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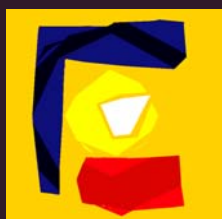
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**006**

## **The “Germanization” of Africa: White Education in German South-West Africa**

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# The “Germanization” of Africa: White Education in German South-West Africa<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

In recent studies of imperialism, there has been a growing tendency to analyze the structure of dominance from cultural viewpoints. Therefore, education in the colonies is a field worthy of attention.

One thing common to all German colonies was the introduction of German language education. Emphasis was placed on getting colonial subjects to learn German. This act of thoroughly teaching the language of the colonizer to the colonized was a phenomenon also seen in Japanese and French colonies. While France tried to disseminate the French language as part of its “civilizing mission”, and Japan Japanese as part of its assimilation policy, what kinds of meanings can we find in this phenomenon in German colonies? To answer this question, I would like to look first at the following data:

Funds for teaching German in the colonies were put in the budget of the school educational system in 1906. (The budget of 1914 was 20,000 marks for German East-Africa, 60,000 marks for the Cameroon, 25,000 marks for Togo, 20,000 marks for German New Guinea, 9,000 marks for German South West Africa, and 7,000 marks for Samoa).<sup>2</sup>

They were small amounts considering the state budget, but it is interesting that individual funds were set aside separately for German dissemination. More interesting is the fact that although German South-West Africa (hereinafter “South-West Africa”) was second to Germany’s largest colony, German

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on my article, “Doitsuryo Nansei Africa to Kyoiku,” published in *Kotoba to Shakai*, No.7 (Sangensha, 2003), pp.168-179. For this COE project, I gave that article a lot of changes and additional parts.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich Schnee, *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*( Leipzig, 1920 ), Bd.II, S.309.

East-Africa (“East-Africa”), only 9,000 marks were allocated. With this in mind, it is useful to refer to the following table.

Table 1: Overview of schools for natives in colonies as of 1 June, 1911

			No. of shools
South-West Africa	Missionary schools	(primary)	48
		(secondary)	1
		(vocational)	5
	Finish missionary		30
East-Africa	Governmental schools	(primary)	78
		(secondary)	2
		(vocational)	3
	Missionary schools	(primary)	875
		(secondary)	29
		(vocational)	14
Togo	Governmental schools	(primary)	2
		(secondary)	1
		(vocational)	2
	Missionary schools	(primary)	313
		(secondary) (vocational)	4 2
Cameroon	Governmental schools	(primary)	4
	Missionary schools	(primary)	495
		(secondary)	21
		(vocational)	11
South Pacific colonies	Governmental schools	(primary)	2

	Missionary schools	(primary)	400
		(secondary)	19
		(vocational)	11
Samoa	Governmental schools	(primary)	1
		(vocational)	1
	Missionary schools	(primary)	299
		(secondary)	26
		(vocational)	2
Kiaochow	Governmental schools	(primary)	11
		(secondary)	1
		(vocational)	1
	Missionary schools	(primary)	20
		(secondary)	5
		(vocational)	1

(Table from Japanese translation of Becker's *Die Kolonialpädagogik der Grossen Mächte: ein Kapitel der vergleichenden Erziehungswissenschaft der Gegenwart*, *Rekkoku No Shokuminchi Kyoiku Seisaku*, Suzuki, Fukuichi and Nishihara, Shigemasa, trs., Daiichi Shuppan Kyokai, 1943, p.438.)

It is clear from this table that there were no governmental schools to educate colonized peoples in South-West Africa. Since funds from the state budget for German education were mainly allocated to governmental schools, and there were no such schools in South-West Africa, it can be inferred that little money was allocated to this region.

Education of Africans in South-West Africa was almost single-handedly carried out by Christian missionaries and their organizations. This is related to the fact that even before South-West Africa was put under German control, missionary priests belonging to the German Rhenish Mission came to this area

to spread Christianity.<sup>3</sup> The Rhenish Mission was the strongest Christian mission in South-West Africa. The purpose behind the education by the missionaries was the conversion of Africans to Christianity, and German was also taught for the purpose of reading the Bible. The Rhenish Mission, however, was also very active in spreading Christianity in East-Africa, and there were schools there managed by the mission.<sup>4</sup> Why was it, then, that although there were governmental schools for colonial subjects in other colonies, there were only missionary schools in South-West Africa.

