

# New Perspectives on the History of Gender and Empire

Comparative and  
Global Approaches

Edited by  
Ulrike Lindner & Dörte Lerp



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# Contents

List of Illustrations	vii
List of Contributors	viii
Acknowledgements	xii
1 Introduction: Gendered Imperial Formations <i>Ulrike Lindner and Dörte Lerp</i>	1
Part I Regulating Marriages and Demarcating Empire	
2 Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean and the Domestic Foundations of Imperial Sovereignty <i>Alexis Rappas</i>	31
3 In the Forge of Empire: Legal Order, Colonists, and Marriage in the Nineteenth-century Northern Black Sea Steppe <i>Julia Malitska</i>	59
Part II Intimate Relationships and Imperial Encounters	
4 Interpreting an Execution in German East Africa. Race, Gender, and Memory <i>Bettina Brockmeyer</i>	87
5 Colonial Self-positioning. Approaching the Snapshots of an American Woman in the Philippines (1900–1902) <i>Silvan Niedermeier</i>	115
6 Male Same-Sex Conduct and Masculinity in Colonial German Southwest Africa <i>Jan Severin</i>	149

## Part III Indigenous Servants and Colonial Homes

- 7 Domestic Servant Debates and the Fault Lines of Empire  
in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa and New Zealand  
*Elizabeth Dillenburg* 179
- 8 Being at Home: Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender in  
Settler Colonial Australia  
*Eva Bischoff* 209

## Part IV Education and Schooling

- 9 Women and Education Reform in Colonial India: Trans-  
regional and Intersectional Perspectives  
*Jana Tschurennev* 241
- 10 Missionary Encounters: Female Boarding Schools in  
Nineteenth-Century Travancore  
*Divya Kannan* 269
- Index 295



# Illustrations

- 1.1 German soldiers in Southwest Africa, ca. 1910. Courtesy bpk – Bildagentur für Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte. 1
- 3.1 Anna Catharina Neumeier and Johann Michael Becker’s marriage certificate, Josephstal colony, issued by the pastor Carl Biller on February 5, 1801. Courtesy State Archive of Odesa Oblast. 71
- 5.1 Eastman Kodak advertisement, 1901. Courtesy George Eastman Museum. 123
- 5.2 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino boy, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 129
- 5.3 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino boy, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 130
- 5.4 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino girl, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 131
- 5.5 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 135
- 5.6 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas in a boat, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 137
- 5.7 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas on a horse, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 138
- 5.8 Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas on a horse, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries. 139

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Ulrike Lindner and Dörte Lerp

# Introduction

## Gendered Imperial Formations

Ulrike Lindner and Dörte Lerp



**Figure 1.1** German soldiers in Southwest Africa, ca. 1910. Courtesy bpk – Bildagentur für Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte.

Around 1910, an unknown photographer took a picture of three German soldiers somewhere in the then German colony of Southwest Africa. The men sit outside, around a small, neatly covered table. They wear military caps, but have discarded their jackets and seem quite relaxed. All three of them are knitting socks. At first glance the image seems to confront us with a stark

contrast. It is hard to reconcile the peaceful scene of men knitting—a craft generally associated with women—with our historical knowledge about the bloody handiwork of war those men were sent out to do in the colony. After all, the picture was taken only a few years after the German colonial army had fought a genocidal war against the Ovaherero and Nama in German Southwest Africa (1904–1907). However, those associations reveal more about our conceptions of the relationship between gender and empire than about its realities. Knitting socks was in fact not yet a gendered practice, and it was not extraordinary that soldiers undertook such a task in their free time.<sup>1</sup> Besides that, colonial soldiers of lower ranks had to engage in other domestic activities such as cooking, cleaning, or washing clothes on a regular basis. Those tasks were part of a homosocial culture that characterized military and frontier life.<sup>2</sup> The picture thus presents us with a fairly trivial aspect of colonial masculinity and everyday military life.<sup>3</sup> Disconcerting is not the scene itself, but its juxtaposition with what we know about the history of colonial violence, warfare, and in this specific case genocide. It unsettles us, because of what is not visible but still part of the story. The image forces us to change our viewpoint and look behind the obvious to discover the links between colonial domesticity, intimacy, and violence. More generally, it challenges us to reinvestigate imperial history and its sources. It is this task that the authors of this volume set out to do in order to open up new perspectives on the complicated relationship between gender and empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The expanse of empires (that of the European colonial powers as well as of Russia and the US) throughout this period is without precedent. They covered huge parts of the world, especially in the decades around the First World War.<sup>4</sup> It was also in this era, from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, when European empires for various socio-political, economic, and environmental reasons were able to assume global hegemony. Previously, there had been several centers with their own peripheries.<sup>5</sup> Now the “Great Divergence” occurred, a period during which Britain, France, and Russia gained military, political, technological, and economic superiority over Qing China, Moghul India, and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>6</sup> *New Perspectives on the History of Gender and Empire* concentrates on this global setting in which the European empires, Russia, and later also the US, were highly dominant and



were able to exert a strong influence on the societies and cultures under their imperial rule, including the formation of gender regimes, the regulation of sexuality, the shaping of education, and the introduction of European concepts of household and family. All chapters deal with imperial settings in the nineteenth and twentieth century, many of them concentrate on the years from the 1880s to the beginning of the First World War, which witnessed a large spurt in globalization, resulting in a world which was interconnected in many more ways than before. This period is seen as a time of “great acceleration,” as Christopher Bayly puts it in his book *The Birth of the Modern World*.<sup>7</sup> Technical and economic globalization also reached the colonies and imperial peripheries.<sup>8</sup> In particular, the speed at which information traveled changed. Whereas letters had previously taken months, messages could now be sent home rapidly by telegraph, and the steamer lines made it possible for goods and people to be transported ever more quickly.<sup>9</sup> These developments had a huge impact on the connections between colonies, imperial peripheries, and metropolises. The exchange of practices, ideas, and knowledge within and between empires was widened and intensified. Thus, globalization and high imperialism also increased and rearranged the flow of gendered practices, ideas, and knowledge that we address in this book. Furthermore, the end of the nineteenth century saw a growing influence and a radicalization of racial concepts and thoughts in many of the expanding and now more closely connected empires, that shaped and repositioned imperial policy in the field of gender and sexual relations worldwide.<sup>10</sup>

The volume addresses the specific changes and radicalizations as well as the global framework that shaped the relationship between gender and empire during the nineteenth and twentieth century. It deals with a variety of colonial and imperial situations and locations based on multi-archival research that explores new and unusual source bases. The chapters discuss colonies in Southern and Eastern Africa; they address British India and the Philippines, settler colonial settings in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as imperial peripheries like the Aegean Sea in the Italian Empire or the Black Sea Steppe in the Russian Empire. Thus *New Perspectives on the History of Gender and Empire* expands and decentralizes research on gender and empire. It offers novel opportunities to compare topics such as domesticity and sexuality, or violence and intimacy, in various imperial situations.<sup>11</sup> It also traces imperial

connections like those between New Zealand and South Africa, which were both part of the British Empire but were situated far apart from each other on different continents. And even more importantly, while imperial studies usually focus on the main overseas empires of the nineteenth century, i.e., the British, Dutch, and French empires, we argue that for a truly global approach, less familiar settings must be explored. This is why we included chapters on the Russian Empire, a land empire with forms of internal colonization, the Italian and the German empires, two rather short-lived empires that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, as well as the US empire, that has been included more intensely in the discourse of imperial and colonial history only during the last decades.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, we widen the arena of imperial comparison and are able to address multiple configurations and structures of imperial rule. For example, “mixed marriage” regulations, a fairly well-studied object of colonial gender history, have so far been researched mainly in the context of British, Dutch, and German colonialism.<sup>13</sup> This volume allows for a more differentiated view by addressing the topic in the context of the Russian and Italian empires. Furthermore, the case studies of this volume deal with the ambiguous distinctions between subjecthood and citizenship, which form a central category in the production of difference within empires, from a completely new angle.<sup>14</sup> The imperial expansion of the US in the Philippines, still rarely researched in gender history, adds another aspect to the global outlook.<sup>15</sup> The volume also deals with “typical” colonial empires such as the British Empire; however, in such cases the authors engage with new global perspectives, as is evident for example in the comparative analysis of violence and domesticity in South Africa and New Zealand. When investigating colonial education in British India, the volume includes global networks and transnational influences of knowledge production in the analysis, both of which played a growing role in the development of colonial and imperial strategies of the nineteenth century. Generally, we not only create a global view by combining new cases and examples from a wide array of imperial settings, but also by focusing on global entanglements, by looking at specific local situations with a global perspective and by addressing shared histories of metropolises and colonies as well as connections between empires.<sup>16</sup>

In our endeavor to explore unexpected settings and issues the chapters of this volume engage with key themes of gender history such as intimacy,

marriage, family, sexuality, and education, but also with issues that have been addressed to a lesser extent with respect to gender and empire, such as the workings of colonial homes and schools, the self-positioning of colonizing men and women, and homosexuality in colonial spheres. Generally, we address spaces of colonial dominance as well as spaces of resistance, often combined in ambiguous ways, as the analysis of Indian missionary schools reveals.

This volume focuses on the analysis of what we suggest to term “gendered imperial formations.” Expanding on the epistemic framework of the “(social) imperial formation” introduced by Mrinalini Sinha as well as Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan we place the study of gender relations at the center of comparative and entangled imperial history. The authors delve deeply into the multiple ways in which the imperial world was structured according to gender and other categories like race, class, sexuality, religion, nationality, and citizenship. With their case studies, they tie the gendered formation of empire back to certain places and local conditions, particularly when addressing the intimate as a domain that strongly localizes people and practices.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, they identify overarching developments across the empires of the nineteenth and twentieth century. And they explore the conjunctions of power structures and personal experiences within both typical and more unexpected imperial situations. Generally, the volume points out global networks and entanglements, seeks to include subaltern perspectives, and questions dichotomies such as male/female or colonizer/colonized.

## Gender and empire: Towards new global perspectives

Scholars have been studying the history of women, gender, and empire now for more than three decades. Works by historians such as Helen Callaway or Margaret MacMillan in the 1980s and 1990s have argued against the notion of white women being the reason for racism in colonial settings, questioned the idea of colonialism as an exclusively male endeavor, and explored the relations between indigenous and Western women.<sup>18</sup> But most importantly, they did not merely add the stories of white and colonized women to the historiography of empire; they went on to expose colonialism itself as a fundamentally gendered project. Several monographs and a number of edited volumes published in the

1990s and 2000s revealed the broad scholarly interest in questions of gender and empire. Among the most influential volumes are those edited by Clare Midgley, Catherine Hall, and Philippa Levine.<sup>19</sup> They all challenged the notion of empire and imperialism as a male project, a view that had been purported by (mostly male) historians who had followed the self-perceptions of male colonial officials, settlers, and military men all too easily. Furthermore, they bridged the gap between a gender history that had focused strongly on rewriting social history, and an imperial history still occupied by standard stories of empire, while also integrating interactions between the metropole and colony and including new cultural, social, and economic aspects of empire.<sup>20</sup> Most of this research was focused on the British Empire. Since then, the body of literature has started to include other empires and imperial contexts. The anthologies published by Chaudhuri Nupur and Margaret Strobel, by Ruth Roach Pierson, Chaudhuri Nupur and Beth McAuley, and by Antoinette Burton include articles on various European empires and settler societies.<sup>21</sup> To give some other examples: Frances Gouda, Julia Clancy-Smith, and Ann Laura Stoler focused specifically on gender relations in the Dutch and French empires,<sup>22</sup> while Lora Wildenthal and Birthe Kundrus addressed the German case.<sup>23</sup> Still, the non-British imperial world is far less studied, at least in Anglo-American scholarship.<sup>24</sup> To address the lacuna in research we will tackle issues of gender and empire in a wide array of imperial situations, showing various connections as well as parallel and diverging developments that allow for further comparisons.

Many studies upon which we draw in this volume also revealed the importance of other dimensions such as race, class, and sexuality within histories of gender and empire. Two of the most groundbreaking books in that context have been Ann Laura Stoler's study on the intertwining of race and gender in the Dutch Empire in East Asia<sup>25</sup> and Anne McClintock's work *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Focusing on South Africa, McClintock explores how imperial subjects were constituted not just by gender but also by class, race, and sexuality.<sup>26</sup> Further research on intimacy and body practices in global imperial contexts has repeatedly shown how important the management and the policing of the intimate were for stabilizing imperial and colonial rule and how these issues lie at the heart of imperial strategies.<sup>27</sup> Questions of class and labor have gained more scholarly

attention again. They are at the center of new volumes like Harald Fischer-Tiné's and Susanne Gehrman's *Empires and Boundaries* and Philippa Levine's and Susan R. Grayzel's *Gender, Labour, War and Empire*.<sup>28</sup> These connections are taken up and elaborated on in various chapters of the volume that deal e.g., with domestic servants in colonial homes, with the education of lower-class girls in India, or with an alleged sexual affair that ended with a hanging in German East Africa, in this case linking issues of gender, intimacy, sexuality, race, and violence.

Initially, studies on gender and empire centered on women and their experiences in colonial and imperial worlds. In the meantime, some scholars, such as for example Mrinalini Sinha, Sandra Mass, Eva Bischoff, and Graham Dawson, have expanded the field and concentrated specifically on the production and representation of masculinity in colonial and postcolonial contexts.<sup>29</sup> Studies now also question the dichotomies—like male/female, colonizer/colonized—that shaped modern gender relations and the imperial world alike. Issues of female self-positioning and of homosexuality in colonial societies are also addressed in this volume, again within a global context, with case studies from the Philippines and German Southwest Africa.

Looking at this overview, it should be clear that, despite a growing body of literature that has been produced over the years, the history of gender and empire is far from told. It is certainly no longer necessary to ask “Why gender and empire?” as the companion series of the Oxford History of the British Empire had to do in 2004.<sup>30</sup> However, the amount of scholarship has only served to reveal the complexity of colonial and imperial gender practices, relations, and ideologies. Both gender history and imperial history have been characterized by strong theoretical and methodological dynamics over the last few years—a potential that can be fruitfully explored when investigating questions of gender *and* empire. Approaches from new imperial history have stressed the strong connections between metropole and colony, have tried to integrate the views of the colonized and subalterns, and have placed an emphasis on the interactions between events in the “centers” and the “peripheries.”<sup>31</sup> From the beginning, new imperial history has been influenced by postcolonial and feminist theory, analyzing the representations of the imperial world as well as asking for the intersections of imperial interests with gender and race (e.g., in the domain of colonial sexuality).<sup>32</sup> Currently, imperial

history also concentrates more on global networks and entanglements between different empires, their interplay with imperial policies and structures, and on inter-imperial transfers, thus exploring the impact of globalization on empires and vice versa.<sup>33</sup> Generally, these developments have resulted in the expansion of research fields, a turn away from master narratives and a stronger focus on entangled histories and global connections. The authors of this volume draw on these areas of research, add to a decentered history of gender and empire and try to find their own new global perspectives on political, social, and cultural processes within empires, or rather within imperial formations.

### Imperial formations

In contrast to many other collections, this volume relates different imperial formations to one another, be they seaborne or land-based, long-standing or short-lived, formal empires or informal imperialisms. Until recently imperial and colonial history have focused mainly on overseas empires, while continental empires like Russia and Austria-Hungary have been studied mostly by scholars of (East) European history. However, during the last few years historians have started to compare maritime and continental empires<sup>34</sup> or to include them in the same analytical framework.<sup>35</sup> These approaches to empire have opened up new opportunities for comparing discourses, structures, and policies across different imperial settings. Still, gender is hardly placed at the center of analysis in these new comparative studies,<sup>36</sup> a gap in research that is addressed by this volume. In order to explore gendered imperial relations across such a broad, global spectrum, we need an epistemic framework that enables us to relate different imperial situations to one another. We concur with Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan who have questioned the usefulness of “empire” as a category of analysis.<sup>37</sup> They suggest taking trans- and inner-imperial connections seriously by attending “less to what empires are than to what they did and do, for these transformative practices altered their relations with other empires and with their own subject populations.”<sup>38</sup> Instead of looking for geopolitical entities that resemble what European imperialists and subsequently European historiography called “empire” they argue for the analysis of imperial conditions and of the concrete economic,

political, ideological, and cultural practices, processes and “moving categories” that produced them. Their main focus is on movement and change, on what they term “imperial formation.”<sup>39</sup>

Already in 1995 Mrinalini Sinha developed a similarly named concept. In her study on colonial masculinity she proposes the heuristic model of an “imperial social formation” to explain how colonial and British imperial masculinities were produced by local conditions and relations as well as by broader economic, political, and ideological structures.<sup>40</sup> Initially, Sinha was less concerned with trans-imperial connections and transfers between different empires; instead she focused on the entanglements between colony and metropole within the British Empire, in particular on the impact of imperialism on domestic British history. However, in her more recent work she focuses on trans-imperial developments as well and widens her concept of the imperial social formation “to refer most broadly to the imperial ordering of modern society.”<sup>41</sup> Gender and intersectionality are central to Sinha’s work as are the power structures that shape the imperial world. To her the “focus on the imperial social formation points not only to intersection of the imperial with the categories of nation, race, class, gender, and sexuality, but also the essentially uneven and contradictory nature of that intersection.”<sup>42</sup>

While Sinha argues for a systemic analysis of imperialism and a historic materialistic approach stemmed in world system theory,<sup>43</sup> Stoler and McGranahan’s concept of the imperial formation is rooted more clearly in cultural theory.<sup>44</sup> Despite those differences, however, both approaches draw from postcolonial theory and offer a framework to think about empires in a global setting. They manage to connect local developments and processes to broader structures and discourses and challenge Eurocentric epistemes. Furthermore, they call attention to the production of difference within empires. Sinha points to the importance of gender in this process. Her study demonstrates how the construction of different masculinities helped to establish and uphold the differences between British rulers and colonial subjects in India. Stoler and McGranahan elaborate on the concept of “grammars of difference” in empires, as coined by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler. They stress the importance of a production and protection of difference in imperial contexts, but also point at the different degrees of discrimination and tolerance that shaped imperial societies.<sup>45</sup>

This volume builds on Stoler and McGranahan's as well as Sinha's idea of the imperial (social) formation. From the former we take the broad comparative and trans-imperial scope. The authors of this volume focus on various imperial formations, from "typical" colonies in Africa or Asia, to settler colonial settings in Australia, New Zealand, and Africa, and to imperial peripheries in Southern Europe and Russia. Sinha guides us in placing gender at the center of such (trans-)imperial research. In combining these approaches, we can develop a new outlook at the gendered formations in the global world of empires of the nineteenth and twentieth century: The authors of the volume stress the fact that gendered imperial practices developed not within bounded geographical entities or through transfers from one separate place to another but rather through complex multifaceted exchanges within and between different imperial settings. They demonstrate the workings of gender in various imperial settings, analyze how they were shaped by local conditions as well as broader structures and ideologies and address the various intersections between gender, race, class, nationality, religion, caste, or sexuality. Focusing on gendered imperial formations with case studies that draw from a variety of new sources *New Perspectives on the History of Gender and Empire* thus addresses a global spectrum of imperial settings and furthers a deeper understanding of how imperial gendered practices and discourses spread and developed within and across imperial borders.

### Placing gender at the center of imperial formations

To place gender at the center of our investigation into the imperial world does not mean that we believe gender to be an unrelated or predominant factor of historical development. Instead, we follow the idea that gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, religion, and caste are not separate categories, but interact in multiple and often complicated ways. Forms of discrimination, like sexism, racism, or homophobia, are not and never were disconnected but work together to create specific forms of oppression. In light of this, the authors of this volume draw on various approaches from gender studies and gender history including the concept of intersectionality.<sup>46</sup> Following the definition by Kathy Davis, we consider intersectionality to be a theory specifically aimed at



bridging and crossing the boundaries between the different categories just mentioned, exploring the connections “between individuals’ lived experiences, socially structured institutional arrangements, and collective political mobilizations.”<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Dillenburg, Eva Bischoff, and Jana Tschurenev especially use intersectional approaches in their argumentation. In their chapters on domestic servant debates in New Zealand and South Africa and on colonial homes in Australia, Dillenburg and Bischoff combine the categories of gender, race, class, and sexuality, whereas Tschurenev links categories of gender, race, class, and religion in her chapter on female education in India.

Of course, to focus particularly on the intersection of gender and race is not a new idea. As historians, we can trace such ideas back to Black women’s critiques of white middle-class feminism in the nineteenth century. In a speech at the Women’s Rights Convention in Acron, Ohio in 1851, Sojourner Truth pointed out that her experiences as a Black woman and a former slave differed considerably from those of white middle-class women. Describing the hard physical work of a female slave and the suffering she endured through losing her children to slavery, she repeatedly asked the audience: “And ain’t I a woman?” With those words she challenged white middle-class feminists who proclaimed their specific experiences of suppression to be universal.<sup>48</sup> Black feminist scholars and activists continued this critique of universal womanhood in the 1970s. Frances Beale called attention to the “double jeopardy” of being Black and female in the path-breaking feminist anthology “Sisterhood is Powerful,” the New York-based “Third World Women’s Alliance” advanced an intersectional approach *avant la lettre* through its newsletter “Triple Jeopardy. Racism, Imperialism, Sexism,” and the Combahee River Collective published a manifesto in 1977 that described multiple forms of oppression on the bases of gender, race, class, and sexuality as “simultaneous and interlocking.”<sup>49</sup> Today, scholars of postcolonial theory, diaspora studies, and queer theory have been influenced by intersectionality, and vice versa.<sup>50</sup> They have raised awareness about different forms of structural discrimination based on sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, and religion. Their shared critique of universalism is one of the central facets of intersectionality today and one of the aspects that makes it a useful heuristic tool for historical analysis. To understand the importance of gender within imperial history this critique of universalism is essential. Notwithstanding different theoretical approaches and historiographical

backgrounds, the authors of this volume therefore all pay close attention to the various forms of identity formation and discrimination within imperial formations.

