as enacting a cultural mission to Africa. The development of colonial settler farms established German spaces and involved the German cultivation of land, thereby spreading the nation’s culture to a part of the world that, according to popular European colonialist views, lacked any of its own.

Despite the efforts of publications in favor of settler farms such as Südwest, and in spite of frequent debates within the German government concerning the colony’s finances, GSWA never became a lucrative settler colony. Nevertheless, the newspaper’s strong advocacy for an agriculture-based colonial economy contributed a financial perspective to the colonial discourse with important implications for national identity. It supported the popular German perception of settler-farmers as the ideal colonists who

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95 Prein, “Guns and Top Hats,” 102.
brought development and culture to supposedly uncultured places such as Africa through their hard work and toil. Furthermore, the paper articulated a national vision in which these figures played a decisive role in the creation of a profitable *Heimat* abroad. The publication’s criticisms of colonial authorities for insufficiently addressing agrarian subjects, such as land credit and water management, directed attention towards a proposed path of development in which settler farmers created a Germanized region of Africa with a strong colonial agricultural market and a large German population. Although this vision did not come to pass, it offered an agrarian form of national identity. This imagination communicated German strength and capability as masters of colonial land who could transform African landscapes to their desires, if given the appropriate state support.
Race and the Perceived Contrasts between Blackness and *Deutschtum*

As a core element of European colonialist mentalities during the age of New Imperialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, race was fundamental to the discourse offered in the pages of *Südwest*. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck explicated the centrality of race to the European colonial worldview during the Berlin Conference in 1884, at which he declared that the goal of the conference was “to enable the natives of Africa to connect to civilization by opening up the inside of this continent for commerce.” Such a perspective considered European profit as an inherent civilizing good to colonial subjects, the latter of whom this viewpoint deemed voiceless.96 The period’s popular colonialist perception of Africans as ‘uncivilized,’ inferior people who were subordinate to the interests of white Europeans was the basis of much of the newspaper’s commentary concerning race. It advocated a racial hierarchy in which the indigenous population of GSWA occupied a distinct and subservient position underneath a ruling German colonial class. *Südwest* premised this desired caste system on assumptions of German racial superiority over colonial subjects, thus communicating to its readers a form of racialized national identity.

During the nation’s colonial period, popular German perceptions of African inferiority included numerous negative racial stereotypes. These racist beliefs communicated supposed German supremacy over Africans, and they provided justification for colonialist intervention in the lives of black subjects on the basis of white supremacy. One such viewpoint considered Africans to be naturally slothful and

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disobedient, thus requiring the “firm hand” of German authorities in order to force them to work through means such as corporal punishment. In the case of GSWA during the years following the end of the Herero-Nama War in 1908, German colonists adopted a view of Africans as dangerously opposed to what they considered a proper racial hierarchy. Continued black resistance to imperial governance following the conflict led colonists to consider Africans as menacingly insubordinate, and they therefore deemed it essential to monitor and combat black defiance, both violent and non-violent. These two stereotypes of Africans—as idlers to be compelled into labor and as threats to be neutralized—were most prominent in Südwest’s discussions of race-related topics. Such commentary focused chiefly on utilizing black work for the benefit of the German colonial project, or on opposing what the writers considered as dangers to the racial order of GSWA. It should be noted that popular German racial beliefs during the period deemed whiteness as a necessary part of Deutschtum. Accordingly, the publication’s white supremacist perspectives have important implications for German identity, as they describe racial distinctions that many considered a defining feature of being German.

One particularly important racial topic in the pages of Südwest was labor. Following the Herero-Nama War, the Reichskolonialamt pursued a “semifree” labor system that encouraged Africans to adopt a “European work ethic” and find employment in service of German colonists. Although the government used indirect methods such as expropriations of indigenous land and work requirements to meet the economic needs of

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99 Blackler, An Imperial Homeland, 150.
colonial industries, demand for African labor in GSWA continued to exceed supply significantly during the remainder of the colony’s existence, in large part due to the recent genocidal war.\textsuperscript{100} Indeed, German soldiers killed over eighty percent of the Herero population and over fifty percent of the Nama population, the territory’s two largest ethnic groups, during the conflict.\textsuperscript{101} The writers of \textit{Südwest} considered the lack of African labor a critically important issue, and repeatedly encouraged the government to use more aggressive methods to place colonial subjects under German employment. One article, for instance, approvingly transcribed a speech given at a meeting of a colonial farmer’s association in which the speaker called for the police to more vigorously monitor colonial subjects and more actively force unemployed Africans into colonial labor. Concurring with the farmer, a writer for the paper added that the black labor shortage was “one of the sorest points of our economic life” that “only a ruthless crackdown of the government” could fix.\textsuperscript{102} The article indicates the publication’s racial views concerning the relationship between Germans and Africans in connection with the labor shortage. Namely, it demonstrates the newspaper’s dehumanizing perspective that encouraged Germans to brutally coerce Africans into the service of colonists for the sake of colonial profit. A similar article compared African workers to dogs and argued that the police should beat black farmhands who flee from colonial farms (as one would treat an escaped dog, the writer states) so that they would fear doing so again.\textsuperscript{103} Such a perspective reinforced the position that colonial authorities could and should use harsh

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{100}Zimmerer, \textit{German Rule, African Subjects}, 291–292.
\bibitem{101}“Herero Genocide in Namibia.”
\bibitem{103}“Vorschläge zur Abhilfe der Arbeiternot.” \textit{Südwest}, 19 May 1911, 6.
\end{thebibliography}
measures to force Africans into work for colonists. In addition to expressing Bismarck’s colonialist view that white financial interests take priority over the preferences of black people, this labor stance also sought to enforce an economic racial hierarchy in which Africans reported to German bosses.

As indicated by the paper’s push for more active conscription of indigenous work, the German government’s post-Herero-Nama-War labor system did not bring as much of the remaining African population into colonial employment as some colonists wished. As part of its envisioned overseas Kulturarbeit, the German settler press argued that colonial subjects were lazy and needed to become poor laborers in order to learn work ethic, thereby becoming more ‘cultured’ in the process.\textsuperscript{104} Südw\textsuperscript{e}t\textsuperscript{w}est articulated this viewpoint and applied it to the case of GSWA. A journalist, for instance, praised the economic burden of a tax on colonial subjects in German Cameroon because it supposedly taught them to work in order to pay it, and he or she noted that the colony achieved success despite a low demand for indigenous labor.\textsuperscript{105} The writer expressed support for such a tax in GSWA, and the mention of the labor market implicitly argued that the measure would produce even more work ethic in a colony where there were many available jobs for colonial laborers.

Südw\textsuperscript{e}t\textsuperscript{w}est also connected the idea of indigenous sloth to the behavior of the colony’s black population who lived outside of the colonial system. A published write-in letter, for example, decried the Eingeborenen (natives) who owned cattle and therefore “do not have to work” since their daily tasks involved overseeing grazing animals. It

\textsuperscript{105} “Allgemeine Eingeborensteuer in Kamerun.” Südw\textsuperscript{e}t\textsuperscript{w}est, 20 May 1913, 5–6.
concluded that the local district council should find a way to prevent such “laziness” and “evil.” 106 Similarly, an article criticized the colonial police for allowing a population of Africans to maintain a hunter-gatherer “vagabond life” instead of directing them to settler farms. Arguing that the indigenous group of a few hundred might be receptive to labor on colonial farms, the writer commented that they were “actually willing to work.” 107 In line with the concept of Kulturarbeit, such pieces of writing communicate the viewpoint that participation in the colonial system was necessary to developing African work ethic. Those who lived outside of colonial employment and maintained their existence as cattle farmers or hunter-gatherers were not ‘truly’ working, according to this perspective, and required German intervention in order to abandon their laziness and instead adopt a culture of diligence. This racist mentality provided moral justification for the coercion of Africans into colonial labor, as it portrayed such efforts as an attempt to instill culture and virtue within the colony’s indigenous population.