Some studies regarding education in South-West Africa, after a detailed description about what sort of education Africans received, have pointed out that there were no governmental schools built for Africans, which meant no involvement from the German government, and have asserted that this was to keep Africans away from higher education in order to turn them into mere laborers for whites.<sup>5</sup> This view reflects a relatively typical methodology where colonial rule is simplified to a conflict between whites and non-whites. Considering that recent research in imperialism has pointed out the different levels of control, it is also necessary to reexamine education in South-West Africa from a more comprehensive viewpoint. There are studies that take up the education of both whites and Africans.<sup>6</sup> While they do provide detailed descriptions of education in colonies, these studies do not connect the form that education took with form of colonial rule. There are other studies that examine the education that whites received,<sup>7</sup> but concerning what that education meant in the context of colonial rule, it seems that a more in-depth analysis is

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<sup>3</sup> The Rhenish Mission was a Lutheran Christian missionary society established in Elberfeld, a town in central Germany, in 1812. John J. Grotzinger, *Historical Dictionary of NAMIBIA* (Metuchen, N.J., London, 1994), p.434. This missionary group was very conscious of their German heritage from the beginning, and employed only German missionaries. Nagahara, Yoko, "Jonker Afrikaner to Rhein Mission-dan: 19 seiki chuuyou no Namibia", in "Sekai no Kouzoka" (*Series Sekaishi heno Toi 9*) Iwanami Shoten Publishers, 1991, p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> Cynthia Cohen, "The Natives Must First Become Good Workmen': Formal Educational Provision in German South West Africa and East Africa Compared," in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 19, Nr.1, March 1993, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*; Cynthia Cohen, *Administering Education In Namibia: The Colonial Period To The Present* (Windhoek, 1994); Elizabeth Magano Amukugo, *Education And Politics In Namibia* (Windhoek, 1993). They consider the education system of the German colonial period to be the basis for Bantu education.

<sup>6</sup> Eduard Moritz, *Das Schulwesen in Deutsch-Südwest Afrika* ( Berlin, 1914).

<sup>7</sup> Henning Melber, *Schule und Kolonialismus: Das formale Erziehungswesen Namibias* (Hamburg, 1979). Daniel J. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies And National Identity In Namibia* (Ohio University Press, 2001). Dr. Melber also mentions education for Africans.

necessary.

This issue is related to an understanding of the peculiarity of South-West Africa among German colonies and the position of South-West Africa in German colonial policy. First, in this paper, I would like to take a look at the school system in South-West Africa and explore possible reasons why there were no governmental schools there. Next, I would like to discuss German language dissemination under an educational system different from other colonies and its relation to colonial rule.

## 1. The beginning of German colonial rule in South-West Africa

Before the main discussion, I would like to present an overview of South-West Africa under German control. South-West Africa corresponds to the present-day Republic of Namibia. In 1883, the Bremen merchant Adolf Lüderitz bought the coastal land of Angra Pequena (present-day Luderitz) from a local chief. The following year Bismarck declared it a protectorate, making it a colony of Germany.<sup>8</sup> South-West Africa was the first territory Germany acquired on the continent of Africa. Bismarck was at first reluctant to acquire the colony, but the German Colonial Society, as well as other groups with interests in German colonization, emphasized the need to acquire colonies as a solution to the emigration issue, which was seen as a problem at the time.<sup>9</sup> During the era of Wilhelm II, Germany began to think seriously about the future of its colonies, and with this, from around the late 1890's, the German government tried to establish a policy whereby Germans would emigrate to German colonies. During the 30 years leading up to Germany's defeat in the First World War, the number of Germans who relocated to South-West Africa exceeded 12,000, making it the colony with the largest German population among German territories.<sup>10</sup>

In German colonies at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were frequent uprisings by native peoples,<sup>11</sup> and how to control these peoples in order to

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<sup>8</sup> Henning Melber, ed., *Watashitachi no Namibia (Our Namibia)*, UNTAG Kyoto, tr.) Gendai Kikaku-shitsu, 1990, pp.89—94.

<sup>9</sup> Klaus J. Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit* (Freiburg i. Br., 1975.), S.80.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Martha Momozai, *Schwarze Frau, Weiße Herrin* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg, 1989), p.29, table.

