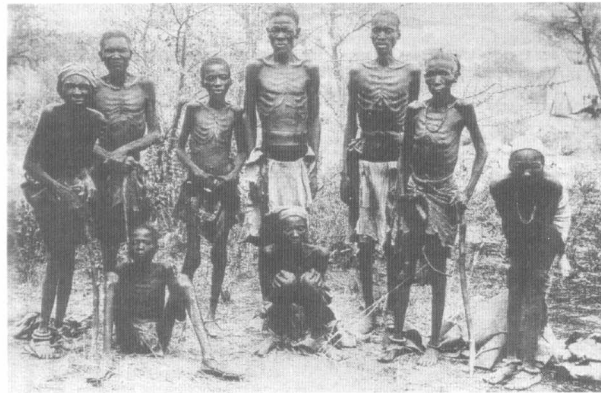


The Herero war – the first genocide of the 20th century?



Motto:

*"Those who cannot remember the past
are condemned to repeat it."*

George Santayana

Martin Weiser

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Credits for Photographs and Maps

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The picture on the front-page is from Bridgman, *The Revolt of the Hereros* and it depicts a group of Hereros after their ordeal in the Omahake.

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Prologue

In June 2001 a reparations suit against Germany was filed at a United States court. The Herero, a native group of Namibia, sued the German government for 2 billion USD. The German state was accused of having, from the 1890's "continuously violated the fundamental principles of international law in existence at the time by participating in the intentional extermination and destruction of the Herero tribe, enslaving them, and subjecting them to forced labour and torture".¹ Earlier that year legal action against Deutsche Bank and two other German companies was taken by the Herero as well. The companies were accused of having formed "part of the German colonial enterprise that employed explicitly sanctioned extermination, the destruction of tribal social organisation, concentration camps, forced labour and medical experimentation to advance their common financial and political interests".²

¹ New African; 2001; *Hereros Now Sue German Government*

² New African; 2001; *Hereros Now Sue German Government*

Introduction

The 20th century is sometimes called the "century of genocide". Never before have people been killing each other on such a scale, with so sophisticated methods and techniques, for so many reasons and seemingly without any scruples or mercy. Untold masses of humans fell victims to these massacres.

Many people believed that the 21st century would be different - that it would be one without wars, atrocities or cruelty - as though one small move of the clock hand could change everything. People have always hoped that a turn of a century would be the true turning point. However, their hopes have more often been betrayed than not.

Early in 2003 a conflict began in the scorched and poor region of Darfur in Sudan. Rebel groups started attacking government targets. As a revenge "self-defence militias", supported by the Sudanese government, began ethnic cleansing in the region; "slaughtering men, raping women and stealing whatever they can find."³ Some 200,000 Africans died as a result of the violence and almost 2,000,000 had to flee from their homes. The United States and a number of human rights organisations described the events in Sudan as genocide.

Almost exactly one hundred years earlier, at a place several thousand kilometers away, another conflict broke out. Although these two conflicts are separated by so many years and kilometers, they have a lot in common. We can only hope that the events in Darfur will not foreshadow the whole 21st century in the same way as the events, which began to unfold in South West Africa in 1904, foreshadowed the 20th.

The events of the Herero war.

In my thesis I will examine German colonial policies in South West Africa towards the natives from their first engagement in the area in 1883 up to the end of the Herero war in 1907. Further, I will try to establish if they were genocidal.

This is a theme hardly studied in the Czech Republic and as far as I am aware there is yet to be a serious attempt by a Czech scholar to examine it. There were several foreign scholars who have dealt with policies towards the natives in German colonies. However, it is not to my knowledge that any of them tried to apply specific definitions of genocide on these policies, in order to find out if the measures used were genocidal. This is where my thesis should have a substantial added value – it will introduce a neglected topic into the Czech academic environment and it will explore and analyse it using methods not employed before.

For my research I have only used foreign sources. There is a relatively large number of books, studies, articles and documents on German colonialism in general as well as on German South West Africa in particular. However, the vast majority of them has been written by Germans or Europeans and reflects, therefore, necessarily their subjective attitudes, approaches and goals. The only documents written in the period of my interest by an African are the so called "Hendrik Witbooi Papers". That is, obviously, not even nearly enough to obtain a better understanding of the African - or native if you want - perspective. In my case this should not constitute such of a problem, since my focus is on German policies, their attitudes towards and treatment of natives, not *vice versa*.

There are several important books I used, when writing my thesis, which are worth mentioning.

First of them is the, by now classical, study by Horst Drechsler "*Let Us Die Fighting*". Even though it is influenced by the time it was written in and by the Marxist doctrines effective in Eastern Germany then,

³ www.bbcnews.com - Q&A: Sudan's Darfur conflict

it is still hardly dispensable, mainly for its thorough research of German archives. Another essential account of the nature of German colonialism is given in Helmut Bley's *Namibia under German rule*.

Important role for information about South West Africa prior to colonization play publications of missionaries such as Heinrich Vedder's *South West Africa in Early Times*, or about missionaries, such as Nicole Glocke's *Zur Geschichte der Rheinischen Missiongesellschaft in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*. Theodor Leutwein's *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* offers a very special point of view, a number of information not to be found anywhere else and a detailed description of events preceding the Herero war.

Jan-Bart Gewald's *Herero Heroes* is focused on the history of the Herero between 1890 and 1939, and Müller's account *Kolonien unter der Peitsche: eine Dokumentation*, still remains important for its description of German treatment of the natives. Several books describe the course of combat of the Herero war itself, in quite a detailed way. These include for example: Walter Nuhn's *Sturm über Südwest*, Jon Bridgman's *The Revolt of the Hereros*, or the memoirs of Ludwig von Estorff *Wanderungen und Kämpfe*.

Last but not least the British Blue Book⁴ in its reprint *Words Cannot Be Found.*, by Jan-Bart Gewald and Jeremy Silvester must be mentioned. One has to be aware of the circumstances under which this book was published; nevertheless it still contains valuable information and important accounts of the natives.

My thesis is divided into three major parts. The first two describe and characterize the German policies towards the natives of South West Africa and their mutual relationship, prior to the Herero war and during it respectively. The third is concerned with definitions of genocide and relevance for its application on the Herero war.

In the first chapter I shortly portray South West Africa prior to European colonisation and then turn my attention to German - steady and gradual - conquest of the country. Special consideration is given to German perceptions of the natives, to their use of the natives for their own cause and to their treatment of the indigenous population. Finally the most important aspects of development of the colony under German rule are presented.

The next chapter of the thesis deals with the events of the Herero war. Analysis of the main causes of the uprising is followed by the description of the course of war. This one is purposefully not very detailed, and only events relevant for our cause are mentioned. Much more attention is given to German changing policies during the war and to the differing arguments behind these policies, with special focus on Lothar von Trotha's reasoning. The Nama uprising is mentioned briefly as well. At the end results of the war and its influence mainly on the native population are characterized.

I deal with the concept of genocide in the final part of this paper. I offer three different definitions and apply them one by one, on the events in Gernam South West Africa at the beginning of the 20th century. I analyze if any, some, or all definitions are valid and could be used to describe these events.

The crucial question of this thesis is whether German policies in South West Africa regarding the native population, especially the Herero could be described as genocidal.

⁴ The Blue Book was published in November 1918, when South West Africa was occupied by the Union of South Africa. It is an account of German treatment of the native populations in the country. The Blue Book includes, among others, 75 witness accounts of German colonial practices. In Germany it was dismissed as "an English piece of war propaganda with no credibility whatsoever". (Gewald, Silvester; 2003; xxi) Subsequently the Germans published their own so called White Book (*The Treatment of Native and Other Populations in the Colonial Possessions of Germany and England: An Answer to the English Blue Book of August, 1918*) as a reply, in which they, for a change, accused the British of ill-treatment of the natives. In 1926 white elites in both countries decided that in the interest of their future cooperation all copies of the Blue Book should be disposed of.

In May 2006 American movie star Angelina Jolie decided to give birth to her daughter at the coastal resort of Walvis Bay in Namibia. Since then, the interest of foreigners and above all Americans in this country skyrocketed and the numbers of tourists increased multiple times. Special tours for visitors are now organized, where tourists can see all the places where the Hollywood star spend her time. They will probably visit some beaches, game resorts or camping areas and they will know that Angelina Jolie was there. What they will most likely not know is that a lot of these places were previously sites of concentration camps and battle grounds, where tens of thousands died. They will not know, because there has not been a single war memorial erected for the victims of the German colonial era.⁵

I am hopeful that my thesis will contribute to that we do not forget our history so quickly, because those who cannot remember the past...

⁵ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; xxxv

1 South West Africa Under German Rule

1.1 The Area of South West Africa Prior to German Colonization

The territory of South West Africa (SWA) – present day Namibia – has always been one of the most inaccessible, sparsely inhabited and arid regions of Africa. Delimited with the Kalahari from the east and the Namib from the west, it had no fixed boundaries prior to European colonization. At that time the territory could be divided roughly into three parts – from north to south - Ovamboland, Hereroland (or Damaraland) and Namaland, with the majority population in these regions being the Ovambo, Herero and Nama nations⁶.

Although the Ovambo was the biggest of the three tribes, this study will not deal with them in any detail, since they remained outside the sphere of German influence throughout the colonial era.

The central region covering about 350,000 km² was populated by the Bantu speaking herdsmen of Herero⁷, who migrated to SWA from the northeast most probably during the 17th and 18th centuries. Since there had never been a census prior to German colonization, it is very difficult to establish the exact number of Hereros living in the area at that time. Most estimates vary between 70,000 and 100,000 with about 80,000 being the most likely figure, most authors and experts agree on. It is important to note here that the whole life of Hereros revolved around cattle, which they considered sacred.⁸

The southern part of the country was inhabited by the Nama⁹ tribe, which earlier sources and German colonizers almost invariably described by the derogatory term Hottentots. The estimates of their number at the end of the 19th century were somewhere in the region of 20,000.

Apart from the Ovambo, Herero and Nama which together formed the majority of SWA population, there were a few other tribes - the so-called Bastards (descendants of Boer men and Nama women), the Berg-Damara and the Bushmen (or San).

Leutwein's¹⁰ estimates of aboriginal population in 1892 are described in the following table:

Table 1 Population of Native Tribes in 1892

Tribe	Population
Ovambo	90,000 – 100,000
Herero	70,000 – 80,000
Nama	15,000 – 20,000
Bushmen and Berg-Damara	30,000 – 40,000
Bastards	3,000 – 4,000

Life in SWA prior to German colonization was far from ideal. It was certainly not the life of "peaceful, noble savages" in Rousseau's sense, rather it was a state of Hobbe's *homo homini lupus*, where life was mostly – to use Hobbes' words again - "brutal, nasty and short". The tribes almost constantly led

⁶ Both the Herero and the Nama are often described interchangeably as nations or tribes. In my opinion, depending on ones perspective, both terms are acceptable. The Germans mostly referred to the native peoples as nations and to their leadership sometimes as government. Anderson; 2005; even argues that Hereroland could be recognized as a state entity.

⁷ The Herero nation was not a homogenous group, but rather an agglomeration of several tribes, the most important of them being the Tjimba (West Herero) and the Mbandjeru (East Herero).

⁸ For more about the Herero as well as Nama religion, customs and traditions see for example Schultz-Ewerth; 1930; 211 - 397.

⁹ Sometimes Khoikhoi as well, which means "real people". The Nama could be divided into two main groups – the Nama proper (consisting of: the Veldschoendragers, the Franzmanns, the Zwartboois, the so-called Red Nation, the Topnaars, the Zeib people and the Bondelswarts) and the Oorlam tribes (the Witboois, the Berseba community, the Khauas, the Bethanie people and the Afrikaaners)

¹⁰ (Leutwein; 1906; 11) Theodor Leutwein (1849 – 1921) was in GSWA between 1894 and 1903, first as Landeshauptmann and later as Governor.

wars against each other, often in a very cruel manner¹¹. Especially the Herero and Nama fought each other for supremacy for the most part of the 19th century. Three wars took place in the years between 1830 – 1842, 1846 – 1858 and 1863 – 1870. In August 1880 fighting started once again and lasted until November 1892, when a peace treaty was signed. Only then the natives realized that another and common enemy was emerging on the horizon – the Germans.

1.2 “First a missionary, then a consul, and then com army.”

Although the quote heading this section was borrowed from the Zuluchief Cetshawayo¹², a similar pattern of conquest can be identified in SWA. First Europeans to come to this land where “no palms, no woods, no trees, no shrubs: only stones, rocks and sand” were to be found and in which “everything looked so dead, so bleak, so deserted”¹³ were indeed missionaries. The first, from the evangelic “Rheinische Missionargesellschaft”, came in 1842 and proceeded to establish the initial mission in Otjimbingwe in 1849.

More than forty years passed by before the missionaries were followed by merchants, who sought prosperity in this “no man’s land”. The pioneer among them was Adolf Lüderitz (1834 – 86) who closed two contracts with the native chief of the Bethanie people on 1st May and 25th August 1883. For 600 pounds sterling and 260 rifles he bought the area of Angra Pequena and a twenty mile¹⁴ wide strip of land between the 26° of south latitude and the river Orange respectively.

Lüderitz soon asked the German Reich for protection of his territory. It was granted by Bismarck in a telegram to the German Consul in Cape Town on 24th April 1884. On this day, German colonialism was born and Germany joined the “scramble for Africa”.

Because of insufficient monetary funds, Lüderitz was forced to sell his land to the “Deutsche Kolonialgessellschaft für Südwestafrika” in 1885. Since then, until 1889, German South West Africa (GSWA) was administered predominantly by merchants, in accordance with Bismarck’s idea that “In den Kolonien muss der Kaufmann vorangehen, der Soldat und die Verwaltung nachfolgen.”¹⁵

And indeed it was not long before the first soldiers came. In June 1889 21¹⁶ of them arrived. Their number was rising steadily in the following years as the next table shows.

Table 2 Number of German Troops in GSWA up to 1902¹⁷

Year	Number of troops
1889	20
1890	50
1893	250
1894	15 officers, 500 soldiers
1896	33 officers, 900 soldiers
1897	31 officials, 700 soldiers
1902	42 officials, 780 soldiers

¹¹ Captured fighters were often mutilated, sometimes thrown to the dogs (Le Blanc; 2003; 116), or their body parts cooked (Schultz-Ewerth; 1930; 233).

¹² Quoted in Glocke; 1997; 334

¹³ A German military officer recollecting the surprise when he first saw SWA, quoted in Bridgman; 1981; 8

¹⁴ The contract, as though it should mark the whole future relationship between the natives and Germans, was either a random misunderstanding or a purposeful deception. It stated: “a strip 20 geographical miles wide”. One geographical mile is the equivalent of 7.4 km. However, the Bethanie people were not familiar with this term and presumed that the contract meant an English mile, which equals 1.5 km. Thus they were very surprised later on, when they found out, they had sold almost all of their land.

¹⁵ Leutwein; 1906; 18

¹⁶ Rather interestingly, because at this time there was no German harbour in operation in GSWA these soldiers had to land in the British harbour at Walvis Bay disguised as explorers.

¹⁷ This table is based on information from: Drechsler; 1980, Leutwein; 1906 and Stoecker; 1986

The scheme of something similar to the British "chartered companies" did not work quite well in GSWA. Therefore, an Imperial Commissioner was appointed in 1889 to govern the colony, which was with its 835,100 km² one and half times the size of the German Reich then.

1.3 "However ruthless one's colonial policy, it is necessary to give one's actions a semblance of legality"¹⁸

In order to govern such a vast territory, it was first necessary to acquire some control over it. Therefore Germans concluded treaties of protection ("Schutzverträge") with various tribes. In these "Schutzverträge" the tribal chiefs gave up part of their power and sovereignty in exchange for the promise of German protection.

Native chiefs usually committed themselves and their tribes in the following ways:

1. To protect all citizens of the German Reich and their possessions.
2. To guarantee them the right and freedom to travel, settle down and trade in the native's land.
3. Not to guarantee any rights and advantages to anyone of other than German citizenship and not to sell any land without the approval of the German government.
4. To acknowledge the jurisdiction of the German Kaiser in cases of a legal dispute between Germans and natives.
5. To contribute to the sustenance of peace in the protectorate and to accept the decision of the German government in the case of a dispute with other chiefs.
6. To recognize German laws passed for the protectorate.

German government on the other hand was bound by these treaties:

1. To protect the chief and his people.
2. To leave natives under their chief's jurisdiction.
3. To make sure that white people respect the laws, local customs and traditions.

Germany concluded the protection treaties although it had virtually zero real power on the territory of SWA at that time. Drechsler correctly pointed out that "protection meant little more than the intention to keep other nations away from the country"¹⁹. Nevertheless most of the tribal chiefs signed the "Schutzverträge" till 1890, even if they often did not understand them completely²⁰. As Leutwein admitted in his voluminous memoirs, the details of these treaties were not significant. The only substantial fact was that they were signed and the "semblance of legality" given. As long as German colonizers did not have much power, the treaties remained rather unimportant. However, as soon as the Germans gained power they used these treaties "ohne Rücksicht auf die Einzelheiten ihrer Festsetzungen".²¹

¹⁸ Leutwein quoted in Drechsler; 1980; 81

¹⁹ Drechsler; 1980; 38

²⁰ This could be documented for example by the fact that from 11 Herero chiefs only Samuel Maharero and two others could sign themselves, all others signed with a cross.

²¹ Leutwein; 1906; 237

1.3.1 *Divide et impera* – Leutwein's Policy and Native Uprisings

The new Governor Leutwein (arrived in 1894) took the idea of treaties with natives to another level when he employed a *divide et impera* policy, trying to play the tribes against each other.

Starting in 1895, he made arrangements with the chiefs of the Herero, the Nama and others, in which they bound themselves *inter alia* to send native troops against all German enemies, both outside and inside the colony. This meant, above all, that whenever Germany faced any problems within the colony, they would not have to deal with them by using their military forces alone, but they could use native soldiers as well. Leutwein made thus – in his own words - the "native tribes serve our cause" and he held it for "more serviceable, to influence the natives to kill each other for us than to expect streams of blood and streams of money from the Old Fatherland for their suppression."²²

One could ask: what was the reason the native chiefs agreed to such arrangements? What did they get for it?

The answer is quite simple: money. The most powerful chiefs, including the Herero chief Samuel Maharero, were paid a yearly salary from the German budget. The usual amount of between 1,000 and 2,000 marks certainly helped to sweeten the pill and made it quite easy for the chiefs to overcome their partial loss of power. In this way almost decade long period of Herero collaboration with the Germans started.

For his money and constant supply of alcohol Samuel Maharero was willing to sell out his nation. As a sign of loyalty a German flag flew over his camp; and on several occasions he even asked the German forces to help him eliminate some of his Herero opponents. Leutwein was not mistaken when he appraised Maharero's behaviour as one, which "nahezu an Verrat an seinem eigenen Volke grenzte"²³.

Thanks to this policy Leutwein was easily able to subdue any native rebellions or unrests up to 1904. Native chiefs kept sending their forces all this time and helped him squash all native uprisings; sometimes even fighting against their relatives. Thus Africans were fighting Africans and helping the Germans to gain control over their territory in the process.

Table 3 Native Uprisings and Their Results in the Era Leutwein up to 1903²⁴

Year	Opponent	Result
1896	Mbandjeru and Khaua	Mbandjeru dispersed; leaders shot dead; 12,000 cattle taken away. Khaua disarmed and interned in forced labour camps; their territory taken.
1897	Afrikaaners	Tribe captured; leaders shot.
1897 - 1898	Zwartboois	Tribe disarmed and interned in Windhoek.
1900	Bastaards from Grootfontein	Tribe disarmed, dissolved and partly interned in Windhoek.
1903	Bondelswarts	Tribe disarmed, the run-away leaders banned.

²² Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 16

²³ Leutwein; 1906; 511

²⁴ According to: Drechsler; 1980, Leutwein; 1906; 300 and Bley;1996

1.4 "White Man's Burden"

Germany, just as other European colonizing powers, felt the weight of this burden very intensely; and as a colonial "late comer" maybe even more than the others. The Germans unmistakably saw themselves and other whites too, as members of a higher race and supreme civilization, whose task or even duty was to bring the light of civilization into these "dark corners" of the world. The civilizing mission was perceived especially with regards to culture, traditions and religion. Its goal was to lift the African "Naturkinder"²⁵ morally and spiritually from their underdeveloped state, closer to the superior level of Europeans. The "amoral natives with immoral traditions"²⁶ were to be brought up like children by their strict, but fair European fathers. And it would not only be of advantage to the natives and the Germans, but in fact to "mankind in general"²⁷.

