Political and Religious Colonialism in German New Guinea: How did the relations between the indigenous population and the Colonial Government, the Rhenish missionaries and the Neuendettelsau missionaries differ from each other

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How did the relations between the indigenous population and the Colonial Government, the Rhenish missionaries and the Neuendettelsau missionaries differ from each other?

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Introduction

As has been mentioned increasingly more often lately in the German public media, German colonialism is a topic that has often been sidelined or even ignored when it comes to discussing and teaching German history. Therefore I have decided to write my thesis on German colonialism, more specifically German colonialism in New Guinea, as this topic has been sidelined even more than the history of Germany's bigger and better known colonies in Africa, such as German South West Africa (now part of Namibia).

Germany started acting on its desires for a colonial Empire quite late compared to her competitors such as Britain and the Netherlands and was, according to Dirk H. R. Spennermann, "under-prepared and reluctant to invest in large administrative infrastructure."[1] When Germany started colonising parts of New Guinea in 1884, Britain was already over half-way through its so-called "imperial century", which lasted from 1815 to 1914, in which the size of its Empire, which was already so large that, famously, the sun never set there, increased by around 26 million square kilometres of territory and circa 400 million people.[2] While not reaching the impressive size of the British Empire, the Dutch Empire was also sizable, including the Colony of Curacao and Dependencies (later known as the Netherlands Antilles), Aruba and Bonaire in the Caribbean, Suriname in South America, and the Dutch East Indies (modern-day Indonesia, including the western half of New Guinea). In comparison, the German Empire appeared quite miniscule.[3]

The German rule of parts of New Guinea stretched from 1884 to around 1921, and therefore only lasted 35 years, an extremely short period of time compared to many British, Dutch and French colonial rules. Additionally, Germany did not even have complete ownership of German New Guinea during all of these 35 years, which consisted of three distinct administrative periods. From 1884 until 1899 the so-called Protectorate was managed by the private New Guinea Company, which failed to achieve its economic and political goals, leading to its replacement by the Imperial Government of German New Guinea, which represented the German Reich. From 21st September 1914, the day of German New Guinea's military surrender, until 9th May 1921, an Australian military administration governed

[1] Dirk H. R. Spennemann - Government Publishing in the German Pacific 1885-1914 - *Journal of Pacific History*, (2017) Vol 52, No, 1 2017, p. 68.
[2] Timothy Parsons, *The British Imperial Century, 1815-1914* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), p. 3.
[3] Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer, *German Colonialism and National Identity,* (2010).

German New Guinea, which did not change the fact that most of the German outposts remained, with most of the Westerners living there being German.[4]

In the German Pacific, including German New Guinea, there were additional problems due to the insufficient number of administrators, which led to them often being unable to properly enforce German colonial law and successfully engage in "ideological infiltration of Indigenous communities."[5] Indeed, the German administrators, who were first located in Finschhafen on the Huon Peninsula and then moved to Astrolabe Bay close to Friedrichs-Wilhelmshafen after 28 Europeans had succumbed to a fever epidemic in 1890; tended to have a very negative relationship with New Guineans living nearby, owing mostly due to the horrific treatment of the indigenous population by the hands of some German colonists.[6]

However, German missionaries, especially those belonging to the Neuendettelsau mission, tended to act and work quite independently from the German colonial government and sometimes even criticised their inhumane acts towards the indigenous population.[7]

The Neuendettelsau mission, or as it was called officially, the *Gesellschaft für Innere und Äußere Mission im Sinne der Lutherischen Kirche* had been established in the 1840s, mainly to train young Protestant men from the northern Bavarian village Neuendettelsau and nearby areas to become pastors for German-speaking congregations abroad in Australia and North America.[8] In 1886, the Neuendettelsau missionaries began their activities in New Guinea. The following year the first missionaries of the Lutheran Rhenish Mission also came to New Guinea and in March 1888, three Rhenish missionaries, named Scheidt, Bergman and Eich established the first Rhenish mission on the coast of Astrolabe Bay near the village Bogadjim. In 1889, missionaries Bergman and Kunze founded a second mission station on

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[4] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea,*The Journal of Pacific History,* Vol. 42, No. 3 (Dec 2007), p. 346.
[5] Dirk H. R. Spennemann - Government Publishing in the German Pacific 1885-1914 - *Journal of Pacific History*, (2017) Vol 52, No, 1 2017, p. 68.
[6] Johann Flierl, *Is the New Guinea Primitive Race destined to perish at the hands of European Civilization?*, (Acculturation, 1936), p. 6.
[7] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXXIII.
[8] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 89.

the small island of Siar near Friedrichs-Wilhelmshafen, now called Madang.[9] Almost a decade later, in 1896, the Catholic Society of the Divine Word followed suit.[10]
Missionaries, those working for the Neuendettelsau mission more so than their Rhenish counterparts, tended to be much more successful in building positive relationships with members of the New Guinan population than colonial administrators. To a large part this was due to the nature of the goal of their mission. To convince the local population to give up their traditional beliefs in favour of Christianity, the missionaries needed to win their trust and be able to communicate with them on a relatively advanced level. They put much effort into learning indigenous languages such as Kate and Jabem, for example by listening to New Guineans tell them stories and myths in their native language.[11] This was especially of importance for missionaries who believed that to effectively lead New Guineans to baptisisation, they had to "radically indigenise Christianity", a belief which was based on the theory that one's native language was the base of one's religious life, meaning that one should be introduced to the Christian God "within one's local linguistic and cultural context."[12] By 1912 the Neuendettelsau missionaries were fluent enough that they could translate large parts of the Bible into indigenous languages.[13]
The aim of this thesis will be to compare the different forms colonialism took in German New Guinea, focusing on the German colonial authorities, the Neuendettelsau missionaries, the Rhenish missionaries, and their relationships to the indigenous population of New Guinea and each other.
This thesis will be structured within three main chapters.
In the first chapter I will deal with the topic of the German colonial government and its relationship with the indigenous populations of New Guinea. While I believe it to be essential to write about the way that missionaries treated the indiginous people in a critical way, it is true that in general the relationship between the indigenous population and colonial officers

[9] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross: On Uncharted Ways*, (Lutheran Missionary Classics, 1997), p. 2.
[10] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020) p. 89.
[11] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath,(Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 87.
[12] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 87-88.
[13] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 99.

was much more negative than the relationship between the indigenous people and missionaries. Abusive colonial practices, such as the so called “labour recruitment” for plantations by the German colonial officials of indigenous people was often forceful and violent, as Richard Scaglion’s article “Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea" describes. This article includes a summarised translation of an oral account by an Abelam man named Mambil, who was an eyewitness to one of these violent labour recruitments. This is therefore an extremely valuable source, as, unfortunately, only few primary sources by indigenous New Guineans from the colonial period are available.[14] Secondary sources such as this article are extremely important when exploring this topic, as primary sources by German colonial officers are extremely biased. However, I will of course also use primary sources by German colonial officials, as they provide us with a fascinating insight in how these officials regarded their role as colonists, colonialism itself, and the indigenous population. I will also use these sources to compare the approaches of different colonial governors of German New Guinea, as well as how their views of the indigenous New Guinean population varied. According to Wilfried Wagner, for example, the first governor Rudolf von Benningen, who held this position 1899-1902 was very violent when it came to suppressing an indigenous uprising, while his successor Albert Hahl, governor 1902-1914, tended to deal with such issues in a more peaceful way.[15] Despite this, we should of course analyse Hahl’s role as governor in a detailed and critical manner. Although he was in some regards more gracious than his predecessor, he was still a suppressive colonial authoritative figure, who held racist beliefs, such as white people being superior.[16] Some people, including some historians, argue that such beliefs should be excused as they were common in this time period. However, while I of course agree that all aspects of events, people and their views have to be seen in their historical context, we should not simply excuse them, but examine why these were so common and what it meant, for example, for their treatment of the indigenous population. Simply excusing such views and behaviour has meant that German society has still not dealt with its legacy of colonialism and the prevalence of racist attitudes in German society today.

The second chapter will explore the relationship between the Rhenish missionaries and the indigenous New Guinean people they were in contact with. For this I will also focus on

[14] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea,*The Journal of Pacific History,* Vol. 42, No. 3 (Dec 2007), p. 335.
[15] Albert Hahl, *Gouverneursjahre in Neuguinea*, (Abera Verlag, 1997), p. vi.
[16] Albert Hahl, *Gouverneursjahre in Neuguinea*, (Abera Verlag, 1997), p. xiviii.

specific missionaries, such as Georg Kunze. This chapter will also mostly focus on the reasons why the Rhenish missionaries were less successful than the missionaries belonging to the Neuendettelsau missionaries. While Rhenish missionaries at the time, who were all too aware of their failure when compared to their competitors, blamed these on factors out of their control, such as physically being too close to the Colonial government, I will argue that their lack of success was mostly due to their own failings, first of all their narrowmindedness which led to their refusal to attempt to understand New Guinean indigenous cultures, traditions and beliefs.

In the third, and final chapter I will focus on the Neuendettelsau missionaries and their relationship with indigenous New Guineans. I will argue that the intense study of New Guinean languages, culture and practices that Neuendettelsau missionaries undertook, is the main reason for their remarkable success, especially when compared to the lack of success of the Rhenish missionaries.

One ethical issue that this topic includes is if it is possible to compare the "moral values" of the different colonial authorities, including questions such as who treated the people of New Guinea better, when all colonial authorities mistreated the colonised. Should we as historians be allowed to give some colonists praise just for treating the colonised not quite as inhumanely as other colonists did? Or does this bring us in danger to present this history as an example of benign colonialism when it is highly questionable if Colonialism can ever be benign?

The topics which will be discussed in this thesis are highly important and relevant today. As mentioned above, the topic of German Colonialism, and especially when it pertains to New Guinea, is barely taught in German schools or discussed in German media today, which has led to much ignorance about it as well as about New Guinea and its people in general, and in some instances even an unaware continuation of racist and discriminatory colonialist ways of thinking. According to Verena Keck, both German colonial administrators and German missionaries in New Guinea believed in a metaphorical "ladder of humanity", on which they saw themselves and other Europeans at the very top and the indigenous people of New Guinea on the lower rank, as they believed them to be inferior in terms of "physical appearance, character and mental capacities."[17] In terms of "appearance" this ranking was

[17] Verena Keck, "Representing New Guineans in German Colonial Literature", *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, Bd. 54 (2008), p. 61.

very much based on a Eurocentric idea of beauty, with light-skinned Polynesians regarded as better looking than the Melanesians. Additionally, hierarchical societies were seen as more advanced, as they were more similar to those of the Europeans, once again showcasing the colonists' Eurocentric view of the world.[18]

One of the aims of my thesis is therefore to explore the ways German colonists, both German colonial administrators and missionaries viewed and treated the indigenous peoples of New Guinea.

[18] Verena Keck, "Representing New Guineans in German Colonial Literature", *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, Bd. 54 (2008), p. 62.