<sup>11</sup> There is room for argument regarding who should be called “native peoples”, but in this paper, this term is intended to mean all peoples who are not European immigrants or white immigrants. Regarding who should be called “native (*senjuumin*)” in southern Africa, see Nagahara, Yoko, “‘Senjuumin’ wo miru Me: Minami Africa no Rekishi kara” in *Hitotsubashi*

create “model” colonies had become an issue in the Reichstag. Among these conflicts with Africans, the uprising of Herero and Nama in 1904 is particularly well-known. Germany spent a vast amount of money and human resources in putting down this uprising, and costs in human life on both sides were significant. This uprising is well-known as an historical event because of the enormous number of casualties. But in addition, because of this war the mode of German rule changed drastically, and this change is an important one in any discussion of the history or society of South-West Africa.<sup>12</sup>

It is thought that this uprising began because the lifestyle of Africans had been threatened by German colonial policies. The German government, which sought to pay for colonial management through the development of mines and railroads, had exploited land from Africans through imperial companies.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, since these companies were given precedence with regard to the acquisition of land, it was difficult for settlers to gain land or livestock, driving them to bargain directly with Africans on credit or through other dishonest means, leading to the rapid exploitation of African land and livestock by settlers.<sup>14</sup> This rapid loss of property bred discontent towards German colonial rule, leading to rebellion.

From the circumstances behind this uprising, we can see that there was not only a structure of discord between the German government and Africans, but between settlers and Africans, and even settlers and the German government as well. In other words, the subjects of rule of the German government were not only Africans, but also whites. In such circumstances, what kind of education did the German government try to implement?

## **2. The establishment of schools and the introduction of a compulsory education system**

South-West Africa became a German colony in 1884, but there were already schools. The reason is that the Lutheran groups, particularly the Rhenish

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Jouhou: *Chiri Rekishika*, May 1998.

<sup>12</sup> During this uprising, the German commander, General von Trotha, gave an order to annihilate the Herero and Nama, resulting in the deaths of 80% of the Herero and 50% of the Nama. In recent years, there has been debate about whether to consider this genocide.

<sup>13</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonial Herrschaft. Der Kampf Herero und Nama gegen den Deutschen Imperialismus (1884-1915)*, (Berlin, 1966). English translation: *Let Us Die Fighting*, (London, c1980).

<sup>14</sup> Helmut Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1894-1914* (Hamburg, 1968). English translation: *Namibia under German Rule* (Windhoek, 1996).

Mission, had been in South-West Africa since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for missionary activities.

In many cases, once the station of a mission was established, missionaries started to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic there. In other words, the missionary station also played the role of a school. This kind of education by missionaries was started as a part of their proselytizing activities, but during the period before the government was involved in providing education, missionary stations were also the only place where the children of whites could receive an education. Therefore, in this period, there were cases where both African and white children took classes at the same stations.<sup>15</sup>

However, this situation drastically changed in 1894. The German government began involvement in education, which to then had been solely handled by the missionaries. On 3 September of that year, the first governmental school (Regierungsschule) for whites was established in the capital city, Windhuk (now, Windhoek). With this, a line was drawn between the places where Africans and whites learned.

The first governmental schools had only one class, and there were three kinds of curriculum, arranged by age bracket. Helene Nitze,<sup>16</sup> who was a licensed German teacher, was appointed the first teacher of this school. School staff and administration of governmental schools was managed by the government at home, and school curriculum was designed in accordance with schools in Germany, but the subject matter was not strictly regulated.<sup>17</sup> Operation expenses of 600 marks were disbursed by the German government every year, and the remainder was collected from the parents based on the number of children.<sup>18</sup> When the school was founded there were only 11 students. Following

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<sup>15</sup> This began with white settlers' children learning at the Rhenish Mission in Otjimbingue. Moritz, *op.cit.*, S.3.

<sup>16</sup> Helene Nitze was a qualified teacher and the daughter of a senior officer in German South-West Africa. She received a request from the Colonial Governor's Office and became the first governmental school teacher. She later married and became Helene von Falkenhausen. Her private papers are important as historical materials for understanding the life of German colonists of the time. Helene von Falkenhausen geb. Nitze, *Ansiedler-Schicksale. Elf Jahre in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1893-1904* (Swakopmund, 1905(1995)).