However, we also agree with historians that have criticized intersectional research for its strong focus on individual experience and identity formation. Joan Scott has pointed out that research centered on people's experiences of difference cannot explain how those differences were established. She therefore argued for the inclusion of specific reference to social structures in intersectional studies at the beginning of the 1990s.<sup>51</sup> Many scholars have taken up Scott's critique and broadened the concept of intersectionality to include not just identities, but power dynamics, legal and political systems, and discourses as well.<sup>52</sup> As an example, Frances Gouda has written extensively on the intersection of the categories of gender and race in imperial settings since the early 1990s. She addressed white women in colonial contexts as the subordinate gender of a superior race, and dealt with the many-faceted forms of the production of difference, exclusion, and inclusion in colonial societies.<sup>53</sup>

In our analysis of gendered imperial formations, we therefore follow up intersectional approaches from gender studies *and* their historical critique. We use approaches that are generally guided by thinking across and combining several categories of analysis<sup>54</sup> and insist that intersections under investigation should always be derived from the specific historical circumstances. Placing gender at the center of imperial formations in such a way, we can address the question of how categories like class, race, and gender were combined to marginalize individuals and to discriminate against them within and across imperial borders. But we can also look beyond individual experience and investigate how those categories interacted with one another to produce and transform relations of power and create new categories.

Our chapters deal with topics like colonial education, where questions of gender, race, class, caste, and religion coincide; with discourses that connect religion and sexuality; with biographies that touch on several social categories, as well as on feminist self-assertions. The difficulties in studying those topics lie not in acknowledging different categories, but in combining them in a way that is not additively, but instead reveals their interconnectedness. Thus, one of the central questions of this volume is how various dimensions of

discrimination, oppression, identity formation, and power structures were connected in imperial formations.

### Central topics of the volume

Analyzing imperial formations by intersecting gender with other categories *New Perspectives on the History of Gender and Empire* concentrates on four central themes to show how gender played out in different imperial arenas. First, the volume focuses on regulating marriages and demarcating empires; secondly, on intimate relationships and imperial encounters. Thirdly, it addresses the specificities of gender relations in settler colonialisms when dealing with indigenous servants and colonial homes, and finally it concentrates on education and schooling. Some of these issues have been addressed before, but not under the particular perspective offered in the case studies of this volume. Investigating unusual source bases and settings these studies are able to shed a new light on major themes of gender and empire. Other issues, like homosexuality in German colonialism, have so far been marginalized.<sup>55</sup>

Since the publication of Stoler's *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*<sup>56</sup> scholars of colonial and gender history have paid particular attention to how colonial governments and societies viewed and dealt with marriages, sexual relations, and forms of intimacy between colonizers and colonized.<sup>57</sup> While this scholarship has revealed the complexities and local specificities of colonial gender relations, comparisons between colonial settings also pointed to common patterns.<sup>58</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century racial classifications played an increasing role in European and US empires, thus sexual and marital relationships between colonizers and colonized attracted the attention of the authorities; colonial societies showed an increasing lack of tolerance regarding such relations. In some cases they were even outlawed or strictly regulated by law. Marriage regulations were an indicator of extreme racial segregation. However, while scholars have assessed the meaning of colonial marriage restrictions in some of the seaborne empires of the nineteenth century, they have largely ignored similar efforts and debates in other imperial contexts.

Alexis Rappas and Julia Malitska offer a new perspective on the subject by focusing on marriage regulation in specific regions of the Italian and the

Russian empires respectively. Their research shows that marriage regulation was not just a question of gender and race, but also of religion or denomination, nationality and citizenship, and was strongly connected with questions of access to land and resources. Rappas, whose article is based on extensive research in Italian and Greek official archives that are hardly ever consulted by imperial historians, examines the case of “mixed marriages” in the Dodecanese, both when the archipelago was an Italian colony (1912–1943) and after it was annexed by Greece at the end of the Second World War.<sup>59</sup> The administrative category “mixed marriages,” created by the Italian administration and perpetuated by the Greek government, officially designated unions contracted between Italian men and Dodecanesian working-class women. Its very existence, Rappas argues, revealed superficially dissimilar but essentially related Italian and Greek official anxieties regarding the physical and racial boundaries of their contested sovereignty over the archipelago.

Julia Malitska looks at marriage regulation of German colonists in the Russian Empire during the first half of the nineteenth century. Her analysis is built on colonial administration material from several Ukrainian archives—also rarely employed in research on imperial history. Ethnically and denominationally diverse German-speaking people migrated into the Russian Empire since the end of the eighteenth century and were granted a certain colonist rank in imperial legislation. The chapter discusses the legal restrictions on marriage that the German-speaking colonists in the Black Sea Steppe faced, and considers the extent to which their social and legal position was defined by their status as colonists. It deals with the colonists’ marriage options and marriage procedures. The analysis stresses the importance of the intersections of gender, denomination, and social position in imperial policy formation. Both articles point at the significance of the “grammars of difference” that empires developed in the domain of marriage and sexuality to establish, strengthen, and uphold their rule. Rappas also investigates individual decisions of couples when they entered into the bond of marriage. Such questions point again to the importance of studying forms of intimacy in order to understand how colonialism and imperialism worked.<sup>60</sup>

With our second focus on intimate relationships and imperial encounters we pick up some of the questions of marriage, intimacy, and sexual relationships that are raised in the first chapter. However, we address them from a different

angle by focusing less on imperial policies and more on the day-to-day imperial encounters between colonizers and colonized. Those relationships between men and women, children and adults, servants and masters offer insights into imperial identity formation as well as power structures. Bettina Brockmeyer tackles this complex issue by focusing on the different readings of an alleged intimate relationship between a colonizing woman and a colonized man in German East Africa. This allows her to study the interplay of individual experiences, hegemonic discourses, and power structures in detail. She presents readers with the possibility of an affair between the Hehe leader Mpangile and Magdalene Prince, the wife of a colonial commander in German East Africa. Mpangile was hanged in 1897 and, as Brockmeyer argues, his story can be unfolded either as a political story of treason and conviction, or as a love story with a lethal ending. She not only investigates the written documents that have been preserved, especially Magdalene Prince's diary, but also includes oral testimonies by members of the Prince and Mkwawa families and a recent Tanzanian documentary film in her analysis. By taking various interpretations and unusual sources into account, the chapter opens up our view of the colonial situation, and raises questions about established interpretations of colonial gender relations in a more general way.

Recent years have also seen a new scholarly interest in colonial wars, which were mostly non-declared and fought between unequal military forces.<sup>61</sup> Silvan Niedermeier adds a novel dimension to this research, first, by addressing the Philippine-American War, and secondly, by examining the self-positioning of a colonizing woman during this war. The chapter sheds new light on the gendered self-positioning of white Western women in colonial spaces by examining new and unusual sources—the private photograph collection of Mary Denison Thomas, an American officer's wife who lived in the Philippines during the time of the Philippine-American War. Niedermeier investigates how his protagonist chose to present herself and construct colonial femininity. Denison's snapshots reveal both her ambivalent stance towards the Filipino population, and the emancipative dimensions of her colonial experience. The analysis also points back to the self-positioning of Magdalene Prince who styled herself as the ideal colonizing woman as Brockmeyer argues in her chapter.

For a long time, scholarship on gender and empire has focused predominantly on women to counterbalance the male-centeredness of traditional colonial

and imperial history. Recently, the study of colonial masculinities has proven to be a fruitful area of research.<sup>62</sup> Still, scholars who deal with questions of male homosexuality in specific imperial or colonial settings remain an exception.<sup>63</sup> Jan Severin adds a new aspect to this field by analyzing the intersections of race, class, and homosexuality in German Southwest Africa. He enquires how same-sex desire between male settlers and in some cases between settlers and indigenous men impacted on the formation of colonial masculinities and the development of colonial rule in German Southwest Africa. His study is based on court files of lawsuits against white male settlers who were charged with violations against clause 175, a paragraph in German law dealing with male same-sex practices. The lawsuits show quite explicitly that colonial hegemonic masculinities were clearly constituted as heterosexual. This observation, though trivial at first glance, contradicts generalizing accounts of the colonies as less regulated spaces where men could follow sexual desires more freely, for which they would be persecuted in the European metropolises. The in-depth analysis of the lawsuits reveals striking differences in the sentencing of individuals and shows how the colonial context strongly influenced the way in which same-sex desire was criminalized. By examining constructions of masculinity, Severin also deals with the self-positioning of white men in colonial situations connecting his research with Brockmeyer's and Niedermeier's approach.

The third focus of our volume is gender relations in settler colonial situations. Comparative settler colonial studies have emerged as a new research field during the last years. Scholars of this field have guided our attention to the specificities of this colonial formation, where the settlers, rather than the government or economic interest, are the driving force.<sup>64</sup> Settler colonialism, be it in North America, Australasia, or Africa, was accompanied by land conflicts and ideologies supporting strictly hierarchic relations between settlers and indigenous populations. Gender relations played a crucial part in constructing and upholding these hierarchies. Therefore, debates about sexuality and marriages, about colonial intimacy and about appropriate and inappropriate contacts between colonizers and colonized were generally more charged than in other colonial and imperial settings. They were also more likely to lead to restrictive political measures. Elizabeth Dillenburg compares servant debates in South Africa and New Zealand at the end of the nineteenth

and beginning of the twentieth century. Although domestic servants are often considered peripheral figures in histories of colonialism, debates over how to solve the chronic servant shortage demonstrate their central role in constructing—and challenging—the foundations of colonial societies and identities. Despite their different social and racial contexts, colonial states in both New Zealand and South Africa used servants as a means to create and maintain ideas of racial purity, which served as the foundations of their respective identities and visions of colonial societies. Using an unusual variety of sources—including servants' correspondences, memoirs, governmental reports, and newspapers—Dillenburg explores how ideas of race and racial survival not only influenced the discourses surrounding domestic service but also shaped servants' lives and identities. Discussions over proposed solutions to the “servant crisis” generated impassioned responses from various groups—including Maori women, British emigrants, African girls, and colonial officials—that revealed their dynamic engagement with systems of colonial power and also brought into focus competing notions of domesticity, family, masculinity, femininity, race, and girlhood.

Eva Bischoff also addresses the roles of servants and apprentices in settler societies in her exploration of colonial homes in early nineteenth-century Australia. Taking in young women or girls of Aboriginal descent as apprentices and/or servants was a common practice in colonial Australia. The practice stood at the beginning of those infamous nineteenth- and twentieth-century Australian policies that organized the abduction of children and transferred them to the care of white foster families (“Stolen Generations”). The overall aim was to impart middle-class norms and values upon those children, such as industriousness, cleanliness, and obedience, quite similar to the education efforts in India during the first half of the nineteenth century Divya Kannan discusses in the last chapter of the volume. The home transformed into a location of colonial biopower; the homemaker into an active agent of “civilization” and elimination of indigeneity. In juxtaposing two cases from two different contexts, namely Van Diemen's Land and South Australia, Bischoff examines the complexities of settler colonial biopower from a comparative and intersectional perspective.

Both chapters stress that settler colonialism came into being by organizing populations and individuals along hierarchies structured by gender, race, and

class. Dillenburg also illuminates the anxieties about gender, race, and sexuality within the settler colonies of the British Empire at the end of the nineteenth century, thus investigating similar issues as Severin in his analysis of sexuality and masculinity in the only settler colony of the German Empire.

European women actively participated in colonial and imperial endeavors, as several studies have shown. Wives and daughters of settlers, and of colonial officers and missionaries, played a crucial role in the construction of the colonial order and female activists took an active part in many colonial organizations.<sup>65</sup> Women also acted as independent agents of colonialism and imperialism in the field of education—the fourth focus of our volume. In their capacity as teachers, European women engaged with settler as well as indigenous women and thus helped shape colonial societies. Their contribution to the imperial project was especially important in the context of the “civilizing mission.” When several empires turned towards “development” as a concept of governance after the beginning of the twentieth century, education became a cornerstone of colonial policy. This process not only strengthened the position of European women working as teachers or nurses, it also opened up spaces for indigenous women. Jana Tschurenev and Divya Kannan both point to the fact that discourses on female education in India, as well as concrete educational endeavors, were shaped by various intersecting categories like gender, race, class, and religion, and could empower as well as silence specific groups of Indian and European women. Tschurenev focuses on the emergence of a colonial discourse on female education in India in the 1820s, which was—as the regulations of sexuality, intimacy, and marriage—firmly embedded in a “colonial grammar of difference,” addressing different groups of girls according to their race and class with diverging educational aims. While female students were to be turned into better (rational, enlightened) mothers and into agents of social improvement and civilization, some British women used the engagement with the imperial “civilizing mission” as a way to enter the public sphere, to go abroad as teachers at schools for indigenous girls and to act as missionaries among women. The chapter contrasts the experiments with girls’ education in the early nineteenth century with new developments in the 1880s. At that time strong international links were formed between feminist activism, the promotion of female education and the emergence of new professional possibilities for women in the fields of child-care and health-care connecting



the British imperial world with the US and other countries and pointing at the global dimension of imperial education. In this aspect Tschurenév's chapter links back to Niedermeier's who shows how his protagonist Mary Denison employed her concern for the education of indigenous children in the Philippines to style herself as a woman with professional ambitions.

Kannan's chapter deals with the female missionaries of the London Missionary Society and their educational endeavors during the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Travancore, South West India, amongst the women of poor, lower-caste groups. In the history of educational provision so far, the role of European missionary women has been underplayed. They have often been subsumed under general missionary educational activities, without due attention to the specificities of female schooling. Schooling practices also manifested themselves in the debates on what constituted acceptable moral norms, femininity, family, and work across colonial populations. Kannan examines the educational activities for colonized women and inquires into the ways in which these attempts were appropriated, resisted, and influenced by indigenous populations, paying special attention to the role of Indian women as intermediaries in the educational project. On a more general level, the chapter delineates the complexities of missionary women's educational work and investigates its connections to social change in Indian society.

The chapters of this book constitute significant fields for the investigation of gendered imperial formations and explore the multidimensionality of global empires during the nineteenth and twentieth century. They address a number of topics that offer fresh perspectives on gender and empire. A recurring theme is the relationship between intimacy and violence that is central in several locales and imperial settings and at various levels. The contributors also expand our view by encompassing a seemingly unimportant arena—the colonial home and its servants—and arguing that it stood at the core of the production of imperial rule. The variability of imperial rule and the flexibility of imperial administrations are demonstrated in all chapters, pointing at the significance of men's and women's local agency and at the leeway left for colonizers, colonized, and intermediaries to act upon. However, it is likewise evident that the empires of the nineteenth and twentieth century—especially during the period of high imperialism—were able to exert a growing influence over their territories and people. They intensified the regulations and interventions into

the domains of the intimate, the family, education, and sexuality and thereby defined and demarcated gendered roles and practices. At a more theoretical level, we use the concept of gendered imperial formations in order to firmly place gender at the center of analysis in an expanding scholarship that compares empires on a broad scale and investigates global and trans-imperial connections between empires. The volume thus presents a wide range of case studies that scrutinize the various ways in which imperial formations were structured by gender and other intersecting categories such as race, class, caste, sexuality, religion, denomination, nationality, and citizenship.

On the basis of the new findings presented in this volume some suggestions for further research should be added. We advocate that economic issues are more strongly incorporated into the investigation of gender and empire. The chapters on mixed marriages show convincingly how questions of land ownership influenced marriage regulation and vice versa, thus pointing to factors that the existing literature, in focusing on questions of race, sexuality, and citizenship, has often underemphasized. The chapters on education, servants, and colonial homes have proven to be highly fruitful fields for explaining the workings of gendered imperial formations; still, more work on imperial social policies would add immensely to our understanding of the field. Furthermore, the volume often refers to general problems of dealing with the colonial archive: Many contributions indicate how extremely productive it can be to explore new sources and to read old ones against the grain in order to give voice to otherwise silenced histories and agencies of indigenous people, or more generally, to question established historical narratives. The book also demonstrates how much scholarship is still shaped by strict divisions between national and imperial/colonial history. However, imperial regulations could be taken up by independent national states, as Rappas' chapter shows, which points to the complex connections between formations of late imperialism and new forms of independent rule. Those relations merit much more attention. In a more general way, the volume closely investigates how imperial policies, that might look similar at first glance, played out highly differently in local situations. This brings us back to our argument to gain new insights into the study of gender and empire by addressing less familiar imperial situations and adding less researched settings e.g., within the German, Italian, and Russian

empires. In doing so, we hope to open up new arenas to the study of gender as a core element of imperial formations.

## Notes

- 1 Irena Turnau, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, 1991), 87; Deborah Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present* (London/New York: Routledge, 2002), 42.
- 2 See for example: Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871* (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 12–39; Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York/Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
- 3 On colonial photography and masculinity in German Southwest Africa see: Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white. Historical photography from colonial Namibia 1860s to 1915* (Windhoek: Out of Africa, 2004); Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes (eds.), *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History* (Windhoek: Juta and Company Ltd, 1998).
- 4 Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History – Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
- 5 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Beck, 2009).
- 6 Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- 7 Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).
- 8 Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 6; Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels Petersson, *Geschichte der Globalisierung* (Munich: Beck, 2003), 64–67.
- 9 Paul M. Kennedy, 'Imperial Cable Communications and Strategy, 1870–1914', *English Historical Review* 86, no. 341 (1971): 728–752; Dirk van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur: Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2004): 35–40, 91–93. For the consequences of faster communications, see also Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 461.
- 10 Ulrike Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen. Deutschland und Großbritannien als Imperialmächte in Afrika 1880–1914* (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2011), 308–309.

- 11 Here, we are also taking up the fruitful discussions in Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (eds.), *Moving Subjects. Gender, Mobility and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire* (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008).
- 12 For bringing together (post)colonial scholarship and North American studies see the groundbreaking essay by Ann Laura Stoler 'Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post)Colonial Studies', *Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (2001): 829–865. See also the work of Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire the United States & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).
- 13 See e.g., Birthe Kundrus *Moderne Imperialisten: Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Köln/Weimar: Böhlau, 2003); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Ulrike Lindner, 'Contested concepts of "white"/"native" and mixed marriages in German South-West Africa and the Cape Colony 1900–1914: A histoire croisée', *Journal of Namibian Studies* 6, 2009: 57–79.
- 14 Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, 'Introduction: Refiguring Imperial Terrains', in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan, and Peter Perdue (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 3–42, 21.
- 15 Exceptions are e.g., Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood. How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and the Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Paul Kramer, 'The Darkness that Enters Home: The Politic of Prostitution during the Philippine-American War', in *Haunted by Empire. Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2006), 366–404.
- 16 See for approaches in global history Sebastian Conrad and Andreas Eckert, 'Globalgeschichte, Globalisierung, multiple Modernen: Zur Geschichtsschreibung der modernen Welt', in *Globalgeschichte: Theorien, Ansätze, Themen*, ed. Sebastian Conrad, Andreas Eckert and Ulrike Freitag (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2007), 7–52.
- 17 Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction: The Politics of Intimacy in an Age of Empire', in *Moving Subjects*, 5.
- 18 Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji, 1835–1930: The Ruin of Empire?* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986); Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture, and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Margaret MacMillan, *Women of the Raj. The Mothers, Wives, and Daughters of the British Empire in India* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 1988); Mary Ann Lind, *The Compassionate Memsahibs: Welfare activities of British Women in India, 1900–1947* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1988); Antoinette M.

- Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).
- 19 Clare Midgley (ed.), *Gender and Imperialism* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1998); Catherine Hall (ed.), *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: A Reader* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) (many chapters deal with gender issues); Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). See also Kathleen Wilson's influential monograph: Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003).
- 20 Clare Midgley, 'Introduction. Gender and imperialism: mapping the connections', in *Gender and Imperialism*, 1–21, 3–4.
- 21 Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (eds.), *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992); Ruth Roach Pierson, Nupur Chaudhuri and Beth McAuley (eds.), *Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Antoinette M. Burton (ed.), *Gender, Sexuality, and Colonial Modernities* (London/New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 22 Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (eds.), *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.
- 23 Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Birthe Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten: Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Köln/Weimar: Böhlau, 2003). See also Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (eds.), *Frauen in den deutschen Kolonien* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2009).
- 24 See e.g.: Ballantine and Burton (eds.), *Moving Subjects*. Even though the book explicitly stresses a global outlook, the essays deal only with colonial situations in the British and the US empires, others are not addressed.
- 25 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.
- 26 Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York/London: Taylor & Francis Group, 1995).
- 27 Ann Laura Stoler 'Intimidations of Empire: Predicaments of the Tactile and Unseen', in *Haunted by Empire. Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006, 1–22, 4; see also Ballantyne/Burton (eds.), *Moving Subjects*; and Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (eds.) *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

- 28 Harald Fischer-Tiné and Susanne Gehrman (eds.), *Empires and Boundaries: Rethinking Race, Class, and Gender in Colonial Settings* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Philippa Levine and Susan R. Grayzel (eds.), *Gender, Labour, War and Empire: Essays on Modern Britain* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
- 29 Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Sandra Mass, *Weisse Helden, Schwarze Krieger: Zur Geschichte Kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918–1964* (Köln: Böhlau, 2006); Eva Bischoff, *Kannibale-Werden: Eine Postkoloniale Geschichte Deutscher Männlichkeit um 1900* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011); Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
- 30 Philippa Levine, 'Introduction: Why Gender and Empire?' in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1–13.
- 31 See e.g., the edited volume Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), or various edited volumes and studies by Catherine Hall. These works have triggered a wealth of new research concentrating now on a much wider array of topics and addressing the connections between colonies and motherlands as well as the strong influences of imperialism on the metropolises.
- 32 Catherine Hall/Sonya O. Rose 'Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire', in *At Home with the Empire*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–31, 15.
- 33 See e.g., Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and globalisation. Networks of people, goods and capital in the British world, c. 1850 – 1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); see as an example for inter-imperial transfer Ulrike Lindner 'New forms of knowledge exchange between imperial powers: The development of the Institut Colonial International (ICI) since the end of the nineteenth century', in *Encounters of Empires. Interimperial Transfers and Imperial Manifestations, 1870–1950*, ed. Volker Barth and Roland Czetowski (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 57–78.
- 34 Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen (eds.), *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2nd edn. 2012); Dominic Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2002).
- 35 Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400–2000* (New York: Bloomsbury, 3rd edn. 2009).