This paternalistic attitude was shared by German settlers, officials, soldiers and missionaries in GSWA and members of the German public in the Reich alike. Dr. Solf, the Secretary of the Colonial Office, expressed it most vividly in his speech before Parliament on 6th March 1913²⁸: "Die Eingeborenen sind unwissend – sie müssen unterrichtet werden. Sie sind faul – sie müssen arbeiten lernen. Sie sind schmutzig – sie müssen gewaschen werden. Sie sind krank, mit allerlei Gebrechen – sie müssen geheilt werden. Sie sind wild, grausam und abergläubisch – sie müssen besänftigt und erleuchtet werden. Alles in allem, meine Herren: sie sind große Kinder, die der Erziehung und der Leitung bedürfen."²⁹

The stance of Germans towards natives was racist not only implicitly, but often quite explicitly as well. In the most extreme cases, African natives were not recognized as human beings³⁰. Mostly thought, indigenous peoples were either perceived and described as animals such as "baboons"³¹ or they were seen as higher beings and were allowed to "enter" the human race. If this was the case, then they were typically depicted as inferior and heathen savages with numerous negative characteristics usually ascribed to them, such as: lazy, insincere, cruel, profane, nasty etc.

With these attitudes it should not come as a surprise that the one thing, Germans were most afraid of, was miscegenation. The first reason was that it was considered as "scientifically" proven, at that time, that children born from a mixed race relationship were more likely to inherit the native African characteristics, which were deemed negative, than those originating from the more "favourable" white gene pool. The second, that through these "ill effects of race mixing", the white minority would not be able to maintain its race "clean" and keep itself in control over the coloured.

Because of the lack of white women in the colony the number of marriages between white men and native women as well as the number of their "Bastard" children was growing. In German eyes this was clearly not desirable and to ensure the future of the colony it was necessary to reverse this trend. Thus, to lower the "danger" of miscegenation, German women had to be brought in and encouraged to settle in the colony.³²

²⁵ Schultz-Ewerth; 1930; 222

²⁶ Translated from Glocke; 1997; 115

²⁷ Words of Paul Rohrbach, the Commissioner for Settlement in GSWA. His whole statement read as follows: "By no argument in the world can it be shown that the preservation of any degree of national independence, national prosperity and political organization by the races of South West Africa would be of greater or even of equal advantage for the development of mankind in general or the German people in particular than that these races should be made serviceable in the enjoyment of their former territories by the white races." (Mbuende; 1986; 51)

²⁸ Although the speech was made only in 1913, its message is valid for the whole period of German domination of SWA.

²⁹ Heyden, Zeller; 2002; 69

³⁰ This attitude was most blatantly expressed in a petition of 75 German settlers to the Colonial Department from 21st July 1900. "From time immemorial our natives have grown used to laziness, brutality and stupidity. The dirtier they are, the more they feel at ease. Any white man who has lived among natives finds it almost impossible to regard them as human beings at all in any European sense. They need centuries of training as human beings, with endless patience, strictness and justice..." (Bley; 1996; 97)

³¹ A missionary named Elger observed "that the average German looks down upon the natives as being about on the same level as the higher primates". (Madley; 2004; 169)

³² In the years 1896 – 1902 the "Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft" imported 18 brides, 21 servant maids and 18 women relatives of the farmers, altogether 57 German women. Till 1907 the number increased to 501 women and until 1913 reached almost 1 500 (Heyden, Zeller; 2002; 53). Later in 1907 the "Deutschkolonialer Frauenbund" was established to promote the "Rassenbewusstsein" of German women going to Africa and to prevent an increase of bastard children population.

1.5 "Colonisation is always inhumane"³³

The last section showed that African natives were sometimes perceived as animals. This section will demonstrate that they were often treated as such or even worse.

1.5.1 "Leniency towards the natives is cruelty to the whites."³⁴

Beside the protection treaties there were just three laws³⁵ regulating the relationships between the natives and the Germans before 1904. It can by no means be said that there was equality before the law in GSWA. In the vast majority of cases, the Germans or white population in general received a far better treatment than the natives. Sometimes aborigines were reduced to a state, where they were almost completely rightless. One of the most extreme examples was that during one period a testimony of 7 natives before court equalled the testimony of a single white person. Moreover, natives could hardly expect to receive fair treatment when all judges were German. Hanemann, a former district judge in Swakopmund, formulated his – and probably not only his – stance, when he wrote: that "a single drop of white blood was just as precious to me as the life of one of our black fellow-citizen".³⁶ Racial prejudice and hatred thus became part of the judicial system.

As a result, natives received much harsher punishments for the same offences than the Europeans. This can be clearly seen on punishments for murder³⁷, which are documented in the following table.

Table 4 Whites and Natives Murdered Before 1903³⁸

Whites killed by natives		
Year	Name	Punishment
1894	Englishmen Christi	1 death penalty, 1 imprisonment
1895	Member of the Schutztruppe	6 death penalties
1895	Boer Smith	2 death penalties
1896	Englishmen Fenton	1 death penalty
1899	Settlers Claasen and Dürr	2 death penalties
1900	white policeman	3 death penalties
Natives killed by whites		
1896	Hottentots Jantje and Kuriieb	On trial: 5 ^{1/2} years of imprisonment; On appeal: 3 months of imprisonment
1901	Herero Leonhardt	1 year prison sentence
1902	Herero Kamauru	2 years prison sentence
1903	Daughter of the chief Zacharias	On trial: acquitted; On appeal: 3 years prison sentence

What we see in this table was well described by Governor Leutwein: "...a higher value was placed on the life of a white man than on that of a native."³⁹ Punishment for the same offences depended much more on the colour of skin of both the victim and the criminal than on anything else. Not only have Europeans in the afore mentioned cases received much milder sentences, but none of them served the whole sentence. Furthermore, these were only cases brought before trial. The real number of natives killed by whites can hardly be estimated, but it was most probably much higher. For most of these offences no adequate penalty followed. The family of the deceased native usually received just a small payment or a few dozen goats.

³³ Leutwein quoted in Bley; 1996; 68

³⁴ Karl Dove, the Director of the land settlement in Windhoek, quoted in Soggot; 1986; 8.

³⁵ The most important and relevant in this context was "The law relating to jurisdiction for the purposes of punishments and disciplinary control", dated 23rd April 1896.

³⁶ Bley; 1996; 141

³⁷ Only cases of murder are depicted in the table. However, similar discrepancies could be found by all crimes. For example no case of rape was ever brought before a court in GSWA prior to uprising, although rape of native women and girls was widespread.

³⁸ According to Leutwein; 1906; 431

³⁹ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 94

1.5.2 "Prügelstrafe"

According to some of the German racist theories (see section 1.4) African natives were regarded as children or even animals. Animals can sometimes only be held in check with a lash in hand. And Germans certainly did not hesitate to use this lash.

Physical punishment of natives was seen as a very good upbringing measure. It was used from the very beginning of German colonial rule in Africa⁴⁰ right up to the end. To German colonial masters – merchants, officials, missionaries and settlers on the same level – "the lash appeared as a magic wand, which could fulfil all wishes".⁴¹

Thus natives were physically punished for all possible offences, such as: "laziness", "ongoing idleness", "neglect of duty", "disobedience", "arrogance", "runaway", "milking strange goats"⁴² etc. Typical punishment for these offences was 25 "shambock"⁴³ or "kiboko" lashes. So was for example the native Job Bantam sentenced to 3 months in prison and 50 shambock lashes for "milk theft", or Hereros Barnabas Isaak und Salib both punished with 15 sticklashes for "beach pollution".⁴⁴ In most similar cases, there was an evident discrepancy between the punishment awarded and the severity of the crime.

During the 1884 – 1896 period, there was no regulation of the "Prügelstrafe" and 100 lashes were often given as a minimum punishment. By the ordinance of 22nd May 1896 at least some guidelines for physical punishment were set. The maximum punishment was specified at 50 lashes (25 at a time) and the ordinance exempted women, Arabs and Indians from such a punishment. However, these changes did not make much difference for the natives, since the most common punishment – flogging of natives by their masters – remained unrestricted. Most of these floggings were not recorded and till 1907 colonists did not even have to examine the identity of the punished.

In 1906 there were new attempts to reduce lashing, which, however, failed miserably as the following statistics show:

Table 5 "Physical Punishments of the Natives"⁴⁵

Year	Number of punished natives
1901/02	257
1902/03	473
1903/04	340
...	
1911/12	1655

A very common German perception was that the natives had a different threshold of pain and should therefore survive lashing without any further consequences. It was argued, that even if such punishments seemed too violent or inhuman, it, in fact, did not hurt the natives much, because of their stronger and less sensitive skin. However, there were a number of cases when natives were seriously injured or even died after being lashed. In fact, every whipping could mean death for the punished. Such cases were not usually taken as maltreatment of natives but just as an accident. „Es war nur ein Neger“⁴⁶ was a sentence often heard in such cases.

⁴⁰ Cameroon was even known as the "Twentyfiveland (the land of twenty-five)" because 25 lashes were the usual amount given as punishment.

⁴¹ Translated from Müller; 1962; 35

⁴² Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 258

⁴³ Shambocks used in GSWA were usually heavy hippopotamus (or giraffe, rhinoceros) hide whips about 50 – 100 cm long and 1½ to 2 cm strong. Sometimes a wire was put into the shambock, which turned it into a true torture instrument. (Müller; 1962; 102)

⁴⁴ Müller; 1962; 90

⁴⁵ According to Müller; 1962

⁴⁶ Müller; 1962; 41

Notwithstanding all the facts revealed in this section, it should not be concluded that all relationships between European citizens and natives were the same. There were some instances where European settlers lived in relative harmony and friendship with natives; where the settlers appreciated natives as proud, gifted or promising people. However, in general their relationship was tarnished mostly because of German approach, which could be defined with the words of one colonial officer: "Only with strict upbringing can we produce good material from these people"⁴⁷.

1.6 Silence Before the Storm

In order not to paint just a completely bleak picture of German colonization, it is worth to point out some of their successes in Africa.

When Germans first came to SWA it was: "a sun-drenched, drought-afflicted land enveloped by desert, with a non-existent transport network, highly restricted agricultural opportunities, unknown mineral resources..."⁴⁸ During the 20 years of their reign and especially during Leutwein's 10 years as a Governor, they were able to substantially change the land and move towards their goal of building a white settler colony.

1.6.1 All-round Development of the Colony

With support of the German government white settler population in GSWA was rising steadily. While there were just 310 Germans in 1891; in 1903 according to the population census, there were 4,640⁴⁹ settlers in the colony, living in a few cities and on more than 250 farms. Although still relatively small in numbers, in comparison to the natives, the Germans already owned the majority of land and cattle. Approximately 40% (276,450 km²) of the colony was in the hands of trading companies; some 20% (149,860 km²) in the hands of the government and the rest still belonged to the natives (287,567 km²).

If the white settler population grew significantly, then the growth in infrastructure must be labelled as massive. Farms, roads, bridges, dams, irrigation structures, schools, hospitals etc. were built in many parts of the colony. Modern techniques and means of transportation were introduced. In September 1897 work on the railway between the harbour Swakopmund and the capital Windhoek began, only to be finished in June 1902. Telegraph and heliograph connections were already completed one year earlier.

Furthermore, there were 34 post offices operating in 1903, busy to accept and expedite over one million letters and packages in 1903/1904.⁵⁰ The colonial newspaper *Windhuker Anzeiger* (later *Deutsch Südwestafrikanische Zeitung*) was published. In 1899 German system of weights and measures was introduced and from December 1899 Reich mark was to be used as the only legal currency.

Economy of the colony had been rising without interruption with the exception of the rind pest epidemic in 1897. Although trade deficits were still substantial, the trend of rising exports was clear as the following table shows.

⁴⁷ Translated from Müller; 1962; 150

⁴⁸ Cocker; 1998; 290

⁴⁹ White population consisted of 3,391 men (622 married; 42 married with native women) and 1,249 women. Regarding the nationalities of the settlers the division was as follows: 2,998 Germans, 973 Cape Lander and Boers, 453 Englishmen, 40 Austrians, 35 Swedes and Norwegians, 29 Dutch, 19 Russians, 101 without citizenship. (Leutwein; 1906; 232)

⁵⁰ Leutwein; 1906; 235 - 236

Table 6 Trade of GSWA⁵¹

Year	Import in Marks	Export in Marks	Altogether
1900	6,968,000	908,000	7,876,000
1901	10,075,000	1,242,000	11,317,000
1902	8,568,000	2,213,000	10,781,000
1903	7,931,000	3,444,000	11,375,000

1.6.2 Administrative Reorganisation

With such a growth in many spheres of the colonial economy, it was necessary to adapt the administration appropriately. Theodor Leutwein shared Karl Peter's opinion that: "Die Verwaltung in der Kolonie soll nichts sein als ein Apparat, um es möglich zu machen, gewinnbringende Unternehmungen fürs Mutterland durchzuführen."⁵² And therefore he had been trying to establish an effective bureaucratic framework, based on German tradition and model.

GSWA was divided into six administrative districts. Although Leutwein himself remained both the head of the administrative and military branches of government, he chiefly succeeded to separate military and administrative powers throughout the colony. From 13 local administrative officers, only two had both powers, the rest was separated. Furthermore, Leutwein tried to divide executive and judicial powers and by 1903 professional judges worked in all three district courts as well as in the High Court in Windhoek.

Concerning the military, there were 7 military districts with 35 stations and a net of military outposts and forts, which were scattered throughout the territory in 50 – 130 miles distance.

1.6.3 Mission Growth

The mission celebrated some success as well after hard beginnings. The Herero mission had 15 main stations, 32 branches, 48 schools, 1985 pupils and 7508 congregation members⁵³ in 1903. The Nama mission was, in relative terms (when population numbers are taken into account), much more successful. It displayed the following balance: 8 main stations, 1 branch, 5 schools, 472 pupils and 5111 congregation members.⁵⁴

As we saw the colony developed in many areas and various signs pointed towards a bright future of the country (at least from the German perspective). Many Germans thought that they already succeeded in bringing "deutsche Ordnung in das afrikanische Chaos"⁵⁵.

⁵¹ According to Historical Section of the Foreign Office; 1969; 91

⁵² Karl Peters, German traveller, founder of the "Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation" and Commissioner in German East Africa, quoted in Müller; 1962; 81

⁵³ It took 16 long years of work before the "Rheinische Missionargesellschaft" succeeded in baptizing the first Herero. In July 1858 a maid of the missionary Hahn was baptized with the Name Johanna Maria (Glocke; 1997; 124). This only documents the mistrust the Herero had towards Europeans.

⁵⁴ Leutwein; 1906; 282

⁵⁵ Heinrich Ernst Göring (father of Hermann Göring), the Commissioner of GSWA in the second half of the 1880's, quoted in Nuhn; 1989; 323

2 The Herero War

The Herero nation rose up as a whole against German colonizers under the leadership of Samuel Maharero on 12th January 1904. On this day the first war of Wilhelmian Germany started.

2.1 Whose Fault is it?

Although there had been widespread rumours and some signs of the insurrection in the days leading to the Herero rebellion, for most of the Germans in the colony as well as in the German Reich, the uprising came "wie der Blitz aus heiterem Himmel"⁵⁶. Governor Leutwein truly could not believe the Herero would have done anything like that: "In a way which we held to be impossible the Hereros concealed their intentions from us completely... It was a real Sicilian Vespers. I had intimate contact with the Hereros for over ten years and came to believe that I understood them, but I would never have thought it possible for them to mount such a coordinated, energetic effort."⁵⁷

Soon the settlers, German public and politicians started to search for the culprits. First the British⁵⁸ got the blame. Second in order was Governor Leutwein and third came the missionaries.

In a most aggressive manner Governor Leutwein was blamed, for his previous policy towards the natives. A number of settlers had pushed for a much stricter policy for several years. There was even pressure for a preventive war. In their opinion Leutwein was too lenient, too weak, had the "Eingeborenen...zu milde behandelt"⁵⁹ and did not do enough for the "Aufrechterhaltung der Suprematie seiner Rasse"⁶⁰.

Leutwein defended himself and tried to justify his preceding actions. He felt he was an impartial arbitrator, who was supposed to mitigate disputes between Europeans and natives. He further argued that it was exactly his policy of *divide et impera*, which had prevented any major uprising until 1904 and that a preventive war at an earlier date would have been a bloody one. His main argument was as follows: "Nicht übersehen dürfen wir ferner, wie viele deutsche Soldaten der Tatsache das Leben zu verdanken haben, dass es so lange Jahre gelungen ist, für unsere Sache Eingeborenen gegen Eingeborenen auszuspielen..."⁶¹

The British, but above all Leutwein and the missionaries were held responsible for almost anything bad that happened in the next weeks. However, the real causes of the rebellion had to be found elsewhere as the following section shows.

2.2 Causes of the Uprising

Not only Germans in SWA, but German public and their political leadership at home were too shocked by the uprising. Some of them saw no reason for the uprising whatsoever. German Chancellor von Bülow thought that Hereros started the uprising "without any reason of which even those who are thoroughly acquainted with the country are aware"⁶².

⁵⁶ Leutwein; 1906; 289

⁵⁷ Leutwein quoted in Bridgeman; 1981; 75

⁵⁸ Two British settlers Hewitt and Steenkamp were even arrested, only to be released later. (Drechsler; 1980; 138-139)

⁵⁹ Leutwein; 1906; 429

⁶⁰ Glocke; 1997; 212

⁶¹ Leutwein; 1906; 491

⁶² Times, 19.1.1904, 3, "South-West Africa. Grave Situation."

However, the Herero felt that there were some reasons. Three main long-term causes can be distinguished – the injustice with which the natives were treated, the appropriation of land and cattle, the credit trade system and increasing indebtedness of Hereros.

2.2.1 German Abuse and Humiliation of Natives

Hereros' standing, basically outside of the legal system, their inferior position in the settler society, the destruction of their way of life and the misuse of „Prügelstrafe“ were described in detail in the preceding sections (see sections 1.4 and 1.5.). Therefore it is not necessary to comment much further on these abuses. As a proof, that the abuse was indeed one of the major causes for the uprising, testimonies of two natives should suffice.

The Herero chief Samuel Maharero stated some of the reasons in his letter to Leutwein on 6th March 1904: "...the war is not...begun by me, but by the whites, for you know how many Hereros have been killed by white people, especially traders...And always when I brought the matter to Windhoek, the blood of my people was always valued at no more than a few head of small stock..."⁶³ The second statement comes from Barmenias Zerua, son of the chief Zacharias of Otjimbingwe: "We were driven to desperation by the cruelty and injustice of the Germans, and our chiefs and people felt that death would be less terrible than the conditions under which we lived."⁶⁴

2.2.2 Land Appropriation and the Question of Native Reservations

Thanks to German dispossession strategy, which lay "in the gradual transfer of the land from the hands of the work-shy natives into white hands"⁶⁵, the Germans owned some 60% of the land in GSWA prior to the uprising.

40% in the hands of the natives might seem to be more than enough; however the trend was quite obvious. Whilst during the first decade of German rule over SWA the Herero did not sell any land at all, they started selling it at an ever increasing pace during the second decade. Some of the native chiefs, and especially the Herero chief Samuel Maharero, exceeded their powers⁶⁶ and began selling land for their own benefit. In 1903 3^{1/2} million hectares out of a total of 13 million were sold, not to mention the numerous occasions when land was simply taken by Germans, without any payment.

The central area of Hereroland of approximately 100,000 km² was still largely intact and such situation did not pose any imminent threat to the future of the tribe. It was much more the future outlook of losing most of the land that caused anxiety among Hereros. Their fears were further heightened by German plans to establish reservations for the native population.

The idea which stood behind the reservations plan was well expressed by Leutwein: "Entweder muss man beide Rassen gleichstellen (Kaptkolonie), oder man muss die eine mit Waffengewalt unterwerfen. Eine dritte Möglichkeit gibt es noch, nämlich Trennung der beiden Rassen mittels Eindämmung der einen in Reservate..."⁶⁷ Until 1903 two reservations had been established and two more projected. However, the Hereros rejected the proposed reservations on the grounds that they were too small, too remote, too arid and the pasture there too bad.