<sup>17</sup> "Denkschrift über die Entwicklung der deutschen Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee, 1894/85" in *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages*, S.428. Curriculum was not firmly established until 1911.

<sup>18</sup> Twelve marks were collected per child every month. If the parents had more than one child, nine marks were paid for the second child, seven for the third, and tuition was free for the fourth child on. "Denkschrift", 1894/95, S.428.



incidents of trouble between the instructor and parents, the number of students began to decrease, and the school was closed for a period in 1899. In following year, a new instructor was sent from Germany and the school was reopened.

After the governmental school for whites was established in the capital, governmental schools all over South-West Africa began to open. Governmental schools were established in places such as Gibeon in 1900 and Keetmanshoop in 1901 in the south, and one was founded in the mid-coast town of Swakopmund also in 1901. A school was established in Grootfontein in the north in 1902, and one in Karibib in central West-Africa in 1904. Because of the wars beginning with the uprisings of the Herero and Nama from 1904 to 1906, the schools for the most part ceased to function for a period, but after the rebellions were completely quelled in 1908, school construction steadily progressed, and by 1912 a total of 17 schools had been established in South-West Africa. Furthermore, secondary schools (Realschule) were established in Windhuk and Swakopmund.<sup>19</sup>

After 1899, school construction steadily progressed, and this is related to the increase in the number of settlers and their children. Let us now look at the shifts in population of whites in South-West Africa. From Table 2, it is clear that aside from the period of war between 1904 and 1906, the number of whites shows an overall steady increase, and the increase of children is particularly apparent. From these figures, we can imagine how high the necessity of school education was in South-West Africa.

Given this situation, the government started to institutionalize the school system. This began with the "order by the Governor General of South-West Africa regarding the introduction of compulsory education" issued on 20 October, 1906. The details are as follows:<sup>20</sup>

1. White children from 6 to 14 years of age are required to regularly attend a governmental school (Regierungsschule) in their area of residence. The school year is to be in accordance with the calendar. Persons subject to mandatory school attendance are children who have reached the age of six between 1 April of the previous year and the end of March of that year. This obligation becomes effective if a child's area of residence is located within four kilometers of the location of the governmental school.

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<sup>19</sup> *Deutsche Kolonial-Lexikon*, Bd.III, 1920, S.309.

<sup>20</sup> "Deutsches Kolonialblatt. Amtsblatt für die Schutzgebiete in Afrika und in der Südsee," Berlin, 1906, S.325-326.

2. If the school is located beyond four kilometers, then the Governor General shall decide the conditions for the area to which a school belongs.
3. Children not required to attend governmental schools are those who can attend equivalent classes, particularly German language classes. The educational supervisory authority (Aufsichtsbehörde) can request proof that the such classes are managed as well as those of governmental schools. If this cannot be proved, a child is to be ordered to go to a governmental school.
4. Establishment of private schools is allowed with a permit issued by the Governor General even if attendance of that school can be replaced by attendance of a governmental school. And in that case, only instructors with qualifications accepted by the educational supervisory authority, with respect to knowledge and morals, will be employed. Permits given to teachers may be revoked only if there is a valid reason.
5. If there are special circumstances concerning a child, such as illness, mental weakness, or contagious disease, that child is not required to attend school. Decisions concerning such reasons shall be made by the educational supervisory authority.
6. Parents and school staff (guardians, educational staff, instructors, or clerks) are responsible for following regulations prescribed in Articles 1 and 2. If these regulations are not followed, the persons are subject to a maximum of 150 marks or a maximum of six weeks of imprisonment.
7. The administrative district officer (Bezirksamtman) shall be responsible for educational supervision for schools within that district. The administrative district officer shall be responsible for the enforcement of school authorities. To the extent that there is a school board, the school board must listen to the district officer, who is the supervisor, and must cooperate with the administrative district officer in administrating the schools. The administrative officer is given responsibility indefinitely by the local administrative district chief (Distriktchef).
8. These regulations become effective on 1 December, 1906.