Literature Review

Scholars writing about German New Guinea tend to focus on one German perspective, be that the perspective of the colonial officials, missionaries or scholars working in German New Guinea. The perspective of the indigenous peoples of German New Guinea presents one major research gap. This, however, is partially due to the lack of sources written by indigenous people, which makes it especially difficult to study their perspective, especially compared to the Germans who left behind many official colonial documents, letters, diaries, essays and books on their experiences. These, however, must be read with care and taken with a grain of salt as they tend to be extremely biased.
Additionally, while some scholars have explored relations between two perspectives, for example between missionaries and indigenous peoples, colonial officials and indigenous peoples, or missionaries and colonial officials, it is of my opinion that more writings which consider the relations between all of these groups together are needed. Writings which consider questions such as "How did relations between colonial officials and indigenous peoples who had been in close contact with missionaries differ from relations between colonial officials and indigenous peoples who had not?" This method would come closer to grasp the complexity of German New Guinea and its networks of German Colonial officials, who differed from each other in their approaches, the different groups of missionaries, and the many indigenous groups, which differed immensely from each other in language, culture and reactions towards the first Germans they came in contact with. The diversity of these groups is stressed by many scholars (as indeed, it is one of the most crucial aspects one has to be aware of to understand German New Guinea), such as Stewart Firth.[19]

Compared to her rival colonising nations, such as The Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom, Germany started her attempts of colonisation very late. This was especially the case when it came to the German Pacific, which was much smaller than Germany's main colonies in Africa, and had much fewer German administrators working there, due in part to the much larger distance from the homeland.[20] Despite this making law enforcement and the transformation of the indigenous peoples more difficult, Dirk H. R. Spennemann claims that this small size also brought advantages for the German colonial officials, as it meant that the

[19] Stewart Firth, "German New Guinea: The Archival Perspective", *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (April, 1985), p. 96.
[20] Dirk H. R. Spennemann, "Government Publishing in the German Pacific 1885-1914", *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2017), p. 68.

reporting and publication requirements were much lower.[21] Unfortunately for scholars studying German New Guinea, this means that there are fewer Colonial reports and publications available when compared to other German colonies.

Stewart Firth stresses the importance of reading sources carefully and critically, as I have mentioned above, but also choosing them carefully. With this he criticises fellow historian Sack, who exclusively uses published sources, such as annual reports of the New Guinea Company and a book published in 1900 in Berlin.[22] Unsurprisingly, these sources are not reliable, as it is their goal to present the New Guinea Company and German colonial activities in New Guinea in a positive light. I strongly agree with Stewart Firth that it is much more advisable to make use of unpublished sources, in which people involved in Colonial activities in New Guinea earnestly discussed the situation and problems they encountered, such as in "the confidential reports of naval officers, imperial commissioners and consuls, [...] correspondence between Batavia and Berlin, on the diplomatic exchanges between the Germans on one side and the Dutch and British on the other, and on the company records of the Astrolabe Company which ended up in the Colonial Department of the German Foreign Office", which Steven Firth has relied on.[23]
To gain a deeper, and to an extent less biased view into the Rhenish mission, for example, I have read documents by Rhenish missionaries such as scripts of the Inspector Pastor Kriele's and Wilhelm Diehl's presentations at missionary conferences from the archive of the Vereinte Evangelische Mission (United evangelical mission) in Wuppertal. In these conferences among other missionaries, Kriele, Diehl and their colleagues talked openly about the Rhenish missionaries' relative failure. These were very valuable and helpful sources for me, as they also showed me what the Rhenish missionaries perceived the reasons for this failure to be.
In the archive of Mission Eine Welt (Mission One World) in Nuremberg, I read several documents by Neuendettelsau missionaries. Despite these documents also being very interesting, I did not make as much use of them as I did of the documents by the Rhenish missionaries, as many detailed and useful secondary sources about the Neuendettelsau mission, which were less biased and more useful were available to me.

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[21] Dirk H. R. Spennemann, "Government Publishing in the German Pacific 1885-1914", *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2017), p. 68.
[22] Stewart Firth, "German New Guinea: The Archival Perspective", *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (April, 1985), p. 94-103.
[23] Stewart Firth, "German New Guinea: The Archival Perspective", *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (April, 1985), p. 101.

Scholars writing about missionaries in German New Guinea often focus on one specific group of missionaries, such as the Neuendettelsau mission for example, and often even on one specific missionary. In this context this is a useful approach. As has been previously mentioned, different indigenous groups (and even different people within these groups) reacted to and interacted with Germans and other Westerners in very different ways, therefore missionaries working in different parts of German New Guinea had very different experiences. To explore what it meant to be a missionary in German New Guinea in detail it is therefore often necessary to keep one's scope small.

One example of this is Uwe Christian Dech who wrote the detailed book *Mission und Kultur im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner.* This book explores the career of Stephan Lehner, who worked as a Neuendettelsau missionary from 1906, and whose mission was focused on the indigenous group of the Bukawa at the Huon Golf. Besides being a missionary, he was also an ethnologist.[24] However, while this book is very insightful, it is also, to an extent, biased and one-sided. It does include criticisms of the German missions, quoting Hiery, who accused the missionaries of intimate encroachments into the indigenous people's lives.[25]

Lehner, however, is portrayed in an extremely positive way, and Dech refrains from criticising him. He very much stresses the alleged popularity Lehner and his colleagues enjoyed amongst the Bukawa, quoting the New Guinean Bishop of the Lutheran Mission in the Province Morobe, Kigasung, who originally came from the Bukawa area: "The missionaries received a warm welcome from the indigenous people[...]" [26] While this is a welcome instance of a scholar quoting a New Guinean author, which unfortunately tends to be relatively rare in the scholarship of German New Guinea, Kigasung himself is also very much biased to the Lutheran Mission and Christianity in general, as he is a Lutheran Bishop. It would have been interesting to see his opinion on Stephan Lehner and his colleagues be contrasted with the opinion of a non-Christian New Guinean author, or a New Guinean author who has a more critical, or even negative view towards the Christianising missions in New Guinea.

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[24] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 16.
[25] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 37-38.
[26] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 22.

Friedegard Tomasetti's article "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea" (1998) is more critical about the missionaries' view of the indigenous Non-Christians. Tomasetti describes Flierl and some of his colleagues' belief that the indigenous people of New Guinea were ignorant heathens and their dismissal of the indigenous' beliefs as often leading "to zealous judgments of good and evil on the non-Christian New Guineans."[27] His article focuses on missionaries' anthropological and ethnographic writings on the New Guineans' beliefs. As is necessary in this context, Tomasetti stresses how some missionaries' unwavering opinion that the New Guineans' beliefs were inferior to Christianity, hindered them in regarding and studying these beliefs in an objective way, which serves as a good example of the Christian supremacy missionaries forced on indigenous people.[28]

However, he also describes how some Neuendettelsau missionaries saw a "trace of religion" in indigenous traditional beliefs, which they studied comprehensively and respected them as useful tools for indigenising Christianity.[29]

Daniel Midena's article "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" focuses on the language barrier the Neuendettelsau missionaries encountered during their mission and their methods of dealing with this challenge.[30] By extension, this article gives interesting insight into the way in which these missionaries regarded the indigenous people's languages, cultures and beliefs. The article's title refers to a 1886 quote by a neo-Lutheran missionary who claimed that it was part of the missionaries' mission to pour "the wine of the gospels into the wineskins of barbaric languages" and "uncivilised" languages.[31] This clearly showcases once again to what extent colonising parties, such as the missionaries looked down on the indigenous people of New Guinea, categorising them as "barbaric" and "uncivilised" , in contrast to the "civilised" Germans. However, Midena does bring up that Neuendettelsau missionaries tended not to refer to New Guinean languages as "barbaric" in everyday letters and diary entries, possibly

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[27] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 189.
[28] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.
[29] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.
[30] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in ed. Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, (Manchester University Press, 2018), p. 86.
[31] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in ed. Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, (Manchester University Press, 2018), p. 86.

implying that they gradually came to regard the New Guineans and their languages and cultures in a less presumptuous manner. However, Midena rightfully accuses the missionaries of presenting parts of New Guinean myths, and therefore parts of New Guinean culture, in a demeaning way, by dismissing it as animism.[32] Like Tomasetti, Midena is critical of the missionaries' treatment of New Guinean culture, an element that is sorely lacking in Dech's work.

Hermann Hiery has written many important and useful works on German New Guinea, and other parts of the German Southsea. These include the chapter "Die deutsche Verwaltung New Guineas 1884-1914" (The German administration of New Guinea 1884-1914), in the book *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914* (The German Southsea 1884-1914), of which he is also the editor. This chapter proved extremely useful for me, as it contains detailed information about Albert Hahl's predecessors as Governor of German New Guinea, on which there is generally not as much written as about Hahl himself. [33]

Another fascinating work of Hiery's I have read for this thesis is, *Das Deutsche Reich in der Südsee* (The German Realm in the Southsee), especially the chapter "Kulturbegegnung und deutscher Einfluß in den Südseekolonien des Deutschen Reiches (Cultural encounters and German influence in the Southsee colonies of the German Realm) and "Die Südsee, die Deutschen und das Deutsche Reich" (The Southsea, the Germans, and the German Realm). However, despite it including a lot of interesting information about German colonialism and fascinating discussions about the morality thereof, I did not make use of it in this thesis. This was partially due to much of the information in this book being about other parts of the German colonies of the Southsea, namely Polynesia and Micronesia, while my thesis completely focuses on German New Guinea.

Rainer Buschmann's article "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea" focuses on the ethnographic and anthropological interests of the Governor of New Guinea, Albert Hahl, (1868-1945), who by many was and still is seen as less conservative and more forward thinking than his predecessors, having had

[32] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in ed. Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, (Manchester University Press, 2018), p. 94.
[33] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001).

extensive legal training showing genuine interest in New Guinean languages and cultures.[34] Buschmann stresses that, similarly to his contemporary and anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, Hahl believed that the idea of indigenous people being a lesser and inferior kind of human had been proven wrong by science.[35] This notion goes along with Midena's implication of the evolution of the missionaries' opinion about New Guinean languages. Buschmann mentions several interesting concepts anthropologists, such as Thurnwald invented during Albert Hahl's years in office, such as "gendered native" and "native mother", concepts that would be fascinating to research more to explore the ways in which German colonising actors thought about indigenous women in New Guinea.[36] Additionally, this article gives interesting insight into the governance of German New Guinea under Albert Hahl, and the problems he and his officials encountered, such as a declining indigenous population, which Thurnwald investigated under instructions from Hahl.[37] One aspect which this article lacks is an evaluation of what anthropological expeditions such as the Hamburg South Seas Expedition, which was organised by the Hamburg museum to collect many cultural artifacts to be put on display in Germany, meant for the indigenous people of New Guinea. This, indeed, is a topic of debate which is still relevant today, as many New Guinean cultural artifacts, which had been taken during the German colonial era, are still on display in German museums now.[38]

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[34] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea" in ed. H. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*, (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 236.
[35] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea" in ed. H. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*, (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 238-239.
[36] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea" in ed. H. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*, (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 244.
[37] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea" in ed. H. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*, (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 244.
[38] Yvonne Mensching, "Die Uli-Figur aus Neuirland", *Museumsportal Berlin*, https://www.museumsportal-berlin.de/de/magazin/blickfange/die-uli-figur-aus-neuirland/, accessed 22th April, 2021.

Chapter 1

The Colonial Government

1.1 - The Beginning of the Colonial Government in German New Guinea

Germany's decision to colonise parts of New Guinea, as well as the rest of the South Sea (Micronesia and Polynesia) partially stemmed from financial reasons. The first Germans who came to the South Sea believed that trade of walnut, which could be used for producing soap and candles, and coconut products, such as coconut stone and Kopra with which margarine could be made, had the potential of being very lucrative.[39]

However, according to Historian Hermann Hiery, another important reason wasGermany's desire to improve her reputation among her fellow European powers, especially after the colonisation of the South Sea proved to cost more money than it gave.[40] By colonising parts of New Guinea and Samoa, Germany specifically wanted to raise its prestige in competition with the British and the Australians, by whom they were already politically dominated in the area. This moved the German chancellor to become more active in colonial politics in New Guinea and Samoa, which he did by giving the New Guinea Company the diplomatic protection of the Reich.[41] From the beginning, however, the New Guinea Company proved to be ill-equipped for ruling German New Guinea.