The reservation measure, which was introduced to ease the Herero situation – the reservations were supposed to remain an unrestricted and inalienable property of the tribe – could have had some advantages for the natives. But the Herero saw the plan as the beginning of the end, i.e. the beginning of their total expropriation.

⁶³ Wellington; 1967; 203 – 204

⁶⁴ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 103

⁶⁵ Leutwein quoted in Madley; 2004; 182

⁶⁶ According to Herero tradition land was a communal property and could not be sold without the consent of the tribe.

⁶⁷ Leutwein; 1906; 242

2.2.2.1 Otavi Railway

Another factor, which contributed to Herero dissatisfaction, was the projected construction of the Otavi railroad through the middle of Hereroland. The construction company "Otavigesellschaft" demanded not only the land needed for the construction of the railway but a 20 kilometre broad strip on both sides of it, plus all water rights for this area too. In the end the Herero chief Maharero met both demands, but the Herero clearly perceived, that improved infrastructure and a railway line leading through their territory would not help their cause and would only accelerate German penetration into their lands.

2.2.3 Hereros' Cattle

Quite possibly the crucial reason behind the decision to rise up had to do with Herero's cattle. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of cattle in Herero life, culture and traditions. "The Herero man devoted his entire time, strength, and personal attention – his very life in fact – to his cattle".⁶⁸ The preservation of their herds was often their only object in life.⁶⁹

Although it is impossible to do anything more than to estimate the numbers of cattle Hereros owned prior to German colonization of their land, it is sure that it was in the range of hundreds of thousands. Within less than 20 years after the Germans came into SWA, this number had shrunk substantially and German settlers already owned as much cattle as the natives⁷⁰.

Main reason for the decrease was the rind pest epidemic, which hit the whole country in 1897 and which brought the Herero "to the edge of despair"⁷¹. The rind pest epidemic decimated the Herero cattle to a large extent. In some parts of Hereroland up to 95% of cattle died; overall probably about two thirds of the animal stock disappeared. A great many cattle was also confiscated by the Germans or used to repay debts.

If we recall the importance Hereros ascribed to their cattle, we should be able to understand that such a massive loss caused a widespread crisis and fundamentally undermined the stability of the tribe. For many Hereros life without their beloved cattle was almost senseless.

2.2.4 Credit System

The third chief cause of the uprising was the credit system used in GSWA. Having known nothing like it before German colonization a large number of Hereros fell into a spiral of buying goods (above all tobacco, alcohol etc.) on credit, borrowing money on increasing interest rates and the inability to pay back. To ease the native situation Governor Leutwein issued an ordinance on 23rd July 1903 which stated that all debts not collected within one year will become null and void and that in all future transactions only cash will be used. This was meant to help the natives and relieve them of their debts, but the measure backfired. Most of German settlers and traders wanted their money back as soon as possible, sometimes using very unscrupulous manners to get it. As a result tensions between the two parts of population only heightened again.

To sum up: the Herero were only willing to endure the continuous mistreatments and humiliation up to a certain point. At the time when they lost most of their cattle and felt the same would happen with their land soon, their patience was over and they decided to get their land, but above all their dignity back.

⁶⁸ Cocker; 1998; 277

⁶⁹ This is also documented by the fact that in the Herero language there are few or no words for abstract ideas, but more than a thousand for the colours and markings of cattle. (Wellington; 1967; 148)

⁷⁰ According to the official census of 1902 natives owned 45,910 cattle and settlers 44,490. (Leutwein; 1906; 367 – 368)

⁷¹ Fage, Oliver, ed.; 1985; 464

2.3 Leutwein's War

The fighting broke out on 12th January 1904. All Herero joined the uprising, which would not be possible without the decision of Samuel Maharero - the Herero "Omuhona" (supreme chief). Maharero, who had collaborated with the Germans during the previous ten years, was probably pushed towards his decision by some younger chiefs.⁷² According to most scholars, with the notable exception of Gewalt⁷³, the uprising was planned in advance, probably on several meetings of Herero chiefs during the preceding year.

2.3.1 Number of Troops on Both Sides

At the beginning of the conflict there were some 7,000 to 8,000 Herero with approximately 2,500 older rifles and insufficient ammunition standing against a German force of a little more than 2,000 well armed men.⁷⁴ The number of German troops started rising very soon. The first reinforcements came already on 18th January and first troops from the Reich arrived in February. They were the head of a steady flow of additional troops⁷⁵, which kept coming in the ensuing months and years. At the peak in 1906 their number reached 15,000.

2.3.2 Initial Stages of the War

Thanks to their initial numerical superiority and the element of surprise the Herero seized control of most of Hereroland. They took over practically all of 267 German farms in this area and almost all German cattle. Settlers' farms were looted and burned; railway and telegraph lines were interrupted in several places. Hereros besieged a number of German military outposts in this area, but failed to conquer any of them.

In the first days of fighting, up to 150 whites were killed, among them 13 active soldiers, 7 Boers and 5 women. Hereros followed the order of their chief (see box Maharero's Proclamations) not to kill anyone except for German men with just a few exceptions. The Herero were not "die rohen, blutdürstigen Mörder"⁷⁶ as described in the reports from initial phases of the war. It is true that some settlers were brutally murdered and mutilated, but the killings were not indiscriminate and women and children were mostly spared.

Most of the settlers found sanctuary and safe heaven at military outposts. Hereros were not able to exploit the moment of surprise to its full and that allowed the Germans to regroup fast. In fact, one has to agree with Bridgman's conclusion that there is "little evidence of a coherent plan of action beyond the fact that each group took as much as it could".⁷⁷ The Africans missed a great chance and their window of opportunity began closing soon.

Two weeks after the beginning of the uprising the Europeans were for the most part in the clear. Windhoek was fully under German control again in one week, on 19th January, and Omaruru, the last city to come back under German control, was reconquered on 4th February.

Hereros' chances of winning were never again to be as good as they were in the first days of the uprising.

⁷² It is likely that Maharero concluded that if he did not act he would be dismissed by his own people.

⁷³ In Gewalt's opinion the uprising was not planned in advance, but started after a series of misunderstandings, in which Leutnant Zürn played a major role. For a more detailed description see: Gewalt; 1999.

⁷⁴ German forces consisted of 766 German soldiers on duty in GSWA, some 760 trained reserves, about 400 able-bodied men without military training and 120 native Baster scouts and a slightly higher number of native Witboois. (Bridgeman; 1981; 66)

⁷⁵ A majority of these soldiers were inexperienced and were often chosen only because of their good contacts. Some of them had never before shot with ball-cartridge; "was nun während der Überfahrt nach Südwest mit Hilfe mitgenommener, über Bord gehangener Schiessscheiben nachgeholt werden musste". (Nuhn; 1989; 98) Most of the newcomers had the naive impression that they were going on a "big time hunt". (Bridgeman; 1981; 95) Natives usually spoke about them as "boys" contrary to the old members of the "Schutztruppe" who were described as "men". Because of this difference, conflicts between the "alten Afrikanern" (Nuhn; 1989; 221) and the newcomers were anything but rare.

⁷⁶ Estorff; 1968; 110

⁷⁷ Bridgeman; 1981; 89

Maharero's Proclamations

At the beginning of the uprising the Herero chief Samuel Maharero issued the following proclamation to his people: "...it ordains for all my people that they shall not lay hands on the following, namely: Englishmen, Boers, Bastards, Berg-Damaras, Namas. We must not lay hands on any of these people. I have taken an oath that their property will not be regarded as enemy property, neither that of the missionaries. Enough!"⁷⁸ Furthermore, Hereros received orders not to attack women and children. Thus, only German men were to be regarded as enemies. The Herero mostly listened to their chief's words and followed his orders.

In order to increase the chances of winning the war against the Germans and expelling them from the country, Maharero asked other chiefs to join the uprising and fight together. He issued two letters dated 11th January 1904 to the Nama chief Hendrik Witbooi and to the Rehoboth chief Hermanus van Wyk. In one of the letters Maharero appeals to Witbooi: "All our obedience and patience with the Germans is of little avail, for each day they shoot someone dead for no reason at all. Hence I appeal to you, my Brother, not to hold aloof from the uprising, but to make your voice heard so that all Africa may take up arms against the Germans. Let us die fighting rather than die as a result of maltreatment, imprisonment or some other calamity. Tell all the kapteins down there to rise and do battle."⁷⁹

However, none of letters to Witbooi reached the addressee. All of them were intercepted by the captain of the Rehoboth tribe Hermanus van Wyk, who passed them on to the German administration. Hence the Nama troops were still fighting on the German side against the Herero. It was not until October 1904, before they switched sides (see box The Nama Uprising)

2.3.3 "...the uprising must be smashed ruthlessly and a tabula rasa created."⁸⁰

In spite of the surprising effect of the uprising, not all the Germans were unhappy about the prospects such uprising offered them. Their opinion was well expressed by German Minister in Lisbon, Tattenbach, who said: "however regrettable the Herero uprising may be, it will lead to a vast territory being taken into possession and German South West Africa becoming a well-ordered and promising colony rather than a so-called sphere of interest."⁸¹ For him and people of comparable beliefs, the war could serve as a catalyst in changing the colony into a white settler's one.

The moment the uprising began, many German citizens, settlers and officials started planning how to deal with the Herero after the war. Little time had gone by since the outbreak when one official demanded: "The Herero must be disarmed, mercilessly punished and rounded up to perform forced labour for the railway."⁸² Other plans included death sentences for their leaders, numbered identification tags for natives, their deportation or even total annihilation.

War hysteria aggravated by war accounts in German media led a German citizen Otto Seifert to write a letter to the German Kaiser. It is an extreme example of the mood prevalent in Germany in those days. "...In order to give that race an idea of the power we wield over them it is necessary that our soldiers, whenever they withdraw, thoroughly poison their water supplies. After all, we are not fighting against an enemy respecting the rules of fairness, but against savages. Never must we allow the Negroes to prevail. The consequences of such a victory would be dire indeed since even now the Negroes believe that Africa belongs to them rather than to the Lord above."⁸³

⁷⁸ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 100

⁷⁹ Drechsler; 1980; 143

⁸⁰ Chief engineer of the Otavi railway commenting the settler's ideas how to deal with the Herero, quoted in Bridgeman; 1981; 86

⁸¹ Stoecker; 1986; 54

⁸² Drechsler; 1980; 145

⁸³ Drechsler; 1980; 147

The atmosphere in GSWA was not much different. One of the missionaries wrote at that time: "The Germans are consumed with inexpiable hatred and a terrible thirst for revenge; one might even say they are thirsting for the blood of the Herero. All you hear these days is words like 'make a clean sweep, hang them, shoot them to the last man, give no quarter'. I shudder to think of what may happen in the months ahead. The Germans will doubtless exact a grim vengeance."⁸⁴

And so they did, as we should later see.

2.3.4 The end of Leutwein's Independent Position

Governor Leutwein⁸⁵ did not share the afore mentioned ideas. He was well aware of the importance of the natives for the colony. Therefore, he wanted to suppress the rebellion as he had done so many times previously; to crush the uprising and to punish severely its leaders, but certainly not to create a "tabula rasa". However, Leutwein was to find out soon that this time the uprising will be dealt with differently.

Already in February was von Schlieffen, Chief of the Army General Staff, put in charge of operations in GSWA. In all the previous instances of a native revolt, the Governor was in charge of military operations and it was up to him what measures and tactics to use to suppress the uprisings. This time, thanks to Emperor Wilhelm's decision a "native revolt turned into a full-scale war."⁸⁶ The measures used previously by the Governor were quite different from those the military planners in Berlin - who were several thousand kilometres from the theatre of the war and often lacked any colonial experience - were going to use.

Leutwein wanted to reach an agreement with the natives as soon as possible. To avoid a protracted conflict he wrote a letter to Samuel Maharero on 18th February asking for his reasons to rise up. His view was that: "colonial policy is not only a matter of leadership, but also of diplomacy. The insurgents must know that there is an alternative to death. Otherwise, we will only drive them to despair, bringing on an endless war that will be to our disadvantage."⁸⁷

However, in Germany Leutwein's letter was seen as the beginning of peace negotiations and Leutwein was strongly reprimanded for it by the Chief of Staff of the Army. Leutwein was ordered not to start any negotiations with the enemy and to engage in fighting with them as soon as possible. His rather independent position in the colony came to an end.

While for the Governor, as the administrative head of the colony, not only military victory, but future of the colony was a concern, for the German army a military victory was the only thing that mattered.

2.3.5 Change of Command

Under Leutwein's command - between January and April 1904 - German troops fought Hereros in six battles and clashed with them in a number of smaller skirmishes. The exact course of combat is not of much interest and importance to us and will therefore not be dealt with.⁸⁸ The only important fact is that the Germans did not score any major success in these encounters, lost a substantial number of men⁸⁹ and generally squared off with the Herero fairly evenly. All in all, in the first four months of fighting the German army was not able to do much more than to repair the railway and telegraph lines and protect the forts and settlements.

⁸⁴ Drechsler; 1980; 145

⁸⁵ Governor Leutwein was in the south of the colony when the rebellion began, trying to settle the matters with Bondelswarts, who had risen up at the end of 1903. He managed to sign a peace treaty with them on 27th January and return to Okahandja on 18th February.

⁸⁶ Bley; 1996; 156

⁸⁷ Leutwein to the Colonial Department on 23rd February 1904 (Drechsler; 1980; 148)

⁸⁸ For a detailed description of the combats see for example Bridgeman; 1981 or Nuhn; 1989

⁸⁹ Bridgman's estimate for this period is some 210 Germans and about 250 Herero casualties. (Bridgman; 1981; 108)

The General Staff of German Army was displeased with Leutwein's leadership and the development of the war up to that point. "The greatest military machine in the world had ground to an inglorious halt, and it was unclear when and how it would be set in motion again"⁹⁰

The man chosen to set it in motion again was the 56 year old general Lothar von Trotha.

2.4 Von Trotha's War

Lothar von Trotha⁹¹ was chosen by Kaiser Wilhelm, based on the suggestion of the Chief of the General Staff. Von Trotha was named the head of German forces in GSWA on 3rd May 1904, his orders from the Emperor being simply to "crush the uprising with any means necessary and then inform him (*the Emperor*) of the reasons for the uprising."⁹²

2.4.1 "Die Würfel waren gegen die Hereros gefallen"⁹³

Von Trotha sailed for GSWA from Hamburg on 20th May 1904 with *inter alia* a portrait of the Empress, which was presented to him earlier that day. Already one day before his departure von Trotha declared martial law in the colony, whereby he transferred all executive powers to himself.

Five days after his arrival on 16th June he met in Okahandja with his predecessor Leutwein, who still remained in his position as the Governor. At this meeting Leutwein advised his successor, urging him to conduct the war with respect for the future of the colony and the survival of the Herero. According to Leutwein's son von Trotha replied at the end of the meeting: "Your remarks have been of great interest to me, but you will have to allow me to conduct the campaign as I see fit."⁹⁴

Here, as in section 2.3.4, we can again see the sometimes unbreachable disparity between colonial and army officers' approach to the war; in this case Leutwein's and von Trotha's. The former always showing some concern for the natives and for the future of the colony, while the latter's only interest lied in destroying the enemy, without caring for the consequences. For von Trotha this war marked "the beginning of a racial struggle"⁹⁵ in which there was no place for negotiations.

2.4.2 Battle of Waterberg

Von Trotha's only goal was to destroy the enemy in a battle, most preferably in a battle a la Sedan or Cannae. Therefore, he issued an order already on 19th June preventing his subordinates from accepting any Herero offers to negotiate. Then he waited for additional troops until July, before deciding to move towards the decisive attack.

German troops gradually encircled between 40,000 and 60,000⁹⁶ Herero with some 60,000 cattle in a small area at Waterberg. Six German detachments were used to surround the enemy. The smallest and weakest company of von der Heyde was placed, probably on purpose, to the southeast in the direction of Omahake desert.⁹⁷ If the Herero decided to break through the encirclement, they would be most likely to succeed in von der Heyde's direction. However, the only place they could go then would be the Omahake desert. A study by the German General Staff considered this possibility and read: "If, however, the Herero

⁹⁰ Bridgman; 1981; 104

⁹¹ Adrian Ditrach Lothar von Trotha was born in 1848. He fought in 1866 in the Seven Weeks War against Austria. He had been in command of the Colonial forces in German East Africa from 1894 to 1897 and helped to crush the Chinese Boxer uprising in 1900.

⁹² Bridgeman; 1981; 111

⁹³ Leutwein's remark after his first meeting with von Trotha, quoted in Nuhn; 1989; 207

⁹⁴ Jacob; 1938; 292

⁹⁵ Von Trotha quoted in Drechsler; 1980; 160

⁹⁶ Glocke; 1997; believes there could have been up to 80,000 people. However, this number is almost certainly exaggerated. Sudholt; 1975; at the other extreme estimated the number of Hereros assembled at Waterberg at less than 30,000. Although it is almost impossible to estimate the accurate number, it seems likely that between 40,000 and 60,000 Hereros could have gathered there.

⁹⁷ Some of the commanders such as Major von Estorff and Governor Leutwein later said they warned von Trotha against such tactics and suggested switching the weak detachment of von der Heyde for another one, but von Trotha refused. (Estorff; 1968)

were to break through, such an outcome of the battle could only be even more desirable in the eyes of the German Command because the enemy would then seal his own fate, being doomed to die of thirst in the arid sandveld."⁹⁸

Approximately 6,000 able bodied Hereros were prepared to fight against some 4,000 German soldiers on 4th August 1904, when von Trotha announced his battle plan from his headquarters in Erindi-Ongoahere, The crucial Directive Nr. 2 of the "Directives for the Attack on the Herero" read: "Ich werde den Feind...gleichzeitig mit allen Abteilungen angreifen, um ihn zu vernichten"⁹⁹

In the early morning hours on 11th August 1904 the German attack started. Both sides engaged in fighting for two days, before the Herero realised they were unable to resist the German supremacy in weaponry any longer and tried to break through the encirclement. As expected by the German military they broke through von der Heyde's troops in the direction of Omahake.

General von Trotha informed the Emperor William about the "successful" battle in a telegram to which the Kaiser answered on 16th August. "With thanks to God and with great joy have I received report from Hamakari about the successful attack against the main force of the enemy. Even though the tough resistance of the enemy cost us dearly in loss of life, the bravery of our troops, who endured incredible hardship, has filled me with pride and I am sending you, the officers and the men alike, my imperial thanks and my complete appreciation."¹⁰⁰

However, von Trotha was not satisfied with the result of the battle. He lost just 12 soldiers (33 were wounded) compared to 120 - 150 Herero casualties, but most of the Herero managed to flee. No battle a la Sedan took place. Neither had von Trotha destroyed the enemy nor had he broken his enemy's will. In order to finish his job von Trotha tried to destroy the Herero in the Omahake desert. On this the study of the General Staff noted blatantly: "The arid Omaheke was to complete what the German Army had begun: the extermination of the Herero nation."¹⁰¹

And it nearly did.

2.4.3 Dying in the Sun

As seen in the previous section the number of Hereros killed in the battle was rather small. The main part of the nation was able to flee from Waterberg. German troops started chasing Hereros right after the end of the battle. In a few days Hereros were pushed to the edge of Omahake. However, this was not good enough for von Trotha. He mounted raids on the Herero to push them further and further into the desert. Troops were ordered to either kill the Herero or push them deep into the desert, which for most of them meant death sentence anyway.

During these pursuits the Germans found the same picture over and over again: a large number of dead aborigines and cattle around the few water reservoirs in the desert. The Herero tried to dig for water, but as they were forced to go further and further into the desert, water was ever more scarce. They dug up to 20m deep, but could not find enough water for themselves and their cattle. Facing the prospect of a slow, excruciating death they even cut the throats of their beloved cattle to drink the blood; or they tried to press the stomachs of the cattle to get some moisture of it. Sometimes they were even forced to saturate their hunger by eating anything they could, including the death bodies of their compatriots.¹⁰²

Von Estorff, a commander of a German section which pursued the Herero deep into the dessert, gave the following account: "Immer wiederholte sich das schreckliche Schauspiel. Mit fieberhafter Eile hatten die Männer daran gearbeitet, Brunnen zu erschließen, aber das Wasser ward immer spärlicher, die

⁹⁸ Drechsler; 1980; 155

⁹⁹ Nuhn; 1989; 227 It is necessary to note that "vernichten" was probably not meant literally, because camps for 8,000 prisoners were prepared at the time of the battle. It was more likely meant as a "military annihilation".