These regulations were issued by the Governor General not simply because the number of children had increased. Though there were strong calls for the establishment of schools for German settlers, the actual number of attending students had not increased by a great degree (Table 3). The reason for this was

that many children lived far from schools. Therefore, in 1902, boardinghouses were built for children who lived in locations distant from schools in Windhuk, Grootfontein, and Keetmanshoop.<sup>21</sup> However, since the cost of boarding was 600 marks per child per year, there were many parents who did not send their children to school. Accordingly, without legal regulations after a reduction in costs, most children in remote areas would not attend school.

### **3. The difference in educational content**

Next, I would like to examine the characteristics of education by looking at the order by the Governor General making education compulsory. According to the order, compulsory education applied only to white people living in South-West Africa. This point suggests that among German colonies, South-West Africa was in a unique position. This is because, though there were governmental schools built for Africans in the other German colonies, in South-West Africa governmental schools were established only for whites.

In South-West Africa, missionary priests were mainly in charge of education for Africans. The main things that were taught in those settings were written German (in order to understand the Bible), arithmetic, and simple manual tasks.<sup>22</sup> According to a memorandum written by colonial Governor General of 1894/95, in the missionary stations in Okahandja and Keetmanshoop there were organizations set up for training instructors to specialize in the education of Africans, and the subjects taught there were German, African languages, Biblical history, Lutheran Confessions, arithmetic, geography and singing.<sup>23</sup> The teachers who received training here were in charge of educating Africans in the missionary stations which were spread out over South-West Africa.

The primary purpose of education for Africans was to deepen their understanding of Christianity. Even before colonization by the German Empire began, missionary groups had been active in efforts to proselytize Africans in South-West Africa. At the same time, since Africans knew that they could use missionary priests as middlemen to trade with Europeans, and thought conversion to Christianity was beneficial for this, an increasing number of Africans became Christian.

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<sup>21</sup> "Denkschrift," 1903/04, S.119.

<sup>22</sup> "Denkschrift," 1894/85, S.428. African languages were also taught.

<sup>23</sup> "Denkschrift," 1895/97, S.924.

However, there was one thing that the German government emphasized over conversion to Christianity. That was German language education. In the annual reports issued by the colonial office and colonial department of the Imperial foreign ministry, there were often reports concerning the degree to which German had infiltrated the colonies. Moreover, “subsidiaries for African education” were paid to the Rhenish Mission, the group which was first in undertaking missionary activities in South-West Africa.<sup>24</sup> Considering that the Rhenish Mission organization, which was the most active in this area, was composed exclusively of German missionaries, these government subsidiary payments were most likely related to the policy of thorough German education.<sup>25</sup>

What then was taught in governmental schools? The first teacher, Helene Nitze, said that the administrative officer asked her to teach grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, religion, reading and writing.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, English and French were taught as foreign languages two hours a week each for the elder grade, and English was taught two hours a week for the “middle” grade.<sup>27</sup> After that, in 1899, the schools in Klein-Windhuk and Windhuk merged, and class hours became 24 hours per week. What they taught here were German (reading and writing, dictation, and grammar), arithmetic, history, geography, religion, and singing.<sup>28</sup> For “advanced” classes, French was taught. The subjects taught at schools in Windhuk in 1906 were German, arithmetic, geography, history, natural science, drawing, “writing”, singing, physical education, manual tasks, and religion. Classes were from 8 a.m. to noon, and from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Compared to the missionary schools for Africans, there were more subjects taught at governmental schools. Classes in history and geography were never taught to Africans. For some time even after the introduction of public education, there was no fixed curriculum. It was not until 1911 that an official curriculum was created, and from the annual reports from the colonial office and colonial department of the foreign ministry, it is clear that among the subjects taught in “white” education, there was particular emphasis placed on German language

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<sup>24</sup> In 1895, missionary priests in Windhuk received 800 marks annually. That was to increase as more Africans converted, they got 9000 marks subsidies in 1909. Moritz, *op.cit.*, S.180-185.

<sup>25</sup> The other active groups were Finish and Catholic missionary groups, mainly in Ovamboland in the north. After the wars with the Herero and Nama in 1904, Rhenish Mission extended its activities and influence to the north.

<sup>26</sup> v. Falkenhausen, *op cit.*, S.30.

<sup>27</sup> “Denkschrift,” 1894/95, S.428.

<sup>28</sup> “Denkschrift,” 1899/1900, S.981.

classes.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, all subjects were taught in German, and non-German languages were forbidden in boardinghouses.