The first Governor, Georg Freiherr von Schleinitz, for example, seemed very much unprepared for what would await him in New Guinea. His first direct contact with New Guinea was in 1875 when he, as commander of the ship Gazelle, led one of the first German research expeditions there, which was a major reason for his appointment as Governor of German New Guinea.[42]

In the beginning, the colonial administration was so disorganised that when he and his family arrived in Finschhafen on 10 June 1886, there was no proper accommodation and they were forced to live in the hull of a ship for many months, a dire living situation which most likely partially led to the early death of the Governor's wife, Margot von Schleinitz on 18th January 1887 after she had contracted malaria, the same disease their servant Nell succumbed to four

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[39] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 19.
[40] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 29.
[41] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 20.
[42] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 280.

months later.[43] This lack of preparation, as well as the disorganisation of von Schleinitz would serve as a foreshadowing of the lack of preparation and the disorganisation of the New Guinea Company-led colonial government in general.

1.2 - Reasons for the failure of the New Guinea Company-led Colonial Government

Due to the commercial goals of German colonial policy laid out at the 1885-1886 Reichstag memorandum on German protectorates, the New Guinea Company which had been given the responsibility to reign over the German protectorate of New Guinea was given much freedom. According to Historian John Moses, the Reichstag trusted that with their extensive entrepreneurial experience, the Company would be able to build upon the economic local situation in New Guinea to create a protectorate that would produce financial gain for both the New Guinea Company and Germany.[44]

On first glance, the German government's decision to give the reins of colonial rulership in the German protectorate of New Guinea to the chartered New Guinea Company appears sensible, as they had much commercial experience and were so the most likely to build up an infrastructure that would transform New Guinea into an at least somewhat profitable colony, for example by establishing trade or plantations. However, as mentioned above, while the German government would have certainly welcomed it if they had received financial gain from the colonisation of New Guinea, another essential reason for this venture, for them, was prestige. In contrast, the New Guinea Company was, by its very nature, a commercial, capitalist company, and therefore had almost exclusively commercial goals. There was therefore, in my opinion, a disconnect between the Company and the Government at home in Germany and their relationship to each other was often difficult. On the one hand, the German government, while expecting a lot from the Company, did not give it enough financial support. In the words of Historian Healy, the New Guinea Company was one of several

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[43] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 280.
[44] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 163.

"[...] woefully undercapitalised institutions with commercial personnel and objectives [which] were expected to take new possessions through the difficult, unproductive phase of pacification before they could even begin economic activities."[45]

On the other hand, the Company did not seem interested in making sure that their relationship to the New Guineans would be positive. While it can be argued that the positive nature of relations between coloniser and colonised was not explicitly one of Germany's goals, it would have certainly made the realisation of what Germany would have seen as a "successful" colony (financially beneficial, and "modernised", meaning adapted to the German/European way of life and work) easier. Not only did the administrators working for the New Guinea Company tend to put much less effort into learning the New Guineans' languages or inform themselves about their cultures than the missionaries, they also often pushed and punished New Guineans in an extremely brutal manner. This occurred especially after the imperial ordinances of 1888, which put the people of New Guinea under the law of the New Guinea Company.[46] German administrators working for the Company, such as Fritz Rose and Georg Schmiele, who first served as judge in the Bismarck Archipelago and then as Governor from 1886 to 1895, hit back brutally after attacks from indigenous groups, for example by dismantling gardens and burning whole villages, although this would also harm innocent people.[47] If one wanted to defend these actions of the German administrators, they might argue that this was part of an adaptation to New Guinean culture, as, at least according to German colonists at the time, violence and taking revenge on an enemy's village was a normal part of the culture of many New Guinean indigenous peoples. In the words of commissioner Rose in a letter he wrote in 1891:

"Vigilante justice was the common and accepted type of justice of the indigenous cultures."[48]

Other ways in which the German administrators sought to adapt to New Guinean cultures in other ways was, for example by allowing the Tolai (the indigenous people of the Duke of York Islands and the Gazelle Peninsula, New Guinea) to give traditional shell money as

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[45] A Healy, "Review of Firth", *Pacific Studies*, 8/1, Fall 1984, p. 140.
[46] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 137.
[47] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 137.
[48] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 293.

fines.[4950] However, I see these examples simply as evidence for the German colonial government only bothering to adapt to New Guinean culture and society when it either took no effort or was beneficial for them.

The problem, once again, was that the New Guinea Company was completely unprepared for what would await them in the new protectorate.

As Historian John Moses so aptly summarises:

"German New Guinea began as a colonial enterprise 'on the cheap', established with a bare minimum of facilities on the spot and limited capital at home; a veritable leap in the dark. A plantation colony was launched in a region about which virtually nothing was known, and overcoming this ignorance proved to be most costly in both capital and human life."[51]

Largely, the pervasiveness and near impenetrability of this ignorance of the German colonists was due to their eurocentric view. It appears to me that both the Company and the German government seemed to have expected there to be an economy and culture of trading, that, while much more "primitive" than that of Europe, would be similar in nature and could therefore act as the basis of a more "modern" economy established by the German colonisers which would play an important role in "modernising" and "civilising" New Guinea and its people while also bringing financial profits to the Company and Germany. What they found instead was a complex country populated by many different peoples that spoke different languages, had different cultures and often held major animosity towards each other. There was no long-range trading on which the Company could have built upon.[52] This, however, was not due to the New Guineans being more "primitive", a concept based on the idea of European superiority, but rather due to the New Guineans living in a completely different environment and socio-economic context and therefore having different needs when compared to the Europeans. One aspect of their living situation that differed extremely from that of the Europeans was the climate. Unlike Europe, New Guinea did not go through several seasons per year and the weather tended to only switch between rainy season and

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[49] https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/tolai

[50] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 137.

[51] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 164.

[52] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 136.

drought, therefore the inhabitants did not have to plan for upcoming seasons in the future. Historian Hermann Hiery explains that this was one of the reasons the New Guineans lived more in the present rather than planning, for example, how to make more profit so that they would be richer in the future as Europeans did.[53] It was also due to the climate that they were not able to store many goods, with storage based economy being an important aspect of European future-oriented economy. However, due to the climate the New Guineans also had little need of storing food and no need of trading, as they could grow crops all year round.[54] Therefore, the New Guineans were not "primitive", "lazy" or "stupid" as some Europeans believed. They had simply adapted to their situation and had developed a lifestyle that might have seemed "behind" in the eyes of most Europeans, but worked well within the context of New Guinea, in a way that the European way, without any adaptations, would not have.

I argue, that the biggest failure of the German Colonial Government, especially in its earliest iteration was their failure or unwillingness to understand New Guinean societies and their values, something that was not necessarily impossible, as can be seen in the comparison between the Colonial Government and the German missionaries, especially those from the Neuendettelsau mission, whose members, as will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3, thoroughly studied the cultures of the indigenous people of New Guinea. This made some of them understand that the indigenous people's different approach to work was not due to laziness.

In contrast to the missionaries, the Colonial Government as well as settlers and plantation owners attempted to force European values on New Guineans, which often failed, at least to an extent, and worsened the relationship between New Guineans and colonists.

The situation, however, changed to a degree when the Company recognised that it was not able to effectively rule a colony that, at this point, had gained a relatively high amount of European settlers, especially those working as planters in the Bismarck Archipelago. These tended to be unwilling to heed the command of a commercial company that they saw as competition. The Company also lacked authority when it came to disputes with missionary groups.[55] Therefore, and due to the New Guinea Company having "failed economically and politically and having been disqualified in moral terms, incriminated even", in 1899 they

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[53] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 84.
[54] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 83.
[55] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 171.

asked the German Reich to "assume sovereignty because the power of the state could be seen to be above parties, permanent and unchallengeable".[56]/[57]

1.3 - The impact of Governor Albert Hahl and his anthropological approach

As the Company had predicted, German New Guinea became a more successful, better organised and somewhat more profitable colony under the sovereignty of the German Reich, partially due to the Reich's authority. Mostly, however, the colonial government's increasing success has been ascribed to one particular man: Albert Hahl (1868-1945). Being the "longest serving" and the most famous and most influential Governor of German New Guinea, (an office he held from 1902 to 1917), he is often lauded by scholars with phrases such as "[a] new breed of administrator".[58]/[59]

Even before becoming Governor, he, as imperial judge and deputy governor, put much effort into studying and understanding New Guinean cultures and languages. In contrast to earlier German administrators, he fully realised that eurocentric strategies would not work in the protectorate, especially when it came to his speciality, law. As Rainer Buschmann put it, Hahl "address[ed] legal concerns in an ethnographic context."[60] One major example for this was his ingenious idea to create the posts of *lululai* and *tultul*, whose names were taken from the Tolai language and assigned New Guinean elites to them. According to Buschmann,

> *"Lululai* originally designated local leaders whose skills were sufficiently tested in warfare to warrant leadership positions; *tultul* referred to a new elite group who had extensive contacts with the European community. The *tultul* emerged as important middlemen since

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[56] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 299.
[57] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 172.
[58] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 173.
[59] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 236.
[60] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 236.

they had an understanding of indigenous as well as European customs, while the *lululai* became colonial authority figures equipped with cap and staff to underline their position."[61]

The success of Hahl's revolutionary idea for the *lululai* and *tultul* posts, at least when it came to the Tolai, was, similarly to the success of the Neuendettelsau missionaries in New Guinea, essentially based on his willingness to engage with Tolai culture and language, making it possible for him to understand what kind of strategies might be attractive, due to being familiar, for the Tolai. Writing in 1996, anthropologist Richard Scaglion supports this claim, by stating that the early use of the lululai system was successful, especially when compared to its later use by the Australian colonial government in New Guinea, "almost exclusively [due] to the efforts of Albert Hahl", who he calls "quite an amateur anthropologist, [who] studied the customs and traditions of the Tolai [...] and listened to their grievances."[62] While doing so Hahl also cooperated and was in contact with professional anthropologists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski, who, due to their academic interest and expertise, often regarded the people of New Guinea in a more nuanced manner. Malinowski, for example, stated

"The time when we could tolerate accounts presenting us the native as a distorted, childish caricature of a human being is gone. This picture is false, and like many other falsehoods, it has been killed by Science."[63]

Buschmann claims that this quote mostly also reflected Hahl's opinion, an opinion that he possibly developed through the close intellectual contact with scholars such as Malinowski.[64] Hahl often married his interest in indigenous cultures of New Guinea and his relations with important anthropologists with his desire as a Governor to improve the success of the colony. When anthropologist Richard Thurnwald, for example, was visiting New Guinea to collect items for Felix von Luschan, the director of the African/Oceanic Division at the Berlin Museum for Ethnology, Hahl encouraged him to focus his research on aspects such as

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[61] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 236.
[62] Richard Scaglion, "Chiefly Models in Papua New Guinea", *The Contemporary Pacific,* Volume 8, Number 1, Spring 1996, p. 12.
[63] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 237.
[64] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 239.

population studies.[65]/[66] This was due to Hahl regarding the increase of population to be the most important part of building a successful economic infrastructure.[67] In his words:

"The protectorate in its present development stands or falls with the population question. If the plantations are not to remain at their present extent but rather be increased, if new crops are to be introduced there will have to be greater recruitment of labour."[68]

Hahl was aware that such a complicated problem such as the "population question" would only be able to be solved with expert knowledge about the indigenous cultures of New Guinea. Similarly, Thurnwald complained that, despite their similarities, colonial officials and anthropologists cooperated only seldomly. According to him, anthropologists focused too much on material culture, while neglecting indigenous society, while colonial officials barely studied any aspects of indigenous culture except for economics.[69] Hahl was one of the few German colonial governors of New Guinea who realised this and bridged the gap between colonial officials and anthropologists, from which both the colonial government and the field of anthropology benefitted. Indeed, encouraged by Hahl, Thurnwald was even able to speed up the creation of a peace agreement between inland and coastal populations, an event which gained the colonial government new territory.[70] This serves as an example of how Hahl's efforts to foster productive relations with anthropologists had actual and immediate positive impacts on the Colonial administration.