¹⁰⁰ Kerina; 1981; 46

¹⁰¹ Bley; 1996; 162

¹⁰² Glocke; 1997; 190

Wasserstellen seltener. Sie flohen von einer zur andern und verloren fast alles Vieh und sehr viele Menschen."¹⁰³ A similar picture painted the documentation of the General Staff: "...like a half-dead animal he [*the Herero*] was hunted from water-hole to water-hole until he became a lethargic victim of the nature of his own country."¹⁰⁴

On 30th August von Trotha had the Omahake sealed off from the west and southwest by a 250 kilometre long chain of military outposts to prevent any Hereros from escaping from the desert. These outposts were maintained until the middle of 1905. During this period "Das (*Herero*) Volk schrumpfte auf spärliche Reste zusammen"¹⁰⁵ Probably just a few thousands of Hereros managed to survive. They had three main directions in which to flee from the desert: a) to the east into British Bechuanaland; b) to the west through German lines back into Hereroland or into Namaland; c) to the north into Ovamboland. It is usually estimated that more than a 1,000 Hereros crossed into Bechuanaland and about 1,000 made it to Ovamboland and Namaland. It is unclear how many Hereros reached their homelands, but very likely, no more than a few thousands. There they lived as they could, feeding themselves mainly with stolen cattle, berries or roots.

For these poor survivors von Trotha had still a few "surprises" in mind.

2.4.4 Extermination Order

First of them was Von Trotha's infamous "Vernichtungsbefehl", issued in Osombo-Windimbe on 2nd October 1904. He read it personally to his officers following a field church service. The proclamation read:

"I the Great General of the German troops send this letter to the Herero people.

The Herero are no longer German subjects. They have murdered and stolen, they have cut off the ears, noses and other body parts of wounded soldiers, now out of cowardice they no longer wish to fight. I say to the people anyone who delivers a captain will receive 1000 Mark, whoever delivers Samuel will receive 5000 Mark. The Herero people must however leave the land. If the populace does not do this I will force them with the *Groot Rohr* [cannon]. Within the German borders every Herero, with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will no longer accept women and children, I will drive them back to their people or I will let them be shot at.

These are my words to the Herero people."

The Great General of the mighty German Kaiser."¹⁰⁶

On the next day two Herero prisoners were hanged and 30 others were sent in all directions with a printed copy of the proclamation to spread it among the remaining Hereros. A few days later von Trotha specified the order concerning the killing of women and children to his soldiers in this way: "...the shooting of women and children is to be understood to mean that one can shoot over them to force them to run faster. I definitely mean that this order will be carried out and that no male prisoners will be taken, but it should not degenerate into killing women and children...The soldiers will remain conscious of the good reputation of German soldiers."¹⁰⁷

Notwithstanding this specification the Herero men, women and children were killed *pari passu*. In fact concerning women and children von Trotha wrote on 4th October 1904 in his message – to which a copy of the "Vernichtungsbefehl" was attached – to the Army Chief of Staff: "To accept women and children who are for the most part sick, poses a grave risk to the force, and to feed them is out of the question.

¹⁰³ Estorff; 1986; 117

¹⁰⁴ Dederling; 1999; 213

¹⁰⁵ Estorff; 1986; 117

¹⁰⁶ Gewalt; 1999; 172 - 173

¹⁰⁷ Bridgman; 1981; 128

For this reason, I deem it wiser for the entire nation to perish than to infect our soldiers into the bargain and to make inroads into our water and food supplies."¹⁰⁸

2.4.5 The Last Power Struggle Between von Trotha and Leutwein

After von Trotha issued the "Extermination order" the divisions between him and Governor Leutwein became once more very clear in a dispute, which was to be their last. It was a brief power struggle between two fundamentally different views concerning the treatment of natives.

On one hand there was Leutwein caring - as always - for the future of the colony. In a letter to the colonial department from 12th November 1904 he wrote *inter alia*: "...I do not agree with those strident voices raised in favour of total annihilation of the Hereros. Aside from the fact that a people numbering 60,000 to 70,000 cannot be so easily annihilated, I would have to argue that such a measure would be an economic error. We need the Hereros as herdsmen and as workers. The people must only suffer a political death."¹⁰⁹

Again, he reiterated his stance, which was already apparent at the time of the first meeting between him and von Trotha (see section 2.4.1). For him the survival of the natives was vital for the development of the colony. So, if it was not for humanitarian reasons, at least the economic ones prevented him from supporting a policy of annihilation.

On the other hand there was von Trotha following his only goal of destroying the enemy and winning the war no matter what the costs. Political, economic, humanitarian or any other aspects were only secondary to him. His report to the Army Chief of Staff from 4th October read: "Es fragt sich nun für mich nur, wie ist der Krieg mit den Herero zu beendigen. Die Ansichten darüber bei dem Gouverneur und einigen 'alten Afrikanern' einerseits und mir andererseits gehen gänzlich auseinander...Ich glaube, daß die Nation als solche vernichtet werden muß, oder, wenn dies durch taktische Schläge nicht möglich war, operativ und durch weitere Detail-Behandlung aus dem Lande gewiesen wird."¹¹⁰

Furthermore, in a message to Leutwein on 27th October von Trotha expressed himself once again quite unambiguously: "Throughout my period of duty here the eastern border of the colony will remain sealed off and terrorism will be employed against any Herero showing up. That nation must vanish from the face of the earth. Having failed to destroy them with guns, I will have to achieve my end in that way."¹¹¹

Leutwein, who though not the Commander in Chief anymore, was still the Governor – the political head of the colony – wanted to change von Trotha's policy and asked Berlin if he still had any say in the matters of the colony. However, leaders of the army in Berlin stood still firmly behind von Trotha. The answer, which Leutwein received, made it clear that he had no more power concerning military issues. Consequently, Leutwein asked to be relieved of his duties, was granted a home leave and later resigned from his governor post. He left the protectorate on 1st December 1904 never to return again.

Von Trotha won this "battle" and succeeded Leutwein as the Governor of GSWA. But, he too was about to bow his head to orders from Berlin soon.

2.4.6 Change of German Policy

The German Chief of Staff General Schlieffen did not think there was anything fundamentally flawed with von Trotha's policy. Quite the opposite was true. He agreed with the policy, only thought it was not possible to carry it out as the following extract from his report to Chancellor Bülow from 23rd November 1904 proves: "One may agree with Trotha that the whole nation must be destroyed or

¹⁰⁸ Drechsler; 1980; 161

¹⁰⁹ Bridgman; 1981; 86

¹¹⁰ Nuhn; 1989; 284

¹¹¹ Drechsler; 1980; 161

driven out of the country. After what has happened the co-existence of whites and blacks will be very difficult, unless the blacks are kept in a state of forced labour, indeed in a kind of slavery. Racial war, once it has broken out, can only be ended by the destruction of one of the parties...General von Trotha's intention is admirable. Unfortunately he does not have the power necessary to implement his plans."¹¹²

One day after receiving this report, chancellor Bülow asked Kaiser Wilhelm to change von Trotha's policy and to revoke his extermination order. In his letter to Wilhelm he named four main reasons to do so as soon as possible:

- 1) The proclamation of 2nd October was inconsistent with the principles of Christianity and humanity.
- 2) Von Trotha's plan was impossible to put into effect.
- 3) The plan was absurd from an economic point of view.
- 4) The proclamation was "demeaning to our standing among the civilized nations of the world."¹¹³

After five days, on 29th November, Wilhelm telegraphed back that von Trotha should be ordered to, among others: show mercy to the Herero who give themselves up. Consequently, Bülow asked the Emperor for an explicit order to von Trotha not to kill the Hereros who surrender, which Wilhelm gave after another eight days. Furthermore, in December 1904 von Trotha was instructed to cooperate with the Mission in establishing concentration camps for native prisoners.

Von Trotha had a big difficulty¹¹⁴ with accepting this changed policy and interpreted his new orders in the narrowest way possible. He did not want to be involved in any negotiations with the enemy, but was assured by Schlieffen that there was "no question of negotiating"¹¹⁵ implied in the new orders. They contained just a passive offer of clemency to Hereros, who surrender.

Hence, after more than two months von Trotha's Extermination order was lifted and German policy changed. If it, however, was going to make any difference for the Herero, we should see.

The Nama Uprising

The Nama did not join the general Herero uprising at the beginning of 1904, but rose against German rule on 3rd October 1904 under the leadership of then almost 80-year old Hendrik Witbooi.

The major causes of the uprising were not "ein Ratsel, dessen Lösung in der unerklärlichen und unergründlichen Seele des Hottentotten....zu suchen ist"¹¹⁶, but were in fact very similar to what made the Herero rise. The Nama feared that after the suppression of the Herero uprising they would be disarmed and dissolved as a tribe¹¹⁷; that it would be their turn after the Germans dealt with the Herero. Witbooi personally declared, when asked about the reasons for an uprising that it were "...die unzähligen von den Deutschen mitten im Frieden verübten Morde und Mißhandlungen an Afrikanern..."¹¹⁸, which caused the Nama to rise.

¹¹² Bley; 1996; 165 - 166

¹¹³ Drechsler; 1980; 164

¹¹⁴ On 6th January 1905 von Trotha wrote a letter to Bülow, in which he expressed his discontent and surprise, because his previous treatment of the natives had, up to then, not been revoked by the Kaiser or the Chief of the Staff. He added: "QUI TACET, CONSENTIRE VIDETUR" (he who keeps silent, seems to consent). Dederling; 1999; 212

¹¹⁵ Bley; 1996; 167

¹¹⁶ Sudholt; 1975; 148

¹¹⁷ A part of the 100 men strong Nama contingent, which fought alongside Germans against the Herero, fled home to Gibbon after the battle of Waterberg and reported about the brutal German conduct of war and their plans, thus increasing Nama fears.

¹¹⁸ Glocke; 1997; 198 - 199

If the causes were similar, then the tactics used were completely different. The Nama used guerrilla warfare throughout the conflict, trying to avoid a major decisive battle at all costs. In the span between the start of the rebellion and its end, the Nama and Germans crossed their arms more than 200 times in a battle. In the second half of the conflict some 15,000 German soldiers fought against 1,000 – 2,000 natives and further on just against a few hundred of them, not being able to defeat them. Death of Hendrik Witbooi at the end of October 1905 marked the beginning of the end of the uprising, which was officially declared over by a decree of the German Kaiser from 31st March 1907. However, sporadic fighting continued in some parts until March 1908.

As was the case with the Herero, von Trotha again issued a proclamation towards the natives. This time the proclamation from 22nd April 1905 was not as harsh as the one issued earlier to the Herero, but nonetheless threatened annihilation.

During the course of the uprising, Germans came up with a new idea how to deal with the natives. It was the idea of deportations. In German eyes the Nama were seen as being under the Herero on the "racial ladder" and therefore of no future use to the colony. In a letter to the colonial department from 10th July 1906, the new Governor von Lindequist proposed "that the entire Witbooi tribe be deported to Samoa while the followers of Cornelius of Bethanie and those of Simon Kopper's people who have been captured should be send to Adamau (*in Cameroon*)."¹¹⁹ However, this idea was rejected by the Colonial Department, on the grounds that the cost for transporting 1,599 Witboois and 191 Bethanie people would be too high. In the end these two Nama tribes were transported to the concentration camp at Shark Island in Lüderitz Bay.

In fact, deportation of the Nama had already been tried earlier, but did not quite work out as Germany expected. Instead, it evolved into a true odyssey for the affected Nama. Upon receiving the information about the Nama uprising, von Trotha disarmed the rest of Nama soldiers, who had been fighting on German side up until then. In November 1904 they were sent with another Nama (altogether 119 people) to Togo to do forced labour. The Germans expected that in this way, other colonies could be supplied with cheap labour. But, 54 of the Nama in Togo died within six months, and almost none of the rest were in a shape for work. In September 1905 the 49 remaining Nama were therefore sent to Cameroon. Finally in June 1906 42 Nama survivors returned to GSWA again, because none of the German Governors wanted to keep them in their territory.

2.5 Von Trotha's Departure From the Theatre of War

After not being able to defeat the native uprisings for more than a year von Trotha had waited for any "success", which would allow him to depart from the colony with any semblance of achievement. This opportunity came when the Nama leader Hendrik Witbooi was injured in a raid on a German convoy on 29th October 1905 and later died. Von Trotha – this "butcher in uniform"¹²⁰ – consequently left the colony on 19th November 1905.

In Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm awarded the General with a *pour le merite* order and thanked him in these words: "I would like to let you know that you have fully justified the confidence I had in your judgment and military experience when I made you commander of the colonial force at a difficult time. I also wish to acknowledge that you have earned my imperial thanks and my fullest appreciation for your splendid achievement by bestowing upon you the order *pour le merite*."¹²¹

Von Trotha was further praised by Chancellor Bülow for his outstanding leadership in the African campaign. Bülow found the following words of appraisal for him. "Der General von Trotha hat in einem langwierigen und schwierigen Feldzuge persönliche Bravour, Energie, Umsicht, alle Eigenschaften eines

¹¹⁹ Drechsler; 1980; 211

¹²⁰ Stoecker; 1986; 55

¹²¹ Kerina; 1981; 51

tüchtigen, eines hervorragenden Führers an den Tag gelegt. Mit vollem Recht trägt er die höchste militärische Auszeichnung, die Preußen zu vergeben hat, den Orden Pour le merite."¹²²

Following von Trotha's departure, military and administrative power in the colony was once again divided. Colonel Dame became the military leader in GSWA and Friedrich von Lindequist its Governor.

With a change in the leadership of the colony, came a significant transformation of its policies as well. On 1st December 1905 the new Governor issued a proclamation calling the Herero to surrender, in which he *inter alia* stated: "I therefore call upon the Hereros who still are wandering about the veld and in the mountains and who nourish themselves by eating wild roots and by theft. Come and lay down your arms, Hereros! Thousands of your fellow tribesmen have already surrendered and are being clothed and fed by the Government. I have taken every precaution to ensure that you will be justly treated. That I also personally guarantee to you."¹²³

If it was a worthy guarantee, we shall explore in the next section.

2.6 "Sammellager", Prisoner and Concentration Camps¹²⁴

As we saw previously, von Trotha's no-prisoner policy was changed at the end of 1904. Since the beginning of 1905 four main "Sammellager"¹²⁵, for natives, who gave themselves up, were set up by missionaries. During the first four months after their establishment, some 6,500 Africans, mostly women and children, sought refuge here. Till 31st March 1907 some 12,000 Herero and Nama found their way into these camps. Additionally some 8,800 Herero were captured by the "Schutztruppe" until the end of 1905. A vast majority of over 17,000 of these almost 21,000 natives ended up in concentration camps.

The concentration camps were being set up from the beginning of 1906 in Windhoek¹²⁶, Karibib, Omaruru, Swakopmund and Lüderitzbucht. Almost every Herero regardless of age, sex, tribeship, health condition or whether he or she was or was not involved in the rebellion was at first put in one of these camps. Conditions in the prisoner camps were often terrible. The natives did not get sufficient clothes¹²⁷, housing, food and often suffered in climatic conditions they were not used to.

A good account of the conditions in the camp of Swakopmund was given by missionary Vedder. "They were placed behind double rows of barbed wire fencing, which surrounded all the buildings of the harbour department quarters and housed in miserable structures constructed out of simple sacking and planks, in such a manner that in one structure 30 - 50 people were forced to stay without distinction as to age and sex. From early morning until late at night, on weekdays as well as on Sundays and holidays, they had to work under the clubs of raw overseers, until they broke down. Added to this, the food was extremely scarce: Rice without any necessary additions was not enough to support their bodies, already weakened by life in the field...Like cattle hundreds were driven to death and like cattle they were buried."¹²⁸

¹²² Glocke; 1997; 206

¹²³ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 179

¹²⁴ There is no agreement on the use of these terms. For example Glocke argues in her book that one should rather use the terms "internment" or "prisoner camps", because these camps can simply not be compared to the concentration camps used during WWII. (Glocke; 1997; 277 - 279) However, in my opinion, the conditions and the death rates at least in some of these camps are fully comparable to the ones of WWII (not the extermination camps!) and therefore I use both terms interchangeably. Moreover, use of the term "concentration camp" is justified by the fact that this expression was used commonly by German officials at that time as well as by Chancellor Bülow.

¹²⁵ These "collection camps" were established in Omburo, Otjihaenena, Otjosongombe and Okomitombe.

¹²⁶ There were two camps in Windhoek. A separate one was created just for Herero women who were kept there for sexual saturation of German soldiers. (Gewald; 1999b; 29)

¹²⁷ According to the reports of missionaries most of them had just a "Mehlsack" with holes for their hands and head.

¹²⁸ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; XX

The prisoners were used as forced labourers in mines, at the railway, for the army, in civilian companies or at farms. However, the majority of the prisoners were in no condition to work. After what they had gone through, they were exhausted, starved and often seriously ill. For this reason the Germans divided them into groups of "arbeitsfähig" and "arbeitsunfähig". As soon as the condition of the "arbeitsunfähig" improved by a small percentage, they were transported and put to work, often under very difficult circumstances.

As Hendrik Fraser, a boy from the Cape colony at that time, recollected after war: "...Many (*women*) were half-starved and weak, and died of sheer exhaustion. Those who did not work well were brutally flogged with sjamboks. I even saw women knocked down with pick handles. The German soldiers did this. I personally saw six women murdered by German soldiers. They were ripped open within bayonets."¹²⁹

Under these conditions it should not come as a surprise, that attempts to escape were very frequent. Those, who tried to break out, were invariably punished by death. Conditions in prisoner camps improved very slowly and before the end of 1905 there was no distinctive improvement to speak of. Even at that time there were some, such as the Deputy Governor Tecklenburg, who were against any improvement. In his opinion: "Je mehr das Hererovolk am einigen Leid nunmehr erst die Folgen des Aufstands empfindet, desto weniger wird ihm auf Generationen hinaus nach einer Wiederholung des Aufstandes gelüsten. Unsere eigentlichen kriegerischen Erfolge haben geringeren Einfluss auf sie gemacht. Nachhaltigere Wirkung verspreche ich mir von der Leidenszeit, die sie jetzt durchmachen."¹³⁰

Several aspects of these concentration camps have been later compared to Nazi concentration camps of WWII. Medical experiments and tests were run on a number of natives. For example their skulls were measured; and several hundred of these skulls, "skulls, from which Herero women have removed the flesh with the aid of glass shards"¹³¹, were later sent for further examination to Germany. The concentration camp in Swakopmund also used pre-printed death certificates with "Tod durch Entkräftung" written on them.¹³² Last but not least von Trotha wanted to mark all prisoners with an undetachable iron-plate sign with the letters "G.H." (Gefangene Herero) written on them.¹³³

The concentration camps were abolished on 27th January 1908; on the birthday of the German Emperor. During the two years of their operation the natives had been dying en masse. For example in the Swakopmund camp 792 of 2,000 prisoners died within six months. The worst situation and the highest death rate were in the prison at Shark Island. It was known as the "Death Island", because the Nama there "died like flies"¹³⁴. 1,032 of 1,795 Nama prisoners perished within seven months. Of 245 men just 25 were able to work regularly.

All in all, according to the statistics of the "Schutztruppe", from October 1904 to March 1907 some 15,000¹³⁵ Herero and 2,000 Nama went through the camps and 7,682 of them died, which is somewhere between 40% and 50% of the Herero prisoners.

¹²⁹ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 175

¹³⁰ Nuhn; 1989; 308

¹³¹ Gewalt; 1999; 190

¹³² Gewalt; 2000; 22

¹³³ Zimmerer, 2001, 42

¹³⁴ A Herero Samuel Kariko quoted in Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 177

¹³⁵ Of these 10,632 were women and children and just 4,137 men. (Bridgeman; 1981; 131)

2.7 "The old, the sick, the wounded were all slaughtered or burnt to death."¹³⁶

German conduct of war was brutal throughout the conflict and in particular under the command of von Trotha. German soldiers pursued a number of policies, which would be today regarded as war crimes; a no-prisoner policy was pursued for a long time, native settlements were often burned down without any reason, innocent people were raped, hanged, burned etc. For the German military no European norms applied to a "Rassenkrieg" in Africa. According to them it was not possible to fight this war "nach den Gesetzen der Genfer Konvention"¹³⁷ This was justified by the perception that Africans were "savage members of an inferior race". In von Trotha's eyes African natives "all have the same mentality insofar as they yield only to force" and therefore he was going to destroy them "by shedding rivers of blood and money".¹³⁸

It is not necessary to describe in much detail how the "rivers of blood" were shed, but it is worth to present at least two examples of German brutal strategy: the no-prisoner policy and the "burn all, kill all" tactic.