- 36 Notable exceptions are the articles by Philippa Levine as well as Dina Rizk Khoury and Dane Keith Kennedy in a journal edition on the British and Ottoman empires. Philippa Levine, 'What's British about Gender and Empire? The Problem of Exceptionalism', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007): 273–282; Dina Rizk Khoury and Dane Keith Kennedy, 'Comparing Empires: The Ottoman Domains and the British Raj in the Long Nineteenth Century', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007), 233–244.
- 37 Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, 'Introduction: Refiguring Imperial Terrains', in *Imperial Formations*, 3–42, 4.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 40 Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 1–31. See also: Mrinalini Sinha, 'Mapping the Imperial Social Formation: A Modest Proposal for Feminist History', in *Signs* 25, no. 4 (2000): 1077–1082; Mrinalini Sinha, 'Teaching Imperialism as a Social Formation', *Radical History Review* 67, (1997): 175–186.
- 41 Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India. The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2006), 17.
- 42 Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 2.
- 43 Mrinalini Sinha, 'Teaching Imperialism as a Social Formation', 176.
- 44 Stoler and McGranahan, 'Introduction', 13.
- 45 Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, 'Between metropole and colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in *Tensions of empire: colonial cultures in a bourgeois world*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann L. Stoler (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1997), 3; Stoler and McGranahan, 'Introduction', 21–23.
- 46 Devon W. Carbado et al., 'Intersectionality: Mapping the Movements of a Theory', *Du Bois Review* 10, no. 2 (2013): 303–312, 303.
- 47 Kathy Davis, 'Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful', *Feminist Theory* 67, no. 9 (2008): 67–85, 75.
- 48 Avtar Brah/Ann Phoenix, 'Ain't I a Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality', *Journal of International Women's Studies* 5, no. 3 (2004): 75–86, 76–78.
- 49 Frances Beale, 'Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female', in *Sisterhood is Powerful*, ed. Robin Morgan (New York: Vintage, 1970), 340–353; Third World Women's Alliance (ed.), *Triple jeopardy: Racism, Imperialism, Sexism* (1971–1975); The Combahee River Collective, 'A Black Feminist Statement [April 1977]', in *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought*, ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall (New York: The New Press, 1995), 232–240. For a critical reading of the

- development from the 1970s to current debates about intersectionality see: Delia D. Aguilar, 'From Triple Jeopardy to Intersectionality: The Feminist Perplex', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 32, no. 2 (2012): 415–428.
- 50 See for example Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses', *Feminist Review* 30, no. 1 (1988): 61–88; Lata Mani, 'Multiple Mediations: Feminist Scholarship in the Age of Multinational Reception', *Inscriptions* 5, (1989): 1–24; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996).
- 51 Joan W. Scott, 'The evidence of experience', *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991): 773–797. Recently German historians Andrea Griesebner and Susanne Hehenberger dismissed the concept altogether. Andrea Griesebner and Susanne Hehenberger, 'Intersektionalität. Ein brauchbares Konzept für die Geschichtswissenschaften?' in *Intersectionality und Kritik. Neue Perspektiven für alte Fragen*, ed. Vera Kallenberg, Jennifer Meyer and Johanna M. Müller (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2013), 105–124.
- 52 Carbadó et al., 'Intersectionality', 304; Davis, 'Intersectionality as Buzzword', 68.
- 53 Frances Gouda, 'Das "unterlegene" Geschlecht der "überlegenen" Rasse. Kolonialgeschichte und Geschlechterverhältnisse', in *Geschlechterverhältnisse im historischen Wandel*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 1993), 185–203.
- 54 Davis, 'Intersectionality as Buzzword', 75.
- 55 See as exception Heike I. Schmidt, 'Colonial Intimacy—The Rechenberg Scandal and Homosexuality in German East Africa', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, (2008): 25–59.
- 56 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 79–111.
- 57 See for example: Fatima El-Tayeb, 'Dangerous Liaisons. Race, Nation, and German Identity' in *Not So Plain as Black and White. Afro-German Culture and History 1890–2000*, ed. Patricia Mazon and Reinhild Steingröver (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 27–60; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 97–123; Gareth Cornwell, 'George Webb Hardy's The Black Peril and the Social Meaning of "Black Peril" in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 22, no. 3 (1996): 441–453.
- 58 Ulrike Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen*, 317–362; Lindner, 'Contested concepts'.
- 59 Nancy R. Reagan, 'German Brigadoon? Domesticity and Metropolitan Perceptions of Auslandsdeutschen in Southwest Africa and Eastern Europe', in *The Heimat Abroad. The Boundaries of Germanness*, ed. Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy R. Reagan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 248–266;



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- 60 Nancy R. Reagin, 'German Brigadoon?', 248–266; McClintock, *Imperial Leather*; Nancy R. Reagin, *Sweeping the German Nation*.
- 61 Thoralf Klein and Frank Schumacher (eds.), *Kolonialkriege. Militärische Gewalt im Zeichen des Imperialismus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006); Tanja Bühner, Christian Stachelbeck and Dierck Walter (eds.), *Imperialkriege von 1500 bis heute. Strukturen – Akteure – Lernprozesse* (Paderborn u.a.: Schöningh, 2011).
- 62 R. Todd Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians: Masculinity, Religion, and Colonialism in Early New England* (Amherst/Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011).
- 63 See Marc Epprecht, *Hungochani: The History of a Dissident Sexuality in Southern Africa* (Montreal/Kingston/London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004); Daniel J. Walther, 'Racializing Sex: Same-Sex Relations, German Colonial Authority and Deutschtum', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 1 (2008): 11–24; Heike I. Schmidt, 'Colonial Intimacy: The Rechenberg Scandal and Homosexuality in German East Africa', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 1 (2008): 25–59.
- 64 Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism. A Theoretical Overview* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism* (London/New York: Routledge, 2016).
- 65 See for example: Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (London/New York: Leicester University Press, 2000); Eliza Riedi, 'Women, Gender, and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria League, 1901–1914', *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 3 (2002): 569–599; Wildenthal, *German Women*, 131–171; Krista O'Donnell, *The Colonial Woman Question. Gender, National Identity, and Empire in the German Colonial Society Female Emigration Program 1896–1914* (Binghampton: Univ. Diss., 1996); Roger Chickering, 'Casting Their Gaze More Broadly': Women's Patriotic Activism in Imperial Germany', *Past and Present* 118, (1988): 156–185.



Part I

Regulating Marriages and  
Demarcating Empire



# Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean and the Domestic Foundations of Imperial Sovereignty<sup>1</sup>

Alexis Rappas

## Introduction: Gendered bodies as boundaries of imperial sovereignty

“Unfortunately mixed marriages have not been systematically recorded therefore no conclusions of a sociological or ethnological character may be drawn [about this phenomenon].” This apparently innocuous expression of an academic interest in the mixed marriages between Greek-Orthodox women and Italian colonial officials in the Dodecanese is in fact part of a nationalist and moralizing narrative of just retribution. Zacharias Tsirpanles, the author of these lines and the most academically sound of a long line of Dodecanesian nationalist historians, presents mixed marriages between the First and Second World Wars as part and parcel of a concerted Italian plan to strip the Aegean archipelago of its Greek identity and Italianize it. Such marriages, the author claims, were always celebrated according to the Catholic rite; the bride’s property was systematically transferred to a family “foreign to Greekness” and her children were invariably baptized Catholic: indeed, Tsirpanles writes, “in the Dodecanese mixed marriages became an insidious and dangerous instrument of denationalization of the people.”<sup>2</sup> The local Orthodox clergy was to some extent able to thwart such plans by barring from church those Orthodox Dodecanesian women who had married Italian officials.<sup>3</sup> “At least the so-called good families,” he goes on, “[decided], for reasons of social dignity, to close their doors to the insistent aspiring Latin [*sic*] grooms. [...] The message eventually permeated to the other social classes among whom grew a

feeling of contempt for the families that accepted Italian grooms.”<sup>4</sup> Despite Tsirpanles’ claims to the contrary, lists of Italian-married Orthodox women seem to have in fact been drawn up; the Greek General State Archives hold one such list regarding the Dodecanesian island of Karpathos containing thirty-six names.<sup>5</sup> Once the Dodecanese archipelago was annexed to Greece in 1947, the fate meted out to these colonial wives—mostly hailing, according to the same author, from poor families—seems to have been exile to Italy; not through a systematic policy but out of social pressure following stigmatizing practices such as the Orthodox Church’s practice of excommunication.<sup>6</sup>

Nationalist historiography is admittedly averse to nuance and favors simple, linear narratives. A close examination of the archive suggests instead that Italian authorities viewed mixed marriages in the Dodecanese with circumspection. As will be detailed later, mixed marriages were perceived as a potential threat both to intercommunal relations in a multicultural archipelago and, perhaps more importantly, to the foundations of Italian rule. Both perspectives then, nationalist and colonial, mirror each other in that they construe the woman’s body as the boundary of a contested sovereignty over the archipelago. Drawing on Italian official archives, this contribution will specifically focus on mixed marriages in the Dodecanese when the Aegean archipelago was an Italian possession (1912 to 1945). The administrative category “mixed marriages,” created by the Italian administration and perpetuated by the Greek government in the postcolonial era, officially designated unions contracted in the Dodecanese between a man and a woman having different international legal statuses (citizenship, subjecthood). This may have overlapped with a difference in their declared religions or ascribed ethnicities or indeed “races,” but officially these were not what made a marriage “mixed” in the eyes of authorities. Formally then, legal status preceded racial origins when in other colonial settings the colonially ascribed racial origin explicitly determined legal status.<sup>7</sup> Only after the Italian government promulgated the November 1938 anti-Semitic racial laws did mixed marriages have to comply with the “measures for the defense of the race” (*provvedimenti per la difesa della razza*). In the majority of cases, both prior to and after 1938, mixed marriages usually involved Italian men—chiefly administrative or military personnel—and working-class Dodecanesian women. While both parties in this latter type of marriage were Italian nationals, metropolitan men

were full Italian citizens while Dodecanesian women were subjects of the Italian Empire. This chapter will show that the painstaking interest official authorities showed in the lives of the future spouses before approving their marriage was motivated by the intention to control three areas affected by mixed unions: the civic rights and consular protection bestowed through conjugality to Italian subjects and their foreign spouses; the transfers of assets, particularly landed property, in the form of dowries or joint ownership; and, though this was almost never explicitly stated, the future of the Dodecanesians' race and the possibility of their degeneration. While these may seem to be concerns of a different nature, I will argue that they are merely varying expressions of one and the same official concern, namely to demarcate the boundaries of colonial sovereignty: over the men and women established in the Dodecanese, their progeny, and, in a more territorial sense, over properties they owned in the colony and abroad. Sovereignty, this paper contends, was then ultimately and gradually outlined around discussions of the nature of the Dodecanesians' legal connection to the Italian state—of the specifics, that is, of their “citizenship.”<sup>8</sup>

### Mixed marriages as a trans-imperial concern

My contribution builds on the insights from a growing stream of studies on mixed marriages in colonial settings. Because mixed marriages mostly involved European male citizens and colonial female subjects, they blurred—perhaps more than situations of concubinage—what Partha Chatterjee called the “rule of colonial difference”—that unnamed racial boundary whereby equality of rights between rulers and ruled is continuously deferred until that elusive time when the latter will be deemed “fit” to enjoy the entitlements of the former.<sup>9</sup> As such, and in compliance with the bureaucratic requirements characteristic of modern government from the late nineteenth century onwards, mixed marriages generated a trail of documentation. As numerous scholars have noted, the overall purpose of this hefty paperwork was to clarify the juridical consequences of this form of conjugality regarding not only the statuses and related rights of each of the spouses, but also the very principles upon which colonial dominion was established. Could a European national marry a

colonial subject without compromising his status as a member of the ruling class? Could a colonial subject hope to be elevated to the ruling class through marriage and enjoy the colonizer's rights and privileges? What of their children? Could they aspire to the citizenship and related entitlements of their Italian father? If mixed marriages translated into political privileges for the colonial spouse and the couple's offspring, would this not negate the asymmetric relation of power upon which colonial rule, as a specific form of political domination, was founded?

Underpinning these questions is the articulation and re-articulation, in colonial settings, of "citizenship," the *status civitatis*, the juridical link between dependent individuals and the state through mixed marriages. Before clarifying our decision to focus on mixed marriages as an observatory in our exploration of the tension between gender and empire, it is important to remember that the above-mentioned questions and concerns were shared across modern European colonial empires; we need then to relocate the Dodecanese into a broader trans-imperial context and compare this Italian possession to other Italian and European dependencies. The legal status (full or partial/dependent citizenship, subjecthood, etc.) enjoyed by subjected populations and the range of rights and entitlements accompanying it, varied not only across European empires but also within them, and could also evolve over time. It was intimately connected to the conditions of acquisition of a dependency (conquest, "peaceful" transfer of sovereignty), the international status attributed to that dependency (colony, "possession," protectorate, mandate, etc.), and metropolitan perceptions of the inhabitants of that dependency; specifically the latter would be decisive in determining the entitlements accessible to subject populations according to a perceived gradient of cultural and/or racial proximity. Hence each European empire progressively enriched its legal vocabulary to create new categories of subjects and define their rights with each new wave of territorial expansion. While differences existed among empires in relation to the specific historical trajectory of their metropolises there were also significant similarities and a certain pattern discernible particularly around the question of gender.

How to imagine in legal terms the membership of populations newly subjected to the imperial political community? A screening of the official lexicon used by imperial powers reveals an initial haziness in the terminology



employed, which was only gradually clarified. Hence Daniel Gorman writes that “[a]ll under the British flag, whether in London or Lagos, were technically ‘subjects’, all owing allegiance to the crown. Indeed, it was this personal relationship to the sovereign [...] which provided the empire with stability and cohesion. [...] [A]llegiance to the crown was reciprocated through the protection the state provided its citizens, even while abroad [...]”<sup>10</sup> Hence British subjecthood and British nationality were mostly coterminous and often conflated with the less utilized—because of its republican connotations—“citizenship.”<sup>11</sup> In practice a distinction was made between “European natural-born British subjects,” “non-European natural-born British subjects” (colonial subjects), and “British Protected Persons” (inhabitants of territories “controlled but not officially administered by Britain” such as mandates for instance, or the allied Indian principalities).<sup>12</sup> It is this practice which determined the “thickness” of a British subject’s “citizenship”—the extent to which this procured civil, social, and/or political rights.<sup>13</sup> French colonial terminology appears clearer, as the French Revolution had occasioned an epistemological break between “subjecthood” and “citizenship” even though under the Third Republic (1870 to 1940) both were subsumed under the notion of “nationality” to distinguish individuals legally bound to the French state from foreigners. In practice subjected overseas populations were French subjects while metropolitans and naturalized expatriates were French citizens. The passage from one status to another was not codified and remained a matter of appreciation on the part of colonial officials of the assimilability of “indigenous” individuals.<sup>14</sup> The Italian case offers an interesting combination of both the British and French cases. Technically, all under Italian rule were *sudditi* (subjects) of the Savoy monarchy ever since 1861, although towards the end of the nineteenth century they were also referred to as *cittadini* (citizens), considered an equivalent term. The first step in refining the legal terminology pertaining to citizenship came in the aftermath of the occupation of “Eritrea” (1882) and Somalia (formally created as a unified territory under Italian rule in 1908) as the *sudditanza coloniale* (colonial subjecthood) was distinguished from the *sudditanza o cittadinanza italiana/metropolitana* (Italian or metropolitan subjecthood or citizenship). While both safeguarded their beneficiaries’ civil rights and entitled them to Italian diplomatic protection, only the latter was a “thick” kind of citizenship procuring both

additional social and political privileges.<sup>15</sup> With the occupation of the Ottoman provinces (vilayets) of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (1911 to 1912) Italian authorities produced another layer of political identification within their growing empire. What in 1919 became the *cittadinanza italiana* in Tripolitania and Cirenaica (Italian citizenship in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica), and in the early 1930s became the *cittadinanza italiana libica* (Italian Libyan citizenship) shortly before the two provinces were merged into the single Libyan administrative unit under the Fascists (1934), was hierarchically superior to the status of Eritreans and Somalis in that it entailed access to more rights: while “Libyans” enjoyed their personal statute according to religion they could also assume administrative responsibilities.<sup>16</sup> Such apparent magnanimity derived from political expediency (Italy’s inability to “pacify” the hinterland) and racial prejudice, with Libyans considered as being on a higher civilizational level than Eritreans, Somalis, and, from 1936 onwards, Ethiopians. This same racial prejudice was turned against Libyans under Fascism and their rights were thus considerably scaled down.<sup>17</sup>

While outlining the contours of the legal status of colonial subjects was a concern shared in all of the cases mentioned above, Italian, French, or British, equally important was the question of the transmission of that status—defining, that is, a *ius communicationis*, the modalities for a legal transfer of rights. Part of the European authorities’ attempts to monitor, control, and at times restrict sexual unions and procreation in colonial settings derived precisely from such consideration. In all three cases, in the colonies as in the metropolises, transmission of citizenship followed a patrilineal form as wives had to adopt the nationality of their husbands and abandon their own, while legitimate children acquired the nationality of their fathers. The only exception was when female full citizens married male colonial subjects, in which case they maintained their relationship to avoid what authorities considered the indignity of white disestablishment; such unions were increasingly restricted and, in Italian cases involving white women and African men, altogether banned in the late 1930s.<sup>18</sup> The regulation of sexuality in colonial settings was used as a way to sharpen the divide between rulers and ruled and functioned as a matrix generating further, interconnected classifications: for instance, as Ester Capuzzo reminds us, in situations of marriages involving Italian subjects (metropolitan or colonial) and foreigners, the latter would themselves be

divided by Italian authorities into “Europeans and European-assimilated” on the one hand and “indigenous-assimilated” on the other. Indeed, as numerous authors have shown, considerations of race, class, and citizenship, no matter how sophisticatedly they might have been discussed in erudite treatises, effectively crystallized around cases of state intervention in licit and illicit unions across the colonial divide.<sup>19</sup>

Scholars have been working for a long time with these questions within the larger rubric of gender and empire, of which mixed marriages can be considered a specific theme. In addressing these issues, historians have confirmed that gendered approaches, and specifically studies focused on the regulation of sexuality, are the most heuristic means to underscore the originality of colonialism as a distinct form of political domination. Within that broader framework of gender and empire, the relative advantage of studying mixed marriages over more commonly explored topics such as concubinage (*madamismo* in the Italian African context), prostitution, or homosexuality, derives from the formers’ sheer “archival density,” making the topic a uniquely expedient vantage point to explore the politics of gender and race in colonial settings. In addition, and as Ulrike Lindner reminds us in her study of such forms of conjugality in German Southwest Africa, legal mixed marriages, as opposed to informal unions, often became the focus of prohibitive legislation because they entailed for the colonized the possibility of accessing the entitlements and privileges of the colonizer.<sup>20</sup> Mixed marriages were at times illegally contracted, sometimes banned after having been temporarily allowed, and always viewed as problematic. Yet the very fact that they were made a distinct administrative category across European empires, and the existence of numerous cases included in files labeled as such, testifies not only to the recurrence of the practice, authorized or not, but also to the importance ascribed to it by colonial authorities. At any rate the theme of mixed marriages can hardly be considered in isolation from other gender-related topics. As will be shown in this chapter, colonial authorities could acquiesce to a mixed marriage when this ended situations they viewed as morally more objectionable, such as the practice of prostitution or the prolongation of cases of concubinage, particularly when they involved undeclared children. This chapter agrees with the existing literature that the racial prescriptions at play in the regulation of colonial sexuality were not uniform, consistent, or of the same intensity and

quality across different contexts and different periods.<sup>21</sup> “It was colonial encounters,” Catherine Hall reminds us, “which produced a new category, race, the meaning of which, like those of class and gender, have always shifted and been contested and challenged.”<sup>22</sup> The central question that runs through this chapter concerns the ways colonizers operate to maintain their status as a ruling class in subject societies they consider as racially proximate. Indeed, as will be seen, the Dodecanese are a particularly fruitful terrain to illustrate how distinct contexts could make notions of racism run the entire spectrum from the Neo-Lamarckian synthesis concerned with the impact of culture and mores on heredity to biological Social Darwinism. It will be argued that a close examination of how Italian authorities dealt with mixed marriages in the Dodecanese allows us to observe practices of micromanagement whereby “racial” differences are constantly recreated, thus reactivating the “boundary” between ruler and ruled, and, in the process, confirming fascist sovereignty on the archipelago.<sup>23</sup>