In accordance with the publication’s agrarian economic stance, much of Südwes‘t’s approach to the black labor shortage centered on providing work for settler farms. As the economic and working conditions of colonial farm labor in GSWA were particularly poor, settler farmers experienced exceptional employment-related difficulties due to indigenous agricultural workers regularly leaving farms in order to flee grueling circumstances. 108 Discussing the labor shortage in 1914, founder and editor Rudolf Kindt mentioned his frustration that the government could not “stamp the natives out of the ground,” that is to say, that the authorities could not force Africans who escaped work

106 “Eingesandt.” Südwes‘t, 7 July 1911, 3.  
requirements out of hiding in the bush, and he expressed the wish that the colony’s available African labor pool work primarily on farms. Kindt’s commentary indicates his publication’s agrarian orientation concerning the colonial workforce, as he expressed the chief desire to direct Africans outside of the colonial system to the agricultural industry. Correspondent to this perspective is the topic of runaway black farmhands, which was pertinent to both colonial labor shortages and the interests of settler farmers. The newspaper repeatedly discussed measures to keep indigenous laborers on farms, such as “a ruthless crackdown of the government” concerning the enforcement of employment requirements and police beatings for escaped farmhands, as noted above. Such methods denote the paper’s view of racial hierarchy in relation to finances, as well as its dehumanized view of Africans that encouraged these cruelties in pursuit of bringing the colony’s black residents into a ‘cultured’ economic role as subordinate colonial laborers.

A particularly illustrative example of this race thinking is the publication’s support for tattoos as a solution to GSWA’s labor shortage. This proposition held that mandatory tattoos on the bodies of Africans would identity them at any time and allow colonial authorities to monitor their adherence to labor requirements and participation in the colonial economy as workers. One writer argued that such a measure was the only way to monitor indigenous laborers, whom the colonist called “masters in lies,” in order to prevent them from fleeing colonial labor. Recognizing the exceptional dehumanization involved in the act and anticipating readers’ opposition, the author argued that the step was not as physically painful as commonly thought and that it was necessary to resolve

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the labor shortage, particularly concerning colonial farms.\textsuperscript{110} The proposal was not unique in the pages of \textit{Südwest}. Another writer, for instance, similarly explained that giving tattoos was the only action that would make the labor status of Africans permanently visible and thus protect German farmers and other colonists from flights of indigenous labor. The author added that the \textit{Eingeborenen} gave themselves wounds for enjoyment, so one should not feel guilty about giving them relatively painless tattoos.\textsuperscript{111} Such commentary regarding forced tattoos indicates the deep sense of control over Africans to which German colonists felt entitled. \textit{Südwest} promoted the view that Germans had, and should exercise, the right to mark the skin of indigenous people in order to permanently brand them with their status as subordinate colonial laborers. This viewpoint, in contrast to stereotypes of African indolence and disobedience, characterized Germans as forces of white colonial order. It assumed that blacks were impudent and lazy, but that Germans were conversely hardworking and would diligently teach “natives” to become effective laborers. Such a standpoint promoted an image of imperial \textit{Deutschtum} in which Germans were willing to carry out the uncomfortable (as indicated by the writers’ justifications) but supposedly necessary measures in order to enforce ‘culture’ and racial hierarchy.

Although agrarian organizations such as \textit{Südwest} supported African tattoos, the colonial government found these proposals too extreme and rejected them as inflammatory.\textsuperscript{112} Perhaps realizing that this desired solution to the indigenous labor shortage was unachievable, the paper appears to have stopped promoting the viewpoint in

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\textsuperscript{110} “Vorschläge zur Abhilfe der Arbeiternot.” \textit{Südwest}, 19 May 1911, 6.
\textsuperscript{111} “Das Fanal im Süden.” \textit{Südwest}, 9 June 1911, 1.
\textsuperscript{112} Zimmerer, \textit{German Rule, African Subjects}, 241.
\end{flushright}
1912. The last article in support of this position further demonstrates the publication’s colonialist, agrarian perspective, however. A farmer wrote in to the paper to call for tattoos of Africans as a means of teaching *Eingeborenen* that they had to work in support of their colonial employer, which a journalist endorsed as true and taken to heart. Such a sentiment reflects the newspaper’s desire for a *Kulturarbeit* in which the indigenous population of GSWA learned ‘culture’ and “European work ethic” through a subordinate economic position in the colonial order.

Alongside the stereotype of Africans as disobedient idlers, *Südwest* also communicated a more threatening image of Africans as ominous dangers to the colonial order. This viewpoint developed in relation to GSWA following the outbreak of war in 1904. As a result of the conflict, a perspective emerged in German popular culture that viewed Africans as violent “savages” intent on rebelling against the imperial system. The legacy of the Herero-Nama War remained particularly prevalent in GSWA for the remainder of the colonial project, as colonists continued to fear open resistance to their rule despite a general lack of African military opposition after the conflict’s conclusion. Expressing such a concern, a journalist for the publication claimed that the Herero Rebellion proved the necessity of violent imperialist force, and that such actions were essential to combatting growing indigenous defiance. He argued that a soldier who fired upon noncompliant striking Africans had defended *Deutschtum* before the world and, in particular, before the colony’s indigenous population. The article reflects the

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113 "Ohne Eingeborene auf der Farm!" *Südwest*, 12 April 1912, 6.
115 Prein, “Guns and Top Hats,” 100.
paper’s view of Africans as dangerous opponents to colonial order, as well as its advocacy for state intervention to oppose any challenge to German rule in Africa. It indicates the core importance of such a staunch support of racial hierarchy to the publication’s understanding of *Deutschtum*. Through a strong defense of colonial authority against indigenous populations perceived as menacing, the newspaper asserted its racialized form of nationalism. The article indicated German strength and superiority in relation to colonial subjects through violent crackdown on dissenters such as uncooperative strikers. In doing so, it expressed the belief that Germans had the right and duty to use force in order to maintain GSWA’s system of white rule over the colony’s black population.

One manner in which the publication communicated such a sentiment, as evidenced by the abovementioned article, was opposition to crimes committed by Africans. Most commonly, the unlawful behavior in question was banditry, often concerning cattle. Following the mass colonial expropriation of indigenous-owned livestock in the aftermath of the Herero-Nama War, some Africans took to armed robbery in order to secure the important agricultural capital. The primary basis for this banditry was the traditional socioeconomic significance of cattle in southwestern Africa, but German colonists interpreted the behavior as organized anti-colonial resistance. Accordingly, the settler newspaper’s concern about cattle banditry reflects German fears about the maintenance of imperial rule. *Südwest* expressed this colonial perspective, and it promoted harsh measures against armed robbers as an issue of crucial importance to the German colonial project. For instance, one article praised the colony’s government for

handing down harsh sentences, including corporal punishment and the death penalty, to cattle bandits. Approving of the measures, the journalist wrote that only energetic policing and severe penalties could protect the colony’s farmers from the “roaming rabble” of indigenous robbers. The article demonstrates the publication’s strong opposition to armed indigenous defiance, and its support of harsh policing against any threats to racial dominance. In light of the paper’s agrarian economic vision, the desire to protect farmers takes on additional importance as a manner in which to advance a future colony dominated by German settler farms. Südwest also pushed the colonial government to take harsher measures against African bandits, communicating its particularly strong stance against indigenous crime. One journalist, for example, suggested that deportation of black robbers was insufficient, and that the state should instead execute the “eingeborene Schädlinge” (native pests) as a solution to the criminality. The strikingly exterminatory language that advocated the death penalty and called indigenous bandits “pests” indicates extreme hostility and concern for African crime. It communicated the understanding that such attempts to subvert white dominance through the black seizure of German-owned property was a grave danger to the colonial project, which therefore necessitated the most extreme countermeasures. Expressing a similar sentiment, a published letter proposed that a group of recidivist cattle bandits go to the gallows instead of prison, as they posed a continuous threat to colonial farmers and police while they remained alive. A journalist agreed with the letter writer, and regretted that undue sympathy for the thieves allowed the “eingeborene Schädlinge” another chance to

118 “Mörder und Viehdieb.” Südwest, 24 January 1911, 2.
Such sentiments indicate the extreme danger that black banditry allegedly represented in the eyes of the newspaper. It regarded these figures as “native pests” who warranted eradication due to their offenses against, and danger to, the German colonial project by defying its laws and seizing colonist-owned property. As such, it conveyed the viewpoint that Germans were defenders of a just colonial order with a duty to combat African lawbreakers.

Many of the perceived threats posed by GSWA’s indigenous population did not come from defiance or criminality, however, but from their supposed racial inferiority. The paper frequently discussed racial topics centered on the management of contact between Africans and Germans in order to maintain alleged genetic purity. This focus reflects a social development in the German overseas empire around the turn of the twentieth century. After several years of sexual relations between colonists and indigenous women, European sexual and racial norms led to a cultural backlash against such activities. Many Germans feared that prolonged contact with non-white women would lead to racial degradation and a new generation of non-German colonial offspring, prompting the government of GSWA to ban mixed-race marriages in 1905.121 This measure did not finalize the legal status of such partnerships, however, and writers of Südwes repeatedly criticized the national government for not aligning with the colony on the issue.