Another example of Hahl's productive and well thought out inclusion of Tolai tradition into German colonialism that Scaglion brings up, was the way he encouraged Tolai people in the Gazelle Peninsula to build roads. In Hahl's own words:

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[65] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 241.
[66] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 242.
[67] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 173-174.
[68] John Moses, "Imperial German Priorities in New Guinea 1885-1914, in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 174.
[69] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 242-3.
[70] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 242.

"[T]he young people are accustomed to working for the heads of their families in return for food and small payments, often in order to work off bride price."[71]

From this Hahl correctly interpreted that some Tolai men would be willing to build roads for payment in the form of iron tools, shell-money and food. By 1898 Tolai workers had, under the command of the German colonial administration and in exchange for iron tools, shell-money and food, built roads that "stretched from Kokopo halfway around the bay towards the site of modern Rabaul, inland towards Vunakokor from Matupit to Rabaul farm, from Malaguna to Ratavul and along the north coast as well", and also made sure that these stayed in good condition and even planted useful plants such as coconut palms.[72]

1.4 Ethical issues regarding the Colonial Government in German New Guinea

While Albert Hahl's achievements are impressive, especially when compared to his predecessors, I believe that some Historians have written about him and his career in a manner that is too one-sided and positive. Many New Guineans were still treated in atrocious ways during Hahl's governorship. One example of this is the violent labour recruitment in the Sepik Foothills.

There, in December 1913, the above mentioned anthropologist Thurnwald saw with his own eyes how the district officer, Ernst Berghausen, ordered police to take recruits from the local Abelam people, be it with or without their consent.[73] In his diary, Thurnwald writes

"[Berghausen] locked the recruited people in the dark, cramped store room of the steamer 'Kolonialgesellschaft'. Like an old slave trader, he had 17 people cooped up in there."[74]

In another example, an Ambelam eyewitness named Mambil tells of terrible violence against and rape of Ambelam people by the hands of German and Malay recruiters:

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[71] Richard Scaglion, "Chiefly Models in Papua New Guinea", *The Contemporary Pacific,* Volume 8, Number 1, Spring 1996, p. 12.

[72] Richard Scaglion, "Chiefly Models in Papua New Guinea", *The Contemporary Pacific,* Volume 8, Number 1, Spring 1996, p. 12.

[73] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 351.

[74] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 351.

"The coastal men erected two stakes in the ground. They tied the woman from Kuminibus to these stakes, with her legs spread apart. The men from the coast, the two whites included, took turns raping her all night until just before daylight."[75]

Only a few days later:

"[T]he men [who had stolen pork from the Catholic Mission] were tied to a case and given ten lashes each with a kanda (length of cane) which was heated, so that the skin came off with each lash."[76]

Mambil also makes it clear that while technically he and the other Ambelan recruits signed contracts, they were not informed what this meant and therefore did not consent to working on plantations:

"The next day we 'signed' our labor contracts by putting our fingerprints on a piece of paper. We didn't know what we were doing."[77]

These examples were anything but exceptions. According to Richard Scaglion

"In practice [...], labour practices were frequently deplorable. [...] Recruits from new areas were frequently taken against their will, and, once on plantations, workers were often mistreated.[78]

Some would argue that this forced recruitment, inhumane treatment and rape of New Guinean people by some German recruiters was in no way the fault of the German Colonial Government. After all, the administration had established strict rules regarding the recruitment, to make sure this would be a non-violent process based on the indigenous people's consent.[79]

Could these inhumane acts therefore not be blamed solely on the recruiters themselves, who simply went against these rules?

However, I argue that the Colonial Government's response to this problem was inadequate. As Scaglion states,the administrators were aware of this problem, but despite the law that they had established, stating that such violent forms of abuse should be strictly punished, they

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[75] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 356.
[76] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 356.
[77] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 356.
[78] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 352.
[79] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 351.

often feigned ignorance of these crimes, as the workers won through these violent and illegal recruitments were seen as necessary for the further development of the colony.[80]

In conclusion, especially in the beginning under the New Guinea Company the Colonial administration was unsuccessful, as it was bound by eurocentric views, disorganisation and a lack of support from the German Government. Due to these reasons it was unable to build a solid base on which to develop a successful colony that would "modernise" (a problematic and eurocentric concept in itself) the country, its people and its economy and establish a positive, productive relationship with the different indigenous peoples of New Guinea. When the German Reich relieved the New Guinea Company of its responsibility and took the reins of Colonial government in German New Guinea in its own hands, the politicians in Berlin still did not control the Governors in New Guinea very strictly. Therefore the quality of leadership and administration tended to depend on the competence of the reigning Governor. Luckily for Germany, Albert Hahl, overall, proved to be a very successful governor, to a large part due to his willingness and effort in learning about New Guinean cultures and implementing aspects of them in his administration, which also led to a much improved relationship between the German Colonists and some New Guinean people. The importance of such relationships cannot be overstated, as, in Peter Hempenstall's words:

"German rule for many New Guineans was a personalised experience of a relationship to a plantation overseer, a German police officer, a missionary, indeed right up to the Governor."[81]

Even Hahl, as popular as he was and as just as he seemed, when compared to other governors of German New Guinea, was not, however, innocent when it came to enabling the abuse of indigenous people by German colonists, such as plantation owners - a fact that should never be forgotten.

Additionally, I argue that - in contrast to the practices established or tolerated by German governors- missionaries, especially those of the Neuendettelsau mission, tended to establish relationships with the people of New Guinea that were even more successful, as I will explore in the upcoming chapters of this thesis.

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[80] Richard Scaglion, Multiple Voices, Multiple Truths: Labour Recruitment in the Sepik Foothills of German New Guinea, p. 352.

[81] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 141.

Chapter 2

The Rhenish Missionaries

2.1 - Ethical issues regarding mission work

Another important, but also often quite separate part of German colonisation of New Guinea was the religious colonisation carried out by German missionaries.
In recent years especially, mission work has rightly become a controversial topic. As Mwende Katwiwa, a former Christian originally from Kenya, a country with a long Colonial history, writes

> "Forcing religion on others in a "noble' effort to "save" is rooted in the colonial notion that part of "the white man's burden" is to bring primitive natives to the light of Christ.",

a rhetoric that she correctly labels as "unproven" and "supremacist."[82]
When discussing missionary work, this crucial problematic aspect has to always be remembered. Additionally, it has to be kept in mind that often, the sources which are available to us are very much skewed in the favour of the Western missionaries, as they are mostly books, diaries, letters and reports by the missionaries themselves, who obviously believed that they were doing God's work and treating the indigenous people that they attempted to save justly. Especially in German New Guinea, we unfortunately have a lack of sources written by the colonised and missionised indigenous people, as New Guinea was, at this point, a non-literal society.
The relations between European missionaries and different indigenous peoples of New Guinea is however a very interesting example of intercultural contact, especially when contrasted with and compared to the relationship between the indigenous peoples and the German Colonial government, which had very different aims and goals, and therefore approaches when it came to the colonisation of the indigenous people of New Guinea. Additionally, comparing the different situations and approaches of different missionary groups, in this case the Rhenish missionaries and the Neuendettelsau missionaries and how

[82] Mwende Katwiwa, "Like John Chau, I believed in Christian missionary work - not anymore", *Independent*, 25 Nov. 2018. https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/american-missionary-john-chau-killed-arrow-sentinel-island-india-christianity-a8650856.html, accessed 20 Oct 2021.

these led to one group being much more successful than the other, gives a fascinating insight into German New Guinea.

2.2 - The Beginnings and early international experience of the Rhenish Mission

The Lutheran mission societies of the Rhenish cities of Cologne, Elberfeld and Barmen (the latter two now being part of Wuppertal) unified on the 23th September 1828 to form the Rhenish Mission (Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft).[83]

German New Guinea was not the first colony, in which the Rhenish mission was active. As early as 1830 they began to settle and work in South Africa and almost a decade later, in 1839, extended their territory to Southwest Africa.[84] The ideology of some Rhenish missionaries, such as Carl Hugo Hahn, who was sent to Southwest Africa in 1842, was based on the understanding that instead of establishing "new churches" or "appendages to existing churches" their mission should entail "converting (people) to [Christ] [and] gather[ing] them into one and the same net of the church".[85] To Hahn this meant that Black Christians should not be detached from White Christians, as they were to be part of the same church.[86] One can even argue that this ideology implied that Black Christians and White Christians should be treated equally.

In Africa, however, the Rhenish mission, did not end up following this ideology, but rather did the opposite. In the words of Sundermeier:

> "If one observes the civic relationships in the colony, one has to admit that the division between people of colour and Whites - more precisely, between the working and propertied classes, the people and the aristocracy - steadily becomes more and more glaring."[87]

According to Gensichten, the Rhenish mission's "founding of racially segregated congregations" in Southwest Africa was partially to blame for this severely unfortunate division.[88] Such racist methods and actions by the Rhenish missionaries were to a large part

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[83] Ludwig von Rohden, *Geschichte der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft*, (Barmen, 1856).
[84] Nikolai Mossolow, *Otjikango oder Gross Barmen - Ortsgeschichte der ersten Rheinischen Herero-Missionsstation in Südwestafrika 1844-1904*, (Windhoek: Meinert, 1968), p. 6.
[85] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 86.
[86] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 86.
[87] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 87.
[88] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 87.

due to the power and influence of Friedrich Fabri, the first inspector of the Rhenish Missionary Society, a post he received in 1857.[89] Due to his ideology being based on colonialist and nationalist goals at least as much as missionary ones, he is often called one of the "leading colonial propagandists" of the 19th century by Historians.[90] To him, Germany's holy mission was to culturally transform peoples he saw as primitive, through the "competence for colonisation" of the "German race."[91] Fabri therefore serves as a prime example for the ideology of Christian missions in colonies sometimes going hand in hand with the racist, colonialist ideology of Colonial governments. To an extent we see this with the Rhenish missionaries in German New Guinea as well, though not to such an extreme extent.

2.3 - The lack of success of the Rhenish mission and their perceived reasons thereof

As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the first missionaries of the Lutheran Rhenish Mission arrived in New Guinea in 1887, only one year after their "competitors" from Neuendettelsau. A year later, in March 1888, the first Rhenish mission station in New Guinea was founded near the village of Bogadjim at the coast of Astrolabe Bay, by missionaries Bergman, Scheidt and Eich. This was followed by the establishment of a mission station on the island Siar in the close proximity of Friedrichs-Wilhelmshafen by missionaries Kunze and Bergman in 1889.[92]

The success of these stations, however, were lacking when compared to the accomplishments of the Rhenish mission's "competitor", the Neuendettelsau Mission, (which chapter 3 will focus on). At the time this was even recognised by Rhenish missionaries themselves, such as the Inspector Pastor Kriele. In a presentation, which was part of a missionary conference in 1909 he openly admitted:

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[89] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 87.

[90] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 87.

[91] Hans-Werner Gensichten, "Mission and Ideology in South Africa", *Missionalia* 16:2, (August 1988), p. 87.

[92] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross: On Uncharted Ways*, (Lutheran Missionary Classics, 1997), p. 2.

"One has to have seen with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears what is happening in the area of the Neuendettelsau mission, to understand how small the success of our Rhenish work is so far."[93]

As Kriele describes, despite both missionary groups working in the same country for approximately the same amount of time, the number of indigenous people who came to the church services of the Neuendettelsau mission was one the Rhenish missionaries could only dream of. Additionally, many of them took it upon themselves to travel six to ten hours just to take part in the Sunday services and baptising lessons held by the Neuendettelsau missionaries, while the Rhenish missionaries had trouble to even encourage a decent number of locals who lived nearby to come to their services.[94]

Kriele lists several reasons for the relative failure of his mission, most of them, according to him, out of the control of the Rhenish missionaries. The first is that, in comparison to the Neuendettelsau mission, the Rhenish mission saw many sudden changes of missionaries. This was mostly due to diseases such as malaria hitting the Rhenish missionaries especially harshly, which led to two thirds of the 30 male missionaries either perishing or leaving New Guinea to recover, often at home in Germany or in Australia.[95] Additionally, there was a severe lack of experience among the remaining missionaries, with only one older Brother, Helmich, being left. In my opinion, these factors can be regarded to stem out of a combination of bad luck and insufficient planning.