Germany pursued a no-prisoner policy already before von von Trotha's arrival to GSWA. Until the battle at Waterberg, there is no official record of a Herero being captured. All the Hereros, German soldiers came across, were usually subject to extensive interrogation after which they were "hung from the nearest tree" because "these criminals were not worth a shot of powder"¹³⁹ in the words of a German marine Auer. Up till the end of 1904 no natives wanting to give themselves up were accepted. Von Trotha strictly rejected any offers for negotiations. In one instance one of the Herero leaders Salatiel Kambazembi wanted to negotiate, but von Trotha brushed him off by saying: "Wird ihm wohl nichts helfen, mitgegangen, mitgefangen, mitgehungen."¹⁴⁰

Another common strategy of German soldiers was to attack a native settlement – "werf" – plunder it or burn it down¹⁴¹ and kill all the inhabitants. It was not important if those attacked were involved in the uprising or not; if they were even from one of the fighting tribes. The only thing that mattered was the dark colour of their skin. A Soldier confirmed this later, saying that his troop was not allowed to take any prisoners and that "alles, was lebend ist und schwarze Farbe hat" should be shot death.¹⁴²

To close this section let us give word to Manuel Timbu. This Cape Bastard stated after the war under oath: "...I saw the bleeding bodies of hundreds of men, women and children, old and young, lying along the roads as we passed. They had all been killed by our advance guards. I was for nearly two years with the German troops and always with General von Trotha. I know of no instance in which prisoners were spared."¹⁴³

Clashes in the "Reichstag" About German Colonial Policies

Although most German citizens and politicians were in favour of acquiring and keeping colonies, some of them criticized the way the colonial business was run and especially how the Herero war was fought. Two of the most profound critics were the Social Democrat August Bebel and a deputy for the Zentrum Party Matthias Erzberger. None of them had an idealistic image of African native population and they both saw colonization as a "civilising mission". Neither of them was against colonization *per se*, but in their opinion German and European colonization in general should have been far more "enlightened".

¹³⁶ Recollection of Johannes Kruger, a Bastard of Ghaub quoted in Levene; 2005b; 234

¹³⁷ von Trotha in Zimmerer; 2001; 37

¹³⁸ von Trotha quoted in Drechsler; 1980; 154

¹³⁹ Gewalt; 1999; 165

¹⁴⁰ Zimmerer, 2001, 38

¹⁴¹ Hendrik Campbell, commander of the contingent of the Rehoboth (Baster) tribe that was also fighting on the German side, remembered that once about 9 old and sick Herero women were burned alive in their hut, because – according to the reasoning of a German Commander – "they might have infected us with some disease". (Soggot; 1986; 10)

¹⁴² Glocke; 1997; 216

¹⁴³ Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; 115 - 116

The criticism of Bebel and Erzberger and their fellow party men focused on concrete colonial policies, treatment of natives and conduct of war. Since the 1890's the Reichstag was split between supporters of then present colonial direction (mainly conservatives and liberals) and its opponents (social democrats and Zentrum). Representatives of these two currents clashed on a number of issues. Their disagreements had been increasing through the years and peaked during the Herero war. The two following examples should give as a better idea about the situation and atmosphere in the Reichstag during those years.

At one Parliament session Matthias Erzberger was speaking about colonies and their native inhabitants and dared to say that black men have immortal souls just as Europeans. At that point "he was hooted down by the whole right side in the house."¹⁴⁴

Even though Bebel's Social Democratic party supported the war in GSWA in the outset, later on, he attacked fiercely and often German war policies. "Einen derartigen Krieg wie Herr von Trotha kann jeder Metzgerknecht führen"¹⁴⁵, were his most famous words. To that the Chancellor Bülow replied by saying: "seldom or never has a colonial war been conducted in such a patient and human manner"¹⁴⁶.

The last time during the Herero war these two totally differing views clashed, was in the "Hottentotenwahl" of 1907. At the end of 1906 - because of opposition of Social Democrats and Zentrum - the budget for GSWA was not accepted and Chancellor Bülow dissolved the Reichstag. The subsequent election campaign was one of the roughest in the Wilhelmian era. This time the public - who knew well what had been going on in GSWA - unambiguously supported the conservatives and liberals, facilitating a landslide win for Bülow and thus voting in favour of the colonial war.

2.8 Results of War

Losses on the German side were substantial. More than 2,000 German soldiers - from over 20,000 who fought there altogether - lost their life in "Germany's bloodiest and most protracted colonial war"¹⁴⁷. Many of the settlers lost their farms, cattle etc. German Reich's expenses exceeded more than 584 million marks.

However bad the German losses, they can no way be compared to the natives' losses.

2.8.1 "The Hereros ceased to exist as a tribe."¹⁴⁸

One of the biggest controversies in the whole history of German engagement in SWA and one of the most discussed topics is the number of natives killed in the war. There have been various estimates, sometimes differing in order of tens of thousands people. There are two main reasons for this. First, it is the ideological reasons why some authors tried to downplay (such as the German colonial apologists) or exaggerate the number. But more importantly, it is the trouble with establishing the number of natives living in SWA prior to German colonization or prior to the war. There are no accurate statistics from this period and we have to rely on pure estimates.

¹⁴⁴ Bridgman; 1981; 63

¹⁴⁵ Nuhn; 1989; 300

¹⁴⁶ Dederling; 1999; 212

¹⁴⁷ Drechsler; 1980; 144

¹⁴⁸ This is how official German historians commented on the effect the war had on the Herero. (Bridgeman; 1981; 131)

The Blue Book in the reprinted version by Gewalt, Silvester; 2003; gives us the following estimates:

Table 7 Number of Natives Prior to the Herero War

	Palgrave 1877	Leutwein 1894	Schwabe 1903
Ovambo	98,000	100,000	100,000 – 150,000
Herero	85,000	80,000	80,000
Nama	18,350	20,000	20,000

As we can see their estimates are very similar and that is probably why they have been more or less accepted by a majority of scholars, such as: Bley, Drechsler, Dove, Gewalt and others. Sudholt is an exception with his estimate of some 40,000 prior to the uprising. He reached this number by using the average growth of the Berg Damara population, which in his opinion was not hit by the war at all¹⁴⁹. However, his estimate is by most rejected on the grounds of the method used and because of his ideological motivation.

Therefore the estimate of 80,000 Herero prior to German colonization still seems the most probable and we can take it as our basis. In order to reach the number of Hereros prior to the outbreak of the war, we need to deduct about 10,000¹⁵⁰, who supposedly died from a typhoid fever epidemic in 1897/1898. That leaves us with some 70,000 Herero at minimum (most authors do not include the epidemic) prior to the uprising; not accounting for the natural birth rate.

The following table describes the numbers of natives after the war as well as the respective decrease in their populations.

Table 8 Decrease in the Number of Natives Between 1904 and 1911¹⁵¹

	Estimate 1904	Official Census 1911	Decrease	Percentual decrease
Herero	70,000	15,130 ¹⁵²	54,870	79%
Nama	20,000	9,781	10,219	51%
Berg Damara	30,000	17,169	12,831	43%
Total	120,000	42,080	77,920	65%

There is no argument regarding the number of natives at the end of the war. The official census of 1911 is widely accepted. The numbers from this census should approximate the numbers of natives right after the end of the war, since birth-rates among them were very low during this period. Between 1905 and 1909 "...more Herero children were born of German fathers than of Herero fathers."¹⁵³

The figures in the table do not show anything one could be proud of. The Herero lost almost four fifths of their pre-war population¹⁵⁴; the Nama lost over one half and the Berg Damara over one third, even though they did not take part in the uprising at any stage. They were killed simply because the Germans were not able to tell them from the Herero or the Nama, i.e. because they all were black. Von Trotha's extermination policy had begun with the Herero, but in the end encroached upon the Nama and the Berg Damara on a large scale as well.

¹⁴⁹ More on the exact way of inquiry in Sudholt; 1975; 43 - 44

¹⁵⁰ This number is nothing more than a pure estimate. Its only source was missionary Irlé. (Drechsler; 1980; 98)

¹⁵¹ Based on information from the Blue Book and several other sources.

¹⁵² Their population nowadays is estimated at 120,000; the majority living in Namibia and the remainder in Botswana and Angola.

¹⁵³ (Gewald; 2000; 26) Many later claimed that Herero women killed their new-born babies, because they did not want them to grow up as slaves. (Schaller; 2004; 403)

¹⁵⁴ It is reasonable to assume that between 25,000 and 30,000 of the Herero and Nama survived the war itself. Approximately 15,000 Herero and 2,000 Nama of these were collected in the prisoner camps, where 7,682 of them died and just some 9,300 survived. That means that about 8,000 Herero found a way either from the country to British Bechuanaland or how to evade the Germans in Nama-, Ovambo- and Hereroland within the colony.

2.8.2 Consequences of the War for the Natives

German measures taken against the natives after the end of the war were very harsh; not only to punish the natives, but to prevent any future rebellion as well.

2.8.2.1 "Measures for control of the Natives"

The most significant of the measures taken were three ordinances issued on 18th August 1907. The first of them barred all Africans¹⁵⁵ from owning land or cattle or "riding animals". From then on, they could acquire these only with the permission of the Governor. However, the permission to own land was not granted at all during the rest of German rule in SWA.

The second ordinance - "Measures for control of the Natives" - stipulated, that all natives, above the age of eight, were obliged to bear passes (a numbered metal tag¹⁵⁶ around their neck) permanently and show them on demand to any white person. It was prohibited to give a passless native any work, support or assistance. Furthermore every "white person" could arrest any native without this pass and hand him or her to the police. Moreover, a permit was needed by Africans to travel between different districts of the colony.¹⁵⁷

The third ordinance related to work and labour contracts with natives. All natives above the age of 14 years had to register with local police, so that their contracts entered into force. Moreover, no more than ten native individual labourers or ten native families were allowed to live on the same plot.¹⁵⁸ Any native without a job, or any native unable to prove the source of his subsistence could be punished for "vagrancy".

Another measure, which was not part of the three ordinances, was taken against the natives. About 25% of the natives, who had lived in the central part of GSWA, were deported to other parts of the colony, often hundreds of kilometres from their native land.

As a result of these measures the natives - now branded almost like cattle - were under nearly total control of the white population. They could only own land, work, settle down or travel when the Germans allowed them to. However, this was not enough, it was also necessary to control the private life of at least some of them. Were these the beginnings of a totalitarian society?

2.8.2.2 Ban on Mixed Marriages

Racial problems and German racial and racist attitudes were already discussed previously (see section 1.4). The Herero war was used as a catalyst transforming some of the attitudes and ideas into reality and law. The most noteworthy one was the decision to forbid marriages between Europeans and Africans, i.e. between whites and blacks in 1905. For Governor Lindequist mixed marriages were "not only a crime against the purity of the German race...but could also be a severe threat to the whole position of the white man in SWA."¹⁵⁹ He therefore welcomed, just as most of the settlers did, the ruling of the High Court in Windhoek of 1907, which nullified all mixed marriages (about 30) that had been entered into before. White men in these marriages further lost one of their civil liberties - the right to vote. And it was not just them who were punished, but their children too. A number of organizations - be they educational, religious, sport or related to farming - excluded children from mixed marriages and their parents.

¹⁵⁵ The only tribe excluded from these ordinances were the Bastards of Rehoboth, who did not take any part in the uprising.

¹⁵⁶ One farmers' association even proposed the natives be marked with a tattoo. (Schaller; 2004; 399)

¹⁵⁷ Bley; 1996; 173

¹⁵⁸ Bley; 1996; 172

¹⁵⁹ Bley; 1996; 213

In the preceding chapters and on the preceding pages we have seen the development of German policies towards the native tribes of SWA during the first twenty years of their colonial rule. We have also seen the ever more brutal tactics and policies applied during the Herero war as well as their results. Now, it is time to analyse them and to explore if they could be described as genocidal.

3 Genocide

3.1 Problems with the Concept

There are at least two problems one has to face when trying to apply the concept of genocide on events that occurred so long ago as the Herero war. I shall discuss these below before I move on in my inquiry.

Some could question the very use of the term genocide on a period on the verge of the 19th and 20th centuries, that is, some 50 years before the term itself was introduced. I agree, that one needs to be very cautious and proceed carefully with respect to age and location and its specifics, when trying to implement such a concept. However, I am opposed to those, who think it is not possible and it should not even be attempted. With this logic, one could not describe the massacres of Armenians during WWI, or even the Holocaust as genocides, because they occurred before the term was born. Following this way of thinking, genocide would lose much of its comparative value, since one would only be allowed to compare events, which happened after WWII.

International Law at the Beginning of the 20th Century¹⁶⁰

If we followed the afore mentioned logic, we would only be able to compare whether German behaviour and actions violated some of the laws and international agreements, which were valid at that time. Then, there were just a few of these – the General Act of the Berlin Conference from 1885, the 1890 Anti-Slavery Conference in Brussels, The 1890 Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty or the 1899 Hague Convention with respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land.

For example Article 6 of the General Act from the Berlin Conference stipulated that all the powers should: "watch over the preservation of the native tribes and care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being..."; or the 1899 Hague Convention (Article 23) prohibited: "To kill or wound treacherously individuals belonging to the hostile nation or army; To kill or wound an enemy who, having laid down arms, or having no longer means of defence, has surrendered at discretion; To declare that no quarter will be given."

The German argumentation was that none of these treaties or conventions was binding for colonial wars. Colonial wars were different, they were fought against "savage" enemies and therefore no European or international laws and customs applied (see section 2.7). However, Anderson shows in her article¹⁶¹ that international law was applicable, under third-party beneficiary doctrine, to the Herero nation as well.

If we accept this view, that at least some parts of international law were applicable to GSWA, then the preceding chapters documented that it - for the most part - was not abided by. Germany honoured the treaties and the obligations resulting from them rather in breach than observance.

¹⁶⁰ If not noted otherwise, wordings of all the contracts presented in this chapter come from The Avalon Project at Yale Law School - <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/lawofwar/lawwar.htm>

¹⁶¹ Anderson; 2005. According to her the Herero nation had the characteristics of a sovereign state (territory, population and government) and was the "intended beneficiary" (Anderson; 2005; 1182) of the convention.

3.1.1 "if this is awful, it must be a genocide"¹⁶²

Second - and in my opinion – a much stronger argument is connected with the term "genocide" itself. Although the phenomenon of mass murders is ancient, the word per se was invented and coined by a Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin¹⁶³ only in 1943/44. The word genocide itself is a combination of Greek words *genos* (meaning race or tribe) and *cide* (murder). Lemkin coined "genocide" as a reaction and response to Nazi atrocities and mass murders committed during WWII, which he wanted to outlaw in an international convention. His own definition of genocide was: "a coordinated strategy to destroy a group of people, a process that could be accomplished through total annihilation as well as strategies that eliminate key elements of the group's basic existence, including language, culture, and economic infrastructure".¹⁶⁴

Since Lemkin's times the term has been widely used, but often misused as well. Therefore it has lost a lot of its value. It has been used to describe a variety of actions, which do not have anything in common with its original meaning, "abortion, bisexuality, cocaine addiction, and dieting have also been labeled as examples of genocide"¹⁶⁵. Sometimes, it seems, it is used to describe almost anything but genocide. This misuse was well captured in the quote, which heads this section.

To make matters more confusing a number of different "-cide" words has been invented to complement genocide, such as: democide, auto-genocide, politicide, ethnocide, libricide, linguicide etc.

As a result of this, it is very hard to find a complex definition, which would be widely accepted. Each classification is naturally influenced by the author's background, culture, personality etc. Because of this, I chose three differing definitions of genocide – one which has been incorporated into international law (UN Convention on Genocide) and two definitions by notable scholars (Charny¹⁶⁶, Fein¹⁶⁷).

What were the reasons for this choice, when there is a number of other definitions?

The UN Convention on Genocide was chosen since it is the only internationally accepted definition and because it is a valuable instrument, which genocides can be measured against. There is no other, which could be and already has been used to identify genocide and punish those responsible. Two remaining descriptions were chosen mainly for their contrasting breadth and scope. While Charny's definition can be viewed as a very broad one, Fein's characterization is rather limited. My goal here is to try to apply all three definitions, one by one, on the events in GSWA, to determine, if they could be regarded as genocidal according to these definitions; that is, to find out if German policy did not constitute genocide at all, was partly genocidal (corresponded with at least one definition) or could be deemed genocidal according to most definitions, even the narrow ones. In the following discussions only the Herero case is inquired into.

¹⁶² Helen Fein quoted in Andreopoulos; 1994; 95

¹⁶³ Raphael Lemkin (1900 – 1959) was a Polish-Jewish jurist and expert who fled Europe in 1941. In 1944 he published a book "Axis Rule in Occupied Europe" in which he used the term "genocide" for the first time. Already since 1933 he pressed the League of Nations to adopt an international treaty to outlaw "a crime of barbarity" and later the United Nations to outlaw "destruction of peoples".

¹⁶⁴ Shelton; 2005; 396

¹⁶⁵ Andreopoulos; 1994; 95

¹⁶⁶ Israel Charny is the Executive Director of the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Israel and the President of the International Association of Genocide Scholars. He is the chief editor of *The Encyclopedia of Genocide*.

¹⁶⁷ Helen Fein is the Executive Director of the Institute for the Study of Genocide and an Associate of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. She is the author of nine books and monographs on genocide and collective violence, including two prize winning works, *Accounting for Genocide* and *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*

3.2 Broad Definition by Charny

Charny's definition of genocide is as follows: "...whenever large numbers of unarmed human beings are put to death at the hands of their fellow human beings, we are talking about genocide."¹⁶⁸

Although this is a much criticized definition, I included it, since it is the broadest one used by one of the foremost genocide scholars and will allow us to find out if the Herero war constituted a genocide at least in the widest sense. The critic of Charny's concept is quite simple: it is too vague and broad. According to this definition a number of cases, which other scholars regard as "mass murders" or other crimes, are described as genocide. The biggest problem with this attitude is that in this way, genocide as a theoretical concept loses much of its comparative value. Levene points this out, when he questions Charny's approach: "...why should one substitute the term "mass murder" with "genocide" when the former is not only perfectly adequate but actually much less open to interpretation?"¹⁶⁹ And Chalk continues to question it in the following way: "If we include every form of war, massacre, or terrorism under genocide, then what is it that we are studying?"¹⁷⁰ If we took it to the extreme than cigarettes or cars could be regarded as genocidal too, because they certainly kill "large numbers of unarmed human beings" and are produced by "their fellow human beings".

Let us now examine the case of the Herero war to see, if it would fit into this definition.

The definition states that "large numbers" of people are killed by others. In my opinion, the number of Hereros, who died during the conflict – between 50,000 and 60,000 (for a detailed discussion see section 2.8.1) – should be considered as "large". However, the most intriguing question in our case is, whether most of the Herero killed were and should be considered soldiers or civilians, i.e. "unarmed human beings"?

A number of people, above all the ones included in the German military and German colonialism apologists, argued that most of the natives died in war, as soldiers or insurgents and further that Germany took just necessary measures to suppress the uprising and that if it was not for the rebellion, there would be no native casualties.

However, if one recalls the development of the war and its stages (see chapter 1), it is very questionable if one can accept such an approach.

It is likely that the uprising was started by the Herero; it is true that they took control over large central parts of the country, cut the railway, looted and destroyed most of German farms and killed over 100 civilians, including 5 women. However, they did not take over any of the important cities, did not endanger most of the Germans and, in just about a two weeks, the "Schutztruppe" was in complete control of most of the German territory. Since then, the main objective was not to protect white settlers anymore, but to suppress the rebellion and to punish the insurgents. The German military was not able to do it in the first few months and the Herero remained a strong opponent. It could be argued that during that time the natives killed were just rebels, who still posed a threat to German rule and therefore their death was a military necessity and not an indiscriminate slaughter. Although if we remember the German no-prisoner policy (see section 2.7), such approach must seem dubious in the least.