In one article, for instance, a journalist remarked that an effort in the Reichstag to ensure the lawfulness of interracial marriages represented a potential “ominous decision”

120 “Abermals eingeborene Viehräuber.” Südwes, 17 June 1913, 1.
that the colony must staunchly protest. The publication continued to oppose these partnerships after the Reichstag passed a resolution in May of 1912 to recognize their legality. Another article criticized a local official for allowing a mixed-race marriage and encouraged the colony to maintain its legal ban on these unions despite the national government’s resolution. The title suggested to readers that the legalization of partnerships between different races constituted “a declaration of war against the white race.” Such strong rhetoric in opposition to interracial marriages indicates the importance of whiteness to the newspaper’s understanding of Deutschtum and the colonial project. Through its defense of racial segregation, it communicated the belief that white colonists must remain in a distinct and superior position to non-white colonial subjects. This fear of association with Africans went largely unexplained, but likely rested on abovementioned racial assumptions that prolonged contact with non-whites would cause Germans to adopt the qualities of supposedly inferior races, as well as concerns about interracial children. After the Reichstag resolution, the publication continued to express opposition to the decision. It republished, for instance, an agricultural association’s declaration that the government must reverse its stance on interracial marriage for the sake of the race and the nation. Such a sentiment reinforces the paper’s understanding of nationhood, and the belief that both the colony and the German Empire as a whole would benefit by avoiding the allegedly harmful influence of non-whites. The nature of such a viewpoint cast the indigenous population as a racially inferior danger that threatened to degrade Germans through potential sexual contact.

123 “Eine Kriegserklärung gegen die weisse Rasse?” Südwest, 14 May 1912, 2.
Related to fears of mixed-race marriages was a concern about interracial children. The writers of Südwest viewed these so-called Mischlinge (half-breeds) as a threat to the colony’s racial order and sought state intervention to control them. This perspective coincides with a popular German desire for “racial hygiene”—which sought to maintain racial ‘purity’ by avoiding reproduction with groups deemed inferior—evinced by the ban on mixed-race marriages.¹²⁵ In light of such a view, interracial children represented racial ‘impurity’ and sexual contact between whites and non-whites. A published letter from an “esteemed source” articulated such a position. It argued that Mischlinge and “pureblood Germans” evidently occupied different social levels, and that those within the former group had little to no connection with the Heimat by nature of their race. As such, the writer determined that “the creation of a half-breed population must be prevented.”¹²⁶ The letter indicates the belief that whiteness was an essential component of Deutschtum, as it claimed that an interracial child’s indigenous ancestry marked him or her as separate from the homeland, regardless of simultaneous German parentage. According to this viewpoint, a mixed-raced population represented an existential threat to the German colonial project because it was supposedly inferior to “pureblood Germans” and could not represent the mother country.

Reinforcing the perspective that whiteness was necessary to Deutschtum, the newspaper published a call to prevent interracial children from acquiring German citizenship by birth.¹²⁷ The proposed legislation made explicit the idea that whiteness was

¹²⁷ “Eine Lücke im Gesetzentwurf über die Reichs- und Staatsungehörigkeit.” Südwest, 3 January 1913, 5.
a necessity to one’s inclusion in the national community, as it directly sought to exclude non-whites from being legally recognized as German on the basis of their race.

Explicating why colonists wished for such a measure, an article argued that colonists with *Mischling* children could not garner respect from their colonial laborers because they had demonstrably engaged in intercourse with an indigenous woman, and the writer added that private groups must take steps to combat mixed-race sexual relations through public education on the subject.\(^{128}\) The article clarifies the significance of racial distinction to such a colonialist mentality, and the corresponding anxiety that interracial children created within this framework. These children were living evidence of close contact between white colonists and African colonial subjects, and therefore blurred the lines of the racial hierarchy that colonialists wished to keep clear. Similarly, another article argued that whites must not supplement indigenous farm labor, because doing so would lead to more *Mischlinge*.\(^ {129}\) The connection of “*Mischlinge*” to the labor shortage further indicates the belief in strong dividing lines within a racial caste system, as it asserted that socioeconomic conditions between different racial groups must remain distinct in order to avoid sexual contact. Such viewpoints explain Südwest’s colonialist desire to limit the number of interracial children, as they demonstrated important encounters between whites and non-whites in a manner that challenged ideas of ‘racially pure,’ German, white supremacy over Africans.

Although the paper’s characterization of the colony’s indigenous population was overwhelmingly negative, it occasionally depicted Africans in a positive light. This


\(^ {129}\) “Eingeborenen-Sorgen in Deutsch-Südwest.” *Südwest*, 26 August 1913, 1.
image adhered to the characteristics that Germans perceived as the ideal traits of a colonial subject and wished to instill: “diligence, loyalty, conscientiousness, discipline and good order.” In other words, this perspective of indigenous people understood them as obedient servants. One piece of text that communicated such a view concerned a rumor that the Ovambo population in northern GSWA had killed a detachment of colonial soldiers. In response, the governor of the colony wrote to the newspaper to chide the colonial press for spreading these myths, noting that five thousand Ovambos worked on German railroad projects and had done nothing to warrant the disparaging gossip. A journalist for Südw est agreed with the sentiment, and argued that the publication had not played a role in spreading the rumors. The interaction demonstrates the positive image of Africans that both the governor and the publication deemed worth defending. Since they understood the Ovambo to be loyal subjects who worked diligently on behalf of colonial interests such as the railroad, they denounced colonial rumors of Ovambo treachery and murder as unfounded.

A particular occasion that demonstrates imperialist views of alleged indigenous obedience was the Kaisergeburtstag, a nationalist celebration of the Kaiser’s birthday. German colonists considered the holiday as an opportunity to include Africans in their national traditions and thereby inspire support for German rule. Südw est expressed such a perspective, and it positively noted, for example, the participation of Eingeborenen in the celebration’s associated military games. A journalist praised those

130 Zimmerer, German Rule, African Subjects, 396.
131 “Zu den Vorgängen am Okavango.” Südw est, 1 August 1911, 1.
involved as recognizing their place in a German country, and wrote that the colony could count on them in serious times.\textsuperscript{133} Similarly, another article recounted a colonist’s \textit{Kaisergeburtstag} speech to a crowd of Africans. The speaker demanded obedience to one’s government and employer, and received hundreds of loud affirmations.\textsuperscript{134} Such depictions of diligent loyalty among some members of the indigenous population convey the publication’s positive view of colonial subjects. In contrast to the negative stereotype of black indolence, this image communicated hard work in service of the \textit{Reich}, such as building colonial railroads, taking part in nationalist military competitions, and committing oneself to one’s colonial government and employer. Likewise, this perspective stood opposite to fears of African criminality or racial denigration. It instead viewed colonial subjects as obedient and trustworthy servants who aided, rather than threatened, the colonial project. This ideal image of indigenous people communicated to German readers a sense of national pride as powerful and effective colonial rulers. It suggested that the colonial power of the \textit{Kaiserreich} had earned the love and support of at least some subjects, who justly served it with deference. Moreover, it suggested that Africans had begun to accept the supposed superiority of Germans by taking part in the European mission to ‘civilize’ Africa as proclaimed by Bismarck at the Berlin Conference, thereby confirming associated concepts of German cultural and racial supremacy.

Colonialist thought in the \textit{Deutsches Reich} viewed the relationship between Europeans and Africans as a direct contrast—a literal black-and-white distinction.

\textsuperscript{133} “Kaisers Geburtstag in Rehoboth.” \textit{Südwest}, 4 February 1913, 2.  
\textsuperscript{134} “Die Feier der Eingeborenen in Windhuk.” \textit{Südwest}, 17 June 1913, 2.
between civilization and barbarity. As such, Südwest’s characterizations of GSWA’s indigenous population conveyed to readers a German identity that stood in opposition to such qualities. Supposed black laziness, for instance, conveyed comparative German industriousness, and the need to teach Africans “European work ethic.” The criminality of “eingeborene Schädlinge” such as cattle bandits painted Germans as comparatively just, and the newspaper’s advocacy for harsh legal responses laid out a national role as law-givers. Calls for strong social distinctions and racial segregation based on alleged black inferiority reinforced concepts of (often vaguely defined) German racial superiority. Even the positive portrayal of indigenous people as loyal servants conveyed a contrasting, yet simultaneously favorable, understanding of Germans as effective and powerful rulers who inspired the love and respect of their colonial subjects. As a newspaper that represented “the interests of the entire protectorate,” it was doubtlessly not coincidental that the publication’s depictions of Africans coincided with the goal of acquiring a source of disempowered black laborers to supply colonial industries. The advocacy of forced colonial employment, harsh enforcement of colonial law, entrenched racial hierarchy, and indigenous deference to German rule all served this objective. Thus, Südwest created a vision of national identity in contrast to Africans in accordance with its desire to build a profitable settler colony for Germans in GSWA.