#### 4. The “Boer problem”

Putting aside the fact missionary priests taught German to Africans, why were whites subject to such forceful policies to use only German in school life? As described above, despite the fact that South-West Africa was the colony with the largest German population, why was so much emphasis put on German language classes? The main reason was the existence of non-German white settlers.

As can be seen from Table 4, though Germans occupied the largest group of whites in South-West Africa, there was a significant population of non-German white residents. Of these, the number of Boers was quite large.

Boers were the descendents of Dutch immigrants who settled in the south of Africa, with a majority of them living in the Cape region. Later, after the British Empire took control of the Cape and made it its own colony, the Boers, disaffected with British policy, gradually moved inland, conquering native Africans as they went. The Boers who had moved inland went on to found the Transvaal republic and the Orange Free State. At this time there were also Boers who relocated to Angola and South-West Africa. The first large wave of migration of Boers to South-West Africa was during the period from 1875 to 1880, before South-West Africa became a German colony.<sup>30</sup> Many Boers who moved to South-West Africa lived in Keetmanshoop and Gibeon in the south and around Windhuk and Grootfontein.<sup>31</sup> Some time after, the British attempted to annex the Boer states, leading to war between Britain and the Transvaal in 1899. The British were victorious in 1902 in the South African War, but during this period many Boers fled to Angola and South-West Africa to escape the conflict.

The treatment of Boers became a major issue for the German Empire.<sup>32</sup> In Germany, there was a heated debate about whether Boer immigration was

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<sup>29</sup> For example, according to a report of 1908, they had a total of 26 hours a week in a governmental school in Swakopmund, 12 hours of which were German classes. "Denkschrift," 1908, S.4008.

<sup>30</sup> Der Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft(DKG) (hg.), *Zeitschrift für Kolonialpolitik, Kolonialrecht und Kolonialwirtschaft* (Berlin, 1904), 6. Jahrgang, S.48.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, S.52-57.

<sup>32</sup> In Germany as well as South-West Africa, the “Boer problem”, as it was known, was frequently taken up in newspapers.

proper for the future of South-West Africa. Although South-West Africa was colonized in 1884, settling of the colony had not sufficiently progressed. With a view to the future of South-West Africa, it was necessary to create a stable “white society” as soon as possible. At the end of the debate, the view that Boers should be accepted as pioneers of South-West Africa until the number of German settlers stabilized became dominant.<sup>33</sup> As a result, in 1895, Boer settlement was undertaken through the South-West Africa Company (a patent company).<sup>34</sup> The reason that Boers were allowed to colonize was that “Boers are close to the German race, and their experiences gained from spending a long time in Africa can form good examples for German settlers.” However, it was added, “they have been ‘Africanized’ by their long time in Africa, and it is necessary to restore their ‘Germanness’.” From this reason emerged the claim that it was necessary for Germans to re-educate the Boers. To borrow the words of Governor General of South West Africa Leutwein, Boers were thought by Germans to have the following characteristics:

Boers are honest and amiable, and there are good family men among them. For that reason they are very conservative and old people are stubborn... They move from waterhole to waterhole with their livestock and large families in ox wagons. That is how they avoid buying land and settling or fulfilling their duties to the government. The character of Boers, who wander around like Gipsies, is clear from the large number of children they have and the fact that they do not seek jobs other than raising livestock (Viehzüchter).<sup>35</sup>

People opposed to the settlement of Boers thought that South West Africa would have no future if they accepted Boers for the reason that they do not settle, and hence are on the same cultural level as Africans. For this reason, education for whites also had the agenda of keeping Boers from “Africanizing” by

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<sup>33</sup> The government was afraid of a disruption in the economic balance that might be caused by a dramatic increase in Boer settlers. Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfeld, Reichskolonialamt, “Förderung der Einwanderung von Buren in das deutsche Schutzgebiet Südwestafrika,” R1001, 1147. Organizations related to colonialism, such as the German Colonial Society and the Pan-German League pressed for settlement by peoples such as Boers who were ethnically close to Germans. See, for example, *Ibid.*, S.121. Alldeutsche Verbände, *Alldeutscher Blätter*, Nr.3, 14. Jahrgang (16. Januar 1904).

<sup>34</sup> DKG, *op cit.*, S.48.