Anyway, after the battle at Waterberg in August, the Herero were dispersed and posed no longer any threat to the Germans. If it was up to Governor Leutwein, he would probably seek to conclude a peace treaty with the Herero then. But German military leadership and especially von Trotha pursued another policy. He pushed the Herero into the Omahake desert (and let it be sealed off), although there was no military necessity for such proceeding, since most of the Herero were willing to surrender. Furthermore

¹⁶⁸ Andreopoulos; 1994; 74

¹⁶⁹ Levene; 2005; 38

¹⁷⁰ Andreopoulos; 1994; 60

von Trotha refused any surrender offers and issued his Extermination order in October (see section 2.4.4). Afterwards all natives including women, children and elders were mercilessly killed. And they did not carry any arms. The fact that women and children were later exempted from the "Vernichtungsbefehl" did not change anything.

Therefore, even if one accepted the view that "virtually all Herero including women and older children" functioned "at least as combat associates"¹⁷¹ prior to the battle of Waterberg, one has to conclude that what happened after it falls within our definition, because "large numbers of unarmed human beings" were without doubt killed.

3.3 United Nations Definition

The most important and known definition of Genocide is the UN definition, because it is the only relevant one, which can be used in practise. Although, genocide-like acts were not invented in WWII and other crimes like pornography or drugs trafficking were incorporated into international law already earlier, genocide was for the first time defined as an international crime in 1948. The United Nations "Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" was approved by the General Assembly on 9th December 1948 and entered into force on 12th January 1951, after the required number of 20 countries ratified it. By 2003, 135¹⁷² nations signed it, but the crime of genocide is prohibited and punishable even in countries, which have not adopted it.

For our purposes, the central part of the Convention is Article II, where genocide is defined as follows:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

This definition is mostly criticized by experts for they consider it too narrow. In their opinion it should include political and social groups as well, since they have frequently been targeted too. In our case, the Herero fall well within the definition. Even if we do not consider them to be a national group, it is safe to say that they presented a specific ethnic group and were clearly perceived by the Germans as racially distinct too.

The question is, whether there was the "intent to destroy" them "in whole or in part". Karla Poewe and Brigitte Lau argue¹⁷³ that the "Vernichtungsbefehl" was only used as means of psychological warfare to scare the Herero and that it was never carried out; i.e. as Dederling points out well "that Trotha did not mean 'extermination' when he said 'extermination'¹⁷⁴.

In my opinion - von Trotha's "Vernichtungsbefehl" with wordings as "every Herero...will be shot" or "I will no longer accept women and children" and his words used in letters to von Schlieffen such as "I deem it wiser for the entire nation to perish" and Leutwein "that nation must vanish" – leave little

¹⁷¹ Midlarsky; 2005; 33

¹⁷² Shelton; 2005; 396

¹⁷³ Some of their arguments can be found in Dederling; 1993.

¹⁷⁴ Dederling; 1993

doubt about his intentions. Even if the Extermination order was indeed meant as a psychological warfare against the Herero, why would he then use similar wording and expressions in his letter to Schlieffen and Leutwein? Was he trying to fight them with his "psychological warfare" as well?

According to Fein: "...one can demonstrate intent by showing a pattern of purposeful action..."¹⁷⁵. If nothing else, than the fact that the Omahake desert was sealed off for almost ten months and raids were mounted to kill the remaining Herero there (see section 2.4.3), shows "a pattern of purposeful action".

To conclude this short discussion: if von Trotha's proclamations and words leave little doubt about his intentions, than the particular actions of the German army leave no doubt what he meant with "extermination".

Let us now move on and focus on each of the five points of the Genocide Convention separately.

a) Killing members of the group.

"Members of the group" were indeed killed, as shown previously. What is important, is that they were killed precisely for the fact that they were members of this group (the Herero tribe); for nothing else. They did not commit any crime. They were only guilty of being born as a Herero. (A large number of Berg Damaras were killed too, although they did not take any part in the uprising. Their only guilt was to be black and similar to the Herero. If the colour of their skin was light, it is very improbable that any of them would fall victim to German violence.)

b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.

"Serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group" was not only caused during the war itself, but afterwards as well – in the concentration camps (see section 2.6). Conditions in most of these camps were unbearable: weak and starved natives were beaten, mistreated, women often raped. They were forced to work without enough food, clothes or proper housing. Furthermore some had to undergo medical experiments or even "remove the flesh" from the skulls of their compatriots.

On one hand, the concentration camps were not established with the "intent to destroy" the Herero. On the other, they were not created to protect him either, as almost 50% of the 15,000 Herero interned document - for them the "bodily harm" was too great to survive.

c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.

This point could be possibly applied to some of the concentration camps as well, but above all, it fits the German policy in the Omahake desert (see section 2.4.3). After the battle at Waterberg the Germans had orders to either kill any Hereros or chase them into the Omahake. The German military leadership was fully aware what this would mean for most of the Herero as for example the General Staff documentation illustrates: "The arid Omaheke was to complete...the extermination of the Herero nation." or "like a half-dead animal he [*the Herero*] was hunted from water-hole to water-hole until he became a lethargic victim..." Nevertheless - or precisely because of this - the Herero were pushed deeper and deeper into the desert, raids were mounted against them¹⁷⁶ and the Omahake sealed off from August 1904 until the middle of 1905. Anyone who tried to break out was shot death. Most of the rest found a slow and agonizing death in the desert.

¹⁷⁵ Andreopoulos; 1994; 97

¹⁷⁶ For example, in one of these raids, Captain Klein lost 25 horses and 21 mules to thirst and exhaustion in just five days. (Madley; 2004; 188)

d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.

Although, it was shown (see section 2.8.1) that in the period after the Herero war there were more Herero children of German fathers than the native ones, there was no specific policy to "prevent births within the group"; if we do not consider killing of women to be such a policy and if we do not take into account the bodily and mental harm, which could have had, at least temporarily, such effect.

e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

There are no documents, which would indicate that such transfers existed. We can not compare the situation in GSWA with the one for example in Australia in the 20th century, where "half-casts"¹⁷⁷ were taken from their aboriginal mothers to be brought up in the white environment as whites. In Africa the Germans, for their racist conceptions (see section 1.4), were afraid of this. They wanted to exclude the bastard children from their white society at the end of the war (see section 2.8.2.2) and it was not only because bastard children were: "keine wünschenswerte Freunde für weiße Kinder"¹⁷⁸.

To conclude, if we use the UN Genocide Convention, than the events which occurred during the Herero war should be considered genocide. The Herero formed a distinct group, which was to be destroyed by methods defined in the convention under points a) and c); application of point b) remains questionable.

3.4 Narrow Definition by Fein

The third and final definition I will use to compare the Herero war with is the one of Fein. Actually, it is more a set of conditions an event has to meet to be labelled genocide, than a traditional definition.

The conditions are:

1. There was a sustained attack or continuity of attacks by the perpetrator to physically destroy group members,
2. The perpetrator was a collective or organized actor (usually the state) or commander of organized actors,
3. The victims were selected because they were members of the collectivity,
4. The victims were defenceless or were killed regardless of whether they surrendered or resisted, and
5. The destruction of group members was undertaken with intent to kill and murder was sanctioned by the perpetrator.¹⁷⁹

Points 1, 3 and 5 (see section 3.3) and 4 (see section 3.2) have been already addressed; let us therefore now focus on the remaining one.

ad 2) The perpetrator in our case was the colonial "Schutztruppe" and the German military. Both of them can surely be regarded as "organized actors" and von Trotha as their commander. The question here is, if and eventually up to which extent can the German state¹⁸⁰ and its political leaders be

¹⁷⁷ This term is today generally considered derogatory. It was used for children of Australian Aboriginal and European parents.

¹⁷⁸ Leutwein; 1906; 232 – 235

¹⁷⁹ Andreopoulos; 1994; 5

¹⁸⁰ According to some this is a necessary precondition for genocide, for example in Horowitz's view "Genocide is defined as a structural and systematic destruction of innocent people by a state bureaucratic apparatus." (Tatz; 2003; x)

considered perpetrators? Was von Trotha acting on his own or did his superiors sanction or at least agree with his policy?

While some think that German actions in the colony "were explicitly authorized by the state"¹⁸¹, others are convinced that it was "rather the decision of the local commander"¹⁸².

In order to be able to decide, which of these statements is closer to the truth, let us now examine the involvement of von Trotha's superiors more closely. Three men will be of most interest to us: the Army Chief of Staff Schlieffen, the Chancellor Bülow and the Emperor Wilhelm.

Schlieffen was put in charge of the operations in GSWA by Kaiser Wilhelm already in February 1904. It was for the first time that the German Army was given a task of suppressing a native revolt in the colony. This decision turned the "revolt into a full-scale war". One of Schlieffen's first actions was to reprimand Leutwein for his letter to Maharero and to forbid him to start any negotiations (see section 2.3.4).

In May - upon Schlieffen's suggestion - Wilhelm personally chose von Trotha, to lead the military operations in GSWA. His orders to von Trotha were simple: "crush the uprising with any means necessary..." (see section 2.4). This, of course, is not a proof, that what he had in mind was the same, what von Trotha later applied. Nevertheless, these very vague and broad guidelines, if one can use such a word, at least underline Wilhelm's confidence in the General.

The General Staff of the Army knew already before the battle of Waterberg, what it would mean for the Herero if they managed to break through the German encirclement into the Omahake and in their eyes such a result would be "even more desirable". For the battle itself von Trotha received Wilhelm's "complete appreciation" (see section 2.4.2). The fact that from 30th August on the Omahake was sealed off and that the Herero nation "schrumpfte auf spärliche Reste" during this time, did not seem to bother anyone.

On 2nd October von Trotha issued the Extermination order and two days later he informed Schlieffen about it. Leutwein's attempts to have the order reverted were repulsed by Army leadership (see section 2.4.5). Schlieffen then send a report to Chancellor Bülow on 23rd November in which he agreed with von Trotha's intentions and thought they were "admirable". Bülow was the first one opposed to von Trotha's policies. He asked Wilhelm twice in a short period to revoke them. The Kaiser, who however seemed a bit reluctant, revoked them at the beginning of December (see section 2.4.6).

Finally, when von Trotha returned to Germany he was awarded *pour le merite*, the highest military order of Prussia, by Wilhelm. Furthermore he was praised by both Wilhelm and Bülow for his achievements (see section 2.5). Already before, Bülow defended von Trotha in the Reichstag against opposition attacks, arguing that the war was conducted in a "patient and human manner" (see box Clashes in the "Reichstag" About German Colonial Policies).

After the recapitulation of the involvement of these three men, let us now try to asses their responsibility for the events in GSWA.

Schlieffen and the German military were directly responsible for the course of combat in GSWA and the policies adopted. They not only recommended von Trotha, but always stood behind him and never seemed to question any of his policies or decisions.

If the Emperor Wilhelm was not directly responsible, then he certainly beard considerable indirect responsibility, for he chose von Trotha, gave him a free hand and did nothing to change the general's policies until he was pushed to do so.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Palmer; 1998; 104

¹⁸² Bridgman and Worley quoted in Schaller; 2004; 402 – 403

Chancellor Bülow bears only indirect responsibility because it was mainly his merit, that the "Vernichtungsbefehl" was rescinded. However, he defended and praised von Trotha and did not push for his dismissal,

All in all, the highest representatives of the state (i.e. the state itself) did not "explicitly authorize" the extermination policies, but neither did they oppose to them to such an extent (with one exception) that they would change them or replace their author, even though they had the power to do it and it was in their competence. In this case we can exceptionally agree with von Trotha's words: "qui tacet, consentire videtur". Therefore, if the German state was not the perpetrator itself, it served at least as his accomplice.

3.5 "For all their power, they could kill but not convince."¹⁸⁴

In this concluding section of my thesis I will try to answer the question: how did it come about that "ein lokaler Konflikt mit den Bondelszwarst im Süden des Landes Ereignisse in Gang setzte, die letztendlich im genozidalen Krieg mündeten?"¹⁸⁵ Several factors contributed.

One of them was the German conviction that they were fighting against "savages", i.e. an enemy in their eyes far inferior to them. Such an enemy, with his obsolete weapons, was never supposed to be able to resist the modern German army. What the settlers and above all Governor Leutwein expected was another – even if much larger – native rebellion, which would be quickly suppressed after one decisive battle with the adversary and for which the Herero would be severely punished. The problem, however, was that no such battle took place in the first months of fighting. The Herero turned out to be a strong, organized and dangerous enemy. Thus German confidence and the conviction of their supremacy were badly shaken. With additional time they grew more and more impatient. German government was concerned with its respect and reputation among other nations and especially among great European powers. How would Germany look if it was not able to finish off a few "half-naked savages" running around with their kirris¹⁸⁶?

In order to save Germany's image, German army was put in charge of all military operations in the colony. Since then, the war was planned and directed thousands of kilometres from the theatre of war by people who often had only a vague idea about the country it was fought in and about the natives they were fighting against. Not only did they not know much about the colony, but above all, they had very little concern for it and its future. The one thing that mattered was to win the war no matter what the costs.

That was why Germany called in more and more – often entirely inexperienced - soldiers, so that at the peak in 1906 their number reached 15,000. Most of them – incited by the war hysteria in Germany and the reports of massacres and mutilations of German women – were ready to follow all Lothar von Trotha's orders.

Von Trotha has to be seen as another and major reason for German policies used during this war. It is highly questionable whether similar ones would be adopted if he was not appointed the head of the German forces in GSWA. The state of war contributed to concentration of power in his hands, which helped him to cloud his genocidal policies. In the end it was not the Hereros, but the Germans whose warfare should be called savage. They did not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, but killed all, including women and children, indiscriminately.

¹⁸³ Although he did not sanction von Trotha's policy explicitly, we have reasons to believe that he was not opposed to it completely. The words he said to his troops on 27th July 1900 in the "Hunnenrede" would suggest it: "Kommt Ihr vor den Feind, so wird er geschlagen. Pardon wird nicht gegeben; Gefangene nicht gemacht. Wer Euch in die Hand fällt, sei in Eurer Hand." (Schaller; 2004; 418)

¹⁸⁴ Bridgman; 1981; 171

¹⁸⁵ Zimmerer; 2001, 31

¹⁸⁶ A wooden weapon often used by the Herero.

The frustration of not being able to crush the "barbarous and inferior" enemy, combined with a military leadership of the "kalthertziger"¹⁸⁷ General were the chief reasons why the Germans abandoned conventional war means, forgot any ethical restraints and engaged in a war of annihilation.

Some scholars argue that von Trotha pursued annihilation "from the outset"¹⁸⁸. Although it might not have been initially the case, and the distinction between military defeat and complete destruction was somewhat blurred, later on it became quite clear. Most scholars and people who dealt with the Herero war such as: Bley, Dedering, Drechsler, Gewalt, Nuhn, Rubinstein etc. agree that German policy pursued in GSWA constituted, at least at some point, genocide. Some, as Lau, Poewe, oppose to that on various grounds.¹⁸⁹

In my opinion the policies applied were genocidal and the case of the Herero war constitutes genocide.¹⁹⁰ In the beginning it was a native revolt which, however, evolved into a systematic military offensive with just one goal – annihilating the Herero. The "Vernichtungsbefehl" of 2nd October 1904 did not start the extermination – the no-prisoner policy was in place at least from April - it merely made it an official policy. Since then there was a clear policy designed to kill all the Herero, exactly because they were Herero. At least from that point on until the Extermination order was lifted in December the events in GSWA were genocidal and should be labelled accordingly. One could argue that the extermination did not end with the cancellation of the order, but continued in the concentration camps, where almost half of the interned Herero died. Although these camps were not designated to annihilate the natives, but more to break them or their will, in fact they continued in the destruction of the Herero – a fact, which no one in GSWA, except for a few missionaries, seemed to mind.

¹⁸⁷ Estorff; 1986; 117

¹⁸⁸ Zimmerer; 2004; 65

¹⁸⁹ For some of their arguments see Dedering; 1993

¹⁹⁰ Percentage-wise (about 80% of the Herero died) it was one of the deadliest, if not the deadliest, genocides of the 20th century.

Conclusion

German South West Africa was the only German colony in Africa suitable for a larger settlement. German goal was thus to build a modern white settler's colony and to show than even as colonial "late comers" they would be successful. The one "obstacle", which prevented them from reaching the goal, was the natives. Germany would have preferred an "Afrika ohne Afrikaner"¹⁹¹. However, the part of Africa the Germans colonized was – even if sparsely populated – not lacking them. The natives were perceived as utterly inferior and the Germans certainly let them feel it. First the Germans tried a gradual approach of dispossession and subordination of the natives and when it did not work anymore they resorted to other and much harsher methods. War was used as a catalyst to carry through the German concept of colonization. Melber characterized the ultimate result of German colonization in SWA pointedly as a form of "Zivilisierung durch Massenvernichtung"¹⁹².

One of the most intriguing questions concerning the Herero war is, if it still was a colonial massacre more appropriate for the 19th century or if it already was a modern genocide of the 20th century? And if so, did then "the road to the Holocaust" really go "through Africa"?¹⁹³

There indeed is a number of similarities and connections between the Herero war and German colonial policies regarding the natives and the Holocaust.

Not a few people, who had something to do with German colonialism, played later an important role in the Holocaust.¹⁹⁴ Terms as "Seuchenherd", "Rassenfeind", "Untermenschen" etc. were used both instances frequently. Blatant racism in German Africa is compared to the one in the Third Reich; laws which banned interracial marriages in GSWA to the Nuremberg Laws; total expropriation of the natives and their marking to the one of the Jews; von Trotha's extermination order to Himmler's oral command to the 2nd SS Cavalry Regiment from 30th July 1941¹⁹⁵; the deportation of the Nama and transfers of natives after the war to the methods of social engineering used more than 30 years later; medical experiments and conditions in the concentration camps for natives to the one used during WWII etc.

Hannah Arendt saw the grassroots of totalitarianism in the European colonial rule in Africa. The situation and events, which took place in GSWA sustain her thesis. Their extremism, inhumanity and methods put them much closer to modern genocides of the 20th century than to previous colonial massacres.

Although the way from the metal tags for the natives in GSWA to the yellow stars for the Jews in Poland was long and the road from Shark Island to Auschwitz winding and could have ended somewhere different, its construction started already in Windhoek over one hundred years ago.

¹⁹¹ Osterhammel; 2002; 86

¹⁹² Henning Melber quoted in Schaller; 2004; 407

¹⁹³ Edward Kissi's statement in Anderson; 2005; 1165

¹⁹⁴ Except for the Görings, doubtless the most interesting case is that of Eugen Fischer. Fisher was a biologist of race, who studied and medically examined the natives of GSWA in 1908. Five years later he published his results in a book "Die Rehobother Bastards und das Bastardisierungsproblem beim Menschen". Later he co-wrote "The Principles of Human Heredity and Race Hygiene", a book Hitler supposedly read during his time in the Landsberg prison. In 1933 Hitler appointed Fischer rector of the Berlin University. One of Fischer's students was a certain Josef Mengele. (Schaller; 2004; 408) The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 regarded Fischer as a practical use of his theories, for which he thanked Hitler. Two year later his expertise war required for the decision to sterilize the "Rheinlandbastards".