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135 Langbehn, “The Visual Representation of Blackness During German Imperialism Around 1900,” 94.
Gender and the Masculine Colonial Ideal

Another important category of identity through which SüdwesL communicated its view of Deutschum is gender. In many ways, its perspective was decisively masculine. During the existence of Europe’s modern colonial empires, women had little decision-making power concerning colonial affairs. Such a condition was in accordance with the period’s male-dominated politics. There is no evidence to suggest that the newspaper challenged this state of affairs, and this section discusses how the publication represented the viewpoint of German colonial men. Nevertheless, the paper’s writers did not work with a male-exclusive audience in mind, and the editorial department clarified its desire for a readership of both German men and women. Although much of the newspaper’s gendered perspectives indicate a masculine emphasis, it also contained discussions of women-centered topics, albeit generally from a traditionalist and patriarchal standpoint. Through such commentary, the publication communicated a set of roles for men and women in its imagined Germany.

One of the many ways that the Herero-Nama War marked a significant turning point in the history of GSWA was its influence on colonial conceptions of gender. Adam A. Blackler explains that after the triumph of the Schutztruppe during the conflict and its dominance of the colonial landscape through genocide and the reassertion of racial hierarchy, the military victory instilled a sense of “imperial masculinity” among the colony’s male German residents. Describing the term, he writes that these Germans considered “bravado, self-reliance, strength, and cultural hierarchy as the foundation of

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137 Die Schriftleitung, “Bestellt ,SüdwesL!” SüdwesL, 6 December 1910, 1.
Germany’s authority in DSWA.” Süddeutsche Zeitung expressed such a gendered understanding of the German colonial project in its pages. A particularly important aspect of imperial masculinity communicated by the paper was support for the colonial military, the Schutztruppe. These figures were responsible for the colony’s newfound confidence, as explained by Blackler, and they represented traits associated with the concept of imperial masculinity such as prowess in combat and status as defenders of racial hierarchy.

Indicating its associated gendered perspective, the publication frequently defended the size and strength of the colonial military from the possibility of cost-saving, Reichstag budget cuts.

An article that expressed this sentiment argued that a potential decrease of the Schutztruppe was intolerable, as the possibility of rebellion still remained. The journalist wrote that the upkeep of the military was worth avoiding the much greater monetary costs and an unknown loss of “good and blood” of another uprising. In other words, the writer contended that the price of the colony’s armed forces was little in comparison to the threat to finances, lives, and livelihoods posed by another breakdown in colonial order as had occurred during the Herero-Nama War. This perspective reflects the importance of both militarism and the legacy of the recent conflict to the publication’s understanding of colonial affairs. Although the war had ended, fears of African resistance remained. The Schutztruppe thus represented a powerful and appealing national force that asserted authority over the indigenous population and protected the lives and property of Germans. Following budget cuts to the colony’s army, another article likewise argued in

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139 Ibid., 202–203.
140 “Verminderung der südwestafrik. Schutztruppe?” Südwest, 10 October 1911, 5.
favor of martial strength as a means of defending German rule. Writing that Herero and Nama people remained rebellious and resentful of their recent disempowerment, a journalist proclaimed that the Reichstag should increase, rather than decrease, the size of the colonial military. Emphatically, the writer also declared that “yet another further weakening of the Schutztruppe would be a disastrous step for which about scarcely anyone would want to take responsibility!”  

Although the article communicated anxiety that Germans might find themselves threatened by Africans, it also conveyed military power as an essential component of the German colonial project. The writer’s staunch opposition to any further diminishment of the Schutztruppe as disastrous to the colony demonstrates the belief that the continued existence of GSWA and martial strength were inextricably tied. Opposition to military funding cuts remained a key issue in the pages of Südwest for years. For a third example, another article similarly criticized the national government for decreasing its financial support of the Schutztruppe, arguing that the decision placed the colony in “a stage of complete uncertainty” as it struggled to set aside more funds for the army. The sentiment reinforced the idea that the colonial military provided imperial order and security, as the disruption of its finances represented disarray. Such articles in defense of a strong Schutztruppe indicate the paper’s belief in martial force as a source of both colonial authority and protection of the colony’s racial hierarchy against perceived African threats. In communicating this viewpoint, the publication expressed a form of imperial masculinity as described by Blackler.

142 “Der Schutzgebietsetat im Reichstage.” Südwest, 15 April 1913, 1.
Another popular figure that came to represent ideals of manliness in GSWA’s postwar culture was the settler farmer. Amidst a boom in colonial settlement following the conflict, many Germans took an interest in these agrarians as tireless workers whose labors reshaped the “rebellious landscapes” of Africa to their will, and who thereby cultivated a homeland abroad.\(^{143}\) As this thesis has already discussed in detail the image of the settler farmer as a hardworking master of the land, two additional examples will suffice to demonstrate its particular relationship to imperial masculinity. A journalist for \textit{Südwest}, for example, reflected on the hardships that settler-farmers had endured in response to a lack of available water. Continuing, the writer noted that the colonists were industrious and willing to develop the land, but that German capital had not been forthcoming with the necessary resources.\(^{144}\) The depiction conveyed a form of masculinity in line with Blackler’s description, as it portrayed the farmers as brave, self-reliant, and strong. According to the journalist, they had suffered through the difficulties and dangers of dry agricultural conditions but nevertheless remained resolute in their decision to cultivate the landscape, waiting only for the required capital. Likewise, an article concerning a crop-destroying wasp derisively noted that the colonial government had refused to give farmers any advice regarding the insects, and informed the readers of the correct manner in which to destroy its eggs.\(^{145}\) The writer similarly communicated to readers an image of hardy settler-farmers who managed the environment with their own hands, as it stressed that the colonial authorities offered little help and that farmers would have to combat the pests themselves. Such portrayals of settler-farmers in adherence with

\(^{143}\) Blackler, \textit{An Imperial Homeland}, 190–191.
\(^{144}\) “Um die Jahreswende.” \textit{Südwest}, 2 January 1912, 1.
the concept of imperial masculinity further indicate Südw est’s male-oriented perspective of the German colonial project, and the associated images of ideal colonists.

A third recurrent theme in the publication that reinforced a predominantly masculine colonial identity was the role of Turnen (gymnastic exercise). Turnen groups had a long history associated with German nationalism and manhood dating back to the early nineteenth century, and they served as a social activity that brought German men together for the purpose of improving strength and community.¹⁴⁶ In the case of GSWA, they played the same roles, but additionally maintained cultural ties to the metropole and preserved German colonial solidarity to the exclusion of outside groups such as Africans.¹⁴⁷ Südw est frequently noted the activities of Turnen groups, and the language that it used conveyed associated concepts of masculine strength. One such article, for instance, noted the entertainment provided by a Turnverein, and remarked that it served the important role of preserving one’s well-being.¹⁴⁸ The positive language implicitly endorsed the role of the Turnverein as a masculine and German association, and remarked upon the organization’s efforts to promote physical strength. A similar article discussed a planned race held by a Turnverein. The author noted that the distance was originally planned to be longer, but that the dangerous climate of GSWA made such a length too hazardous.¹⁴⁹ Such rhetoric further supported the organization’s reputation as manly and strong in a colonial context, as it portrayed its gymnastic exercise activities as uniquely demanding and risky within the atmosphere of southwestern Africa. In one case,

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 77–78.
¹⁴⁸ “Vom Turnverein.” Südw est, 20 August 1912, 2.
¹⁴⁹ “Wettmarsch des Turnvereins.” Südw est, 22 July 1913, 2.
the ties to the metropole offered by a Turnverein were particularly explicit, as an article noted that a delegation of members from Windhoek took part in an inauguration ceremony of a stadium in Berlin and stood before the Kaiser. Expressing pride at the colony’s involvement in the nationalist ceremony, a journalist remarked “heart and hand to the fatherland!” The article uniquely clarified the masculine association’s important cultural ties to the German homeland and its importance to the identity as both a man and a German. Turnen’s importance in the newspaper offers another example of its masculine form of colonial nationalism, as it represented associated concepts of strength within the context of the explicitly all-male organizations.