### Vicissitudes of a “non-colored” colony in the Fascist Empire

An Ottoman province since 1522, the Aegean archipelago known today as the Dodecanese was occupied by the Liberal government of Giovanni Giolitti in 1912 as a tactical move during Italy’s war of conquest of Tripolitania. Yet Italian suzerainty over the Dodecanese was only confirmed in the wake of the July 1923 Treaty of Lausanne which brought an end to the 1919 to 1922 Greek-Turkish War, organized the exchange of populations between the two belligerent countries and redefined the frontiers in the Eastern Mediterranean. Through articles 15 and 30 of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkish authorities officially renounced their claims on the Dodecanese and Cyprus, thus paving the way for a full annexation of these two insular settings by Italy and Great Britain respectively.<sup>24</sup> Under the fascist government from 1922 onwards, the archipelago continued to occupy a distinct position within the expanding Italian empire and was in fact meant to serve as “the capital of the Italians in the Levant.”<sup>25</sup> Its administration was always supervised by the Foreign instead of the Colonial Ministry; gradually referred to as *Le Isole Italiane dell’Egeo* in the official correspondence, the archipelago was because

of this always considered a *Possedimento*, rather than a *colonia*. This may have been a consequence of the intricate diplomatic transactions that marked the first ten years of Italian rule when cession of the archipelago to Greece was contemplated. It was in any case later justified on account of the relative cultural and indeed racial proximity Italian official authorities and thinkers claimed with the local population, made up of a majority of Greek-Orthodox Christians and smaller Muslim and Jewish groups residing for the greater part in the islands of Rhodes and Kos.<sup>26</sup> This alleged racial proximity, and the seemingly assimilationist policy it inspired, certainly facilitated the creation, in October 1925, of a unique citizenship for Dodecanesians, called the “minor” or “Aegean” citizenship, which safeguarded their customary rights, specifically the prerogatives of their religious authorities and courts in the realms of family and succession laws and exempted them from the military service.<sup>27</sup> This unique status, a full citizenship minus the political rights—*civitas sine suffragio*<sup>28</sup>—placed them at the top of the racial hierarchy in force in the expanding Italian empire. According to Davide Rodogno, Dodecanesians were situated somewhere between the first (the civilizational core, metropolitan Italy and the *terre irredente*) and second (European lands) of the three concentric circles (the third and last one being Africa) which he claims constituted the ideal imperial polity as imagined by Italian officials.<sup>29</sup> Both local and international students of the Dodecanese have perhaps taken the privileged situation its inhabitants enjoyed within the Italian Empire a little too much at face value when they argued that because of its particular status the Dodecanese could not be considered a colony. This theory is of course oblivious to the political reasons motivating Italian authorities’ decision not to officially name the Dodecanese as such. More importantly, it disregards the simple fact that opening access to full Italian citizenship to Dodecanesians on a case-by-case basis in 1933 is another way of acknowledging their inferior status.<sup>30</sup> Following Ann Laura Stoler then, I prefer to consider exceptional situations within colonial empires as the general rule “providing the flexibility to mete out to specific populations and persons restricted access to political entitlements.”<sup>31</sup>

With this caveat in mind, the special position Italian authorities assigned to Dodecanesians within their empire led to conundrums particularly visible in the realm of mixed marriages. Thus, in September 1936, in words that it is

worth quoting at length, Governor Mario Lago reacted to the prohibition of a marriage between an Italian official and an Orthodox woman, an initiative he perceived as impolitic:

Mixed marriages between Italians and Dodecanesians should not be encouraged. But they cannot and should not be prohibited. Dodecanesian women are not colored. A systematic obstruction or opposition to mixed marriages would be politically disastrous. In other words we should wish our men to marry in Italy and come to Rhodes with their wives and families. This would offer a better guarantee for marital harmony and morality; a pure race is preferable to the advantages of the two races coming together. But if the impression ever got out that the government opposed mixed marriages, because it considered the 'Greeks' inferior to the 'Italians,' we would create a dangerous and unwarranted atmosphere of racial hatred. Naturally, things would be different if the deficient morality of the wife or her family environment were revealed. But this would not be a case of the wife's race; this would be even more serious when the wife, on top of being of poor moral standards, is also of different race. Such are the most deplorable and, unfortunately, more numerous cases.<sup>32</sup>

While the practicability of this circular seems doubtful, its thorough ambiguity is very revealing.<sup>33</sup> At the very least, it complicates, if not entirely contradicts, the theory of a systematic assimilationist policy attributed by nationalist historians to Italian authorities in their handling of mixed marriages. The racial identity ascribed to Dodecanesian women—with whom mixed marriages are not to be encouraged but cannot be prohibited either—is here only defined in a negative sense: they are not “colored women” but nor are they, it is implied, of the same race as metropolitan Italians. The reference to “colored women” should be understood in the light of the August 1936 directive from the Italian Ministry of the Colonies—the first of its kind—to the Viceroy of the newly conquered Ethiopia ordering complete segregation between metropolitan Italians and “natives.”<sup>34</sup> Indeed the conquest of Ethiopia, historians of fascist Italy agree, was a turning point as a new grammar of racial difference invested official correspondence, paving the way for the implementation of the 1938 anti-Semitic laws, and consecrated the intellectual dominance in the Italian public sphere of a discourse covering a wide racist spectrum from Nicola Pende’s “Mediterraneanist” to Guido Landra’s “Nordicist” speculation on

the origins of Italians.<sup>35</sup> Within that newly rearranged racial hierarchy, Dodecanesians were situated, according to the governor, somewhere between “colored” colonial subjects (Ethiopians, Somalis, and Eritreans merged since 1936 into the newly created *Africa Orientale Italiana*—Italian East Africa) and metropolitan Italians. But even so they did not constitute a cohesive group; to the governor’s regret, mixed marriages often involved Dodecanesian women who were not only “immoral” but also of a different race. How must we understand this abstruse if not apparently self-contradicting statement? Part of the answer, as we will see, lies in the hardly coincidental textual proximity between the “morality” of local women, that of their family, and “racial purity.”<sup>36</sup> Part of it, I will also argue, is related to the high stakes involved in mixed marriages and the desire of colonial authorities to preserve a certain leeway and avoid committing to a systematic policy. As mentioned in the introduction, “mixed marriages” designated first and foremost unions between a man and a woman of different international statuses. Yet the documents produced after a man applied to marry a woman with a different nationality or citizenship status show that much more was at stake for Italian authorities in these marriages they called “mixed” than just resolving a legal quandary. One of these documents in particular, the preliminary report requested by the Registry to the *Carabinieri* (or military police), is of particular interest. This was the outcome of a very thorough investigation into the nationality, professional activities, criminal record, family environment, financial situation, overall *moralità*, medical history, and of course political allegiance not only of the future spouses, but of their entire immediate families.<sup>37</sup> The analysis that follows is overwhelmingly based on these prenuptial reports.

### The precariousness of intercommunal harmony

A number of religious communities lived in the Dodecanese during the interwar period: While the Greek Orthodox were implanted in all of the archipelago’s islands, Ladino-speaking Jews and Turkish-speaking Muslims were established in the larger islands of Rhodes and Kos along with smaller groups of so-called “Franco-Levantines” (Catholics), Cretan Muslims, and even Armenians who had fled the 1915 genocide in the Ottoman Empire.

Notwithstanding Greek nationalist historians' repeated assertions that the Dodecanese archipelago was essentially Greek, this made for a multicultural society preserved through its colonial status from the massive demographic engineering that followed the 1919–1922 Greek-Turkish War. In considering mixed marriages, colonial authorities were particularly sensitive to maintain what they thought was an existing intercommunal balance, a concern that became particularly manifest in their handling of the marriage between Antonio Maggi and Zeynep Burduroğlu which became something of a sensation in the recently earthquake-stricken island of Kos between 1933 and 1934.<sup>38</sup> While formally the right to apply for a marriage license always belonged to men, it seems that in this case it was Zeynep Burduroğlu's initiatives which politicized the affair and prompted Italian authorities to ponder on that precarious colonial articulation between "good government" and "observance of the law." Twenty-one-year-old Zeynep Burduroğlu, we learn, was sought in marriage by twenty-three-year-old Italian worker Antonio Maggi on the condition that she converted to Catholicism. As a consequence of their long-term relationship Maggi and Burduroğlu had a son whom the Italian worker acknowledged as his own. It was through a set of complaints that this case made its way to the archives. Indeed, the local president of the Muslim community informed the Italian district officer that the Catholic priest, Father Amanzio, came to request from him and from the local Mufti, a friend, a *certificato di stato libero*, a required certificate that stated that none of the future spouses were married. When the Mufti refused, arguing that the issuance of such a document was contrary to his religion and in any case not of his competence, Father Amanzio threatened to file a legal complaint. Infuriated at the Mufti's rejection, Zeynep Burduroğlu allegedly stormed into the Sheri Courts where she publicly insulted the Mufti. As a consequence, the latter wrote to the governor, demanding amends for this insult to his "personal honor" and the "dignity of his function" and warning that the conversion of a Muslim to Catholicism would have demoralizing effects on the Muslim community of Kos. If disrespect against their religion and culture went unpunished, the Mufti implied that many Koan Muslims would heed the urgings of the local Turkish consul—a "rabid Kemalist" according to the Italian district officer—and join the ranks of those among their coreligionists who had migrated to Turkey following the April 1933 earthquake.



This was a threat that the governor, inviting to distinguish between the legal and the religious aspects of the question, took very seriously. While the Mufti was legally bound to release the certificates of marriage eligibility requested by Father Amanzio, “[i]t is obvious,” he added, “that the mere suspicion that the government looks favorably to the conversion [of Muslims] to Catholicism would be harmful. In these times of economic and social predicament, marked by a tendency among the Turkish element to migrate to Anatolia, the harm would be even greater.” Although the district officer did not share this opinion, it seems that the governor believed that the potential mass migration of Muslim Koans would deprive his administration of a vital counterweight to the Orthodox majority, led by nationalist elites bent on materializing *enosis*, or the union of the archipelago with mainland Greece.<sup>39</sup> Zeynep Burduroğlu, who began to frequent the local Catholic nuns and continued to live with Antonio Maggi, would not let the affair die out. Faced with such insistence, and also, it may be surmised, the perceived inappropriateness of a child growing up with an unmarried couple, Vitalis Strunza, the administration’s official expert on Dodecanesian religious affairs, devised a solution. Zeynep Burduroğlu and Antonio would be granted authorization to marry on the condition that they did so on the larger island of Rhodes, the archipelago’s administrative center, “where cases of conversion to Catholicism by Muslim women are not so rare,” or even better in metropolitan Italy.<sup>40</sup> It is tempting to read this case as a redemptive story of a subaltern woman’s ability to overcome communal and colonial patriarchy. One should keep in mind however that in pursuing her aim, Zeynep Burduroğlu did so, to paraphrase Ranajit Guha, “necessarily and explicitly in violation of a series of codes which defined [her] very existence as a member of that colonial [...] society.”<sup>41</sup> The cost of her actions came in the form of exile and in all likelihood a break with her family and community. Behind the resolution of her situation lay anxiety regarding Turkey’s potential appeal to the Muslims of the Dodecanese and, therefore, a potential challenge to Italian sovereignty over the archipelago. Interestingly, the preservation of Italy’s sovereignty over this specific community seemed to entail upholding the dignity of their religious leader and exiling Zeynep Burduroğlu at a time when the Turkish Republic was aggressively pursuing its policy of secularization.

## Upsetting sovereignty through property transfers

Securing sovereignty over the archipelago and its inhabitants also entailed monitoring property and asset transfers. In this regard mixed marriage was a particularly important medium whereby foreign nationals marrying Dodecanesians could in principle gain access to property in the archipelago. This could encroach on Italian sovereignty if these foreign nationals passed on their nationality to their spouses, thereby allowing both to use diplomatic means to uphold their property rights against any possible expropriation on the part of Italian authorities. Indeed, while the latter could expropriate their own nationals (full citizens and imperial subjects)—usually in the name of public utility works—they could not do so with foreigners. Thus in 1932, Rhodes-born Zeinab Rahmi, who married Egyptian Ottoman subject Mustafa Rahmi and moved to Alexandria, invoked the Egyptian citizenship which she acquired through her husband in application of article 1 of Egyptian Law 19 of 1929 to contest the expropriation of 5,000 square meters of her Rhodian estates, to be transformed into a public garden or a bus station, or simply seized because allegedly located on an archaeological site. Her claims, which had been supported by the Egyptian Embassy in Rome, only foundered two years later when Italian authorities were able to prove that when Mustafa Rahmi obtained the Egyptian citizenship in 1929, the couple had been divorced for over ten years. As a consequence, Zeinab Rahmi was, in the eyes of Italian authorities, a Dodecanesian citizen and therefore subject to the full force of Italian law.<sup>42</sup>

Colonial authorities were particularly interested in marriages which involved well-off Dodecanesian families giving their daughters to Italian nationals of a certain standing when this involved a handsome dowry in landed property. Such was the case, in 1940, of twenty-eight-year-old Vittoria Costa, an Orthodox Aegean citizen, and second lieutenant Virgilio Pini of the Italian infantry. Not only were all of the five members of the Costa family registered as part of the *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio* (GIL), but Vittoria's father, a primary school teacher, was said to have always "assisted in the government's work of penetration into the local society" even in the face of insults and threats on the part of other Greek-Orthodox Dodecanesians.<sup>43</sup> As dowry for her marriage, the schoolteacher was disposed to give his daughter

two properties worth a combined total of fifty thousand lira. Notwithstanding this family's alleged unpopularity with other Greek Dodecanesians, the *Carabiniere* felt confident that this marriage would "create a good impression with the public."<sup>44</sup> The exemplary value ascribed to this union may however have worked in two directions. While schoolteachers did enjoy a certain moral standing in Dodecanesian society of the time, in this case the groom's status was also important. This was a marriage that brought together two middle-class individuals in a union sealed by an important, by that time's standards, transfer of property. This may, although this is never explicitly stated in the archives, have offered a preferable alternative to the settlement policy heretofore carried out in the Dodecanese. Indeed, between the mid-1920s and the mid-1930s, colonial authorities encouraged metropolitan Italians to migrate into the agricultural colonies they had developed on an experimental basis in the larger island of Rhodes within a broader scheme of occupying the lands left by Greeks who had migrated for economic reasons. In 1937 however, the then governor wrote that the 30,000 Dodecanesians who had been pushed away from their native islands between 1922 and 1936 were replaced by a mere 2,000 socially and economically precarious metropolitan Italians.<sup>45</sup> And of course the fact that settlement in the Dodecanese was only attractive for underprivileged, working-class and/or unemployed Italians was a constant source of concern for local authorities as it was potentially subversive of the colonial hierarchy between rulers and ruled.<sup>46</sup> High-profile mixed marriages, when involving a transfer of assets, may have served as colonization by proxy, but this was probably not part of a systematic and coherent policy.

### Moral unions and "racial hygiene"

Property and assets were mentioned in all cases of mixed marriages where dowries could be exchanged. But in unions involving working-class or even pauper spouses—the vast majority of mixed marriages, as the governor observed with regret—reference to capital, when available, was meant to ensure that the couples were self-reliant and therefore in a position to lead what authorities considered to be a moral life. Indeed, in most prenuptial reports a semantic connection is systematically drawn between *nullatenente*

(or propertyless/proletarian) and *moralità* (morality), to the point where these two terms appear inseparable. Couples seemed to have much better chances at having their marriage application approved when the *Carabiniere* described them in his report by using the set expression “*di buona condotta politica e morale, senza precedenti o pendenze penali* (good political and moral conduct, without criminal record and not facing criminal charges).”<sup>47</sup> While there are a number of cases where the *Carabiniere* found comments to make regarding the criminal profile of the future spouses, cases of “bad political conduct,” by which is meant documented anti-government activity, are almost nonexistent. Indeed, the consuming preoccupation of colonial authorities around working-class mixed marriages was what they termed *moralità* (morality). They usually granted authorization to marriage applications when a child was born out of wedlock or when the woman was pregnant. In such situations it is frequently the woman who appears to have been the driving force behind the whole procedure. One poignant example is that of fifteen-year-old Greek-Orthodox peasant girl Maria Cilinghieri, who in 1940 took the initiative to follow up on the application for marriage of her lover, Private Michele Nargiso. In her letter, Maria Cilinghieri points out that although she is of immaculate morality, she ended up yielding to her courtier’s insistent advances, falling “crazily in love with him, to the point where she no longer knew what she was doing,” and now found herself pregnant. The *Carabiniere* supported her request, perhaps further impelled by the letter’s last sentence, in which Maria Cilinghieri reminded them that she was “*Giovane Italiana e begniamina del nostro amato Duce* [Member of GIL and pupil of our beloved Duce].”<sup>48</sup>

In regularizing extramarital relationships that led to pregnancies and births out of wedlock—particularly following the 1929 Lateran Treaty—authorities acted upon a middle-class and Catholic sense of morality most probably encouraged by the local Catholic bishopric.<sup>49</sup> But there was nothing systematic in such a course of action. Where the bride or her family were said to lead particularly dissolute lives, marriage authorization was not usually granted, even when a pregnancy was involved. Maria Papapanaioti, who in November 1944 wished to marry Pietro Abagioli, was said to be morally loose for having had many extramarital affairs in the past, while the *Carabiniere* also reported that her father, a primary schoolmaster, had been sacked for “passive pedophilia” and that her mother was notoriously and repeatedly cheating on her husband.<sup>50</sup>

The file does not contain the governor's decision concerning this case but if this union was allowed it was probably because Pietro Abagioli was a Turkish citizen. This inference may be made in the light of the case of Airman Salvatore Cudia, who in 1941 requested permission to marry thirty-year-old Paraschevi Caraianni. Although it pointed out that Paraschevi Caraianni, along with her entire family, were "Aegean citizens of Aryan race and Orthodox religion," the *Carabiniere's* prenuptial report was extremely negative. It stated that the bride-to-be, as well as her mother, were women "*di facili costume*" (of loose morals), that her father, a notorious gambler, abandoned his family to move to the US with another woman, that her brother Sava was sent to prison for six months for "*oltraggio al pudore*" (indecent exposure), while her sister Zambica, in spite of her marriage and three sons, practiced prostitution. "In so many words," concluded the *Carabiniere*, "the Caraianni family has one of the worst reputations in Apollachia [the district of Rhodes where the family came from]."<sup>51</sup> Usually the governor's response to requests for mixed marriages was limited to a single line of approval or disapproval; in this case, it not only vetoed the marriage but, "given the dreadful moral record both of [Paraschevi herself] and of her entire family," it requested that Airman Salvatore Cudia be sent back to Italy at the earliest opportunity.

As examples as these suggest, *moralità* was a polysemic concept bearing racial undertones and pointing at fears of miscegenation; it was, in other words, race-recoded. While "morality" or the "dignity" of the "ruling race" were invoked in other colonial empires among a number of signifiers of racial belonging,<sup>52</sup> in the Dodecanesian context *moralità*, and all the creative, potentially conflicting interpretations Italian authorities gave to that term, was truly the only racially operative concept colonial officials retained in their classification of the local population. The mention of Paraschevi's Aryan race should be placed into the context of the promulgation of the 1938 anti-Semitic laws and their application to the Dodecanese.<sup>53</sup> Thereafter all mixed marriages were examined within the framework of the "measures for the defense of the race." While this effectively excluded Jews from marrying Italian or indeed non-Jewish Dodecanesian citizens, it did not seem to reflect any coherent representation of the Dodecanesians' race. Metropolitan Italians are usually defined as *connazionali* (co-national) in the official correspondence and sometimes as being of *razza Ariana*, more rarely as being of *razza Italiana*.<sup>54</sup>

Only Orthodox Christian as opposed to Muslim Dodecanesians are designated as Aryans, but even then this occurs very infrequently.<sup>55</sup> More frequently non-Jewish, Orthodox and Muslim Dodecanesians are defined in the negative as being “*cittadini egei non appartenente alla razza ebraica* [Aegean citizens not belonging to the Jewish race].”<sup>56</sup> The official understanding of race, and of the better ways to preserve a form of “racial hygiene,” can be inferred from the authorities’ attention to the family environment. In pure eugenicist fashion, it is implied that moral corruption, including that of the spouse’s family, can lead to degeneration. This is compounded by the fact that the *Carabinieri* often mention, in conjunction with their morality, the family’s medical record and the presence, or absence, of alleged hereditary physiological or psychological diseases.<sup>57</sup> As students of other colonial empires suggest, eugenicist concerns of this kind mostly appear within the context of working-class or pauper families.<sup>58</sup> This points to a clear Neo-Lamarckian form of racism; a derivation, that is, from eighteenth-century biologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck’s theory of generational transmission of environmentally-influenced physiological characteristics in living organisms.<sup>59</sup> As Emmanuelle Saada has noted, the “Neo-Lamarckian synthesis” adopted by nineteenth-century moralists, eugenicists, race theorists, and eventually colonialists proposes that “hereditary features only manifest themselves under the influence of external stimuli which are diffused through a milieu both physical and social and the repetition of which allows the creation of habits, namely indelible traces in bodies and brains.”<sup>60</sup>

In the Dodecanesian context marked by a perceived racial proximity as opposed to sameness between colonizer and colonized, the degenerates were not always to be found among the latter. In 1940 twenty-eight-year-old Greek-Orthodox Giorgio Stavrianachi from Rhodes saw his request to marry twenty-three-year-old Venetian Giulietta dall’Asta turned down. Although Stavrianachi was said to be a “trivial person, a frequent visitor of taverns, with a strong inclination for drinking and gambling,” it seems that it was his fiancée’s record which blocked the marriage. Giulietta dall’Asta was described as being of “reprehensible morality” for having had a daughter as a result of “illicit romance” in 1936 and finding herself again pregnant as a consequence of “illicit relations” in Venice. Although he did not expand at all on the reasons commanding his decision, the governor flatly refused to grant his permission

for this marriage. We may assume, that he deemed damaging for Italian prestige bringing to the colony a metropolitan Italian whose behavior was so contrary to the fascist (and Catholic) ideals of virtue and loyalty; the “colonial gaze” was then indeed fixed “just as squarely on Europeans themselves [. . .].”<sup>61</sup> It is also possible that Italian authorities were adverse as a matter of principle to Italian female full citizens marrying overseas male subjects possessing a lesser form of citizenship. Indeed while the law provided that in such cases Italian women would retain their citizenship, such marriages—as opposed to an Italian man marrying a colonial subject—were construed as potentially more threatening to the colonial hierarchy between rulers and ruled and usually had practical consequences:<sup>62</sup> by virtue of the patrilineal citizenship transmission the progeny of a mixed marriage between an Italian woman and a Dodecanesian man would become Aegean—and not full Italian—citizens; exceptions to this rule were only considered on a case-by-case basis. This was quite consistent with the practice throughout the Italian Empire, and, indeed, in most European colonies. Aside from this practical question, preventing marriages to “degenerates” was a multipurpose policy: at once an exercise in population control meant to preserve the racial hygiene of Italians, and a display of the colonizer’s higher moral standing. Both these aspects were intended to contribute to a larger work of *bonifica* (reclamation), in the sense defined by Ruth Ben-Ghiat, namely a fascist “desire to purify the nation of all social and cultural pathology.”<sup>63</sup> If indeed there was an Italian assimilationist policy in the Dodecanese, marked by an intention to politically, socially, economically, and also biologically replicate the metropole in the archipelago, this could only be done within the parameters of this stringent, although implicit, racial exigency.