¹⁹⁵ Himmler ordered: "All Jews must be shot. Drive the female Jews into the swamp." (Levene; 2005b; 237)

Epilogue

Almost exactly 100 years after the extermination order was issued - on 14th August 2004 – a crowd of some 1,000 gathered in Okokarara at a ceremony to commemorate the death of their ancestors. At this occasion the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Wieczorek-Zeul delivered a speech in which she apologized for the deeds of German colonizers and for the genocide which took place. "Ich gedenke mit Hochachtung Ihrer Vorfahren, die im Kampf gegen ihre deutschen Unterdrücker gestorben sind...Die damaligen Gräueltaten waren das, was heute als Völkermord bezeichnet würde - für den ein General von Trotha heutzutage vor Gericht gebracht und verurteilt würde. Wir Deutschen bekennen uns zu unserer historisch-politischen, moralisch-ethischen Verantwortung und zu der Schuld, die Deutsche damals auf sich geladen haben. Ich bitte Sie im Sinne des gemeinsamen "Vater unser" um Vergebung unserer Schuld."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ Quoted from the web page of the German Ministry for Economic Coordination and Development - <http://www.bmz.de/de/presse/reden/ministerin/rede20040814.html>

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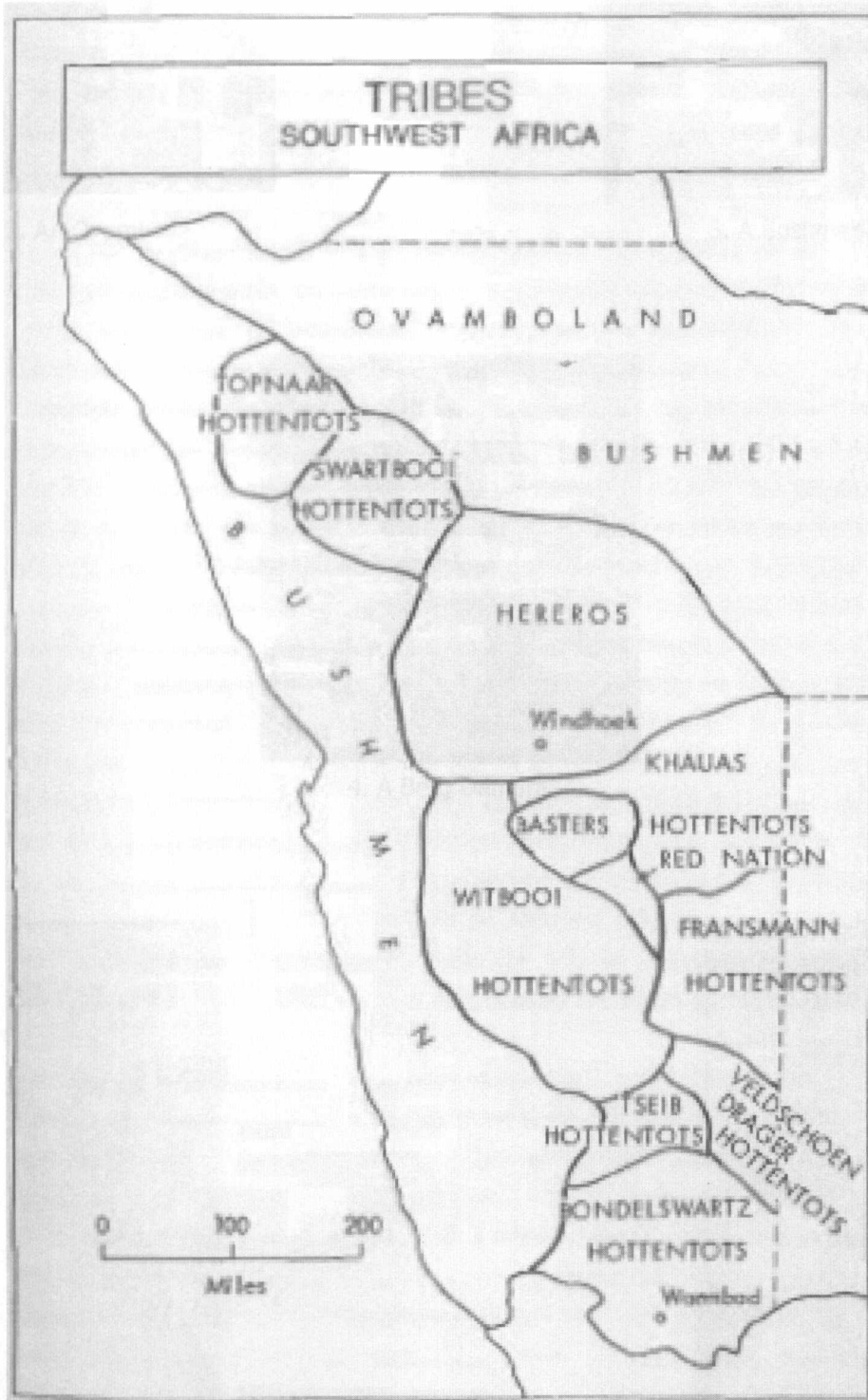
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Zusammenfassung

Diese Bachelorarbeit befasst sich mit dem Thema der deutschen Kolonialpolitik in der damaligen Deutsch Südwestafrika, heutigem Namibia. Im Mittelpunkt steht die Beziehung zwischen den Deutschen und den Eingeborenen. Deutsche Ideen über Afrikaner und ihre Behandlung von denen wird analysiert. Ferner untersuche ich den kolonialen Krieg von 1904 – 1907, den so genannten Herero Krieg. Ich versuche die Gründe für den Aufstand der Herero zu identifizieren und nachdem beschreibe ich den Krieg selbst. Eigentliche Ereignisse und Kämpfe des Krieges sind nicht im Detail behandelt. Viel mehr Nachdruck ist auf die Führung des Krieges von der deutschen Seite gelegt. Verschiedene kriegerische Ziele der Deutschen und die Argumente hinter diesen sind im Detail behandelt. In dem Schlusskapitel wird das Konzept des Völkermordes analysiert und deren Applikation an den Herero Krieg bewertet.



1. South West Africa before German colonization



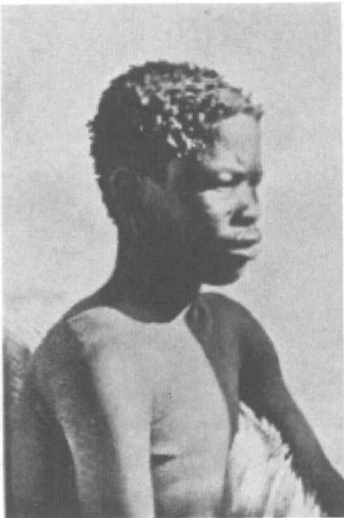
2. An Ovambo



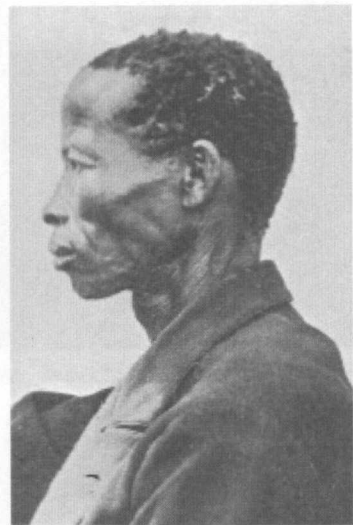
3. A Bushmen



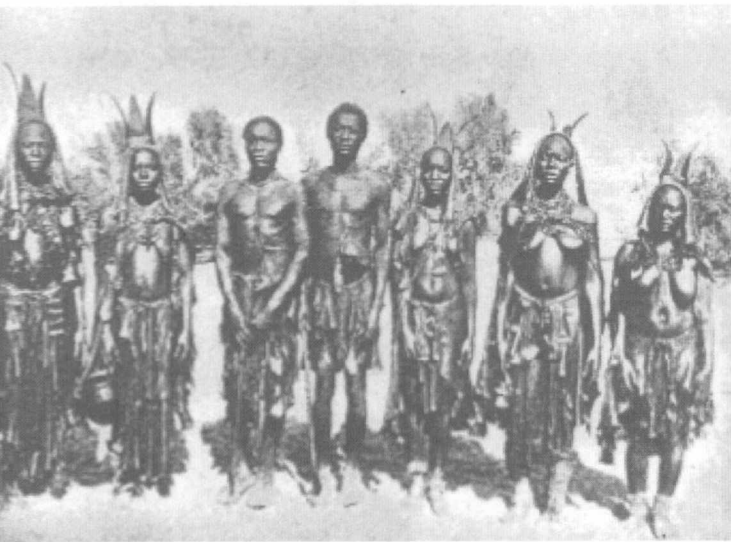
4. A Berg Damara



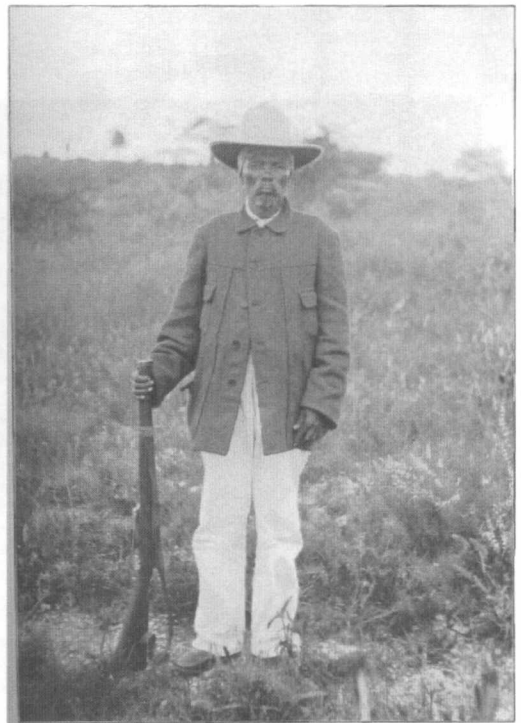
5. A Herero



6. A Nama



7. Hereros in full dress



8. Hendrik Witbooi – the Nama chief



Samuel Maharero – the Herero chief



10. A typical native "Werf" (settlement)



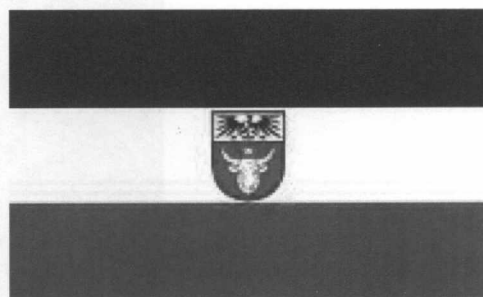
11. Adolf Lüderitz



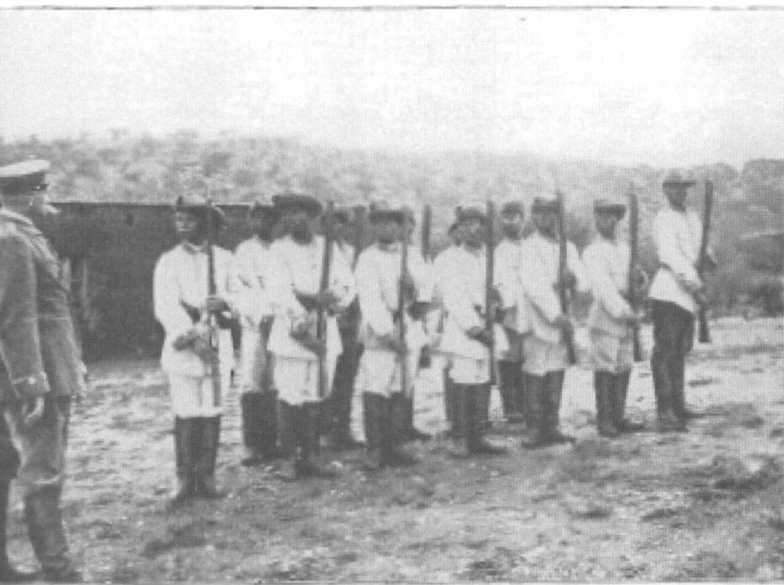
12. Theodor Leutwein

APPENDIX
 EXTRACTS FROM TREATIES, Etc.
 PROCLAMATION ANNOUNCING A GERMAN PROTECTORATE OVER THE COAST OF NAMAQUALAND AND DAMARALAND, August 16 (715), 1884.
 His Majesty the German Emperor William I, King of Prussia, has commanded me to proceed to Angra Pequena with His Majesty's two-decked corvette, the *Elisabeth*, to place under the direct protection of His Majesty the territory belonging to M. A. Lüderitz, on the West Coast of Africa.
 The territory of M. A. Lüderitz will, according to official communication, be taken to extend from the north bank of the Orange River to the 26° south latitude, 20 geographical miles and, including the Islands belonging thereto by the Law of Nations.
 In carrying out His Majesty's commands I herewith hoist the Imperial German flag, and thus place the above-mentioned territory under the protection and sovereignty of His Majesty Emperor William I, and call upon all present to give three cheers for His Majesty.
 Long live His Majesty the Emperor William I.
 SCHERING, Captain at Sea, and Commandant of His Imperial Majesty's ship *Elisabeth*.

13. A transcript of German protectorate proclamation



14. The flag of GSWA



15. Native members of German "Schutztruppe" in Windhoek (1901)

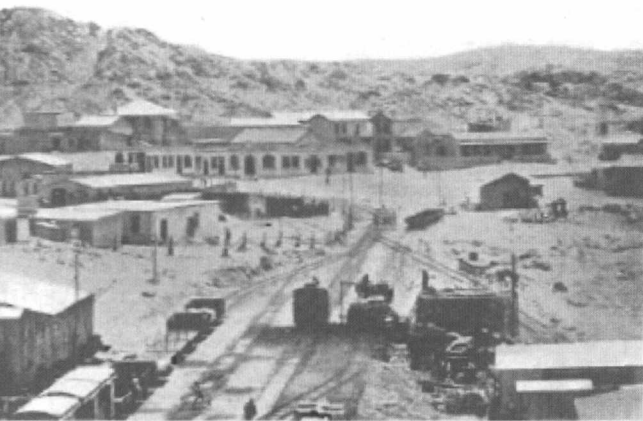


16. Christian missionary school for the Herero

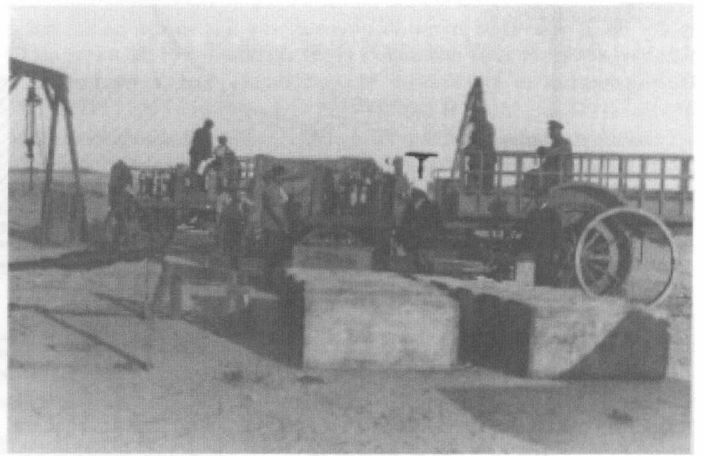


17. Leutwein signing a treaty with Maharero (1895)

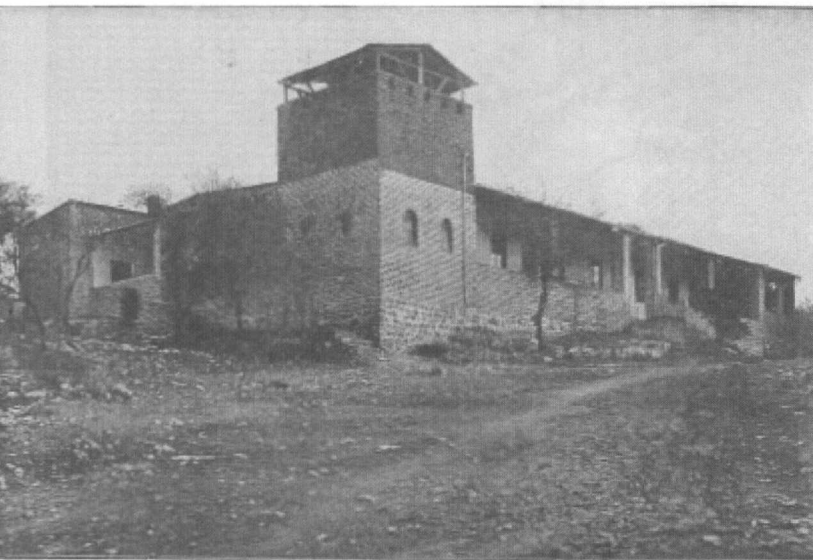
22. The capital city Windhoek



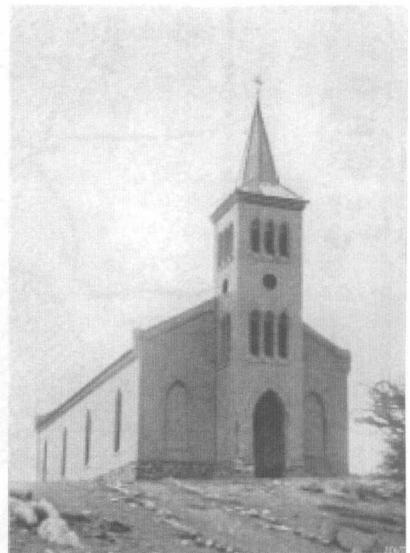
18. Lüderitzbucht railway station



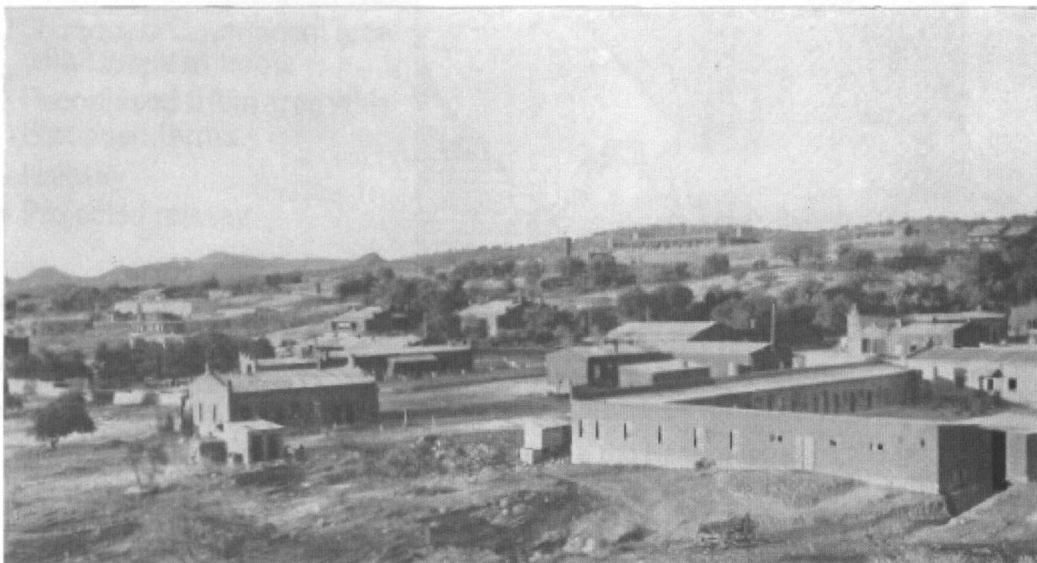
19. Two first petrol driven vehicles in G.S.W.A.
(1905)