One factor that likely influenced the publication’s gender biases was the lopsided ratio of men and women in the colony. Despite attempts to bring the number closer to parity, the ratio of single white men to single white women was about seven to one by 1913, in large part due to assumptions that the colony’s climate posed health risks to women. Such a disproportionately male population probably had an influence on the paper’s perspective regarding its colonial reporting, as the colony’s Germans were overwhelmingly male. Many Germans wished to see a greater number of German women in the colony, however, in line with dominant beliefs concerning ‘racial purity,’ discussed above in regards to mixed-race marriages and interracial children. Particularly after the Herero-Nama War, colonialist women’s organizations promoted female emigration to GSWA in order to win what they perceived as a “race war” that followed the combat. Nevertheless, dominant patriarchal colonial attitudes generally focused almost

151 Walther, “Sex, Race and Empire,” 50.
152 Wildenthal, German Women for Empire, 1884 – 1945, 154–155.
exclusively on the role of German women as producers of white German children, which such women’s groups found overly limiting.\footnote{Ibid., 132.} Despite its masculine leanings, \textit{Südwest} did not express such a sentiment, and it instead encouraged a role for women in the colony beyond a reproductive one.

By the later years of GSWA, moderately feminist colonialist women’s groups articulated the view that German women were protectors of culture, and were thus key to the preservation of a German cultural character in the colonies.\footnote{Ibid., 168.} The newspaper articulated this viewpoint repeatedly. An article that recalled choice excerpts from speeches given during the \textit{Kaisergeburtstag}, for example, affirmed a speaker’s view that German women played an important role as quiet keepers of domestic order. In doing so, the speaker argued, they extended German manners and customs to the colony.\footnote{“Die Enthüllung.” \textit{Südwest}, 30 January 1912, 1.} Such a perspective aligned with the colonialist women’s groups that advocated women as bearers of German culture in the colonies, as it communicated the importance of traditional domesticity as a form of \textit{Deutschtum} to implant in GSWA. In accordance with the sentiment, the publication encouraged women’s education in order to instill the qualities that it saw as important to female colonial life. One article, for instance, praised a colonial women’s school that taught household skills such as baking and sewing.\footnote{“Kolonial-Frauenschule.” \textit{Südwest}, 22 July 1913, 1–2.} Although such a viewpoint consigned German women to domestic life, it coincided with the stance of certain female colonialist groups and did not convey the dominant, patriarchal colonialist understanding of women as child producers and nothing else of
significance. Rather, it assigned importance to women as preservers of German culture within the colonial household. Moreover, the publication repeatedly noted the work of women’s groups that organized cultural events. For example, a journalist positively recounted a colonial women’s group’s efforts to assemble a children’s festival and set of plays, praising the “delightful performances” and calling upon readers for donations.\textsuperscript{157} Likewise, another writer commended a colonial Frauenverein’s preparation of and participation in a celebration of the German Colonial Society.\textsuperscript{158} The support for these activities reinforced the perception of women as important to the culture of the German colonial project. It further communicated them as maintainers of national tradition, in this case concerning rituals such as German plays and festivals. Although there is little to suggest that the newspaper was feminist, it did align with some female colonialist groups in its position that considered German women important to the maintenance of cultural Deutschtum abroad.

Despite this joint perspective in relation to moderately feminist German colonialist organizations, Südwest did not share the more radical feminism of other colonialists. Some German feminists did not merely view women as cultured colonists, but also as strong and independent figures who could control both the land and people of Africa within the (traditionally male) framework of the settler-farmer.\textsuperscript{159} The newspaper did not share this manner of gendered thought, as demonstrated by its protectively paternalistic attitude towards colonial women. It repeatedly communicated the view that

\begin{footnotes}
\item[157] “Fest des Swakopmunder Frauenvereins.” Südwest, 6 June 1911, 2.
\item[158] “Das 10. Stiftungsfest der Abteilung Winduk der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft.” Südwest, 30 September 1913, 1.
\item[159] Lowenthal, “She is the Victor,” 84–85.
\end{footnotes}
German men needed to act in order to save German women from the colony’s indigenous population. In support of an ordinance to prohibit Africans from using the sidewalk in the city of Swakopmund, for example, a journalist wrote that such a legislation was necessary because “cheeky” Eingeborenen frequently and intentionally jostled women while using public walkways for their work. After the city passed such a measure, another article praised it because it would end the supposed frequency of black men knowingly bumping into women on Swakopmund’s sidewalks. The publication’s position that male politicians (as women could not hold office) should protect women from aggressive Africans indicates that the paper did not convey the image of the independent, woman settler-farmer. Instead, it expressed the belief that German women were at the mercy of black men and required the protection of colonial men, in this case from jostling on sidewalks.

Concerning a different subject with more gravity, the paper repeatedly expressed a racist paternalism towards women in regards to rape. In response to the rape of a white woman by a black man in South Africa, for instance, a journalist wrote that colonial authorities must implement the death penalty in such cases to deter black sex crimes against white women. Rhetorically, the writer asked how else a white man could feel comfortable leaving his wife on a farm amidst the supposed “lustfulness” of its indigenous laborers. A similar article written in response to a Herero rape of a German girl called for harsh legal repercussions to prevent similar offenses, and commented that

few colonists would leave their female relatives alone on a farm without a white male present due to associated concerns. The publication’s discussions of rape thus reinforced ideas of paternalism in relation to racial fears regarding alleged black lasciviousness and criminality. It communicated the idea that white women were constantly under sexual threat by indigenous men, and that only white men could protect them. Such views that white woman could not defend themselves if left alone with black men run contrary to the image of the independent woman settler-farmer who was self-sufficient in an equivalent manner to her male counterpart. They instead conveyed a male-oriented belief in paternalism and the opinion that women were ultimately defenseless against the supposed dangers of Africa’s indigenous population.

*Südwest*’s particular fears regarding the rape of white women by black men reflect the subject’s overlap with multiple important aspects of the publication’s colonial worldview. They reinforced, for example, worries about supposed African criminality as a danger to the colony’s system of racial hierarchy. Concerns that indigenous men were violent rapists corresponded to the popular German stereotype of the black “savage” who threatened white rule and safety. Additionally, these sentiments indicate a gendered sense of alarm at the state of GSWA’s white, female population. Colonists such as the writers of *Südwest* sought to maintain a white populace, and to prevent the existence of “Mischlinge.” Pairings between white men and women were difficult, however, in a context in which single white males outnumbered their female counterparts at a rate of seven to one. As such, this imperial mentality considered white women as critically important to the territory’s future. Sex crimes involving black men and white women thus

represented a reversal of desired colonial sexual relations. Within a racist framework that viewed women as valuable producers of ‘pure’ German children, intercourse between an indigenous man and a white woman was deeply offensive to a belief in racial separation. Moreover, the violent and criminal nature of rape particularly challenged conceptions of masculine German dominance in which German men maintained imperial order. It suggested that male colonial authorities struggled to prevent the allegedly sinister impulses of Africans, and could not prevent interracial sex. Altogether, black rapes of white women represented many of the newspaper’s deep fears concerning race and gender. As such, the publication directed particular attention towards the subject in order to combat a crime that was uniquely egregious within its colonial worldview.

In many ways, the gendered form of colonial German identity offered in the pages of Südwest adhered to the concept of imperial masculinity. It communicated the importance of qualities such as strength and self-sufficiency in a manner traditionally understood as male as explained by Blackler. Revered figures who adhered to such a mentality included the soldier and the settler farmer, and they often served as the paper’s examples of ideal German colonists. Moreover, paternalistic attitudes towards female colonists clarified the publication’s view that such imperially masculine qualities were not generally found in women. This stance communicated a gendered national mentality that understood the protection of women against the supposedly harmful nature of Africans as a virtue. Südwest not only wanted Germans to use their ‘masculine’ traits to combat black resistance and to develop settler agriculture, but also to defend women co-nationals. Such a form of national identity did not, however, consider women as merely sources of reproduction as some other male-oriented colonial perspectives of the period
did. Instead, it praised women in a traditional mold as domestic housekeepers and included them in its national colonial vision as bearers of German culture.
“Our New Homeland:” Distinctions between the Colony and the Metropole

As alluded to thus far in this thesis, the relationship between colony and metropole in GSWA was often complicated. Despite sharing a German identity, the desires of the national government and the colonial population as represented by Südwest ran contrary to each other in major ways, such as the disagreements concerning interracial marriage and the funding of the Schutztruppe. These important distinctions indicate that the newspaper’s colonial form of German identity understood itself as separate from the metropole in some significant areas. A brief quote from the publication concerning GSWA’s past encapsulates such a mentality. In reference to an upcoming talk concerning the subject, a journalist for the paper wrote that a speaker will discuss the history of “unserer neuen Heimat” (our new homeland).\footnote{“Hauptversammlung der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Abteilung Widnhuk.” Südwest, 16 April 1912, 2.} The phrase summarizes the newspaper’s understanding of colonial national identity in relation to the metropole. Although the colonists of GSWA belonged to a German Heimat, it was a new one that was distinct from the homeland found in Europe. Specifically, Südwest depicted the Germans in its African homeland as comparatively virtuous, knowledgeable, and (in accordance with its racist worldview) racially well-ordered in comparison to metropolitan Germans.