With the next reason, however, Kriele completely put the blame on the indigenous people of Astrolabe Bay, where the Rhenish missionaries worked. According to him the Siar-Ragetta-Bilibilli people living there were too proud and unapproachable to be easily converted.[96]

2.4 - Reasons for the Rhenish mission's lack of success

[93] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 213-214.
[94] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 214.
[95] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 216-217.
[96] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 217.

Indeed, the Astrolabe Bay had not been the Rhenish Missionaries' first choice. In his 1912 report about the founding and development of the Rhenish Bogadjim Station during its first 25 years, Kriele's fellow Rhenish missionary Wilhelm Diehl explains that they initially had wanted to found a station at Hatzfeldhausen, but they were deterred from doing so by bloody conflicts between locals and colonists, another example of unfortunate circumstances for the Rhenish missionaries.[97] According to Diehl, their second choice had been Simbang near Finschhafen, but they were not able to fulfill this wish as their competitors from Neuendettelsau, led by Johann Flierl, arrived there first.[98] This makes apparent that, although Kriele was correct in pointing out that the Rhenish missionaries and the Neuendettelsau missionaries had been in New Guinea for a very similar amount of time, the importance of the one year head start the Bavarian missionaries had, which one could argue was due to their superior planning and organisation skills, should not be underestimated.

The often difficult and even violent relations between non-missionary colonists and indigenous people standing in the way of the Rhenish missionaries' plans often hindered the Rhenish missionaries in establishing positive relationships with indigenous locals, which was essential for their mission to convert them. The event at Hatzfeldhausen shortly after the arrival of the Rhenish Mission was certainly not a one time occurrence.

After Georg Kunze had built the third Rhenish Mission station on Karkar Island, Scheidt went to Franklin Bay in August 1890 to found the fourth station, an undertaking that at first seemed relatively easy to achieve as the indigenous people he came across there seemed to be very friendly.[99] The trouble started, however, when Scheidt left the building site at Malala to buy corrugated iron from the New Guinea Company in Hatzfeldhausen. During his absence, his colleague Boesch and his five Mioko workers who had stayed behind in Malala were murdered by locals.[100] When Scheidt, accompanied by the New Guinea Company official von Moisy, returned on the 27th of May, they too, as well as nine of their eleven Mioko oarsmen, were killed by the people of Malala, who were worried that they would otherwise be killed by them to extract revenge.[101]

While writing about these tragic events which led to the deaths of his colleagues, missionary Kunze does not simply completely blame them on the perceived "primitivity", "savageness"

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[97] Wilhelm Diehl, "Bericht über Gründung und Entwicklung der Station Bogadjim während der ersten 25 Jahre", *Missionarskonferenzen in Neuguinea, RMG 3.014*, 8. 11.1912, p. 296.
[98] Wilhelm Diehl, "Bericht über Gründung und Entwicklung der Station Bogadjim während der ersten 25 Jahre", *Missionarskonferenzen in Neuguinea, RMG 3.014*, 8. 11.1912, p. 296.
[99] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross*, p. 127.
[100] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross*, p. 128.
[101] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross*, p. 128.

or “inherent violence” of the indigenous New Guineans, as many non-missionary colonists would likely have done. Instead he, to some extent, shows empathy and attempts to see the situation from the indigenous people’s perspective. According to him, a likely reason for the Malala people’s decision to kill the missionaries were

“[...] quarrels and feuds in which the plantation at Hatzfeldhafen had been involved with the neighbouring Melanesian villages, and which usually ended in severe punishment being inflicted on the latter.”

According to Kunze’s theory, to which I also subscribe, this unfair treatment of Malala people by white colonists led, understandably, to a general distrust against white people. Due to this distrust, they likely believed that the missionaries Scheidt and Boesch had come to Malala and bought the land to start a plantation themselves.[102]

However, Kunze still ends up using derogatory terms to describe the indigenous people of Malala, claiming that their

“[...] rapid outpouring of [their] concealed hostility cannot be wondered at, in such passionate and ‘primitive’ people.”[103]

Therefore, while he implies the unfair and violent nature of the treatment of the indigenous people of New Guinea at the hands of white colonist plantation owners, and by extension the injustice and violence of Colonialism itself, he himself continues to showcase, unsurprisingly, colonial and white supremacist thinking and language. Indeed, it is interesting that, while he admits that the Malala people came to regret their decision to sell their land to his colleague Boesch, he never points out that Boesch most likely never properly explained to the people of Malala, what selling their land would mean and entail. They were used to a trade-based society, rather than a capitalist one, and were therefore not used to selling land, or any other goods for that matter. This, to some extent, could even be compared to the way in which colonists “recruited” indigenous people to work on plantation, without them knowing what this meant, and so forced them to work under inhumane conditions and live in a way that was completely different to their tradition. Indirectly, Kunze therefore showcases how missionaries thought of their work as a more “benign” colonialism that was not violent and inhumane as that of their nonreligious counterparts, for example the plantation owners, but hid the fact that they often thought in similar supremacist ways and used similar methods of coercion against the indigenous people.

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[102] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross*, p. 130.
[103] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross*, p. 130.

Another party which Kriele gives partial blame for the Rhenish missionaries' relative lack of success when compared to the Neuendettelsau missionaries is the German Colonial Government. He states that, while he supports the Colonial Government's efforts to secure legal protection for the indigenous people of New Guinea, these often go too far and end up hampering the Rhenish mission.[104]

In his words,

"With all kinds of complaints, often real trifles, the heathens go to the district administrator, who not only lends them his ear, but also very often decides against the missionary [...] and that all only out of fear, because the Tamols' rights and mannerism should not be disrupted."[105]

Interestingly, Kriele's complaints mirror those of European plantation owners and merchants working on the Bismarck Archipelago, who in 1913 wrote to the Governor Dr Albert Hahl:

"The approach of the legal regulations shows that the government almost exclusively sees the question [regarding workers] from the standpoint of the indigenous people, from which the one-sided care for them stems, while the justified interests of the white entrepreneurs are neglected. [...] The district offices, with few exceptions, seem to see their main mission as convincing the indigenous people that they have many rights and few responsibilities."[106]

While these extremely biased complaints want us to believe that the laws that were implemented by Hahl to protect the indigenous people were unreasonable and oppressing the white colonists, be they Rhenish missionaries or entrepreneurs, it has to be pointed out that these laws still allowed violent measures such as the "Prügelstrafe" (beating punishment), which, as the name suggests, allowed plantation owners to physically punish their indigenous workers by beating them, as Hahl believed these beatings, when done for disciplinary reasons, to be necessary.[107] This environment, which normalised physically punishing indigenous workers and even made this practice socially acceptable led to 217 disciplinary offenses in the year 1912 alone, 128 of which were carried out by beating the worker to be

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[104] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 219.
[105] Kriele, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Neu-Guinea-Mission und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für ihre Fortführung", *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, RMG 3.014a, p. 219.
[106] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 308, my translation.
[107] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 306.

punished with a stick. On average this punishment contained 7 hits, with a minimum of 3 hits and a maximum of 15 hits.[108]

It is therefore extremely telling that a member of the Rhenish mission, which often presented itself as benign and peace-loving, would overstate and complain about the extent to which the Colonial government's laws protected the indigenous people. Even more telling is, that by doing so, he made very similar statements to entrepreneurs who often treated their indigenous workers extremely badly, even beating them as punishment, and talking about them in a very derogatory way, with the letter by the white entrepreneurs to Albert Hahl, which I have just quoted, using the crass racial slur n****** several times. In my view, this once again proves that Rhenish missionaries did not have the well-being of the indigenous people, who they wanted to "save" at heart as much as they claimed, and that their brand of colonialism was not as benign as they wanted it to appear.

It also once more serves as an example of how we have to read sources written by colonists very carefully, as they are extremely biased. Indeed, we can only guess how the missionaries really treated the indigenous people they came in contact with, and why they feared the legal measures put in place to protect the people of New Guinea.

The Rhenish missionaries cannot only be compared to plantation owners, who they sometimes blamed for the mistrust against white people by indigenous people, in regards of opinions such as the one just discussed, but even in their methods and actions.

Indeed, in their own way, the Rhenish missionaries forced the indigenous people who wanted to be baptised by them to work for them. Often the justification for this was of extremely paternalistic nature. In a 1909 presentation, for example, Wilhelm Diehl claims

> "We have the same duty for our young parish as parents have for their children, which is to not lead them on a leash and keep them dependent on us, but to raise them to be independent and self-acting people who stand on their own feet."[109]

With this he, as many colonists, be they missionaries or not, implied that without the influence of Westerners such as missionaries, indigenous people were not equal to them and would not be able to become equal without them. At the same time, he attempted to present the Rhenish missionaries' colonialism as relatively progressive, as they did not want to completely control the indigenous people of their parish long-term, but rather help them become independent. This, however, was used as a reason for them having to build their own

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[108] Hermann Hiery, *Das Deutsche Reich der Südsee*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), p. 135.
[109] Wilhelm Diehl, Wie ziehen wir unsere jungen Christen zu finanziellen Leistungen heran? - 1909 RMG 3.014 a, *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate 1904-1909*, p. 230.

churches and church schools, in effect having them do the missionaries' work for them. Indeed, even beyond building churches and schools, Diehl encourages them to work and become part of the capitalist colonial system, suggesting

"With some diligence and effort, they [the indigenous Christians] could grow so much in their fields, that they could sell part of their harvest. [...] Also the service for the Europeans offers them a nice source of income."[110]

Like the colonial government, the Rhenish missionaries expected from the indigenous members of their parish a complete abandonment of their working traditions, which as discussed in chapter 1, served the New Guineans well in their environment and was not necessarily inferior or more "primitive" than the Germans' way of living and working. This and the fact that Diehl even went so far as to recommend working for non-missionary Europeans, who, as previously discussed, often treated their indigenous workers brutally, likely contributed to the low popularity of the Rhenish mission amongst indigenous New Guineans, in my opinion.

These examples show that the closeness of the Rhenish missionaries to the German colonial government and European colonial entrepreneurs was not only of a geographic nature, but that, in some regards, their aims and methods were very similar too, which in my view is an important factor for the Rhenish mission's relative failure, one, for which they themselves are to blame.

Related to this, Rhenish missionaries tended to be unwilling to compromise with the indigenous people they wished to convert, which further contributed to their unpopularity. In 1912, for example, five out of 14 New Guineans attending the Rhenish missionaries' baptising lessons quit, due to not wanting to be buried outside, as this went against their culture's traditions.[111] Had the Rhenish missionaries been more lenient, and allowed New Guinean Christians to be able to choose to be buried according to their own culture's tradition, and in general allowed them to combine their new-found Christian religion with their own traditional culture, this could have been avoided, and likely many more indigenous people would have been willing to convert. Diehl even clearly states that he and his colleagues actively rejected people from his parish for not fully abandoning traditions connected to their old beliefs, stating:

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[110] Wilhelm Diehl, Wie ziehen wir unsere jungen Christen zu finanziellen Leistungen heran? - 1909 RMG 3.014 a, *Missionarkonferenzen: Referate* 1904-1909, p. 235.

[111] Wilhelm Diehl, "Bericht über Gründung und Entwicklung der Station Bogadjim während der ersten 25 Jahre", Missionarskonferenzen in Neuguinea, RMG 3.014, 8. 11.1912, p. 307.