### Conclusion: The domestic foundations of imperial sovereignty

The examples examined in this contribution have shown Italian colonial authorities addressing a number of issues in settling requests for mixed marriages: they heeded the effects of such forms of conjugality on intercommunal peace within a multicultural setting, and sought to ensure control of property transfers

and foreign spouses' entitlements or, more often, to safeguard the racial hygiene of families whose offspring could apply for full Italian citizenship. Taken together, all of these considerations were part of one and the same overarching colonial concern with securing, or at least not compromising, Italian sovereignty over the Dodecanese. A point that perhaps needs to be stressed here is that mixed marriages are not merely illustrative of such colonial anxieties; they are in fact—at least in the specific case of the Dodecanese—the most elusive and therefore difficult and crucial point of articulation of this sovereignty, requiring a systematic and meticulous micromanagement on the part of Italian authorities.<sup>64</sup> Settling a dispute over a contested frontier through diplomatic channels indeed appears more obvious than making sure that a foreigner marrying an Italian subject will not benefit and confer upon her or his spouse entitlements guaranteed through consular protection. Testimony to this is the fact that from the 1930s onwards, the correspondence on mixed marriages grows exponentially; in this chapter I have focused on twenty-five out of perhaps fifty cases found in the archives. Throughout the Italian Empire the Dodecanese stands as a *sui generis* case, because since the archipelago's inhabitants were considered as racially proximate to metropolitan Italians, mixed marriages could not be altogether banned, as they were for instance in Ethiopia or Eritrea. Dodecanesians were considered racially proximate, but not racially identical to Italians, even if the “healthier” among them could apply for full Italian citizenship on a case-by-case basis from 1933 onwards.<sup>65</sup> Racial profiling in the prenuptial police report became much more sophisticated, informed by a Neo-Lamarckian attention to environment with sharpened racial undertones after the passing of the anti-Semitic Laws in 1938. A final word must be added regarding the involvement of the Dodecanesians themselves. As the cases analyzed in this paper show, Dodecanesians and particularly Dodecanesian women never passively accepted decisions made by administrative fiat. Rather they often sought to remain in control of their self-image, crafting it in words that would allow them to penetrate the realm of the racially acceptable. To the extent that they were successful in convincing Italian authorities and securing administrative approval for their projected marriages, they became participants, co-conceptors of Italian official views on race. By extension, and to paraphrase Elizabeth Thompson, they contributed to the emergence of a continuously updated “colonial civic order” in which such views on race were articulated.<sup>66</sup>



## Notes

- 1 This chapter is based on research conducted mainly in the Historical and Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy in the frame of the 'laboratoire d'excellence' LabexMed-Les sciences humaines et sociales au coeur de l'interdisciplinarité pour la Méditerranée' bearing the reference 10-LABX-0090. As such, this research has benefited from a funding from the French Republic managed by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche on behalf of the 'projet d'investissements d'avenir A\*MIDEX' bearing the reference number ANR-11-IDEX-0001-02. My gratitude goes to the following people for their advice throughout the different stages of the writing process of this chapter: Ulrike Lindner, Dörte Lerp, Eva Bischoff, Violetta Hionidou, Sandrine Berteaux, Michele Sarfatti, Georges Dertilis, Dimitris Kousouris and İpek Çelik.
- 2 Zacharias N. Tsirpanles, *Ιταλοκρατία στα Δωδεκάνησα, 1912–1943. Αλλοτρίωση του ανθρώπου και του περιβάλλοντος* (Rhodes: Ziti Publications, 1998), 250–251.
- 3 In his memoirs, the Orthodox bishop of Rhodes of the time, Apostolos Tryfonos (served from 1914–1946), claims to have been instrumental in containing mixed marriages: *Απομνημονεύματα ήτοι χρονολογική ιστορία της εκκλησιαστικής επαρχίας Ρόδου επί Ιταλο-Γερμανοκρατίας, 4 Μαΐου 1912–8 Μαΐου 1945, vol.1* (Athens: Dion. Petsali, 1947), 60–62. Mixed marriages as an attempt to denationalize Dodecanesian Greeks is a recurrent theme in the nationalist-leaning literature. See also Christodoulos I. Papachristodoulou, *Ιστορία της Ρόδου από τους προϊστορικούς χρόνους έως την ενσωμάτωση της Δωδεκανήσου (1948)* (Athens: Stegi Grammaton kai Technon Dodekanisou, 1994), 554–556.
- 4 Tsirpanles, *Ιταλοκρατία*, 251.
- 5 General State Archives, Athens, K95γ: Επανάσταση της Καρπάθου κατά των Ιταλικών αρχών 1944: 'Κατάλογος των γυναικών αίτινες ενυμφεύθησαν Ιταλούς'.
- 6 On how nationalist historians tend to see intermarriage in the Dodecanese as a form of collaboration, see Nicholas Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean: Remembering Fascism's Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 171.
- 7 Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 260, endnote 94. Ulrike Lindner shows how the signification of the term 'mixed marriages' evolved in time in German Southwest Africa, from designating interreligious to interracial marriages; see 'Contested concepts of "white"/"native" and mixed marriages in German South-West Africa and the Cape Colony 1900–1914: A histoire croisée', *Journal of Namibian Studies* 6, (2009): 60.

- 8 Sabina Donati, *A Political History of National Citizenship and Identity in Italy, 1861–1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 2, 11.
- 9 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 17–18. A significant literature has highlighted how colonial sexuality blurred the boundaries of colonial rule. See for Eritrea, Ruth Iyob, 'Madamismo and beyond: The construction of Eritrean women', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 22 (2000): 218.
- 10 Daniel Gorman, 'Wider and Wider Still?: Racial Politics, Intra-Imperial Immigration and the Absence of an Imperial Citizenship in the British Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 3, no. 3 (2002), Retrieved from <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/38080>. M. Page Baldwin makes the same point, 'Subject to Empire: Married Women and the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act', *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001): 525.
- 11 Daniel Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship: Empire and the Question of Belonging* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 9.
- 12 Gorman, 'Wider and Wider Still'.
- 13 Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship*, 18.
- 14 Emanuelle Saada, 'Citoyens et sujets de l'empire français. Les usages du droit en situation coloniale', *Genèses* 53, no. 4 (2003): 7 and Donati, *A Political History*, 10. On the discussion of the German colonists' status in the Russian Empire see Julia Malitska, 'In the Forge of Empire', in this volume, 64.
- 15 Donati, *A Political History*, 121.
- 16 Donati, *A Political History*, 129–30. See also Ester Capuzzo, 'Sudditanza e cittadinanza nell'esperienza coloniale italiana dell'età liberale', *Clio: Rivista Trimestriale di Studi Storici* 31, no. 1 (1995): 87–88 and footnote 72.
- 17 Donati, *A Political History*, 191–192.
- 18 For the French case see Saada, 'Citoyens et sujets', 20. Donati on the Italian case, *A Political History*, 38 and 142, and Capuzzo, 'Sudditanza e cittadinanza', 74. For the British case see Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship*, 20.
- 19 On this issue see Philippa Levine's plea for intersectionality in her 'Introduction: Why Gender and Empire?', in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2, 11.
- 20 Lindner, 'Contested concepts of "white"/"native"', 63.
- 21 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 24.
- 22 Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 16–7.
- 23 The notion of a 'boundary' of colonial rule related to the regulation of sexuality in colonial settings in Ann L. Stoler, 'Rethinking colonial categories: European

- communities and the boundaries of rule,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 1 (1989): 134–161.
- 24 Italy ratified the Treaty of Lausanne in August 1924, Donati, *A Political History*, 134.
- 25 Governor Mario Lago, 'Prefazione,' *Rodi e le minori isole italiane dell'Egeo* (Milan: Turing Club Italiano, 1930), 3.
- 26 On Italian views of Dodecanesians as racially proximate, see Donati, *A Political History*, 195–196.
- 27 Vittorio Alhadeff, *L'ordinamento giuridico di Rodi e delle altre isole italiane dell'Egeo* (Milan: Soc. An. Istituto Editoriale Scientifico, 1927), 46–71; Capuzzo, 'Sudditanza e cittadinanza,' 90–91; Cesare Marongiu-Buonaiuti, *La politica religiosa del Fascismo nel Dodecaneso* (Naples: Giannini Editore, 1979), 55. The preservation of customary rights in multicultural societies seems to have been a concern widely shared across European colonial empires as a question of political expediency. Hence Elizabeth Thompson writes that in the French mandates of Syria and Lebanon wide protests ensued the promulgation of a 1938 statute requiring 'citizens' to 'follow the civil law (rather than Islamic, as done since the Ottoman era) in matters not explicitly stated in the laws of their religious community.' This 1938 statute 'permitted citizens to disavow any religious affiliation, wherein their personal status would be determined solely by civil law.' *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University, 2009), 152.
- 28 Donati, *A Political History*, 148.
- 29 Davide Rodogno, *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation During the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 52–53; See also Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare: Storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), 180.
- 30 Regarding the Dodecanesians' right to access full Italian citizenship by 1933, see Donati, *A Political History*, 196.
- 31 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, xx.
- 32 General State Archives, Rhodes (hereafter GAK) 639–1/2 1936 *Servizio Stato Civile-Carteggio Generale*, Governor Lago, minute to the secretary general Grassini, September 21, 1936.
- 33 Julia Malitska describes a similar ambiguity of Russian imperial marriage regulations. Julia Malitska, 'In the Forge of Empire,' in this volume, 68.
- 34 Annalisa Pasero, 'Madamismo, meticcio and the prestige of the race in Italian East Africa,' *The Italianist* 11, no. 1 (1991): 182–183.
- 35 For the connection between the segregation in Ethiopia and the emergence of the anti-Semitic laws, see Gene Bernardini, 'The origins and development of racial

- anti-Semitism in Fascist Italy', *The Journal of Modern History* 49, no. 3 (1977): 442–444; Luigi Goglia, 'Note sul razzismo coloniale fascista', *Storia Contemporanea* 19, no. 6 (1988): 1225; see also Esmonde Robertson, 'Race as a factor in Mussolini's policy in Africa and Europe', *Journal of Contemporary History* 23, no. 1 (1988): 39–40. For the racist discourses dominating the Italian public sphere in the 1930s, see Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (London: Routledge, 2002), 50–99 and Fabrizio De Donno, 'La Razza Ario-Mediterranea', *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, no. 3 (2006): 394–417.
- 36 See the discussion on morality and same-sex relationships in German Southwest Africa in Jan Severin, 'Male Same-Sex Conduct and Masculinity', in this volume, 162.
- 37 In case of the German settlers in the Russian Empire local authorities conducted enquiries into the couples' personal and economic background as well. Malitska, Julia Malitska, 'In the Forge of Empire', in this volume, 76.
- 38 A. Aggelis, 'Ο σεισμός της Κώ 23-4-1933 μέσα από τις σελίδες των εφημερίδων', *Δωδεκανησιακά Χρονικά*, ΙΗ (2004): 239–261.
- 39 More broadly, *enosis* refers to the struggle of unredeemed Greeks around the Mediterranean to achieve the political unification of the territory they inhabit with independent Greece. This was a complex, interconnected movement which began with the foundation of the Greek state in 1830 and lasted, one could argue, until the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. See Alexis Rappas, 'Greeks under European Colonial Rule', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 34, no. 2 (2010): 201–218.
- 40 GAK 212/1 1934 *Maggi Antonio-Buduroglu Zeinep-Conversioni al cattolismo*, Com. Vitalis, 'Promemoria' per Lago, July 9, 1933, Il Mufti Sabri al Signor Vitalis, July 6, 1933, Il Mufti Sabri al Reggente di Coo, July 6, 1933, Governatore Lago, July 11, 1933, a Reggente di Coo-'Mufti di Coo-Incidente', Carlo Mocchi Sismondi, Reggente di Coo, a S.E. il Governatore delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo, July 14, 1933, Vitalis, Rodi July 27, 1934–XII, 'Promemoria per Sua Eccellenza il Governatore'.
- 41 Ranajit Guha, 'The Prose of Counterinsurgency', in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri C. Spivak (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 45.
- 42 Archivio Storico Diplomatico, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome (hereafter ASDMAE) *Dodecaneso 1931–1945*, Busta 8, Reclami 4, Note Verbale from the Egyptian Embassy to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 5, 1932, Note Verbale from the Italian Foreign Ministry to the Egyptian Embassy, undated, Aide-Mémoire from the Egyptian Embassy to the Italian Foreign Ministry, October 11, 1934 and dispatch of the Foreign Ministry to the Italian Embassy in Cairo (copied to the Governor of the Dodecanese), November 2, 1934. See for the

- connection between marriage policy and access to property also the discussion in Julia Malitska, 'In the Forge of Empire,' in this volume, 63–67.
- 43 The Gioventù Italiana del Littorio was the youth movement of the Fascist Party from 1937 onwards.
- 44 GAK 708/1940 *Pini Virgilio matrimonio con la cittad. egea Costa Vittoria*, Il capitano comandante della compagnia in serv. a Calino (Tognacci Umberto), May 31, 1940 a Comando del 10o Reggimento Fanteria 'Regina' -Uff. Comando, Co.
- 45 ASDMAE, *Affari Politici, 1931–1945, Dodecaneso, Busta 13, 1937*, Cesare Maria de Vecchi di Val Cismon, Relazione sulla Situazione nelle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo e Sopra la Condotta da Tenersi dal Governatore del Possedimento a Sua Eccellenza Galeazzo Ciano Conte di Corteliazzo, Ministro degli Affari Esteri, Rodi June 19, 1937–XV.
- 46 Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 185. This was a ubiquitous concern throughout colonial empires: For examples in the Italian case, see Giulia Barrera, 'The construction of racial hierarchies in colonial Eritrea: The liberal and early fascist period (1897–1934)', in *A Place in the Sun: Africa in Italian Colonial Culture from Post-Unification to the Present*, ed. Patrizia Palumbo (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 85–90. See also Ann Stoler's work in general and specifically her article dealing with the 'boundaries of European (white male) prestige and control' intersecting race, class and sexuality, 'Rethinking Colonial Categories', 139.
- 47 Examples of total clearance on the basis of this statement can be found in GAK 145/1 1945 *Matrimoni Misti*: Il Tenente Colonnello della G.N.R. Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale di Polizia Ferdinando Mittino, September 26, 1944 a Ufficio Anagrafe e Statistica; same file: Il Tenente Colonnello della G.N.R. Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale di Polizia Ferdinando Mittino, October 11, 1944 a Ufficio Anagrafe e Statistica; and GAK 708/1940 *Pini Virgilio: Matrimonio con la citt. egea Costa Vittoria*, Il capitano comandante della compagnia in serv. a Calino (Tognacci Umberto), May 31, 1940 a Comando del 10o Reggimento Fanteria 'Regina' -Uff. Comando, Co.
- 48 GAK 708/1940 Maria Cilinghieri, letter to the governor of Rhodes, Cos, August 29, 1940 and Il Tenente Colonnello Comandante il Gruppo CCRR Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Ferdinando Mittino, to Governor, Rhodes, September 9, 1940. A similar case was that of twenty-nine-year-old Lieutenant Paolo Mandato who was also authorized to marry seventeen-year-old Zehra Chegachi, a pauper girl of probable Cretan origin when it was revealed that he had impregnated her, to the bride's father's indignation. See GAK 422/1 1943 *Matrimoni Misti dal No. 81 al No. 107*, Il Tenente Colonnello Comandante il Gruppo CCRR Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Ferdinando Mittino, to Governor, Rhodes, April 19, 1944. For other cases of authorization granted to

- marriage applications when pregnancy or children out of wedlock were involved see GAK 145/1 1945 *Matrimoni Misti*, Il Tenente Colonnello della G.N.R. Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale di Polizia Ferdinando Mittino, September 26, 1944 a Ufficio Anagrafe e Statistica; GAK 708/1940 *Sabellico Vittorio: Matrimonio con cittadina egea*, Il Comandante del Gruppo Carabinieri Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale Maggiore Ferdinando Mittino, January 9, 1940 al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo; same folder, *Di Gioia Francesco: Matrimonio con cittadina egea*, Il Comandante del Gruppo Carabinieri Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale Maggiore Ferdinando Mittino, March 25, 1940 al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo; GAK 422/1 1943 *Matrimoni Misti dal No. 81 al No. 107*, Il Tenente Colonnello Comandante il Gruppo CCRR Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Ferdinando Mittino, to Governor, Rhodes, April 19, 1944; GAK 212/1 1934 *Maggi Antonio-Buduroglu Zeinep-Conversione al cattolismo*, undated, unsigned document.
- 49 On the growing influence of the Church in regulating domestic affairs within Fascist Italy and its empire after the Lateran Treaty, see Alexander De Grand, 'Women under Italian Fascism', *The Historical Journal* 19, no. 4 (1976): 956–957.
- 50 GAK 145/1 1945 *Matrimoni Misti*, Il Tenente Colonnello della G.N.R. Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale di Polizia Ferdinando Mittino, October 16, 1944 a Ufficio Anagrafe e Statistica.
- 51 GAK 708/1940 Il Tenente Colonnello Comandante il Gruppo CCRR Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Ferdinando Mittino, Ufficio Centrale di Anagrafe, August 30, 1941 et Governatore Campioni, A.C. Uff. Anagrafe Statistica a Comando Gruppo CCRR Ufficio Centrale Speciale, September 11, 1941.
- 52 Saada, 'Citoyens et sujets', 4–6.
- 53 Simonetta Della Seta, 'Gli ebrei del Mediterraneo nella strategia politica fascista sino al 1938: il caso di Rodi', *Storia Contemporanea* 17, no. 6 (1986): 997–1032.
- 54 GAK 708/1940 *Di Gioia Francesco: Matrimonio con cittadina egea*, Il Comandante del Gruppo Carabinieri Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale Maggiore Ferdinando Mittino, March 25, 1940 al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo; same file, *Dr. Piegai Adolfo Matrimonio con cittadina egea*, Il Comandante del Gruppo Carabinieri Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale Maggiore Ferdinando Mittino, June 21, 1940 al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo.
- 55 GAK 708/1940 *Ziracachi Elia, Matrimonio con cittadina egea*, Il Comandante del Gruppo Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Capetanio Umberto Vozzi, al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo, 21 March 21, 1940.
- 56 GAK 145/1 1945 *Matrimoni Misti*, Governatore Faralli, Autorizzazione a contrarre matrimonio, Rodi, October 5, 1944; GAK 708/1940 *Pini Virgilio: Matrimonio con*

- la citt. egea Costa Vittoria*, Il capitano comandante della compagnia in serv. a Calino (Tognacci Umberto), March 31, 1940 a Comando del 10o Reggimento Fanteria 'Regina'-Uff. Comando, Co.
- 57 A clear example of this can be found in GAK 708/1940 [no subfolder] Il Tenente Colonnello Comandante il Gruppo CCRR Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale, Ferdinando Mittino, to Governor, Rhodes, October 22, 1941; for the exact same formula same file, *Pini Virgilio matrimonio con la cittad. egea Costa Vittoria*, Il capitano comandante della compagnia in serv. a Calino (Tognacci Umberto), May 31, 1940 a Comando del 10o Reggimento Fanteria 'Regina'-Uff. Comando, Co.
- 58 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 16–17. For the spread of eugenicist concerns and policies across the British Empire in the twentieth century, see Barbara Bush, 'Gender and empire: The twentieth century', in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 80.
- 59 Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, *Zoological Philosophy: An Exposition With Regard to the Natural History of Animals. The Diversity of Their Organization and the Faculties Which They Derive from It; The Physical Causes Which Maintain Their Life Within Them and Give Rise to their Various Movements; Lastly, Those Which Produce Feeling and Intelligence in Some of Them*, trans. H. Elliot (London: Macmillan, 1914), 108.
- 60 Emanuelle Saada, 'Entre assimilation et "décivilisation": l'imitation et le projet colonial républicain', *Terrain* 44, (2005): 22. See also Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 62–63. For eugenicist thinking as a trans-imperial concern, see Susan Bayly, 'Racial readings of Empire: Britain, France and colonial modernity in the Mediterranean and Asia', in *Modernity and Culture: From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean*, ed. Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C.A. Bayly (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 291–297. See also Warwick Anderson, 'The trespass speaks: white masculinity and colonial breakdown', *American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (1997): 1352–1353.
- 61 GAK 708/1940 *Cittadino Egeo Stavrianachi Giorgio. Matrimonio con cittadina italiana*, Il Commandante del Gruppo Carabinieri Capo dell'Ufficio Centrale Speciale Maggiore Ferdinando Mittino, January 17, 1940 al Governo delle Isole Italiane dell'Egeo and De Vecchi a A.C. Ufficio Centrale di Anagrafe, January 25, 1940. Citation in Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 1.
- 62 It should be noted that in the case of mixed marriages Italian women only retained their citizenship if they married Italian colonial subjects. The 1865 National Civil Code of unified Italy—incorporated into the 1922 Italian citizenship law—provided that if Italian women married non-dependent foreigners they lost their citizenship and adopted that of their husband. This was also the practice in Britain in accordance with the 1730 British Nationality Act and

the 1914 British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, and in France in compliance with the 1804 Code Napoléon. In all cases then, 'the wife's citizenship [was] derivative of and dependent on the husband's status' see Donati, *A Political History*, 38–40 and 124.