To be sure, the paper did not advocate national disloyalty to the Kaiserreich. One particular yearly example of its connection to the metropole was the occasion of the Kaisergeburtstag. The German colonial settler press took part in the nationalist celebrations just as the domestic press, thereby unifying fellow nationals across the globe
around the figure of the Kaiser. Südwes\textsuperscript{t}t was no exception to this rule, and a journalist praised the holiday for stressing “the unity of all Germans in service of the fatherland and of culture.” Such a sentiment demonstrated that the publication did indeed express a sense of shared community with the European Heimat and the broader population of Germans around the world. On the occasion of each Kaisergeburtstag, the paper continued to communicate identification with and love for the broader Reich in conjunction with the Emperor, indicating its loyalty to the German nation-state. In 1914, the last year of the newspaper’s publication, a writer similarly commended the emperor for leading the whole of the fatherland into powerful grandeur. The continuation of such nationalist rhetoric further demonstrated the unity between colony and metropole, and the joint German national project to which both belonged.

Nevertheless, Südwes\textsuperscript{t}t communicated to its readership a set of deep divisions between both German populations despite a shared sense of national community. As indicated by the frequent relevance of such disagreements to national governmental policy, many of these differences were political. Writers for the publication repeatedly explained the political interests of the colony as separate from those of the metropole in regards to party politics. In response to a write-in letter asking whom colonists should support in the Reichstag elections, for instance, a journalist wrote that colonists should not become lost in the “hustle and bustle” of parliamentary intrigue. The writer explained that the colony might accidentally gain the ire of a major party if it entered into such matters, and that the colonial government should instead advocate GSWA’s interests at a

\textsuperscript{166} “Des Kaisers Geburtstag in Swakopmund.” Südwes\textsuperscript{t}t, 31 January 1911, 2.
\textsuperscript{167} “Die Kaiserfeir in Windhuk.” Südwes\textsuperscript{t}t, 30 January 1914, 1.
distance from the Reichstag. They suggested that metropolitan politics were beholden to complicated party interests in a manner that the colony was not. Whereas the metropole embodied a complex tangle of political groups that one could unintentionally offend, according to this viewpoint, the colonies represented a cohesive set of non-partisan politics in line with the newspaper’s title proclaiming to represent the interests “of the entire protectorate.”

More explicitly, the paper approvingly republished a speech by the Reichskolonialamt state secretary in which he called domestic party politics an “evil fairy” that stood in opposition to colonial interests. He explained that the colonies should not become another political battleground for the Empire’s major parties, and stated that the German public should instead provide its general support for the colonial project. A journalist added that colonial circles could only respond with joy to such a message. The article further clarified the publication’s understanding of the difference between metropolitan and colonial political concerns. As explained by the state secretary, domestic politics were factional and potentially evil, as they represented the individual interest groups of parties. Colonial politics, on the other hand, were for the general good of Germany’s colonies, and thus more virtuous and deserving of national support. This understanding of a divide between metropole and colony painted colonists as comparatively altruistic and concerned with the common good of the Germans involved in their mission. As such, it also conveyed the political superiority of colonists in

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169 “Bedeutsame Reichstagsrede Dr. Solfs.” Südwest, 3 May 1912, 2.
conflicts with the national government, as it cast the former group’s concerns as public-spirited due to its lack of party politics.

One such significant disagreement not yet discussed in this thesis was colonial Selbstverwaltung (self-administration). Despite settler demands for political autonomy concerning finances and voting rights, the Reichskolonialamt considered diamond profits in GSWA too profitable to relinquish to a newly empowered settler-run government. As such, it only gave colonists the ability to vote for an advisory Landrat in 1908, which led to increased calls for more self-administration. Südwes 170 expressed such a desire for Selbstverwaltung in its pages, and one issue referred to the colony’s nascent self-administration as a young tree that had been planted in the ground but abandoned by its gardener and denied the necessary care. 171 The metaphor cast the colony as capable of extreme growth if given the proper care (presumably more autonomy beyond the advisory district council), and it described the metropole as a neglectful figure that had failed to develop such a promising opportunity.

Similarly, another article argued that the behavior of the advisory council had proven settler knowledge and capability of self-government, but that the colonial office had ignored its requests and refused to offer it more Selbstverwaltung. Providing an example of these conditions, the author noted that the Landrat had seriously deliberated the necessity of new tools for acquiring water, but that Reichskolonialamt had responded with a cool “no” in response. 172 This article likewise depicted colonists as capable and effective, while the metropolitan government brushed them off and refused to take them

170 Smith, The German Colonial Empire, 204–205.
seriously. Such a sentiment similarly conveyed a view of the Reich government as neglectful, and its lack of concern regarding the critical issue of water appeared particularly egregious within the context of the publication’s stance that settler farms were the only long-term path to colonial development.

Expressing the same viewpoint concerning the metropole’s unyielding behavior, a third example accused the Reich government of an unwillingness to offer any additional autonomy to settler governments, such as the right to settle parts of the colony reserved for the indigenous population. Such articles communicated the viewpoint that the interests of the colony and the metropole were at odds. As evidenced by the paper’s complaints concerning self-administration, the writers of Südwest felt that that national government’s unwillingness to extend power to settlers had stifled the colony. Colonial desires for measures in line with agrarian economic goals, such as acquiring more water resources or expropriating more African-owned land, were unfeasible due to a national government that did not offer settlers the authority to take such action. These unanswered requests for Selbstverwaltung conveyed to readers that the metropole was in some ways inconsiderate and patronizing, as it did not recognize the viewpoints of colonists and did not offer them the autonomy to which they felt entitled.

Südwest’s critiques of the metropolitan government concerning self-administration reflects increased colonial tensions between the GSWA and the Vaterland beginning around 1910. As those in many colonial industries remained dissatisfied with their economic growth, particularly agricultural interests, many colonists began to blame the metropole’s governance for their financial conditions and wished for more control.

over economic policies. Similar to the issue of Selbstverwaltung and in line with the paper’s agrarian economic stance, Südwest also advocated colonial development through the increase of exports to the German metropole. One related article called on the Reichstag to remove the tariffs on colonial goods so that the colony could start exporting meat to the European Heimat. A journalist for the publication noted that such a measure had not yet been taken because those in the domestic agricultural industry wrongfully viewed GSWA as an economic competitor and threat, and lobbied to maintain tariffs. As with the topic of self-administration, the coverage of agricultural exports depicted the metropole as an opponent of colonial interests that refused to relinquish any power. In this case, the metropolitan enemy was the domestic agricultural industry and its unwillingness to share space in the livestock market. This notion of competition reflected a sense that the colony was burdened by the metropole. A similar article took aim at a metropolitan magazine because it had criticized the concept of a colonial horse export market as a potential danger to domestic horse breeding. The journalist for Südwest fumed that the European publication “appears with some journalistic rejoinder as soon as the protectorate wants to produce something that farmers can bring to market” such as horses, or meat in other cases, and yet the paper had the nerve to call itself “colonial-friendly.” In regards to topics such as Selbstverwaltung and exports, Südwest portrayed a form of colonial national identity as put-upon and somewhat oppressed. Ironically, the source of this persecution was the old Heimat itself. In both cases, the paper communicated the idea that German colonists were locked out of advancement by

175 “Die Farmer und die Absatzfrage.” Südwest, 8 October 1912, 1.
stronger metropolitan power structures. Concerning self-administration, the domestic force was the national government that disallowed more colonial autonomy. Regarding exports, the metropolitan source of oppression was domestic industries that sought to prevent GSWA’s entry into new markets because they viewed such a development as a threat to their own profits.