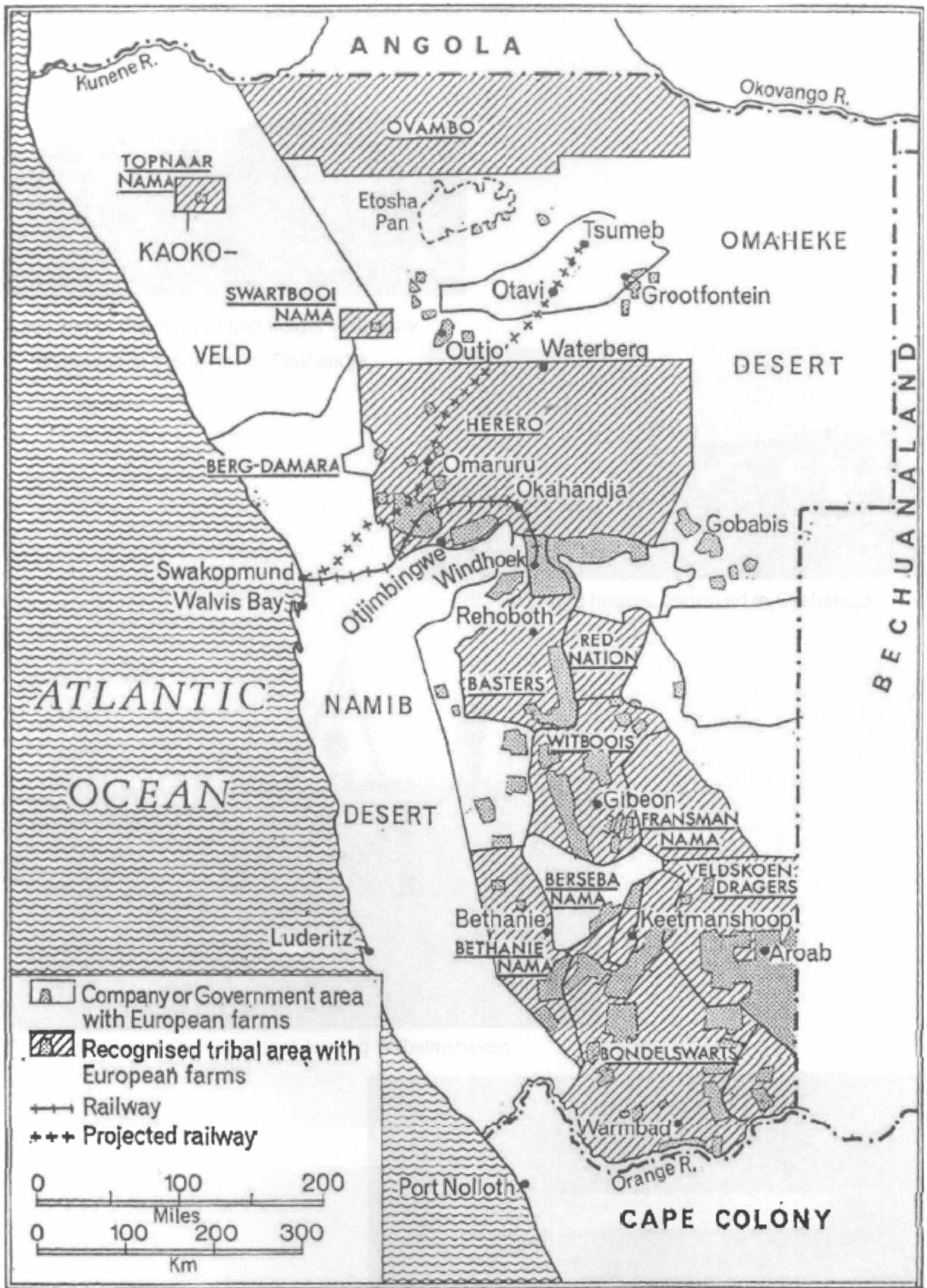
20. House of the Governor, Windhoek



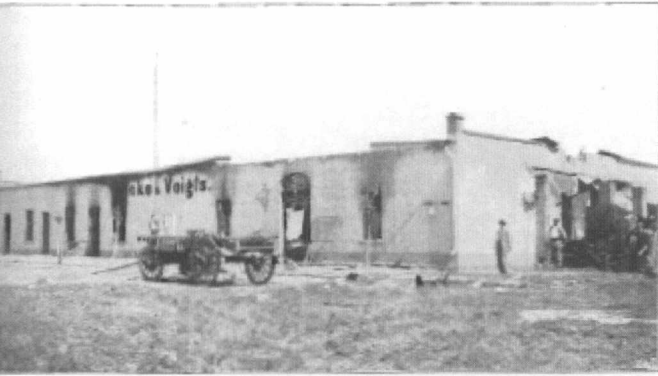
21. A mission church in Windhoek



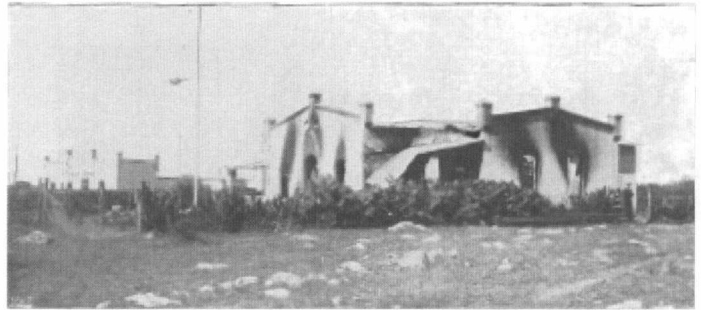
22. The capital city Windhoek



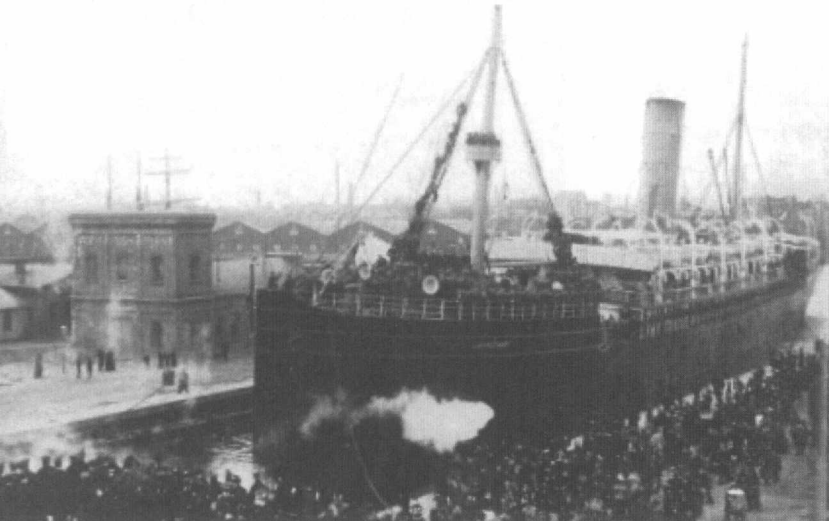
23. German South West Africa before the Herero uprising (1902)



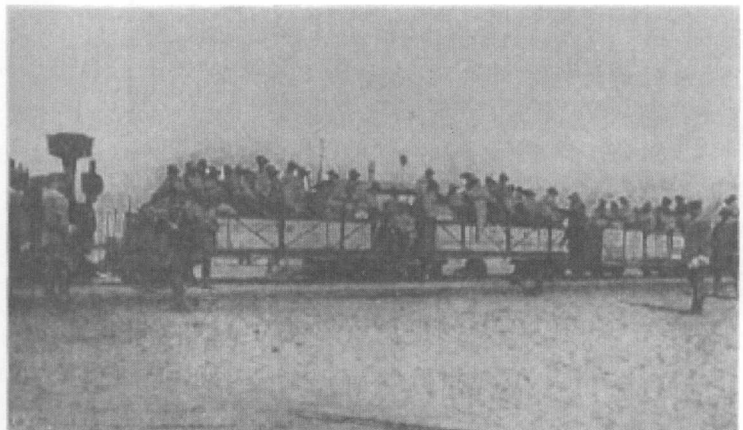
24. A building of the "Wecke und Voigts" company destroyed in the uprising, Okahandja



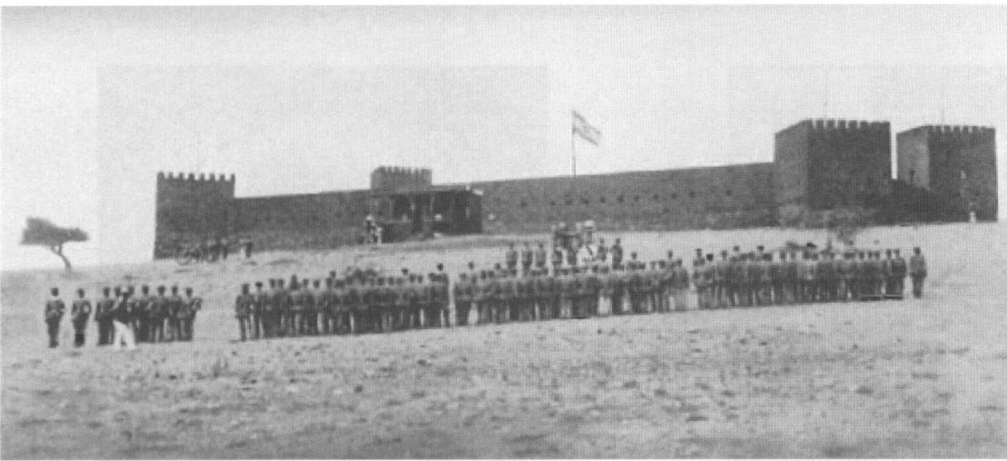
25. Two more houses destroyed in Okahandja



26. Additional German troops leaving Wilhelmshaven



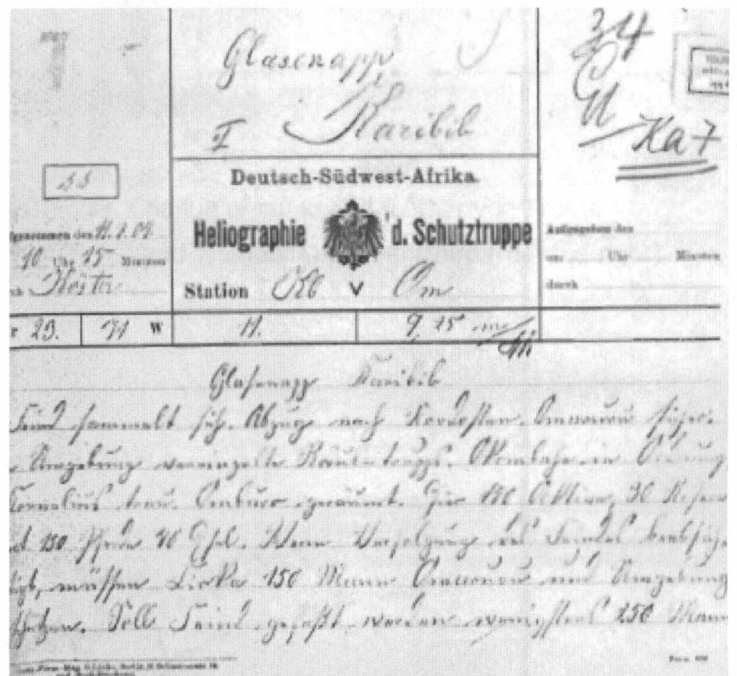
27. German reinforcements on the way to Windhoek



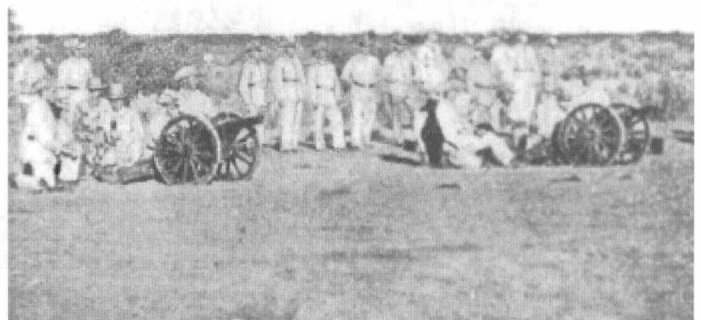
28. One of the forts, which was part of the military chain in G.S.W.A.



29. German soldiers digging for water



30. A facsimile of a heliograph typically used by the Germans during the Herero war



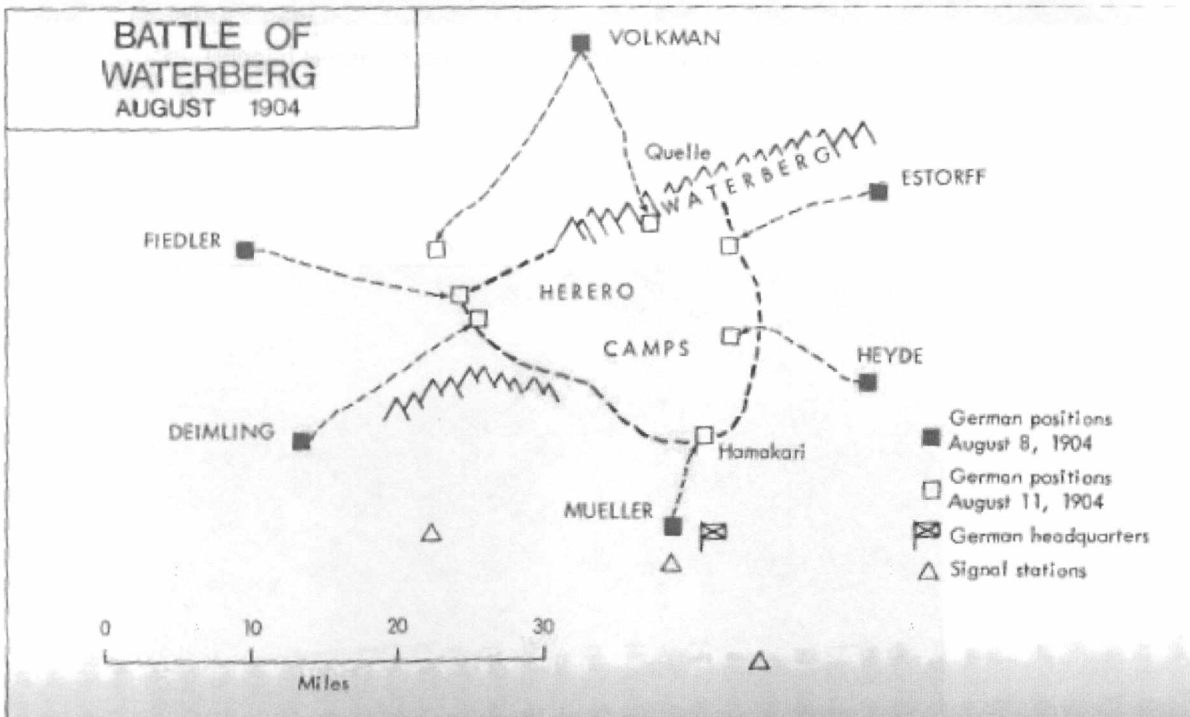
31. German mountain battery



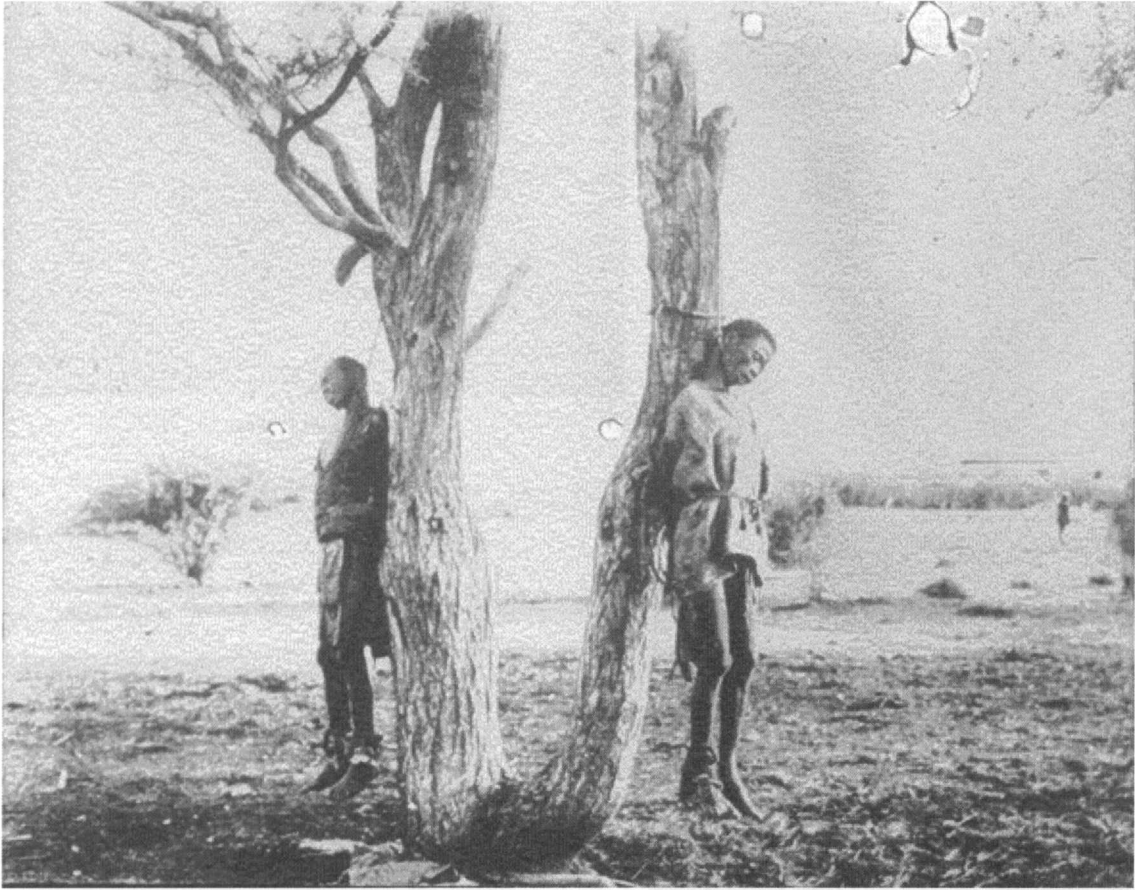
32. Lothar von Trotha



33. Change of command, Lothar von Trotha (right) and Theodor Leutwein (third from the right)



34. Scheme of the battle at Waterberg



35. Hanged Hereros from the time of German no-prisoner policy

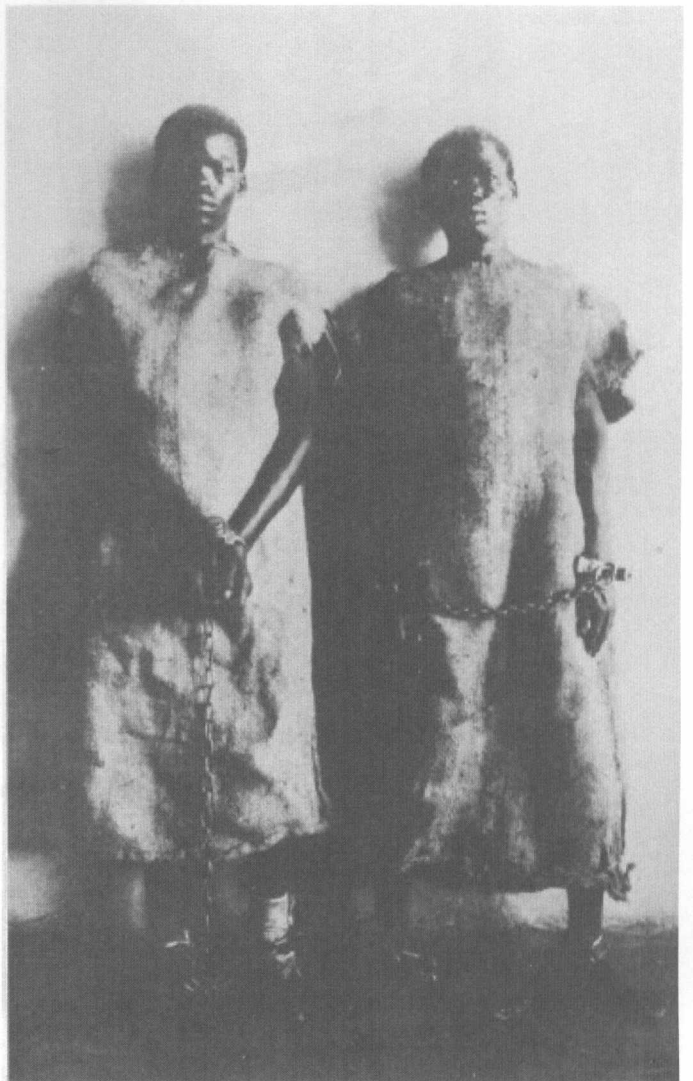


36. German soldiers in front of hanged Hereros

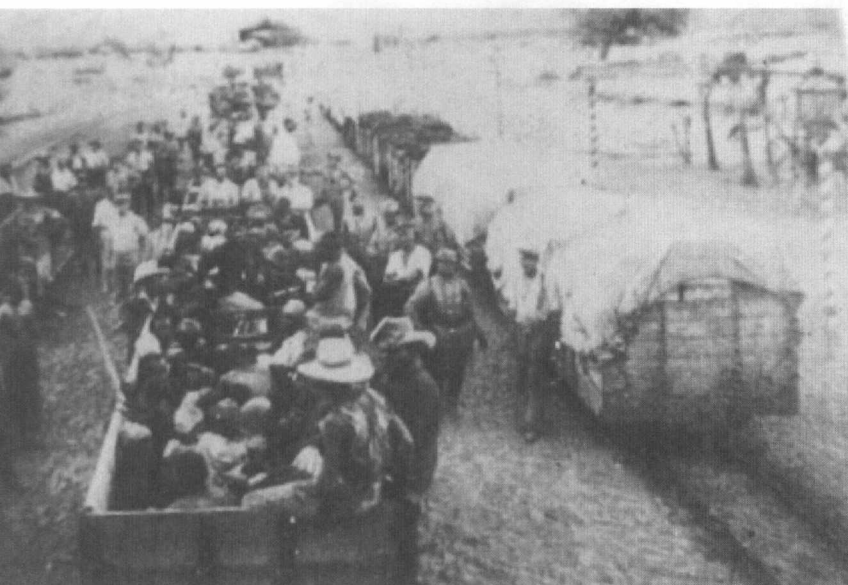
Part of Herero prisoners



37. Chained Hereros



38. Herero prisoners in chains



39. Transport of Herero prisoners



40. Native women doing forced labour at Shark Island



41. A German soldier guarding prisoners at the "Death Island"



42. A German military cemetery in Namibia



43., 44. Graves of German soldiers who died during the Herero war



45. A small commemorative plate for the Hereros fallen at Waterberg