- 63 Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 4. Fabrizio de Donno reminds us that this specific notion of 'bonifica,' reclamation is a central idea in Nicola Pende's 1933 *Bonifica umana razionale e biologica politica*, 'La razza Ario-Mediterranea,' 402.
- 64 Comparatively, Elizabeth Thompson argues, for French Syria and Lebanon, that '[b]ecause it so fundamentally defined power, gender became a primary site of conflict and compromise between the French and the Syrians and Lebanese as they variously challenged and defended these paternalistic privileges.' *Colonial Citizens*, 3.
- 65 Arnaldo Bertola, 'Confessione religiosa e statuto personale dei cittadini italiani nell'Egeo e Libici (A proposito del R.D.L. 19 ottobre 1933 n. 1379)', *Oriente Moderno* 14, no. 3 (1934): 105–111.
- 66 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 1.



## In the Forge of Empire

### Legal Order, Colonists, and Marriage in the Nineteenth-century Northern Black Sea Steppe

Julia Malitska

Among numerous population groups that migrated to the Northern Black Sea Steppe in the course of Russia's colonization, this chapter focuses on people from Central Europe, mainly Lutherans and Roman Catholics, referred to as "German colonists" in the imperial discourse and in the legislation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thousands of immigrants of somewhat imagined "Germanic" heritage gradually became collectively identified and categorized by the imperial authorities simply as "German" colonists, this implying a homogeneity and uniformity that had never existed, and effectively leveling the diverse backgrounds of the immigrants, their varied arrival times, and their settlements in widely separated areas of the Russian Empire.

This chapter<sup>1</sup> discusses the imposition of the legal restrictions on marriage of the "German" colonists in the Northern Black Sea Steppe, and the dynamics and logics of policy formation. It is primarily concerned with the marriage eligibility of the colonists, and the marriage conclusion procedure. The analysis suggests that the colonists' marriages were instrumentalized and subordinated to Russia's politics in the region. It also points out the role and the intersections of gender, religious denomination (*konfessii*), and social position, as focal points of the imperial policy formation and implementation. I argue that the formation and dissolution of the colonists' marriages was grounded in and conditioned by their legal status and by the imperial legal order. Extending the geography of marriage instrumentalization in the Russian Empire, the analysis introduces a new pattern with respect to the colonists of the Northern Black Sea Steppe.

Finally I introduce the concept of “marriage regime” as a term to cover the system of accumulated rules, sequencing routines, and procedures regarding colonist marriage formation and dissolution that evolved during the first decades of the nineteenth century and were orchestrated by the Russian government. I address the following questions: What significances did colonists’ legal position bring to its bearers in the sphere of marriage? How was marriage of the colonists defined, specified, and conditioned within the frame of the colonist status, imperial legal order, and the politics in the region? What was the interplay (if any) between marriage eligibility, gender of the colonists and social status (of colonists and non-colonists) in imperial politics and legislation?

The empirical foundation for this examination derives from printed sources (imperial legislation) and archival materials of official origin (colonial paperwork) here introduced into scholarly use for the first time. I draw on the regulations of the Committee of the Ministers and State Council, Senate and Emperor’s decrees, and the Ministry of the Interior’s orders to be followed by the colonial administrations of the Black Sea provinces and the ecclesiastical authorities. Those legal acts were compiled into the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire* (*Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii*).<sup>2</sup>

It is not sufficient to focus solely on the imperial legislation when studying and comprehending the complexities of the Russian imperial social system and legal regimes. Published sources may portray a twisted vision of actual legal practice; they also provide no insights into the background of the colonization project. Alison Smith points out the complications in the examination of the eighteenth-century legal practices with reference to the *Complete Collection of Laws*, due to its incompleteness. A look at the actual administrative practices of local legal institutions during the eighteenth century shows that at times they were considered as mandatory decisions that were not mentioned in the *Complete Collection of Laws*.<sup>3</sup> In this regard, the primary sources for this examination are composed of the archives of the colonial administration of the Russian government—the colonial archive—distributed between two Ukrainian regional archives of Odessa and Dnipro. It embraces the archives of the former central colonial administration (the Guardianship Office for New Russian Foreign Settlers and the Trustees Committee for Foreign Settlers in the Southern Region of Russia), regional colonial administrations (the

Ekaterinoslav and Odessa Offices for Foreign Settlers)<sup>4</sup> and local rural governance (colonist village and district boards).

This study is largely inspired by the theoretical and methodological insights provided by an array of scholars focusing on the history of the Russian Empire, and particularly by the scholarship on the nature of autocratic legality, imperial geographies of power, Russia's imperial statehood, and the heterogeneity of the imperial rule.<sup>5</sup>

## Historical background

By the end of the eighteenth century, as a result of the Russian Empire's military victories against the Ottoman Empire, the Black Sea littoral fell under the Russian Crown. This was preceded by a profound political shift in the Dnipro River, Azov, and Black Sea areas and by the removal of a number of political actors in the region, such as Cossack Hetmanate, Nogai Hordes, Zaporozhian Sich, and the Crimean Khanate. The Empire aimed to hastily digest alien territories, above all through the dislocation and migration of populations, the rapid import of the imperial fiscal system into new terrains, and constant administrative territorial redrawing. The establishment of the Russian rule, which had engendered massive migrations and displacements, brought radical changes for the populations and societies living in those areas affected, including the destruction of established socio-economic and cultural settings. Some ethnic groups, like Ukrainians, Russians, and foreign migrants, were encouraged to migrate to the Northern Black Sea region and Crimean Peninsula, while other groups, such as Nogais and Tatars, were compelled to leave.<sup>6</sup>

The reign of Catherine II (1762 to 1796) was in fact the first in Russia clearly obsessed with the growth and improvement of population as a basis for increasing the wealth of the state. The thesis that one of the main factors that forced Catherine to focus on immigration was the "underpopulation" or "scarce population" of the imperial borderlands is articulated in the historiography. However, some population groups were simply perceived by Russian officials as both ineligible and unreliable. Another factor was serfdom, which immobilized large numbers of peasants on landlords' estates in the lands of the

Russian center. The general governmental attitude regarding peasant mobility inhibited the free movement of the population, but illegal migration was unavoidable. Roger Bartlett argues that the relative importance of this factor should not be overestimated, since “serfdom may have slowed, but it did not prevent, the rapid growth of population in newly-opened areas.”<sup>7</sup>

Catherine’s main intention was to increase the population of the empire in general, and to use foreign settlers when integrating newly annexed territories. The opportunity to use settlers for the development of agriculture and to encourage new manufacturing production was not overlooked. Catherine’s regime was more generous to foreign colonists than to its own peasants, promising immigrants and their descendants a wide range of rights and privileges, including grants of land and money, tax exemptions, freedom of religion, and exemption from military service. The first German-speaking migrants arrived on the banks of the Volga River in 1764. In 1804 and 1812, Alexander I (1801 to 1825) published a series of decrees, setting new conditions for the extensive European immigration into the Russian Empire and facilitating a new influx from war-torn German lands to the Black Sea Steppe and Bessarabia. Over the years, immigrants and their offspring established colonies in the North Caucasus and Siberia as well. These would-be “German” colonists came from a variety of lands such as Baden, Swabia, Bavaria, the Palatine and West Prussia, and Württemberg. Most of them were Lutherans, but some were Roman Catholics, Mennonites, Calvinists, or members of smaller Christian denominations. According to Bartlett, the predominance of people from German lands among the early colonists was mainly the result of circumstances in Europe, rather than due to the preferences of the Russian government.<sup>8</sup>

In the view of Ihor Lyman, the migration of dozens of ethnic groups to the region produced a strong historiographical tradition considering this region as a conglomerate of different ethnicities and confessions. However, the documented evidence shows that a clear majority of the newcomers and settlers in the Northern Black Sea Steppe were Ukrainians coming from the Right-bank and Left-bank Ukraine, followed by Moldavans, Russians, and Jews.<sup>9</sup>

In 1800, an administration under the name of the Guardianship Office for New Russian Foreign Settlers (*Kontora opekunstva Novorossiiskikh inostrannykh*

*poselentsev*) was established in Ekaterinoslav city for the management of the affairs of the new colonies established in the Lower Dnipro River and Northern Black Sea regions. In 1818 it was replaced by a new administration called the Trustees Committee for Foreign Settlers in the Southern Region of Russia (*Popechitel'nyi Komitet ob inostrannykh poselentsakh Iuzhnogo kraia Rossii*), with offices in Kishinev (*Chişinău*) and Odessa. The local rural governance, with colonist village and district boards and appointed as well as elected clerks, came into existence.

Until the 1860s and 1870s, with the introduction of the Great Reforms, the German colonists enjoyed a distinct legal and social status that distinguished them from other groups of imperial peasants: they were administrated separately by the Russian government and possessed elements of self-governance. The colonist status (*kolonistskoe zvanie*)<sup>10</sup> specified their place within the imperial social matrix, relation to the polity, rights, and privileges, but also set a number of limitations. The administrative reforms of 1866 to 1871 annulled the separate administration of the colonies. The colonists were brought under the wings of general state administration. Because of dramatic shift in politics, tens of thousands of discontented ex-colonists migrated to America prior to 1914. Among the remnants, the twentieth century's revolutions, civil war, famine, and deportations of the later period caused enormous death tolls and turmoil.

The foreign settlers of the Black Sea Steppe were not captives, but eager immigrants who abandoned the turbulent conditions of the German lands of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century for a more promising life in the Russian imperial borderlands. Although the early decades were times of great hardships and misery, many of the colonial settlements reached prosperity.

### Subjects of the empire, objects of governance: Legal grounds for the colonists

Marriage, as the key social institution of the early modern times, organized the basic units of economic production and ownership: the farmstead, the workshop, the estate.<sup>11</sup> It was the only framework for legitimate, socially

approved sexual expression. This made it a colossally overdetermined institution carrying an unsurpassed density of social meanings. In this section, I illuminate the most crucial aspects of the colonists' legal position that preconditioned their marriage eligibility to a great extent, and I show how imperial logic drove the development of the colonist marriage regime over time.

The Russian imperial governance and entire legal order was based on differentiated collectivity, as Jane Burbank notes, or, as Eric Lohr describes it, on "separate deals."<sup>12</sup> Getting married, buying property, and changing one's place of residence were simply regulated according to the estate, religious denomination, ethnicity, or territorial location of the individuals involved. Age and gender were grounds for further specifications of rights within these categories.<sup>13</sup> The key aspect of old-regime subjecthood was its embrace of exceptions, social orders, and national and religious minorities. These separate deals produced very different combinations of rights and obligations before the law.<sup>14</sup> For Germans, Greeks, Serbs, Jews, Bulgarians, and many others, admission to the colonist rank presupposed denaturalization from their "native" citizenship<sup>15</sup> and naturalization into the Russian one. The entire legal order was based on the idea of separate packages of legal rights and obligations for each estate. Thus, the key moment in the naturalization process was not the acquisition of the general rights and obligations of the Russian subjecthood, but rather the entry into a social order (legal status, group, profession, or way of life).<sup>16</sup>

Colonist status as a distinct social condition was formulated mainly during the first decades of the nineteenth century in the set of imperial acts. A number of crucial instructions and regulations concerning the management and entitlements of colonists were adopted. The legal position of the colonists embodied some general imperial features common to all subjects under this designation, but also had some peculiarities, depending on the region of settlement (Volga, Saint Petersburg, or Bessarabia). The crystallization of the colonists' legal standing went hand in hand with the influx of new migrants and the foundation of many more colonial settlements in the Black Sea region, as well as the gradual forging of the vertical structure of the colonial administration.

The colonial administration and elected self-governing organs (village and district boards, chairmen, village major (*Schulze*) and major's assistant (*Beisitzer*)) were called to conduct the overall management and supervision of

the colonists. Communal and domestic issues—so-called “minor disputes and civil claims”—were their responsibility. In those proceedings, the colonial administration and self-governing organs were guided by The Instruction for the Internal Order and the Management over the New Russian Foreign Colonies (*Instruktsiia dlia vnutrennego raspriadka i upravleniia Novorossiiskikh innostrannykh kolonii*) (May 16, 1801) and its Addition (July 7, 1803). These legal acts introduced the strict regulation and surveillance of the colonists’ economic activities and everyday lives, and framed their behaviors, actions, and personal interactions.<sup>17</sup>

By the late eighteenth century, estates were defined by two legal principles: belonging to a society, and owing duties. The estates were regulated by laws that controlled social mobility.<sup>18</sup> The state objectives of collecting tax revenues and recruiting soldiers could easily be implemented by restricting mobility. At the same time, the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries were an era of Russian territorial conquest and subsequent colonization that changed the economic needs of the state and required at least some social mobility. As a result, the imperial laws were torn between the two conflicting demands of either restricting or favoring mobility. This was also the period during which all imperial subjects were bound to their positions through formal ascription to a particular society.<sup>19</sup>

The Decision of the State Council on Colonists’ Movement to Other Estates (*Reshenie Gosudarstvennogo Soveta o perekhode kolonistov v drugie sosloviia*), adopted in 1812, regulated and specified the colonists’ social mobility.<sup>20</sup> By that time, the state was interested in keeping the colonists in place and preventing their settlements from dilution and any disruption. Only then, in the view of the government, could the colonists perform diligent work and increase the productivity of their farms. According to this decision, it was forbidden to release the foreign colonists of the whole village from their status as colonists. From this time onwards, the social mobility of the colonists, similarly to that of other peasant and urban population groups, became bureaucratized. The colonist was allowed to move to another estate only with written permission from the village assembly of the colony.<sup>21</sup> No one could be released from the colonist rank unless they had not definitely chosen “another way of life” and had repaid the state debt. Crucial changes in perceiving social mobility and estates occurred only after the Emancipation in 1861.<sup>22</sup>

The Charter of the Colonies of Foreigners in the Empire (*Ustav o koloniiakh inostrantsev v Rossiiskoi imperii*), adopted in 1857, was the culmination of almost a century of legislative production regarding the colonists.<sup>23</sup> It compiled the legal acts regarding foreign colonists all over the empire, adopted during the last third of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The marriage and family rights of the colonists were declared in the *Charter*, yet specifically regulated by the Statutes of the Evangelical Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches of the Russian Empire, adopted in 1832 and 1857 respectively.

Neither of the documents, discussed above, nor the Catherinian decree of 1763, specified or even mentioned the procedure of getting married and divorced among the colonists. Those social practices were condensed into the first sentence of the Instruction for the Internal Order, claiming that “the main obligation of all settlers is to obey the law of their church.”<sup>24</sup> At the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, social practices regarding marriage and family issues rested under the full competence of respective churches and religious servitors. But this would not last long.

The colonists were allotted plots of land. Yet all colony land belonged to the colony in perpetuity, not to individual families.<sup>25</sup> The farm land could not be subdivided, but could be inherited by only one of the children, usually the youngest son, who then compensated other members of the family. According to the minor law, if the youngest son for some reasons could not inherit an allotment, the father had the right to appoint a guardian or another inheritor among his sons and relatives. So, the land allotment was indivisible, whereas other moveable and immovable property was divided between all the inheritors. In the case of the German colonists, the widow was supplied by a quarter of the property; daughters shared another quarter of property, if the testament did not state otherwise; the rest was equally divided among the sons. If there were no sons, widow and daughters were supposed to possess the land, unless one of the daughters got married or the widow remarried.<sup>26</sup> Marrying widows was economically beneficial for landless males and foreigners. It brought political representation, social recognition, and economic stability. This system of land tenure existed up until the 1860s, when the government encouraged the equal division of the land between all inheritors.<sup>27</sup> Apart from land allotments, the Catherinian decree of 1763 assured thirty years of so-called “grace” to the colonists, during which they were freed from any taxes and



duties. In 1806, the grace years were reduced from thirty to ten years.<sup>28</sup> On the expiration of “grace years,” colonists were charged with several duties.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the colonization became bureaucratized and more pragmatic in many ways, including when it came to the composition of the migrant populations. The governmental ambition of the early nineteenth century became that of settling a limited, well-selected number of migrants who could serve as a model in farming, commerce, and innovation. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, in a series of legal acts, those bearing the status of colonists were differentiated into a separate group of peasants, with assigned rights, obligations, and attributes, as well as separate colonial administration. They were also bound legally and socially, and to their places of settlement.

Most colonists also had financial obligations to the Russian government, individually imposed on each household. State debt repayment, and transfer or sale of the farm to a fellow colonist, were among the conditions for colonists moving to other estates. Both social and physical mobility became bureaucratized. Multiple meanings were ascribed to the colonist status: an obligation, an opportunity, a belonging, an identity, a way of life, and subordination. To a great extent, colonists’ legal position and their relation to the polity (yet another “separate deal”), predetermined their marriage and divorce eligibility.

## Governing the colonists, supervising their marriage

This section discusses the encounters between the colonists and the colonial authorities regarding the marriage conclusion and the character thereof in the first decade of the nineteenth century. I mainly focus on the settlers of the colonies of Josephstal, Jamburg, and Danzig founded during the period of 1787 to 1796.

For rulers of the Russian Empire, governance was about control over resources—territory and labor—and the social order required securing them. In order for tribute or taxes to be paid, the organizing and reproductive capacity of the population had to be sustained. In the eyes of the Russian rulers, only through surveillance and guardianship over the colonists could the goals

of colonization be achieved. In the nineteenth century, imperial subjects' rights in matters of marriage were established primarily by religion, but age, sex, occupation, marriage history, criminal record, and place of settlement were also considered by the law. The right to marry according to the rules of one's own faith was offered to most subjects of the Russian Empire. In accordance with the imperial differentiated governance, the rules regarding marriage were not uniform: Orthodox Christians, non-Orthodox Christians, and non-Christians could marry under laws particular to their religious group. Imperial marriage law, codified and published in the 1830s, both recognized differences in marriage practices and made some universalizing assumptions.

In the Russian Empire, the cultural diversity was accommodated by authorizing a plurality of legal regimes. However, as Jane Burbank underlines, authorities had to struggle on occasion to deal with subjects whose actions did not clearly fit within the cluster of a confession or a single specific legal order. Thus both intermarriage and conversion were painful practices that challenged the premises of the system and imperial governance.<sup>29</sup> In the imperial law, marriages were construed as being "mixed" only from a confessional perspective. Marriages between different ethnicities or races were neither regarded nor regulated as "mixed."<sup>30</sup> The marriage laws were only altered in 1861 to allow unions between people of different estates, but the principle of rights accorded to groups and the division of population by social status persisted as mechanisms of governance.<sup>31</sup>

In the eyes of the Russian government, organizing colonies on the basis of a common religious denomination principle facilitated the carrying out of religious rites by its members. It also supported their management. However, as it turned out in practice, it was hardly possible to maintain boundaries and segregation, and confessionally mixed colonies, particularly Roman Catholic–Lutheran ones, appeared.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was either the overseer—an inspector—of the respective colony, or the *Schulze* who notified the Guardianship Office for New Russian Foreign Settlers on colonists' intention to marry, and asked for the office's approval of marriage on behalf of the colonists. Between 1801 and 1807 Pavel Peleshnikov, Vasilii Develdeev, and Ivan Gsell, the overseers of the colonies, reported on the intentions of the residents of Josephstal, Jamburg, and Rybalsk colonies to marry. They also

claimed that there were “no obstacles,” assuring the absence of any negative consequences of the would-be unions to the colonist societies’ well-being, and asked for the Guardianship Office’s resolution.

These matters followed a rather simple procedure.<sup>32</sup> For example, Bartel Lutz, *Schulze* of Jamburg colony, reported on marital intentions among its residents and received positive resolutions from the Guardianship Office on the requests of Georg Lang and Maria Schtibertin, Andreas Orth and Katarina Lenz, Martin Frost and Anna Charlotte Ullerichin, Gottfried Weis and Widow Elisabeth Fahlin, and others.<sup>33</sup> The documented evidence provides no hints about what was behind the overseer’s statement of the “lack of obstacles” to the marriage conclusion, what the criteria of evaluation were, if any, or whether any sort of investigation had previously been conducted but not documented. No colonists’ personal petitions to marry were identified in the archive in respect to the above-mentioned regular cases. Apparently, they expressed their intentions in words to the overseers or *Schulze*, who then made these known in writing to the colonial administration.

During the first years of the nineteenth century, as evidence suggests, the intentions of the colonists of Jamburg and Josephstal colonies to marry were met with positive resolutions by the Guardianship Office, with only a few exceptions requiring supplementary proceedings.<sup>34</sup> The Guardianship Office authorized marriages of so-called “old” colonists and newly arrived ones, and of widows with colonist males.