"[...] Unfortunately, the [indigenous] Christians were, more or less, put under a spell and took part in heathen things and were the reason for many complaints. Some had to be excluded."[112]

This quote suggests that the Rhenish missionaries were often not able to empathise how difficult it must have been for the indigenous people to completely abandon the beliefs they had been raised with; the Rhenish missionaries were often not forgiving enough, quickly excluding people for acting against the missionaries' will to not give in to "heathen" beliefs. With this unwillingness to empathise and forgive "trespasses", the Rhenish missionaries were often shooting themselves in the foot, as obviously fewer indigenous people were able to become or remain Christians with these strict conditions.

Rhenish missionaries, such as Inspector Pastor Kriele, might have claimed that their lack of success when it came to converting a high number of indigenous people in German New Guinea was due to factors out of their control. These, according to them, include a lack of missionaries, and especially experienced missionaries due to many of them perishing or having to leave due to health related reasons, or the Colonial Government's laws to protect the indigenous people from being mistreated by Europeans being allegedly unfairly skewed to the advantage of the indigenous people, and so hampering the missionaries' efforts.

The main problem of the Rhenish missionaries, however, was that they were often unpopular amongst the indigenous people, and often unable to convince them to convert to the Christian faith. This failure in persuading them to believe in the Christian God is apparent in the many recorded instances in which indigenous New Guineans tried to get close to missionaries or attended their Christian festivities only because they hoped they would gain something material from this. Georg Kunze himself, for example, admits that the people of Karkar and other New Guineans he invited were mostly excited for the Christmas celebration he organised due to the promise of receiving Spekulatius biscuits his wife had made, rather than for the opportunity to celebrate the birth of the messiah Jesus Christ.[113]

In conclusion, the Rhenish missionaries' failure to properly connect with the New Guineans and persuade them to believe in God and Jesus Christ, was due to their low popularity amongst the indigenous people. This was partially, because, similarly to other colonists, the

[112] Wilhelm Diehl, "Bericht über Gründung und Entwicklung der Station Bogadjim während der ersten 25 Jahre", Missionarskonferenzen in Neuguinea, RMG 3.014, 8. 11.1912, p. 307.
[113] Georg Kunze, *In the Service of the Cross: On Uncharted Ways*, (Lutheran Missionary Classics, 1997), p. 178.

Rhenish missionaries made the indigenous people near their stations work, and even build churches and schools for their parish, and even encouraged them to work for other colonists, and so forced them into a capitalist way of life and work, which they were not used to and which was contradictory to their own culture and practice. Additionally, the Rhenish missionaries were often unable to properly empathise with the indigenous people, which not only led to them being less able to convince them of Christianity, but also made them less forgiving of trespasses, such as engaging in “heretic” traditions, and therefore made them even exclude some indigenous people they had already converted. With this attitude, they differed from the much more successful Neuendettelsau missionaries, which the following chapter will focus on.

Chapter 3

The Neuendettelsau Missionaries

3.1 - The Beginnings and early international experience of the Neuendettelsau mission

The Gesellschaft für Innere und Äußere Mission im Sinne der Lutherischen Kirche (Company for Inner and Outer Mission for the Lutheran Church) originated from minister Wilhelm Loehe's parish in the small Bavarian village Neuendettelsau, a parish he led from 1837 until he passed away in 1872.[114] According to Vorländer, missionary work was always an important focus for Loehe, who established a missionary society in Fürth in support for the Basel Mission when he was only nineteen years old and "studied intensively the missionary work of the Moravians in North America."[115] When, in 1838, he went to the mission festival in Dresden and participated in testing the seminarians, he noticed that these were more ignorant than, "well-informed confirmands."[116] This observation encouraged him to found his own missionary training centre in his Neuendettelsau parish, which he did in 1841.[117] The proper beginning of the Neuendettelsau mission's work was on the 11th of July, 1842, when Adam Ernst (1815-1895) and Georg Burger (1816-1847), who had been trained in Neuendettelsau by Loehe and his colleague Heinrich Brandt, left for North America to clerically support German migrants there, as well as convert indigenous Americans.[118] However, the Neuendettelsau mission's early attempts in converting indigenous people often ended very badly for its missionaries. Moritz Bräuniger, for example, was killed in 1860 by Absaroka Native Americans, "probably due to misunderstandings and lack of local knowledge."[119] I believe that events such as these taught the Neuendettelsau mission about the importance of understanding the cultures and languages of indigenous people they attempted to convert, which explains why they put such enormous effort into ethnographic studies of indigenous peoples in their later missions, such as in German New Guinea, as will be showcased in this chapter. From early on, this importance of close relationships with the people they tried to convert was mirrored in Loehe's ideology,which had a crucial impact on

[114] Craig L. Nessan, "Foreword", Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. xi.
[115] Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. 5.
[116] Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. 6.
[117] Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. 6.
[118] Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. 8.
[119] Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. 12.

all parts of the Neuendettelsau mission. His ideology was based on seven principles. Namely these were:

"1) worship-centred community lived out in life-giving relationships, 2) the discipline of a faith informed by the practices of Pietism, 3) Lutheran confessional commitments, 4) the allowance for "open questions" and matter of adiaphora, 5) engagement in care for the needs of the world through diaconal service, 6) a heart for Christian mission by serving others in word and deed, and 7) a global horizon for extending the church's work."[120]

From the beginning, therefore, when compared to the Rhenish mission, there was a stronger focus on close relationships with the people the Neuendettelsau missionaries sought to convert abroad.

3.2 - The beginnings of the Neuendettelsau mission in German New Guinea

In 1886, the Neuendettelsau Mission first arrived in German New Guinea, more specifically in modern-day Morobe Province. From the beginning, they established friendly connections with the New Guinea Company, which was still reigning in the colony at the time.[121]/[122] Only three months after their arrival, however, Neuendettelsau missionaries Johann Flierl and Karl Tremel consciously moved away from the Company, to a provisional accommodation near the village Simbang, which was one and a half hours south of Finschhafen. Unlike their Rhenish competitors, they were aware from early on that to win the indigenous people's trust, they had to be independent from the Colonial Government.[123]

Additionally, in contrast to Rhenish missionary Kriele, who, as discussed in chapter 2, complained, in line with abusive and violently racist plantation owners, about the Colonial Government's laws that were to protect indigenous people from mistreatment at the hands of white colonists, Flierl not only refrained from complaining about such laws, but even supported their execution. Regarding himself as "the defender of the oppressed", he, for example, informed the district office in Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen about the violation of indigenous girls and women near the Neuendettelsau mission at the hands of a German police

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[120] Craig L. Nessan, "Foreword", Hermann Vorländer, *Church in Motion*, (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2018), p. xi.
[121] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 183.
[122] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXX.
[123] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXXI.

officer, and so made sure that the perpetrator was punished for his crimes.[124] Such actions suggest that Flierl did seriously care about the well-being and rights of indigenous people, an attitude that made him and his colleagues popular amongst indigenous people and therefore made it easier for them to convert many of them.

There is also much evidence of other Neuendettelsau missionaries seeing the well-being of the New Guineans as a priority and treating them well. One New Guinean eyewitness, for example, who was the son of a maid working for missionary Lehner reported that, when he was a weak and sickly child, Lehner and his wife had provided medical care for him. This eyewitness reportedly stated:

"[...] I am very grateful to the missionary. Missionary Lehner is my missionary".[125]

He also implied that it was due to Lehner that he was able to become a doctor as an adult.[126]

In defense of the Rhenish missionaries, it has to be mentioned that they also sometimes protested against transgressions against indigenous people by other German colonists, although this was often partially due to self interest. For example, when the New Guinea Company settled in the Rhenish mission's territory and by doing this ignored the land rights of the indigenous locals, the Rhenish missionaries protested in 1904 against the "highly suspect changes of village landings [*Dorfländereien*] around Madang."[127] Despite the Rhenish missionaries' protests against the New Guinea Company, however, the situation led to a general anger amongst the indigenous local population against white colonists, which ended in them almost attacking the missionaries.[128] This serves as yet another example of how the close proximity to the Colonial government was a great disadvantage for the Rhenish mission. Due to their distance from the colonial government, the Neuendettelsau missionaries, who in the words of Hempenstall, "had virtually a corner of empire to itself without the disrupting influence of government or planters", were mostly spared of such troubles.[129]

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[124] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXXI.
[125] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 64.
[126] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 64.
[127] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 37.
[128] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 37.
[129] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 154-155.

Additionally, in comparison to members of other missions, such as the Catholic Herz-Jesu Mission from Neupommern, which claimed that "these man eating and inferior peoples have to be transformed into a completely new people", Johann Flierl and other Neuendettelsau missionaries tended to talk and write about the indigenous people of New Guinea in a much more respectful fashion.[130]

3.3 - Early Neuendettelsau missionaries' views on New Guineans and their culture

However, Christiane Stevens is not wrong in accusing Johann Flierl of being a "product of nineteenth-century cultural and religious xenophobia."[131]
An interesting quote by Flierl that presents both his xenophobia, which, as Stevens implied, was common during this era, but also to an extent his respect towards the indigenous people of New Guinea is:

"The natives lived in the stone-age and it was astounding what they were able to achieve with the primitive axes and knives of stone and how they managed to till the soil with wooden implements."[132]

With this he, like many other Germans before and since, makes use of the xenophobic misconception that the indigenous people of New Guinea were "savages" who were less advanced than the Europeans, a stereotype which has already been discussed in the introduction of this thesis. However, in this quote he also showcases genuine wonder for the indigenous people's impressive skills in using tools, combined with a sense of respect. He also proclaims:

"Their carvings on wooden planks in houses and canoes oftentimes represented real works of art."[133]

This implies Flierl's appreciation and respect of indigenous culture, handiwork and art, which was extremely useful for building a positive relationship with the indigenous people and converting them to Christianity. These quotes show the complicated and even contradictory way in which Flierl and some of his colleagues thought of the indigenous people they tried to

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[130] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXVII.
[131] Susanne Froehlich, *Als Pioniersmissionar in das ferne Neu Guinea, Johann Flierls Lebenserinnerungen Teil I 1858-1886*, (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), p. XXVII.
[132] Johann Flierl, *Is the New Guinea Primitive Race destined to perish at the hands of European Civilization?*, (Acculturation, 1936), p.5.
[133] Johann Flierl, *Is the New Guinea Primitive Race destined to perish at the hands of European Civilization?*, (Acculturation, 1936), p.6.

convert: a mixture of racism and xenophobia which was typical for Europeans from the 19th and 20th century, and respect and goodwill.
Furthermore, it should not be ignored that, especially in the earlier stages, missionaries such as Flierl had internalised a strong double standard in regards to how they thought and wrote about indigenous people when compared to how they thought and wrote about themselves and their own actions. Missionary Pilhofer, for example, complained about the indigenous people's "thievishness", at the same time as he and his colleagues were taking their land from them.[134]
Therefore, when writing about the relative respect the Neuendettelsau missionaries showed to the indigenous people, when compared to the lack thereof that other colonists, including other missionaries showed them, it should and can not be forgotten that still, the Neuendettelsau missionaries also believed that the indigenous New Guineans were, without question, inferior to them. This was especially due to what Peter Lawrence calls the Neuendettelsau missionaries' "[...]] strength of their belief in the unconditional superiority of Christianity [...]."[135]

3.4 - Neuendettelsau missionaries' views on New Guinean religious beliefs

Due to their definition of religion being based on their perceived truth of Christianity, most of them also did not take the indigenous people's traditional beliefs seriously and did not regard them as proper religions, with missionary Heinrich Zahn (1880-1944) claiming "They did not have a religion in the real meaning of the word.", a statement which also mirrors Keysser's opinion on the matter.[136] Peter Lawrence rightly criticises this biased view of inidgenous religions of New Guinea, stating that it

> "[...] prevented any dispassionate consideration of non-Christian beliefs."[137]

However, a few Neuendettelsau missionaries were actually more open-minded and, at least to an extent, accepted indigenous beliefs as religions. In 1911, Bamler, for example, mentioned

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[134] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 35.
[135] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.
[136] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 189.
[137] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.

the "trace of religion" that he observed in the Tami when they came in contact with death.[138] Other Neuendettelsau missionaries, including Vetter showed awareness of the Yabim and Tami creator god Anutu, and his followers' belief in the soul, beliefs which were not unlike aspects of Christianity, and "could be modified and built on for integrating into the Christian teachings."[139] Their colleague Stephan Lehner discovered as many as six aspects of New Guinean traditional belief that he saw as somewhat similar to Christendom and therefore could be useful in making indigenous people familiar with Christianity. The first of these was the very important belief that the soul continued existing after death.[140] Another aspect was a sense of "dualism". Some indigenous people believed that some spirits were benevolent, and others malevolent. Lehner believed that this belief could be used to explain the relationship between the good God and the evil Satan and his demons.[141] Another aspect of indigenous religious tradition that Lehner thought to be useful for missionaries were their magic formulas, which, according to him, were "in many cases nothing else but prayers [...] and as such easily understandable." He therefore saw them as being able to lead the New Guineans to "the right prayer to the living God."[142] He even saw their belief in magic, which many of his colleagues, especially Rhenish ones, regarded as a major obstacle, as useful as it made indigenous peoples believe in the "transcendence of a supernatural power", which could be converted into the belief of God's transcendent and supernatural power.[143]
Lehner therefore believed that the indigenous beliefs did contain good aspects, such as an attempt to deal "with the great problem of existence."[144] Additionally, he appealed in a speech to other missionaries:

"Go with the love, with which God has loved the world! God has also created and loved the animist way of thinking of the Papua."[145]

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[138] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.
[139] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 190.
[140] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 51.
[141] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 51.
[142] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 51.
[143] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 52.
[144] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 50.
[145] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 50.