<sup>35</sup> Theodor Leutwein, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, (Berlin, (Windhoek), 1906(1997)), 4. Auflage, S. 414-415.

re-awakening their “Germanness”.

There is evidence that suggests that conducting classes in schools with many Boer children was difficult due to language differences. The Governor General, for example, wrote in a memorandum around 1903/04, “At present, the most difficult part in conducting classes is having to accept children of various nationalities (Nationalität), and children of differing ages with little or no preliminary knowledge.”<sup>36</sup> While the expression “children of various nationalities” includes non-German children not exclusive to Boers, the latter expression, “children of differing ages with little or no preliminary knowledge”, clearly refers to Boer children. Particularly in the south where there were more Boer children than German children, there were some reports from teachers that class progress was slow due to language differences, or that some children could not graduate even at graduation age.<sup>37</sup> It was a commonly held view among Germans at the time that Boers were “inferior” to Germans and other Europeans. According to a report regarding the school in Gibeon:

The emphasis of German language classes is to teach children of the youngest grade how to think. The reason is that Boer children have a narrow view of things because the farms they live in are isolated and they are in an environment together with blacks. Classes that teach how to think are connected with the practice of speech and language.<sup>38</sup>

In other words, this report says that learning German will lead to the improvement of the traditional Boer, or “Africanized”, lifestyle.

Boers, on the other hand, held a completely different view of education from the Germans. For Boers, education strived for religious education, and was something that passed on the tradition of the Dutch Reformed Church. That is, Dutch language classes were important in that they were for understanding the Bible and learning hymns. In a letter dated 7 November, 1900, addressed to a German Consul in the Cape named Müller, the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape, at the request of Boers living in South-West Africa, requested of the German South-West Africa Office that classes should be held in Dutch and religious education should be conducted by missionaries of the Dutch Reformed

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<sup>36</sup> “Denkschrift,” 1903/04, S.119.

<sup>37</sup> “Denkschrift,” 1908, S.4007-4009.

<sup>38</sup> “Denkschrift,” 1908, S.4009.

Church. It is said in this letter, "Boers want to learn German, and we would like to educate our children in German as much as possible, but at the same time, we would like to keep our original language in order to learn the Bible and hymns." Müller received this letter and asked the German government to start Dutch classes at school, but the request was denied. Since Leutwein in particular held the view that the "gypsy-like character" of the Boers was not good for the future of South-West Africa, he did not approve of taking special measures with regard to the Boers. Since Dutch was not accepted as a teaching language in governmental schools, Boers established a private school in Marienthal in 1902.<sup>39</sup>

However, the number of children attending school showed no outstanding increase in either governmental schools or the private school, primarily because many Boers lived far from schools. Although tuition costs for governmental schools were low, the high price of boarding for poor Boers was a major problem. Moreover, the priests of the Dutch Reformed Church at the center of their lives were not sent to governmental schools. For these reasons, the German government had to take measures to force Boers to attend governmental schools. In exchange for sending their children to Boer schools there were plans put forth that would make it easier for Boers to acquire land and livestock, but for Boers who had little interest in settling to begin with, these offers were not that attractive. Ultimately, the Governor General had no choice but to introduce compulsory education in order to promote school attendance by Boers.

## 5. Conclusion

As we have seen, the intent of the German Empire in attempting to gain control is reflected in the education policies adopted in South-West Africa. Germany had been facing an emigration problem since the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and procurement of a place for emigrants to go was an urgent matter. As many Germans emigrated to the American continent, there was concern that emigrants might lose their "Germanness" in their new environments. The responsibility was placed on South-West Africa to provide a "settlement for Germans" in order to solve this problem.

Therefore, how to incorporate people who were already living in South-West Africa into the structure of control was an important issue. Skin color became the

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<sup>39</sup> DKG, *op. cit.*, S.82-83.



first standard for segregation. People of dark skin were not allowed to be educated in the same place as those of light skin. Furthermore, the two groups were not taught the same kinds of things. The law prohibiting “mixed marriages” of 1905 would have a significant influence on the adoption of a compulsory education system in 1906. After this law was passed, whether people could prove “whiteness of blood” and not just skin became a problem. “Mixed” children who looked white were eventually excluded from schools for white children.<sup>40</sup>

While in places of education there was a line drawn between white and black, Africans were required to learn the language of their colonial rulers. It is possible to talk about German education for Africans in the context of the “civilizing mission”, but more so teaching German had the role of making Africans conscious of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Through these mandatory education policies, even when Africans mastered the German language, they were not given the opportunity to advance to higher education. As is clear from the fact one of the school subjects was “simple manual tasks”, they were required to “provide cheap labor for Germans”.