In complex cases when one of the parties had underage children or property, additional commitments were required in order to obtain marriage approval. In January 1806, a marriage between Josephstal widower Johann Niche and widow Regina Klein was permitted after Johann Niche had committed in writing to support Regina Klein’s underage sons Johann, aged 14, Paul, aged 12, and her daughter Ester, aged 6, as his own and to teach them good morals, as well as how to run a farm.<sup>35</sup>

Irregularities happened as well. By January 5, 1801, having been engaged for quite some time, colonist Anna Catharina Neumeier from Jamburg colony<sup>36</sup> intended to marry Ekaterinoslav city carpenter Johann Michael Becker, with whom she had lived for a few months in Ekaterinoslav. The Guardianship Office prescribed that the overseer should identify Becker’s social belonging and suggested that marriage be allowed only in the case that he turned out to

be a colonist of Jamburg colony. By the end of January 1801, it was revealed that Becker was not a colonist, thus Neumeier should be sent back to her place of registry, to Jamburg colony, without permission to marry Becker.<sup>37</sup> As it turned out, despite the Guardianship Office's ban of marriage, Becker and Neumeier were married by Josephstal pastor Carl Biller.<sup>38</sup> When this fact became known to the Guardianship Office, in March 1801, Carl Biller was reprimanded and strictly prohibited from marrying colonists without the colonial administration's approval thereafter.

The Guardianship Office justified its disapproval of Becker and Neumeier's marriage and Carl Biller's reprimand in two ways. Firstly, Becker didn't belong to the colonist rank, and therefore was not under the office's authority. And secondly, "maids [*devki*] subordinated to this colony [i.e., Jamburg] are needed for its own colonists." As the colonial records suggest, Pastor Carl Biller knew from a letter from priest Thomas Majewski that all marriages had to be authorized by the office. But he broke the rule all the same.

On April 13, 1801, Dmitrii Golovin, Novorossiisk city mayor and court councilor, reported to the Guardianship Office that Anna Catharina Neumeier was ordered to return to Jamburg colony. Johann Michael Becker, resisting her deportation, claimed to be her husband and submitted a marriage certificate in support of this (Figure 3.1).<sup>39</sup> There was nothing the colonial authorities could do in this irregular case but to accept this marriage, albeit with indignation.

Due to the lack of any official directives and guidelines on how to approach and administer cross-border marriages,<sup>40</sup> the Guardianship Office considered it appropriate in the case of Neumeier-Becker's marriage to simply ban it. The colonial administration justified its ban by referring to their aspiration to keep the internal marriage market safe and to restrain non-colonists. It became particularly relevant in situations when a possible marriage would result in a woman's change of social belonging, and thereby her losing colonist status. From Pastor Biller's point of view, a potential groom's lack of colonist status constituted no obstacle for marriage conclusion.

Intermarriage had been a delicate issue, as Jane Burbank and Paul W. Werth have argued,<sup>41</sup> in part because it challenged the principle that people belonged to collectives with certain rights and obligations. From an imperial perspective, all marriages attained a legal force by virtue of their regulation by religious authorities recognized and empowered by the law.<sup>42</sup> By the beginning of the



nineteenth century, the cross-border marriages of the colonists were not specified and regulated in a specific way. But the situation did not remain unchanged. As the evidence suggests, the marriage requests of the colonists of Jamburg, Rybalsk, Danzig, and Josephstal were largely met with positive resolutions from the Guardianship Office. Filed by the overseers or *Schulze*, the requests followed a simple formal procedure.

### Married to the empire: Bureaucratization of the colonists' marriage

In this section I examine the legal architecture that aimed to condition the formation of the colonist marriage and extend control over it. In the 1810s several legal acts were adopted specifically targeting colonist marriage. The lawmaker became more explicit and specific about procedural requirements regarding colonists' marriage formation and dissolution. Colonist marriage became not only an object of lawmaking, but also a social category in need of regulation.

In March 1816 the Ministry of State Domains, in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior and Chief Manager of Spiritual Matters of Foreign Faiths, decreed that marriages of the colonists could be concluded based on the permission of local authorities.<sup>43</sup> It particularly enjoined the clergy in the colonies not to marry colonists without a written certificate from the overseers of the colonies and the mayor of the district boards confirming no legal obstacles to marriage conclusion.<sup>44</sup> The March Decree also strongly advised the overseers and the district boards that if no legal obstacles to marriage were revealed, written certificates should be granted to the colonists "without delay."<sup>45</sup> In October 1816, the Chief Guardian (*Glavnyi Popечitel'*) of the colonists issued a circular to all overseers and district boards, prescribing that they should make the March Decree known to all clerics of their respective boards.<sup>46</sup> From that point onward, marriages among the colonists were to be concluded solely on the grounds of the colonial authority's approval. Thus, the colonist administration was *de jure* introduced into the marital domain.

However, adding to the responsibilities of the colonial authorities by subjecting even marriage to their control had nothing in common with the

limited powers of enforcement and administrative problems typical of the Russian Empire. Eventual growth of the Guardianship Office staff in 1810<sup>47</sup> which, however, went hand in hand with the increase in numbers of foreign settlers in a region, had no visible effect on the actual surveillance over the colonists' personal interactions in the Northern Black Sea Steppe. The number of copies and reminders of the March Decree in the colonial archive from 1810 to the 1830s is remarkable, indicating its frequent violation. Although the March Decree was to be sent to all colonist district boards of the Black Sea colonies, the Trustees Committee repeatedly reminded ecclesiastical authorities, particularly the Roman Catholic ones, about the ban on marriage conclusion without secular authorities' permission.<sup>48</sup>

In the Russian Empire, as Anatolyi Remnev claims, the administrative problem regarding the relations between the center and the region included a dialog between two sides whose positions often did not coincide; thus the steady flow of instructions from the center could be effectively hampered by their non-fulfillment in the periphery.<sup>49</sup> On the one hand, there were the clergy's ignorance and possible obstructiveness, its pragmatic intentions and problem-solving strategies; on the other hand, there were the colonists' tricks and unawareness: all these contributed to an extensive correspondence between secular and religious authorities regarding the violation of the March Decree. The common implications of violations were penalties imposed on colonists and clergy, mostly reprimands and warnings. Even if marriages had been concluded without obeying the regulations, in most situations colonist authorities could do nothing except recognize such marriages.

As to the cross-border marriages, the official guidelines on how to deal with them in the Black Sea colonies appeared only in the early 1820s. By January 1820, the Trustees Committee specified the requirements for marriage conclusion particularly between colonists and non-colonists. Marriages could not be concluded without the knowledge of the colonial authorities in cases where a colonist male wished to marry a non-colonist female, or a colonist female wished to marry a non-colonist male, "because admission into the rank of the colonists or exclusion therefrom requires a special permit."<sup>50</sup>

Based on the suggestion of the Minister of the Interior on December 12, 1824,<sup>51</sup> on February 21, 1825, the Trustees Committee implemented a decree particularly addressing the colonist females. Indebted colonist widows and

daughters were prohibited from marrying non-colonists and leaving the colonist rank, unless their share of debt would be repaid either by them or for them.<sup>52</sup> A colonist female's marriage to a non-colonist male was inevitably perceived as her way out of the colonist rank, which essentially changed her social belonging. To be released from the colonist rank and admitted to another estate, a share of the female's colonist debt had to be repaid.<sup>53</sup>

Most legislation on social mobility and estate membership, Alison Smith argues, "either ignored women or treated them as mere appendages to their male relatives."<sup>54</sup> Men were legally registered in order to ensure the fulfillment of their duties. But because women had no such connection to the duties attributed to their social position, claims Smith, "communities had to register them only in the interests of keeping track of the larger population."<sup>55</sup> Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, a series of discussions between the Ministries of Finance and the Interior on the question of whether women should be considered a special category when it came to legislation regarding changing estate took place. Eventually, the Digest of Laws was amended in 1888 to include the notice that all peasant and urban women who wished to enter new societies as heads of households including no male souls would be allowed to do so solely on the basis of their requests, without presenting letters of acceptance. This, in the words of Smith, confirmed the view of women's roles as adjacent to estate societies.<sup>56</sup> However, I have identified a different pattern in respect to the colonist females of the Northern Black Sea Steppe.

The imperial law and legal order neither regarded nor officially regulated the situations in which Russian subjects belonged to no estate.<sup>57</sup> That did not mean, however, that this was not the case in practice. Before moving out of the colonist rank, an applicant had to be officially accepted into another group of imperial subjects. The leaving and joining of estates was often restricted by the issues of duty. Colonist debts and solvency turned out to become one of the main restraining factors on colonist marriage conclusion. Most of the colonist population in the empire was charged by coverable and irrevocable debts. Food and travel money,<sup>58</sup> expenses for church building, salary for clergy during "grace" years, and money spent on the purchase of lands—as irrevocable expenses—were to be paid in cases of emigration from the Russian Empire or moving to another estate. The authorities excessively provided colonists, at their request, with enormous interest-free loans for dwelling and for the



purchase of agricultural tools and cattle, which were to be progressively repaid by the colonists after “grace” years. The state loan was registered not to each colonist, but to the community of each colony. Communal responsibility became a sort of guarantee. The Catherinian decree stipulated tax-free repayment of this state loan after ten grace years, in equal shares, for three years. However, these terms had been repeatedly extended due to the colonists’ lack of solvency.<sup>59</sup>

The debt was equally imposed upon and calculated for all members of the farm (*khoziaistvo*), regardless of sex and age; the head of the farm was responsible for its repayment.<sup>60</sup> In contrast to Smith’s argument regarding women and their shifting place in the imperial social order, it was colonist females and their marriage eligibility that became particularly legislated and regulated, and in line with the duties, associated with the colonist status. Colonist women had similar duties to colonist men. Moreover, it was women who were seen as the ones potentially changing their social status through marriage.

In practice, when assuming the office, religious servitors and clerks were not provided with a step-by-step algorithm regarding how to marry and divorce the colonists. The orders and prescriptions regarding marriage conclusions procedure were inconsistent and dispersed. Despite a certain procedure of announcing new legal acts and prescriptions to the colonists, the evidence gives a strong impression that the colonists hardly knew the new legal acts; if they knew them at all, they learned about them in the course of social practices, or even *post factum*, after legal violations had been disclosed.

It will be an overestimation to claim a somewhat unified and standardized procedure for the colonists in obtaining marriage permission. The situation varied depending on specific cases, times, and circumstances. In the initial stage, the approval of marriage by parents or guardians was needed. If parents or guardians disapproved of the marriage, they were required to provide justified reasons for that. After obtaining their parents’ and village assembly’s approval (in case of cross-border marriages), a couple was to address the Guardianship Office/Trustees Committee through the overseer of the colony, who submitted a request for marriage conclusion. The colonists were prohibited from directly addressing the Guardianship Office; thus, overseers exercised two-way mediator functions between the colonial administration and colonists

regarding all practicalities. Marriage approval by the district board, which usually based its decision on the village assembly's verdict, was important.

As an alternative, the district board itself occasionally reported to an overseer about its colonists' intentions to marry. The overseer in turn petitioned the Guardianship Office/ Trustees Committee, which initiated an investigation in order to reveal whether the colonists would meet social economic requirements at this point.<sup>61</sup> If there were no obstacles from the Guardianship Office's point of view, it approved the marriage and issued a marriage certificate to be further submitted to the clergy. The marriage permission certificate was personally handed to the colonist couple by the overseer. Priests and pastors were supposed to additionally check age and kinship requirements, as well as voluntariness of marriage and confessional affiliation, and then to make three announcements in the church before the actual wedding ceremony. The routine of obtaining marriage permissions varied. However, the approval of parents, village assemblies in cases of cross-border marriages, and district boards were significant, and usually ensured the Guardianship Office's authorization of marriages.

In the most optimistic cases, receiving a paper certificate permitting the conclusion of marriage took a month or so from the moment a couple openly expressed their desire to marry. In cases when there were no obstacles, time was mainly needed for inquiries (*navedenie spravok*) about the couple.<sup>62</sup> In more complicated cases, connected with property and underage children, or in cases of remarriages, the waiting time for marriage permission could have been extended up to one year. The wedding ceremony could have also been delayed for numerous reasons, such as Lent and other religious holidays, non-availability of clerics in the colony, or arrangements regarding custody over property or minors. The personal lives of the colonists were greatly affected by economic and administrative factors, and were frequently placed in limbo.

To sum up, in the second decade of the nineteenth century, regulations that explicitly targeted marriages among the colonists were introduced. Surveillance and management, as the core duties of the colonial administration, were gradually extended to cover colonist marriage formation and dissolution. Expanding the control of the village and district mayors, as well as the guardianship offices, over colonist marriages resulted in a heavily

bureaucratized procedure of marriage conclusion. The marriage eligibility of colonist females became a target of specific legislation and regulation.

## Concluding discussion

Colonists were assigned a crucial mission in the colonization project: by populating the Steppe terrains they were to promote the economic development of the region, and to facilitate the integration of the Northern Black Sea Steppe with the rest of the empire. This was in exchange for land possession, along with other rights and attributes, assigned by the Russian monarchs. Along with universal requirements within the Russian Empire regarding colonist marriage such as age, health, and kinship, there were also demands originating from the colonist rank, and financial obligations to the Russian state. As soon as the legislation on the colonist status and its boundaries within the imperial social system was designed, in the period from 1810 to the 1820s, legal restrictions were imposed on colonist marriage. The new laws, regulating colonist marriage formation, aimed to predict and keep track of personal interactions, maintaining and securing the social boundaries and the fulfillment of duties associated with colonist status. Finally, from an official perspective, establishing order in marriage would positively influence the colonists' productivity and ensure the prosperity of the colonized region.

Legal restrictions on marriage imposed by the Russian government particularly targeted those females who intended to marry non-colonists. The Russian government viewed them as necessarily leaving the colonist rank and joining their husbands' estates. In this case, mandatory repayment of state debt became a condition for marriage conclusion. In contrast to Alison Smith's generalized findings regarding social mobility of the rural and town population in Russia, in which she stresses the state's abstention from legislating on women's social status and estate membership until the 1880s, the imperial logic with respect to the colonists and their social mobility through marriage was different. To a great extent, it was grounded in the economy of the colonization project. Such an emancipatory situation is connected to the issue of duties, regardless of gender.

Colonist females were equated with colonist males in their financial obligations to the state. The colonist debt was imposed on all members of the

household regardless of age and sex; it was also proportionally recalculated according to the subsequent family growth. For colonist females, the association of colonist rank with an obligation, social identity, belonging, and way of life was like that of the colonist males. The equal imposition of debts on both males and females at the settlement created a situation in which colonist females and their marriage eligibility also became the subject of legislation. In some cases, they could and did negotiate their social identities and even shared their social status with male foreigners, who, through marriage, gained a position within the imperial social and legal order.<sup>63</sup>

Colonist marriages were deeply fraught with the political implications of colonization. Far from representing a private matter of importance only to individuals, families, or local communities, such unions had considerable significance for the imperial governance of the region and colonization. Colonist marriage formation was shaped by the financial obligations and debts imposed on each family unit. In this chapter, I have argued that colonist marriage came to be regarded not only as a social institution to maintain good morals and sexual relations, but also, and primarily, as the bedrock on which the economic sufficiency and success of colonization and the welfare of the colonizing Northern Black Sea region rested.

The aim of extending control over marriage formation and of attracting the colonial regional and local authorities into its regulation was to assure and secure the economic interests of the state. Introduced matrimonial restrictions were an additional instrument to economically motivate colonists and to stimulate the profitability of their farms. They were also intended to guarantee the reimbursement of the Treasury's expenditure on colonists' settlements. Furthermore, the deployment of the marriage regime signified the integration of the colonists into the Russian imperial social matrix, their boundedness within the polity.

The Russian regime's aspirations to deploy the institution of marriage as an instrument of imperial policy are relatively known and brilliantly discussed by a few scholars. Kristin Collins-Breyfogle speaks about the hands-off-strategy of the Russian rulers in the nineteenth-century Caucasus in relation to the marriage and sexuality of the local population. This, in her opinion, is explained by the rulers' intention to preserve the fragile status quo in the Caucasus and avoid alienating the indigenous elites who helped to rule the region. Thus,

Russian officials usually modified imperial law to fit local law.<sup>64</sup> Paul Werth speaks about the clear intrusion and instrumentalization of marriage and its subordination to imperial politics in the Baltic and Western provinces by encouraging mixed Catholic-Orthodox marriages and Orthodox pre-eminence, and in order to integrate these contested and non-Russian regions into the Empire. However, those intentions met consistent rejections and obstructions from below.<sup>65</sup> In the Northern Black Sea Steppe, the marriage regime deployed with respect to the colonists was grounded in the economy of colonization, but also in the intention to control and secure allocated social borders of the colonist status.

## Notes

- 1 For more details about the findings presented in this chapter, see: Julia Malitska, *Negotiating Imperial Rule: Colonists and Marriage in the Nineteenth-Century Black Sea Steppe* (Stockholm: Södertörns Högskola, 2017).
- 2 *The Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire (Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii)* encompassed all types of legislative documents of the Russian Empire and is the most complete compilation of Russia's legislative acts, listed chronologically according to the order of their ratification by the Tsar. The codification of Russia's laws was undertaken in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The *Complete Collection* should not be confused with the *Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire (Svod zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii)*—a sixteen-volume edition, in which many laws were arranged in a kind of codex, that is, set out in a thematic, rather than a chronological, order.
- 3 Alison K. Smith, *For the Common Good and Their Own Well-Being. Social Estates in Imperial Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 61.
- 4 At the State Archive of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast [*Derzhavnyi arkhiv Dnipropetrovskoi oblasti*], further DADO – Fund 134, the Guardianship Office for New Russian Foreign Settlers and Ekaterinoslav Office for Foreign Settlers (1781–1857) [*Kontora opekunstva novorossiiskikh inostrannykh poselentsev, Ekaterinoslavskaia kontora inostrannykh poselentsev*]. At State Archive of Odesa Oblast [*Derzhavnyi arkhiv Odes'koi oblasti*], further DAOO, fund 6, Trustees Committee for Foreign Settlers in the Southern Region of Russia (1799–1876) [*Popechitel'nyi Komitet ob inostrannykh poselentsakh Iuzhnogo kraia Rossii*] and Fund 252, Odessa Office for Foreign Settlers of the Southern Region of Russia

- (1807–1850) [*Odesskaia kontora ob inostrannykh poseleentsakh Iuzhnogo kraia Rossii*].
- 5 From an enormous amount of literature, see: William G. Wagner, *Marriage, Property, and Law in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1–137; Jane Burbank, Mark von Hagen, and Anatoly Remnev (eds.), *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700–1930* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007); Kristin Collins-Breyfogle, *Negotiating Imperial Spaces: Gender, Sexuality and Violence in the Nineteenth-century Caucasus* (PhD dissertation, The Ohio State University, 2011); Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004).
  - 6 From a huge amount of literature, see: Hakan Kirimli, ‘Emigrations from the Crimea to the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no.5 (2008): 751–773; Bohdan Korolenko, “‘Istorychna kryvda’ iak idea ta lehytymatsiinyi faktor aneksii Kryms’koho hanstva Rosiis’koiu imperieiu: vytoky, ideolohichne zabezpechennia ta realizatsiia “novoi” polityky pamiaty, *Derzhavotvorchi ta tsyvilizatsiini zdobutky ukrainskogo narodu. Natsional’na ta istorychna pamiat’* (Kyiv: Stylos, 2011), 283–303; Bohdan Korolenko, ‘Vkhodzhennia Krymu do Rosiiskoi imperii: stabilizatsiini zakhody rossiiskoi administratsii (1783-seredyna 1784)’, *Kultura narodov Prichernomoria*, no. 51 (2004): 104–110.
  - 7 Roger P. Bartlett, *Human Capital: The Settlement of Foreigners in Russia, 1762–1804* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 26.
  - 8 Bartlett, *Human Capital*, 57–59, 65–66.
  - 9 Ihor Lyman, *Rosiis’ka pravoslavna tserkva na pivdni Ukrainy ostannioi chverti XVIII – seredyny XIX st.* (Zaporizhzhia: ‘Tandem-U’, 2004), 62. Soviet historian Vladimir Kabuzan, in his statistical research on the ‘populating’ of ‘New Russia’ in 1719–1858 investigated in detail the dynamics of this process: the ethnic and social composition of the people involved, and the interplay between spontaneous and state-inspired colonization. He concluded that during this period the Northern Black Sea region was mainly spontaneously populated by Ukrainians. According to Kabuzan, in 1745 the share of Ukrainians of the population in the Northern Black Sea region was the highest ever, constituting around 97 percent of the population. Vladimir Kabuzan, *Zaselenie Novorossii (Ekaterinoslavskoi i Khersonskoi gubernii) v 18-pervoi polovine 19 veka (1719–1858 gg.)* (Moskva: ‘Nauka’, 1976), 255–256, 266, 268.
  - 10 *Colonist status (kolonistskoe zvanie)*, *colonist rank (kolonistskii rang)*, and *class of the colonists (klass kolonistov)* were the terms that were used interchangeably regarding the colonists, implicating the distinctiveness of this group.