Another important area of division between the metropole and the colony was the topic of race. As previously noted, many colonists saw those in the European Heimat as unaware of important racial realities that they supposedly understood firsthand from their perspective in GSWA. In an article concerning the proposition of forced tattoos for African laborers, for example, a colonist noted that there would likely be “wailing of old maids of both sexes” in the metropole if the colony were to go through with such a plan, since these “old maids” did not understand the difficulties of controlling indigenous workers. Such a perspective indicates the viewpoint that metropolitan Germans were overly sentimental and sympathetic to black people, as it mocked them based on the assumption that they would find the dehumanizing practice repellant. Similarly, in an article concerning the views of fourteen colonists regarding the cause of slow development of the German colonies, multiple respondents answered that colonial administrators from the metropole were too compassionate towards indigenous people. Although the respondents were from East Africa rather than GSWA, a journalist for Südwest added that many residents of the colony would have responded similarly. These sentiments indicate the idea that Germans in the metropole had skewed racial

177 “Das Fanal im Süden.” Südwest, 9 June 1911, 1.
beliefs to the detriment of whites in the colony. Indeed, an article concerning the Reichstag’s approval for interracial marriages even asked if it represented “a declaration of war against the white race.”¹⁷⁹ As the publication did not consider the metropole to share its belief in racial hierarchy, which it considered essential to Deutschtum and German rule, it expressed a view of the old Heimat as dangerously ignorant of what it considered as racial realities and necessities. Accordingly, it expressed deep criticisms against those who threatened its system of imperial, white rule in Africa.

A particular metropolitan target of the publication was the Social Democrats. Although the paper generally avoided domestic party politics, it found the socialist party particularly worthy of scorn. This dislike likely originated in the fact that the organization maintained an anti-colonial stance and accordingly argued against sending funds and reinforcements to the colony during the Herero-Nama War.¹⁸⁰ Indicating why the party was so antithetical to the paper, Südwest criticized a Social-Democratic-proposed resolution to minimize expropriations of indigenous land. A writer remarked that if such a law passed, even the bravest would lose faith in the German colonial project.¹⁸¹ Moreover, another article commented that the Social Democrats were ignorant of the colonial situation and lacked faith in the Schutztruppe after a member of the party argued that the colonial military would dissolve immediately in the event of war. Reaffirming the strength of the colonial military, the journalist wrote that “one does not get to know the world through the editorial meetings of the Social-Democratic camp.”¹⁸² Such criticisms

¹⁷⁹ “Eine Kriegserklärung gegen die weisse Rasse?” Südwest, 14 May 1912, 2.
¹⁸¹ “Zuckerbrot und Peitsche!” Südwest, 7 June 1912, 1.
¹⁸² “Ein Gesetzentwurf betreffend…” Südwest, 31 October 1911, 1–2.
of the party reflect the critiques of the metropole conveyed in the pages of the settler publication. The party’s efforts to protect indigenous land from expropriation challenged the complete authority over Africans that the paper promoted, thereby threatening the system of racial hierarchy that it viewed as critically important to German rule in GSWA. Social-Democrats also dismissed and criticized the colony in a similar manner to the Reichskolonialamt’s opposition to self-administration or domestic industry’s efforts to block the expansion of colonial markets. The party was critical of the colonial project as a whole, and doubted its effectiveness as demonstrated by the critique of the revered Schutztruppe. As such, the Social Democrats demonstrate in particular the important distinctions that the publication drew between colony and metropole.

Although Südwest considered GSWA a German Heimat, it was a distinct homeland from that of Europe. Metropolitan Germans, in the worldview of the publication, were often dismissive, oppositional, or dangerously ignorant. Moreover, their politics had a basis in a flawed system of parties that acted in their own interests and occasionally counter to colonial interests in the case of Social Democrats. By depicting co-nationals in this manner, the newspaper portrayed colonial Germans as contrastingly genial, productive and knowledgeable of what it considered racial realities. It also communicated an opposite view of colonial politics as rightly ordered and oriented towards the German public good.
International Colonial Relations and German National Identity

Although Südwest’s commentary on the relationship between GSWA and the metropole indicated national divisions, the publication’s discussions of international colonial affairs communicated German unity in opposition to competing colonial powers. Germany’s entry into the realm of colonialism harmed its relations with England and France, and the governments of these major imperialist nation-states mistrusted the Kaiserreich as it competed with them for overseas territory. The German public was aware of such international rivalries, which contributed to a national sense of Einkreisung (encirclement) by hostile powers interested in containing German growth during the early twentieth century. This sentiment was particularly prevalent in the German settler press, as journalists were acutely aware of neighboring and competing colonial interests in Africa. Südwest adhered to this tendency, and its critical reporting on other imperial powers conveyed a competitive and defensive colonial identity.

International colonial competition became especially prominent early in the newspaper’s publication from April to November of 1911 during what is known as the Agadir Crisis. Following an uprising against the Sultanate of Morocco (a protectorate of France), the French government used the opportunity to assert more control over the territory, and sent soldiers into Morocco to achieve this goal. The government of the German Empire saw its own political opportunity in the crisis, and it sent armed ships to the Moroccan port of Agadir in order to extract colonial concessions from France. Although Germany acquired some territorial gains in central Africa as a result of the

183 Berghahn, Imperial Germany, 258–259.
ensuing negotiations, the English government openly proclaimed its support for France, to the surprise of German diplomats. In contrast to a quick capitulation by an isolated France as many Germans had expected, the unity expressed by England and France instead contributed to a sense of colonial encirclement. Many in the Kaiserreich felt that the imperialist nation-states conspired to block the growth of the German colonies, and tensions surrounding the crisis were a significant part of the international hostilities leading up to the First World War.\footnote{Bergahn, Imperial Germany, 262–263.}

As a publication deeply invested in the German colonial project, Südwest directed particular attention towards the Agadir Crisis and offered relevant commentary on the subject. In one article, for example, a writer described the arrival of the cruiser Berlin in the harbor of Agadir as a welcome response to years of “shameful treatment” by European powers that had ignored German interests in Morocco. The journalist was gladdened that after longstanding German forbearance (Langmut), the nation was finally asserting its claim to colonial territory in the northern African country despite the opposition of France, Spain, and England.\footnote{“Agadir.” Südwest, 1 August 1911, 1.} Such a sentiment established a significant understanding of the conflict as one that was important not only because it offered significant imperial land gains, but also because it represented the possibility of victory over the Kaiserreich’s colonial competitors. This framing reinforced the concept of a German identity that existed under a state of perceived encirclement and encouraged readers to combat Germany’s enemies in the colonial sphere for the sake of national honor. Similarly, a later article regretted that the ongoing negotiations had thus far only
dealt paltry French colonial land to Germany. The author complained that the minimal concession constituted a “slap in the face” against the nation, and warned readers that accepting such an insult would cause even more national indignities until an undefined “bitter end.”

Südwest’s emphasis on German honor during the crisis presented Germany as a put-upon community that needed to defend its pride from other colonial powers such as France. This understanding of Deutschtum supported the Wilhelmine state’s usage of its navy against rival colonial powers as an assertion of national strength, and viewed the imperial interests of the opposing nations as standing in direct contrast to its own.

Discussions of the treaty that ended the crisis reinforced the paper’s framing of the event as a zero-sum conflict between competing colonial powers. The publication considered the French concession of lands in in central Africa as a “success of German politics” because it greatly enlarged the German colony of Kamerun and gave the Empire complete control over the Sanga River. Evidently, the writers were satisfied that German honor had been upheld through the extraction of French overseas territory.

Another article towards the end of the crisis similarly praised the national government for rejecting English criticism of the forced concessions, and the writer congratulated the German ambassador to England for responding that that the Reich would maintain the treaty despite English threats. He or she ultimately credited the Kaiser’s leadership for the nation’s resilience in the face of international opposition, arguing that the emperor’s strength was beginning to bear political fruit.

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187 “Deutschland und die Marokkofrage.” Südw est, 12 September 1911, 1.
188 “Die Aufnahme des Abkommens in Deutschland.” Südw est, 7 November 1911, 1.
189 “Deutschland und England.” Südw est, 24 November 1911, 3.
portrayed international conflict as a necessary part of the German colonial project. In order to advance the interests of the overseas empire and protect the nation’s honor, the paper argued, Germany needed to stand up to the enemy countries such as France and England that surrounded it and sought to inhibit its growth. The Agadir Crisis thus demonstrated Südwest’s defensive view of Deutschtum in relation to international colonial affairs. Through its responses to the conflict, it depicted Germans as long-suffering people who had finally begun to claim the position on the world stage that they were owed, at the expense of the enemies who had denied them this due.