The next standard for segregation was whether European values could be shared or not. Boers, who had large families and made their living raising livestock, were the objects of condescension as “white Africans”. But because Boers were originally from Europe, it was thought by the Germans that they could be “improved” through education. Moreover, the Boers were ethnic Dutch, and closer to the German people. In this sense, the educational policies in South West Africa did not just aim to create a “white Africa”; more than that, they were policies based on an extreme form of “racism”, which has a certain kind of German nationalistic context. In summary, behind the structure of control in South-West Africa was a form of racism where Germans were at the top of the hierarchy.

This structure of control did not stop at the territory of South-West Africa. One can see the structure of power that cast its shadow over the whole Empire. This is clear from the fact that even people who finished higher education could not

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<sup>40</sup> In a photograph taken in 1902 at a governmental school in Windhuk, there are three students who are obviously not “white”. At this point, i.e. before the “mixed marriage” law was passed, governmental schools were said to be for whites, but “mixed” children could still attend governmental schools. However, after a clear color line was drawn by the law, these children were eventually expelled. The picture is from *Afrikanischer Heimatkalender*, 1960.

be directly accepted to a university in Germany. Germans living in South-West Africa were required to attend higher educational institutions located within Germany in order to gain permission to German universities. This is proof that people born in the colonies were considered that much “inferior” to those born in the Fatherland. In other words, a hierarchy with “German culture” as its standard was in control.

(Table 2) White population in the German colony of South-West Africa (1900-1907)

Year	Men	Women	Children	Total
1900	2146	451	790	3387
1901	2185	480	978	3643
1902	2569	672	1433	4674
1903	2804	712	1166	4682
1904	-	-	-	-
1905	-	-	-	-
1906	4842	723	807	6372
1907	4899	1079	1132	7110

Note 1: This number includes Africans who married with whites.

Note 2: Population censuses were not conducted in 1904 and 1905 because of uprisings by Africans.

Note 3: “Children” refers to those under 15 years of age.

Source: "Denkschrift über die Entwicklung der Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee im Jahre 1906/07".

(Table 3) The number of children attending governmental schools

	1894	1900	1903	1904	1906
Windhuk (1894)	11	26	25	36	74
Swakopmund (1901)	-	-	11	13	60
Grootfontein (1902)	-	-	13	10	20
Gibeon (1900)	-	17	-	45	13
Keetmanshoop (1901)	-	-	20	20	12

Made by the author from „Denkschrift“ of each year

(Table 4) Shifts in white population by nationality

	1900	1901	1902	1903	1907
German	2104	2223	2595	2998	4829
Austrian-Hungarian	12	35	57	40	247
Dutch	6	27	19	29	94
Danish	-	-		-	15
Swedish	-	-	-	35	59
Norwegian	-	-	-		
British (includes British colonies)	252	443	452	453	973
Russian	-	-	-	19	177
Swiss	10	5	8	-	28
Italian	-	-	-	-	144
Colonial Cape and Boer	-	-	-	973	-
French	-	-	-	-	47
Spanish	-		2	-	
Portuguese			-	-	
American	10	6	7	-	-
Other/ none	993	904	1534	135	397
Total	3387	3643	4674	4682	7110

Population censuses were not conducted during the war years from 1904 to 1906.

Source: "Denkschrift über die Entwicklung der Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee im Jahre 1906/07".

(Table 5a)

The number of children attending school by nationality: Windhuk (1908).

German	43
Boer	25
Austrian	2
British	2
Swiss	2

(Table 5b)

Languages spoken at home: Windhuk (1908).

German	35
Dutch	37
English	2

(Table 5c)

The number of children attending school  
by nationality: Swakopmund (1908).

German	38
Dutch	6
British	5
Hungarian	1
Austrian	1
Russian	2
American	1
Australian	2

(Table 5d)

The number of children attending  
school by nationality:  
Grootfontein (1908).

German	3
Boer	17

(The source for tables 5a, b, c, and d is "Denkschrift, 1908".)