The contrast between the Neuendettelsau and the Rhenish perspective on indigenous beliefs can also clearly be seen through declarations made by Rhenish missionaries, such as Albert Hoffmann, who, in a 1910 lecture in Berlin claimed:

"The first thing that was clear to us was that the Gospel is about spiritual and heavenly gods and not earthly [*irdisch*] - however, things one cannot see. How then to find the words for these unseeable things. The savages [*Wilde*] indeed had and used words for every little grass type and insect, but concepts were distant. With regards to thinking, he was also very focused on that which was perceptible with the senses [*das sinnlich Wahrnehmbare*]. How should we then explain to the people Biblical expression such as belief, hope, eternal life, holiness etc.?"[146]

This quote serves as an example of how, instead of seriously studying indigenous beliefs to find out if it contained any spiritual concepts that could be used to make Christianity more familiar to the indigenous people, as Neuendettelsau missionaries such as Lehner had, the Rhenish missionaries simply assumed that such concepts did not exist within indigenous beliefs and cultures, based on the xenophobic stereotype that the followers of such beliefs were "savages." This biased thinking was the Rhenish missionaries' main obstacle and the main reason that they were less successful than the Neuendettelsau missionaries.

In contrast to Rhenish missionaries, some Neuendettelsau missionaries did not completely disregard indigenous beliefs, but rather explored which aspects of them might be useful in making their adherents understand and accept Christian beliefs. This made their method of teaching and converting much more effective and popular amongst indigenous people. Eyewitness Lissi Schuster, the wife of Neuendettelsau missionary Schuster, for example, remembers one instance in which her husband told indigenous chiefs of God to which they responded "We also have an above-man, who takes care of everything and makes it that our pigs have many piglets, and who makes everything grow." To this missionary Schuster responded that this "above-man" was God, which the chiefs quickly came to accept.[147]

To help understand Good Friday and Jesus' sacrifice, the Neuendettelsau missionaries transported the story into a New Guinean setting. In this story, five villagers were to receive potentially deadly physical punishments for misdeeds such as lying and stealing. Suddenly

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[146] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 99.

[147] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 73,

the chief's son asks his father "Father, I am also responsible for my people. Can I take the punishment instead?" to which the chief responded "Then you are dead." The chief's son's sacrifice clearly mirrors the sacrifice of the son of God by dying on the cross, but was more familiar and easily understandable for indigenous people.[148]

Lehner proudly told of the success of the Sattelberg station which he founded, stating:

"Having travelled for hours the people come to mass, every Sunday we have a full church and attentive listeners, additionally to that a crowd of Christians, who have not yet been holy ones for long, but rather have the understanding of children, but as such, thank god, have given me little reason to complain."[149]

This popularity of Neuendettelsau missionaries carried on for decades, with New Guinean Bishop Wesley W. Kigasung later calling Lehner a "cultural hero."[150]

3.5 - The Neuendettelsau missionaries' efforts to study indigenous New Guinean cultures

Making use of aspects of indigenous culture was only possible with a deep knowledge and understanding of it, which the Neuendettelsau missionaries were able to acquire with their remarkable willingness and effort to study indigenous languages and traditions, especially when compared to other colonists, including other groups of missionaries in German New Guinea. Indeed, as Friedegard Tomasetti states, the most illuminating ethnographic writings about the Huon Peninsula of New Guinea in the late 19th and early 20th century came from several Neuendettelsau missionaries' serious attempts to observe and understand indigenous beliefs and traditions.[151]

Most of these ethnographic writings originated from four sectors of the Neuendettelsau mission in German New Guinea. Namely these were the Simbang and Yabim stations which had been established in 1886 and 1902 (with Yabim station being abandoned in 1911), as well as the Tami Islands, whose station was active from 1899 until 1911, the first Kate station Sattelberg, which was established in 1892, and the Kap Arkona station in the Huon Gulf,

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[148] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 73-74.
[149] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 47.
[150] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 56.
[151] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 183.

which was established in 1906.[152] The ethnographic work of the Neuendettelsau missionaries therefore stretched over several decades and explored several different indigenous peoples, the Yabim, the Tami, the Kate and the Bukawa.

The Neuendettelsau missionaries were also very aware of the importance of learning indigenous languages, both to be able to communicate with the people they wanted to convert, and to better understand their culture and way of thinking, which was also essential to conversion. From its creation, the Neuendettelsau mission had been heavily inspired by German philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1804), whose work Wilhelm Löhe (1808-72), the founder of the Neuendettelsau mission seminars, had allegedly read completely.[153] Herder believed that religious belief and language were intrinsically linked, stating:

"[...] In order to understand the language of the gods on Olympus the human being must already have reason and consequently must already have language."[154]

He also stresses the importance of traditions and sagas in understanding the religious beliefs of indigenous people, including those of New Guinea, claiming:

"In the end, however different its garb may be, religion can be found even among the poorest and rudest peoples on the edge of the earth. The natives of Greenland and Kamachatk, of Tierra del Fuego and Papua New Guinea, have religious expressions, illustrated by their sagas and customs."[155] Based on this, many Neuendetellsau missionaries believed "that one's mother tongue fundamentally structures one's religious life and that one should, therefore know the Christian God only within one's local linguistic and cultural context."[156] These missionaries generally regarded New Guinean local culture, including its sagas, customs and music as different, but not necessarily inferior to German/European culture. Missionary Heinrich Zahn gave examples of passages in local songs that one could only fully comprehend within a local context. One of these examples was the line "You are

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[152] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 185.
[153] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 91-92.
[154] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 91.
[155] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 92.
[156] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 88.

like a betelnut and like the stem of a fern", which in his words gave a sense of "splendour" to indigenous people of New Guinea, as these were objects that were commonly used for dyeing bark cloth. Zahn himself appreciated such lines in songs and saw them as "charming" and "beautiful" due to his awareness of local New Guinean culture.[157] Zahn. who had an aptitude for and special interest in music, and therefore not only analysed the lyrics, but also the melodies and melody structures of local indigenous songs, explained:

"Our European melodies are and remain foreign to the natives. Just as it is impossible for the European, who clings to European things and who measures the natives by a European scale, to become accepted by natives as a 'native', in the same way a native tribe cannot step into European circumstances, or spiritual world - here in the music - in such a way that it means to him what it means to us."[158]

Zahn's quote serves as yet another example of the great strength of the Neuendettelsau mission, when compared to its competitors, their understanding and acceptance that the culture of the indigenous New Guineans was an important, even valuable part of them, which they could not just simply replace with European culture, even if they wished to convert them to Christianity. Instead, their goal was to integrate Christianity into indigenous life while letting indigenous traditions, at least most of them, remain.[159] Zahn himself, for example, indigenised Christian liturgical music by pairing New Guinean melody structures with Christian lyrics and themes.[160]

Herder's influence on the Neuendettelsau mission therefore explains to a large extent the Bavarian missionaries' eagerness in engaging in ethnographic examinations of indigenous traditions and especially myths and tales. Indeed, as Midena explains, Herder was not only the one to inspire the famous Grimm brothers to collect sagas in Germany, but also inspired Neuendettelsau missionaries to do the same in New Guinea "to get to know [the indigenous

[157] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 93.
[158] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 93.
[159] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 93.
[160] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 94.

people's] peculiar modes of thinking and religion."[161] Zahn alone managed to collect over 450 pages of indigenous myths, showing determination in collecting myths that was comparable to his more famous fellow countrymen Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.[162]
Partially these efforts in collecting indigenous myths in German New Guinea were also undertaken to acquire a more sound understanding of indigenous languages, specifically the Kate and the Jabem language, which were the most commonly spoken languages in the Neuendettelsau missionaries' sector.[163]
According to Sara Pugach, both Herder and the Neuendettelsau missionaries were heavily inspired by the seventeenth century German pietistic movement, which saw the personal relationship with Jesus as most important, and also believed that language was crucial for this.[164] This was also an important influence for missiologist Gustav Warneck, another important inspiration for the Neuendettelsau mission, who stated "each nation's soul comes to the Word in the vernacular [*Volkssprachen*]."[165] These influences explain why, from the beginning, the Neuendettelsau missionaries put such effort into learning and understanding the local languages, not only for practical reasons, but also to understand the "soul" of the people they sought to convert.
However, from early on, the Neuendettelsau missionaries recognised that casual conversations with the locals would not suffice in properly learning these languages, as their indigenous conversation partners often did not bother to correct the missionaries' grammatical mistakes, and sometimes even copied them, be it out of politeness or annoyance, and even refrained from using words that the missionaries did not know, so they could understand each other.[166] Listening to indigenous stories and myths therefore was not only

[161] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 92.
[162] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 93.
[163] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 90.
[164] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 90.
[165] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 90.
[166] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 90.

necessary to understand their cultures and beliefs more deeply, but also to learn their languages. In a 1897 letter to the mission house missionary Flierl wrote:

"Since [the missionaries] now rarely discover a new word in their interactions with the people (because the people concentrate only on ever using those expressions that they know the missionaries understand), the missionaries therefore allow the people to tell them small stories [*Geschichten*], which they write down in order to enter ever more deeply into the spirit of the language. That is absolutely necessary."[167]

This letter once again showcases the Neuendettelsau missionaries' awareness of the importance of understanding the indigenous people and gaining a deep understanding of their language.

Thomas J. Lehner supports this point with the example of his grandfather and Flierl's colleague missionary Lehner, whose "deep respect for the old culture and his ability to listen to people without interrupting them, brought trust."[168]

As part of their detailed ethnographic studies of New Guinean people and peoples, several Neuendettelsau missionaries also observed and discussed the difference of the amount of work generally carried out by indigenous New Guineans when compared to Europeans, and the possible reasons for this difference. Like other German colonists, some Neuendettelsau missionaries perceived the indigenous people as lazy, with a "renunciation of laziness" even being part of the baptism formula in the Kate and Yabim congregations.[169] In contrast to other colonist groups, however, the Neuendettelsau missionaries did not simply explain this away with the indigenous people's supposed inferiority which implied that laziness was an inherent part of them. Instead, they had several theories to try to explain why New Guineans did not work as hard as the missionaries thought they should. Keysser, for example, believed this "problem" was partially due to the way animism influenced the way the Kate people saw the world. According to this theory the Kate people were scared of their success attracting "envy which inevitably results from inequalities of wealth" and that by purposefully not achieving too much success by not working hard they would "strengthen harmonious relations between people."[170]

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[167] Daniel Midena, "Wine into wineskins: the Neuendettelsau missionaries' encounter with language and myth in New Guinea" in *Savage Worlds - German encounters abroad 1798-1914*, ed. By Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, Peter Monteath, (Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 90.
[168] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 22.
[169] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 193.
[170] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 193.