These diplomatic difficulties marked an important turning point for the paper, and the publication invoked international colonial hostilities more frequently after the event had inspired sentiments of encirclement among the writers. The newspaper’s discussion of the Kaisergeburtstag each January particularly indicates this shift. In 1911, for instance—before the Agadir Crisis—the newspaper’s reflections on the Kaiser were generally peaceful. A writer explained that the most positive aspect of the Emperor was his ability to unify all Germans, and he or she concluded the article with the need to work for the common good of the colony.190 By contrast, a front-page article honoring the Kaiser’s birthday in 1912 opened by noting the “dark clouds” of Germany’s political future as a result of the recent conflict, and it praised Wilhelm II for his foresight to build up a large navy in preparation for such hostilities. Describing arrogant French pride similar to when the nation had declared war on Prussia in 1870, as well as cold English policy aimed at denying Germany its “place in the sun,” the writer concluded that

Germans needed Hohenzollern courage to guide them through the difficult time.\textsuperscript{191} Such a noticeable distinction in tone, in connection with the recent international hostilities, indicates the impact that the event had on the publication’s perspective. From 1911 to 1912, the Kaiser’s exemplary role as an upstanding German shifted from his ability to unify to his powerful leadership in defense against the enemies that sought to prevent the Empire’s success. Similarly, an article marking the same occasion in 1913 once again chiefly praised the Emperor for building up the country’s navy. The journalist wrote that although England might soon declare war on the \textit{Kaiserreich} if the latter continued to succeed economically, the German people were safe due to the military preparation of Wilhelm II.\textsuperscript{192} Likewise, an article in honor of the Kaiser’s birthday in 1914 for a third time credited the buildup of Germany’s military as the Emperor’s largest achievement, and concluded by stating that the nation under Wilhelm II stood ready to draw its sword against its enemies as it had in 1866 and 1870.\textsuperscript{193} Such continued defensive and militaristic rhetoric demonstrates a shift in emphasis from national peace and common good will surrounding the \textit{Kaisergeburtstag} in 1911 to German unity against enemy nations in 1912 following renewed colonial conflict.

Of course, the Agadir Crisis was not the only moment of international hostilities during the early twentieth century prior to the First World War, and other diplomatically divisive events included a war between the Ottoman Empire and Italy beginning in 1911 and the Balkan Wars beginning in 1912. These events, however, had nowhere near the same prominence in \textit{Südwest} as this conflict over African territory, and the description of

\textsuperscript{191} “Des Kaisers Geburtstag!” \textit{Südwest}, 26 January 1912, 1.
the Kaiser’s birthday in 1912 explicitly invoked the conflict as signaling dark clouds in the Empire’s political future. This change in language to promote the Emperor as a defender against Germany’s opponents further communicated the importance of international competition to Südwes’t’s understanding of Deutschtum. The holiday of the Kaisergeburtstag was a unifying moment of nationalism that linked Germans in the colonies and the metropole in their declarations of support for Wilhelm II. As such, the language that the publication used to describe the figure emphasized—in line with the holiday’s nationalist sentiment—qualities that the newspaper admired and wished to promote within the broader Reich. These descriptions conveyed a combative national attitude in defense of German honor. Such a competitive understanding of the German nation stemmed back to colonial competition with France and England in 1911, and considered such nations as existential threats that wished to hinder German success in line with the concept of encirclement.

In addition to the language of international colonial rivalry communicated in the yearly Kaisergeburtstag articles, which were focused on large-scale geopolitics, Südwest also communicated such a sentiment in relation to local topics specific to colonial matters. These articles were often less explicit and dramatic in their language, but similarly described the German colonial project as existing in conflict with those of other nations. One such topic was criticism of imported labor from English colonies. The newspaper published the complaint of a German colonial merchant, for instance, who blamed Indian coolie workers for slow colonial economic development because they

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saved their money and sent it to relatives in India. Similarly, another article published the concerns of a colonial mining body that expressed distress at GSWA’s reliance on mine labor from Cape Town, South Africa, because the wages that the miners earned almost always flowed out of the German colony and back to that of England. Such concerns communicated the viewpoint that the German and English overseas empires were at odds with each other, and that the benefit of the English colonies came at a cost to those of Germany. These fears about the transfer of wages further indicate the importance of imperialist competition to Südwest’s national worldview. It considered the construction of a German homeland in Africa to exist in conflict with the profits of English overseas territories, and it thus wished to keep the flow of money within the German nation.

The settler newspaper’s understanding of Deutschtum drew contrasts between Germany’s colonial empire and those of other nations, most commonly England and France. It was not coincidental that they comprised two-thirds of the Triple Entente that stood opposite to Germany and the Central Powers during the First World War, and the paper responded to increased international tensions during the years leading up to the global military conflict. Most notably, it adopted a defensive stance in response to the Agadir Crisis of 1911 and considered rivalry with enemy imperial nations as a crucial component of the German colonial project. It viewed competition, such as the acquisition of overseas territory at France’s expense or a naval arms race with England, as necessary to its own survival and a requirement of asserting national honor. Moreover, Südwest

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communicated that these hostile nations existed in direct conflict with German interests. Its writers therefore wished to avoid conditions that benefitted competing colonies, such as allowing colonial wages to flow into rival territories including those of England. Such a perspective conveyed a German identity that was both powerful and threatened. It viewed Germany as strong and deserving of a globe-spanning “place in the sun” as an imperial world power, yet it deemed conflict with international enemies that encircled the nation necessary to achieve this goal.
Concluding Remarks

The writers of Südwest described in the pages of their publication a comprehensive understanding of the nation. This imagined Germany was built on the Kulturarbeit of settler farmers and their work to cultivate land in difficult climates. The envisioned nation had a deeply entrenched hierarchy based upon racist beliefs that considered blackness as inferior (but an importance source of labor) and as embodying qualities deemed opposite to Deutschtum, such as laziness and disorderliness. Südwest’s perceived national community was also overwhelmingly masculine and viewed men as the primary source of national stability and development, though it also assigned women a role, albeit secondary, as culture bearers. The newspaper’s vision of Germany also made important distinctions between the colony and the metropole. It praised colonists as superior Germans who were concerned with the common national good of GSWA’s settler colonial project. By contrast, it frequently disparaged metropolitan Germans as self-interested and detrimental to the national interests of a new Heimat abroad. Lastly, this German identity viewed the nation as existing under international imperial threat. This state of encirclement necessitated strong leadership and fierce competition in order to achieve and maintain the globe-spanning world power status to which Germany was entitled, according to those who created the publication.

These defining characteristics of Deutschtum as articulated in the pages of Südwest originate in the paper’s colonial mission. As a member of GSWA’s press that chiefly advocated “the interests of the entire protectorate” as its writers viewed such concerns, it communicated national perspectives in line with its guiding desire to create a successful German Heimat in present-day Namibia. This thesis has examined the
manners in which the publication’s commentary on German identity corresponded to the settler colonial project of GSWA and popular colonialist views. A promotion of agriculture, for instance, aligned with imperial desires to form a permanent German settler population with its own renewable colonial economy. The belief in racial hierarchy strengthened the socioeconomic positions of German colonists in relation to Africans, the latter of whom settlers considered productive sources of cheap, disempowered labor. Colonists generally considered masculinity (as they understood it) as necessary to ‘tame’ the harsh geography and supposedly savage indigenous population of GSWA into a ‘civilized’ German homeland. Many also viewed women as vital to the spread and maintenance of national culture abroad through activities such as organizing German cultural events. An idealization of German colonists corresponded with a popular colonial belief in Selbstverwaltung, and it more generally promoted pro-colonial interests. Finally, the paper’s concern with perceived encirclement and hostile colonial powers reflected a German desire for competition within the imperial realm. Such conflict sought to advance German colonialism at the expense of other imperial powers, as the Kaiserreich pursued during the Agadir Crisis. In all, the understanding of German-ness promoted by the publication was the product of its settler colonial worldview and mission. Through their advocacy of GSWA’s settler colonial project, the German settler writers of Südwest communicated a correspondingly imperial form of Deutschtum.

As such, the newspaper is an important example of overseas imperialism’s influence on national identity in the German Empire from 1910 to 1914. The colonists who created the settler paper communicated an understanding of the German nation and Deutschtum in accordance with their settler colonial mission. Through the consumption
of hundreds of editions over the course of around four years, German readers regularly absorbed these perspectives and incorporated them into their own national imaginations and self-identifications. A network of colonial discourse connected German settler press publications such as *Südwest* to other colonies and the metropole of the *Deutsches Reich*. Accordingly, the influence of the newspaper on national identities was not limited to GSWA, but instead impacted Germans around the world.
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