Early on, in 1890, Keysser's colleague Bamler even actively sought to rectify the stereotype of "the lazy natives."[171] He attempted this by referring to the way of life of the Tami as "socialism". With this, he presented their lifestyle, worldview and way of working not as something underdeveloped, archaic or barbaric, as many other colonists did, but rather as an alternative to the Capitalism the majority of Europeans had normalised as part of a "modernised" world, and linked it to a way of thinking that some contemporary Westerners also adhered to.[172] In Tomasetti's words, Bamler believed that "the existing custom of sharing was a reciprocal obligation which precluded the accumulation of wealth."[173] The reason that the Tami did not work more and did not earn money was not because they were unable to, due to laziness or supposed inferiority, but because it was not part of the life philosophy they had chosen and was therefore not needed or wanted by them.

Bamler's sensitivity towards and understanding of Tami culture even led to the Tami people he lived amongst to overcome their fear of foreigners and accepting him as one of their own, with one Tami person saying to him in 1891

"You are no longer a white [buwun], you are a Wonam (name of the main Tami Island.)"[174]

This example clearly showcases that understanding indigenous cultures heavily stimulated positive relationships between missionaries and indigenous people, and was therefore extremely important for the success of the mission. The impressive effort of Neuendettelsau missionaries in studying indigenous cultures, languages and religions therefore explains why their mission was substantially more successful than the Rhenish mission. These practices also led to the Neuendettelsau missionaries being able to train an impressive number of indigenous Christian teachers and pastors, whose fluency in the local language strongly facilitated the conversion of other indigenous people and especially children. By 1913 there were 35 of such indigenous pastors and teachers, who were often not only influential in their parishes, but also powerful in non-religious contexts. Sometimes the

[171] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 194.
[172] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 194.
[173] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 194.
[174] Friedegard Tomasetti, "Traditional Religion: Some Perceptions by Lutheran Missionaries in German New Guinea", *The Journal of Religious History,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1998), p. 194.

government *lululais* even decided in favour of the missionaries instead of the colonial government law at court, due to the influence of these New Guinean pastors and teachers.[175] In the words of the first Neuendettelsau missionary in German New Guinea, Johann Flierl:

"It is necessary to appreciate their heathen customs. [...] We were obliged to study all these conditions until we gained the confidence of the natives. Then they told us of their troubles and fears, they embraced our message of peace, and accepted the Gospel of Christianity."[176]

[175] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Insitute, 1989), p. 156.
[176] Johann Flierl, *Is the New Guinea Primitive Race destined to perish at the hands of European Civilization?*, (Acculturation, 1936), p.7.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the different ways in which the German Colonial government, the Rhenish mission and the Neuendettelsau mission has treated the indigenous people of New Guinea and engaged with their cultures. This exploration has made clear that the more willing a German colonist or colonialist group was in seriously studying indigenous cultures, traditions, beliefs and languages through an ethnographic or anthropologist lens, the more they were able to establish close relationships with indigenous people.

Therefore, Albert Hahl, who was in very close contact with professional anthropologists such as Thurnwald, who he even encouraged to focus his work on aspects that would be useful for the Colonial government, such as population studies, ended up being remembered as the most popular, successful, simply said, best Governor German New Guinea had ever seen.[177]/[178] His success and popularity was also, to a very large part, due to his willingness and commitment to study indigenous cultures and indigenous traditions through an anthropological lens himself. This not only made it possible for him to understand the people he wanted to colonise more deeply, but also enabled him to envision strategies such as the foundation of the *lululai* and *tultul* posts, which were based on indigenous cultures and proved extremely successful.[179]

Similarly, the Neuendettelsau missionaries were much more successful in converting a large number of indigenous people to Christianity than the Rhenish missionaries, due to the extensive and detailed way in which they studied indigenous traditions, cultures, beliefs and languages. Related to this, they were much more willing in accepting some aspects of indigenous traditions and beliefs, and, rather than simply forcing indigenous people to reject these familiar and beloved traditions, looked for ways in which they could be used to make Christianity more familiar for the indigenous people. They did this by looking for similarities to Christianity in indigenous stories and beliefs and building Christian stories and explanations of Christian concepts on them.[180] This increased not only their popularity among

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[177] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 242.
[178] Rainer Buschmann, "Colonizing Anthropology: Albert Hahl and the Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea", in ed. Glenn Penny, Matt Bunzi, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 236.
[179] Richard Scaglion, "Chiefly Models in Papua New Guinea", *The Contemporary Pacific,* Volume 8, Number 1, Spring 1996, p. 12.
[180] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 74.

indigenous people, but also the indigenous people's understanding of Christian concepts, which furthered their conversion.

This becomes especially apparent when comparing their methods to those of the Rhenish missionaries, who did not engage in such rigorous studies of indigenous cultures and beliefs. They therefore believed indigenous beliefs and traditions to be inherently worthless, as they were not able to discover any higher concepts, which could be linked to Christianity, within them, as their Neuendettelsau competitors had. Instead, they rejected indigenous people who were interested in Christianity, or even already baptised, for engaging in indigenous religious traditions. This led to fewer indigenous people being converted by the Rhenish mission and the Rhenish missionaries enjoying less popularity among the indigenous populations, when compared to their competitors of the Neuendettelsau mission.

The impact of German missionaries in New Guinea is still very much apparent today. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, which originated from the Rhenish and the Neuendettelsau mission, is not only active, but relatively popular today. According to its website, 1.2 million of the 5 million citizens of Papua New Guinea are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, which corresponds to around 20% of the population.[181] It is therefore the second largest religious group in Papua New Guinea, with the largest being the Roman Catholics which, according to the 2011 census, make up 26 percent of the country's population.[182] Especially considering that the Neuendettelsau and Rhenish missions from which the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea originated, were only active in a few relatively small territories of New Guinea, these numbers are very impressive. Overall, around 95.6 percent of citizens of Papua New Guinea identified as Christian in 2011, ironically a much higher percentage than in the home countries of the missionaries who converted their ancestors.

Interestingly, however, according to a 2003 Report by the US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor:

> "Many citizens combine their Christian faith with some pre-Christian traditional indigenous practices."[183]

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[181] http://www.elcpng.org/

[182] National Statistical Office, *Papua New Guinea 2011 National Report*, https://web.archive.org/web/20170812174041/http://sdd.spc.int/en/resources/document-library?view=preview&format=raw&fileId=218, (Port Moseby, 2011).

[183] Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Papua New Guinea - International Religious Freedom Report 2003", *U.S. Department of State Archive*, https://2001-2009.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/24317.htm, (Dec 2003).

In my opinion, this once again suggests that the Neuendettelsau missionary's tolerance for indigenous traditions strongly contributed to their popularity amongst New Guineans and that their willingness, as well as the willingness of other mission groups, to allow New Guinean Christians to keep parts of their traditional rites highly increased the acceptance of Christianity amongst New Guineans.

On the website, of the Lutheran Christian Church of Papua New Guinea, German missionaries, especially those from the Neuendettelsau mission, are praised, with one article about the History of the Church claiming:

"God instilled the courage, the wisdom, the strength, and the perseverance into the life of Rev. Johann Flierl."[184]

This clearly showcases that Neuendettelsau missionaries are popular amongst New Guinean Christians to this day.

Interestingly, in this article, as well as other articles on the website of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, much less space and fewer words of praise are devoted to the Rhenish missionaries, suggesting that they, even today, are not as influential and popular as their Neuendettelsau competitors.

However, despite their comparatively higher respect towards indigenous cultures and more positive relationship with some indigenous people, it must not be forgotten or ignored that like more conservative, and more openly racist colonial administrators, governors and missionaries, Albert Hahl and the Neuendettelsau missionaries, were part of the violent, xenophobic and white supremacist system that is Colonialism, and often thought, wrote and acted in xenophobic and white supremacist ways.

It is true that colonised people in other German "protectorates" were treated more outwardly brutally. An obvious example for this is the Herero War in 1904 to 1906 in the German colony South West Africa, a conflict which "has been judged as one of the bloodiest, most brutal, and cruel of colonial wars."[185] According to Historian Wallenkampf:

" The Germans wrought the greatest cruelty to the Hereros by confiscating, after their surrender, their landed wealth as punishment to them and financial reimbursement for the

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[184] Leroy Batia, "Brief History and Background of the beginning of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea", *Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea*, http://www.elcpng.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=57.

[185] Arnold Valentin Wallenkampf, *The Herero Rebellion in South West Africa, 1904-1906: A Study in German Colonialism*, (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1969), p. Iv.

cost of the rebellion to themselves, and by making the Hereros serfs to the German settlers. [...] The annihilation decree issued during the war was cruel and unwise, but making a defeated people permanent helots to their conquerors climaxed the victor's cruelty."[186]
While the actions of the Colonial government in German New Guinea did not reach the levels of cruelty that those of the German colonists of South West Africa did, we still have to examine them critically.

This includes the actions of Albert Hahl, who claimed that indigenous workers on European-owned plantations needed to be disciplined by brutal beatings, and so allowed and even justified many instances of physical abuse of indigenous people at the hands of European plantation owners.[187] The ways these workers were recruited were also often violent and without their informed consent. While Hahl had not officially and openly allowed this, he refrained from any serious attempt to punish these violent recruiters simply out of the colony's and his own economic interests.

Meanwhile, despite the Neuendettelsau missionaries' efforts in studying indigenous cultures, traditions, beliefs and languages and writing numerous ethnographic texts on these being impressive, they often still made use of racist and xenophobic language. This was even true of the alleged "cultural hero" Stephan Lehner, who, despite showing relative respect for the indigenous beliefs, in which he discovered similarities to Christianity, referred to the indigenous people of New Guinea as a "low standing people."[188]

Indeed, Governor Albert Hahl, in the words of Peter Hempenstall, "looked to the missions to ensure the development of a 'vigorous' native population and considered their civilising influence indispensable to labour recruiting".[189] Similarly, in 1886, Johann Flierl, the founder of the Neuendettelsau Mission in German New Guinea claimed that the "pure fruit" of Christian conversion "would be the education of the natives to the work and the raising of them to a higher level of culture and a superior existence."[190] Even the seemingly most benevolent German actors in German New Guinea were cooperating for the colonial goal of

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[186] Arnold Valentin Wallenkampf, *The Herero Rebellion in South West Africa, 1904-1906: A Study in German Colonialism*, (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1969), p. xiii.
[187] Hermann Hiery, "Die deutsche Verwaltung Neuguineas 1884-1914" in ed. Hermann Hiery, *Die Deutsche Südsee, 1884-1914*, (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2001), p. 306.
[188] Uwe Christian Dech, *Mission und Kultur und im alten Neuguinea - Der Missionar und Völkerkundler Stephan Lehner,* (Transcript Verlag, 2005), p. 53.
[189] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 157.
[190] Peter Hempenstall, "The Neglected Empire: The Superstructure of the Colonial State in German Melanesia" in ed. Sione Latukefu, *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984* (Port Moresby: The National Research Institute, 1989), p. 156.

exploiting the indigenous people for Germany's economic gain, which they justified with white supremacist ideas, such as the indigenous people being primitive and that they and their lives would be improved through westernisation, which the colonists, be they colonial official or missionary, equated with modernisation.

This, therefore, serves as a reminder that when one is discussing any aspect of colonialism, one should do so in a careful and nuanced manner.

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