- 11 For more about matrimony and gender roles in early modern times see: Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 157–176.
- 12 Jane Burbank, 'An Imperial Rights Regime. Law and Citizenship in the Russian Empire', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, no. 3 (2006): 397–431; Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 2–3.
- 13 Burbank, 'An Imperial Rights Regime', 407.
- 14 Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, 2–3.
- 15 In line with Jane Burbank, William Wagner, Eric Lohr, and Alexander Morrisson, I define the term 'citizenship' in a narrow sense, as status denoting membership in a country, usually documented with a passport or comparable document. 'Subjecthood' is used in the same way, to refer to the membership status of the subjects of the tsar.
- 16 Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, 53. See also the broader discussion of citizenship and legal status within empires in Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean,' in this volume, 35.
- 17 'Instruksiia dlia vnutrennego rasporiadka i upravleniia Novorossiiskikh inostrannykh kolonii [May 16, 1801]', in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii. Dokumenty vysshykh organov vlasti i voennogo komandovaniia. 1652–1917*, comp. Viktor Dizendorf (Moskva: MFD, Materik, 2006), 116–131; 'Dopolnenie k Instruksii vnutrennego rasporiadka i upravleniia Novorossiiskikh inostrannykh kolonii [July 7, 1803]', in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 136–142.
- 18 Here by *estate* I mean *soslovie*, omitting the historiographical debate on the semantics, and conceptual distinction between estate and *soslovie*. For more, see: Simon Dixon, 'Russia's Soslovie (Estate) Paradigm Revisited. Review of *For the Common Good and Their Own Well-Being: Social Estates in Imperial Russia* by Alison K. Smith', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 93, no.4 (2015): 732–736, but also the works by Vasilii Kliuchevskii, Gregory L. Freeze, Boris Mironov, Alison K. Smith.
- 19 Smith, *For the Common Good*, 48–51, 78, 150, 208.
- 20 'Vysochaishe utverzhdennoe mnenie Gosudarstvennogo Soveta. O pravilakh na uvol'nenie kolonistov v drugie zvaniia [November 27, 1812]', in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 171–172.
- 21 DADO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 2691, *O prichislenii kolonistov i perechislenii iz odnoi kolonii v druguiu po Bessarabskomu vodvoreniuu, 1832–1833*, 40–42.
- 22 The Emancipation Reform of 1861 in Russia was the first and most important of the liberal reforms effected during the reign of Emperor Alexander II (1855–1881). The reform abolished serfdom throughout the Russian Empire.

- 23 The *Charter* consisted of nine sections and 577 paragraphs, see: 'Ustav o koloniiakh inostrantsev v Rossiiskoi imperii. Svod Uchrezhdenii i ustavov o koloniiakh inostrantsev v imperii [1857]', in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 420–492.
- 24 Instruksiia dlia vnutrennego rasporiadka i upravleniia Novorossiiskikh inostrannykh kolonii [May 16, 1801], in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 116.
- 25 On Russian inheritance policies see: Roger Bartlett, *Human capital*, 72–73.
- 26 'Ustav o koloniiakh inostrantsev v Rossiiskoi imperii [1857]', in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 441–442.
- 27 On the agrarian relations of German and Mennonite colonies in the second half of the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century see: Oleksii Zamuratsev, *Nimets'ki kolonii Pivdnia Ukrainy u druhii polovyni deviatnadsiatoho – na pochatku dvadtsiatoho st.* (Dys. kand. inst. nauk, Kyivs'kyi Natsional'nyi Lingvistychnyi Universytet, 2008), 90–99.
- 28 For more about the rates of land tribute in the colonies of foreigners in the Russian Empire at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see: Boris Malinovskii, 'Stavka pozemel'noi podat' v koloniiakh inostrantsev na territorii Rossiiskoi imperii (rubezh XVIII–XIX vv.)', *Istoriia torhivli, podat'kiv ta myta* 7, no.1 (2013): 82–86.
- 29 Burbank, 'An Imperial Rights Regime', 408–409.
- 30 Paul W. Werth, 'Empire, Religious Freedom, and the Legal Regulation of "Mixed" Marriages in Russia', *The Journal of Modern History* 80, (2008): 298.
- 31 Jane Burbank, 'Thinking Like an Empire: Estate, Law, and Rights in the Early Twentieth Century', in *Russian Empire*, 199. On diverse and ambiguous status of groups within the Italian Empire see Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean', in this volume, 40.
- 32 The paperwork of the colonial administration, both in German and Russian, is not infrequently characterized by negligence. At times, the names of the individuals are confused, and several, slightly different, variations of the same name circulate in the same file. In the original translations and records composed in Russian, the German surnames of the colonists are usually Russified beyond recognition. Polish names were also Germanized.
- 33 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 56, *Po predstavleniiu smotritelei i prikazov o pozvoilenii kolonistam vstupať v brak*, 1801–1807, pp. 5, 19–20, 21–22, 24, 26, 30, 36, 38, 82, 86.
- 34 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 56, pp. 5–8, 20–104.
- 35 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 56, p. 89.
- 36 Jamburg colony, settled by Catholics, situated 17 *versts* from Ekaterinoslav city. One *versta* equals 1,066,781 meters.
- 37 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 56, pp. 1, 7.



- 38 Carl Biller was a Lutheran pastor of Josephstal district colonies during 1801–1826 and Swedish district colonies during 1801–1828.
- 39 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 56, pp.13–15, 17–18.
- 40 By *cross-border marriage* I mean a marriage of a colonist with a person of another social background—a different status or estate—or a non-Russian subject.
- 41 Burbank, 'An Imperial Rights Regime', 397–431; Werth, 'Empire, Religious Freedom', 296–331.
- 42 Burbank, 'An Imperial Rights Regime', 408.
- 43 This *recommendation (predstavlenie)*, having the validity of law, was not found in the *Complete Collection of Laws*.
- 44 DAOO, fund 252, inventory 1, file 28, *O sovershenii brakov mezhdu kolonistami po svidetel'stvam svetskogo nachalstva*, 1816, p. 6.
- 45 DAOO, fund 252, inventory 1, file 28, p. 1.
- 46 DAOO, fund 252, inventory 1, file 28, p. 6.
- 47 In 1810, the staff of the Guardianship Office had risen to 55 people, see: *Popechitel'nyi Komitet ob inostrannykh poseleentsakh Iuzhnogo kraia Rossii. 1799–1876: Annotirovannaia opis' del 1799–1818*, vol.1, ed. Olga Konovalova (Odessa: 'Astroprint', 1998), 12–13.
- 48 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 1600, *Po raportu Bessarabskoi Kontory o vospreschenii sviashchennikam rimsko-katolicheskogo ispovedaniia sovershat' braki bez dozvoleniia mestnogo kolonistskogo nachalstva*, 1822–1826, p. 4.
- 49 Anatolyi Remnev, 'Siberia and the Russian Far East in the Imperial Geography of Power,' in *Russian Empire* 432.
- 50 DAOO, fund 6, collection 1, file 1600, p. 2.
- 51 Interestingly, the Prescription of the Ministry of the Interior dated December 12, 1824, if we believe the chronology of the archival file, was not found in the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire* either.
- 52 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 1910, *O vstuplenii kolonistki Shefer v zakonnyi brak s inostrantsem Vil'gel'mom Germanom, ne podlezhashchemu kolonistskomu vedomstvu*, 1826, p. 3.
- 53 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 2459, *Ob otpravlennykh v kaznacheistvo den'gakh v popolnenie dolga za kolonistok, vyshedshykh v zamuzhestvo za storonnikh liudei*, 1829–1833; DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 4153, *O vzykanii kazennogo dolga s kolonistskoi docheri Sabiny Nol'd kolonii Geidel'berg po sluchaiu vykhoda v zamuzhestvo za postoronnego cheloveka*, 1836, p. 2; DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 6878, *O brake Ioganna Bekera s Marieiu Mints i o vzykanii s nee kazennogo dolga*, 1843; DAOO, fund 6, inventory 2, file 12760, *Ob iskliuchenii iz kolonistskogo zvaniia kolonii Frantsfeld Barbary Dertsaf po sluchaiu vstupleniia v brak*, 1849–1853.

- 54 Alison K. Smith, 'The Shifting Place of Women in Imperial Russia's Social Order,' *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 51, no.2 (2010): 2, <http://www.cairn.info/revue-cahiers-du-monde-russe-2010-2-page-353.htm> [accessed January 5, 2016].
- 55 Smith, 'The Shifting Place,' 7.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 57 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 4179, *O zhelanii gnadental'skogo kolonista Georga Mikhaelia Mertsa vstupit' v brak s vdovoiu Reginoiu Ziber i ob uvoľnenii ego iz kolonistskogo zvaniia s dozvoľeniem ostavat'sia v Rossii inostrantsem*, 1836.
- 58 From the time when they crossed the Russian border and until their settlement, the migrants received the food money from the Russian government: 3 kopecks per adult and 4.5 kopecks per child.
- 59 'Vysochaishe utverzhdenyi doklad Ministra vnutrennikh del. O pravilakh dlia priniatiia i vodvorenii inostrannykh kolonistov [February 20, 1804]'; *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 144–147; 'Vysochaishe utverzhdennoe mnenie Gosudarstvennogo Soveta. O pravilakh na uvoľnenie kolonistov v drugie zvaniia [November 27, 1812]'; in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 171–172; 'Ustav o koloniiakh inostrantsev v Rossiiskoi imperii. Svod Uchrezhdenii i ustavov o koloniiakh inostrantsev v imperii [1857]'; in *Nemtsy v istorii Rossii*, 458–459.
- 60 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 3764, *O brakosochetanii, peredache khoziaistv i prichislenii kolonistov kolonii Sarata*, 1835–1836, p. 24.
- 61 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 5299, *O prichislenii kolonistov, peredache khoziaistv i brakosochetanii po Ekaterinoslavskomu vodvoreniiu*, 1839–1842, pp. 122, 132.
- 62 DAOO, fund 6, inventory 1, file 613, *O khudykh postupkakh kolonista derevni Klostendorf Iogana Tovbergera i zheny ego Barbary*, 1812–1813. Similar enquiries were conducted in the Italian Empire. Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean,' in this volume, 40.
- 63 Malitska, *Negotiating Imperial Rule*, 220–233.
- 64 Collins-Breyfogle, *Negotiating Imperial Spaces*, 75, 76, 87, 90, 152, 166.
- 65 Werth, 'Empire, Religious Freedom,' 296–331.

Part II

Intimate Relationships and Imperial  
Encounters



## Interpreting an Execution in German East Africa. Race, Gender, and Memory<sup>1</sup>

Bettina Brockmeyer

Research on gender and empire has underlined the significance of sexuality for imperial rule. It has been argued that European colonizers, especially during New Imperialism, defined a sexual order that was both aligned with and influenced by the political order.<sup>2</sup> According to the liberal gender concepts of Europe's colonizing countries, European men should not be restricted in their personal choices, on the one hand. On the other hand, racism was a foundation of colonialism that assumed a hierarchical "categorical identification"<sup>3</sup> of humans into different "races," and that categorization was endangered when colonial men engaged with locals.<sup>4</sup> The colonial racist order was always gendered. This gendered colonial order and its afterlife are the subjects of this chapter.

Though the perception of danger in relationships between colonizers and colonized was a constant, there was a shift at the beginning of the twentieth century from the limited acceptance of relationships between European men and non-European women to the thorough condemnation of them. In fact, colonial men and women and their compatriots in the mother country increasingly perceived "going native"<sup>5</sup> as a specifically moral threat, so that a growing "ideology of dissimilation" called for the rigid separation of Europeans and Africans in British, Dutch, and German colonies alike.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, therefore, colonial propaganda in the metropole aimed at changing the fact that European men outnumbered European women in the colonies. In her study of the German case, *German Women for Empire*, Lora Wildenthal shows how members of the Women's League of the German

Colonial Society advertized the importance of white women in the colonies as representatives of European civilization.<sup>7</sup>

Only in German colonies, like German Southwest Africa (1905), German East Africa (1907) and Samoa (1912), were so-called “mixed marriages” officially banned.<sup>8</sup> Still, no European colonial power welcomed them. For example, men in the Cape Colony married to African women were excluded from colonial circles and societies.<sup>9</sup> Such regulations and attitudes mostly concerned men because the discourse about “(not) going native” was mainly about men. Women were not usually included in the discussion of the danger of “going native,” and, when they were, it was a result of their class, as Laura Ann Stoler shows for the East Indies. “Mixed marriages” involving European wives were said to occur only in “certain classes of the inhabitants.”<sup>10</sup>

However, it is important to note, and the assumption of this chapter, that this does not mean that there were no worries about European women of all social backgrounds having relationships with African men. On the contrary, by no means were African men to be allowed to conquer European women. This would undermine the foundation of the colonial order, for the European man was the only conqueror in that order. Philippa Levine argues convincingly for the British Empire that it was always very troubling when white women engaged sexually with black men.<sup>11</sup>

The same can be said of the German Empire.<sup>12</sup> Lora Wildenthal provides a paradigmatic case for German East Africa. An African teacher at the school for colonizers and diplomats, the *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen*, in Berlin, married a German woman at the beginning of the twentieth century. Having decided to live in the colony, they sailed to German East Africa, but the woman was forbidden to disembark at the colonial ports of Tanga and Dar es Salaam. Thus, it was impossible for the couple to live together in the husband’s homeland, and they had to return to Germany.<sup>13</sup> However, this sort of thing was not always the case. Katja Kaiser considers a couple in Qingdao, in the German colony of Kiautschou, in China. Though the wife was German and the husband of Chinese descent, they were allowed because of their wealth to settle in the European quarter of the city.<sup>14</sup> Wildenthal’s and Kaiser’s cases demonstrate, first, the different practices that different German colonies followed and, second, the significance of class affiliation.<sup>15</sup> And the fact that

both cases were widely discussed, and that such couples aroused great curiosity at the time, illustrates their uncommonness.

In what follows, I present what may have been a love affair between an East African man and a German woman. I shall argue that the rigid administrative practices of German East Africa and the discourse that prevailed among the colonists concealed what may have been the couple's activities, which would have violated the colonial sexual order, and, furthermore, that this discourse continues to influence historiography today. We hardly ever find depictions of taboo sexual encounters. Instead we find narrations of events that are mainly copied from European sources. The story that I want to analyze, which comes from the colonial archive, is about the hanging of an African *Sultan*, which is what the Germans called local leading men, in East Africa in 1897 during the German colonization. The execution can perhaps be described as either the result of political treason or the lethal ending to a story of forbidden love. The executed man, Mpangile, was a member of a distinguished African family and the brother of Mkwawa, who was famous for his rebellion against the German occupation. Both descriptions involve Magdalene Prince, who wrote and later published a diary that is a source still cited today. Prince was the wife of the German commander of occupation forces in Iringa, in the Uhehe region of today's Tanzania, which Mkwawa had ruled before the German conquest.

I address the execution from different perspectives. Stoler recommends analyzing colonialism "along the archival grain,"<sup>16</sup> by which she means that historians should try to understand the inherent rationale of a colonial archive before they disclose its irregularities and hidden information. Or, in Stoler's words, we should read "along" the "grain" before reading "against" it. Her advice structures this chapter. I consider colonial sources as belonging to a colonial archive whether or not they have actually been deposited in one. After reconstructing the facts as they have come down to us, I, first and mainly, describe the circumstances of the hanging on the basis of the sources provided by Magdalene Prince and other contemporary witnesses. Second, I bring in different present-day perspectives. I look at some of the current Western research on the history of the colonization of Uhehe, and I present a Tanzanian perspective. As I show, European research on German colonialism interprets the hanging as an effect of colonial rule, but Tanzanian historians tell a completely different story. I next consider the different ways in which

latter-day members of the families that were involved remember the story of the execution. I argue that taking the Tanzanian perspective into account helps to broaden today's view of the "colonial situation," to quote the famous words of George Balandier, who coined this expression to denote a minority's violent rule over a majority.<sup>17</sup> By including different historical and current perspectives on the events, I not only highlight the agency of the people involved but also call into question common interpretations of the processes of colonization.<sup>18</sup> I conclude that most of the interpretations of these events until today are based on colonial knowledge, or, as Juhani Koponen puts it, "the empirical basis for much of what we think we now know was provided by colonial scholars."<sup>19</sup>

### The story: A hanging in German East Africa

Beginning in 1885, the German army together with *Askaris*, African soldiers serving in the German colonial forces, conquered land in East Africa that today includes Tanzania and parts of Rwanda and Burundi. From the start, there was opposition and uprisings against German rule.<sup>20</sup> Opposition was especially fierce in the region of Uhehe, which is in the center of Tanzania, south of the capital of Dodoma. Before the German conquest, Mutwa Mkwawa was the most powerful ruler in the region.<sup>21</sup> He belonged to the Hehe, a heterogeneous and warlike group continually expanding its territory, according to European geographical sources of the nineteenth century. German and British colonizers called, and thereby made, the Hehe a "tribe."<sup>22</sup> A German commander of troops in the region, Ernst Nigmann, described them as the "tinderbox" of the colony.<sup>23</sup> His characterization was in line with European research of the day. However, it was also a way of raising the prestige of the colonial forces that finally quashed Hehe resistance.

In 1891, Mutwa Mkwawa defeated a German expeditionary force under the command of Emil von Zelewski. Thereafter, the Germans vengefully pursued Mkwawa.<sup>24</sup> His main pursuer was Captain Tom Prince, who commanded the military station that he had set up in the autumn of 1896 in the captured town of Iringa, close to Mkwawa's former stronghold at Kalenga. From Iringa, he tried for several years to capture the fugitive and conducted an extermination campaign against the Hehe.<sup>25</sup> Mkwawa went into hiding but continued to lead



the resistance until 1898, when he shot himself to avoid capture. German soldiers took possession of his skull and presented it to the local people. The skull subsequently had a famous career; it was mentioned in the Versailles Treaty and was the subject of investigations and bargains until 1954, when the British governor of Tanganyika, Edward Twining, claimed to have found it in a museum in Bremen and brought it back to Kalenga.<sup>26</sup>

In Iringa, Prince was accompanied by his wife, Magdalene Prince, who saw herself, and was celebrated as, the first “white woman” in the interior of Africa.<sup>27</sup> Magdalene Prince, *née* von Massow, came from an aristocratic Prussian family with a long military tradition. She became Magdalene von Prince when her husband was ennobled at the beginning of the twentieth century for his colonial achievements.<sup>28</sup>

In 1897, Prince installed Mpangile, Mkwawa’s brother, as the region’s *Sultan*. Two months later, Mpangile was convicted of collaboration with his outlaw brother and being a threat to the colony. He was hanged, and his wives and children were imprisoned. This is the story contemporary German sources tell, though it varies with regard to who accused Mpangile of collaboration and to the truth of the accusation. Some sources say that Mpangile did collaborate with Mkwawa, and others say that Mkwawa made it look as if his brother were collaborating in retaliation for Mpangile’s cooperation with the Germans.<sup>29</sup>

Against that background, Mpangile’s hanging can be viewed as a typical act of colonial suppression. From the beginning, uprisings against German colonization were continuous;<sup>30</sup> Mkwawa’s rebellion was just one example but a famous one. Hence, the hanging can be seen, and mostly is seen, as part of the military’s campaign to conquer the region of Uhehe. However, I will come to a different conclusion after presenting the contemporary sources, today’s research, and some familial memories.

## Magdalene Prince’s story and the official contemporary view

Magdalene Prince kept a diary during her time in Iringa. It was first published in 1903, followed by a second edition (1905) and then a third in 1908, which included entries about her new start as a planter in the Usambara Mountains. The second edition was reprinted in 2012 with the original text from 1905 and

a new cover but with no historical critical introduction or any other explanation.<sup>31</sup> All of the editions tell the story of Magdalene Prince's first years in East Africa. That story starts in 1896, when she and her husband left Dar es Salaam for Iringa and finishes symbolically with the celebration of the German Emperor's birthday in Dar es Salaam in 1900, the couple having left Iringa for a holiday in Germany and Tom Prince's retirement from the military. The diary shows that Prince was the master of her biography, if we understand a biography as an intentionally arranged story of someone's life events.<sup>32</sup> She presented herself as a loving partner; prudent and hardworking housewife; caring stepmother of the African children who were given to her as a "present" and a courageous white woman always aware of her position vis-à-vis black men.<sup>33</sup>

The diary includes the story, which other sources also tell with the same spin, of Magdalene Prince entering the colony. Tom and Magdalene Prince were deeply in love, and they fought for their love, refusing to separate even when they came to the unknown and dangerous wilderness. The story, as these sources tell it, influenced the couple's later biographers. One telling example is Herbert Kranz's two-volume novel *Die weiße Herrin von Deutsch-Ost und Abenteuer in Uhehe*, which he wrote in the 1930s, inspired by Magdalene Prince's life.<sup>34</sup> The female protagonist, Maleen, falls in love as a girl with Lutz, a soldier in the Prussian army.<sup>35</sup> Her father is opposed for reasons of status to having a lowly soldier as a son-in-law. So, Lutz leaves the army and takes ship to East Africa in order to enlist in the colonial army under the command of Wissmann,<sup>36</sup> where rapid advancement is supposed to be easier than in Prussia.<sup>37</sup> Needless to say, Lutz is commissioned an officer and decorated, and, when he returns on leave, Maleen's father (after a few complications) consents to the marriage. The newlywed couple books passage to East Africa. After arriving, they travel inland where Lutz resumes command of operations against the rebel Quawa.<sup>38</sup> Maleen stays by Lutz's side as he pursues the fugitive chief. Along the way, she brings German culture to the Africans and even impresses Quawa, for "she can hold *Schauri* like a Chief and wins the hearts of black men."<sup>39</sup>

Kranz's story is typical of German colonial-revisionist culture in the years before the Second World War.<sup>40</sup> Biographies, novels, and plays of the period praise Prince as a remarkable woman who was gentle and brave and took

European culture to Africa.<sup>41</sup> Most of these authors referred to Magdalene von Prince's diary, and it seems that some were able to speak with her in person. Prince does seem to have been eager to establish her place in colonial memory. However, the authors of this literature could also have consulted other published sources of the time. Eduard von Liebert, for example, Governor of German East Africa from 1896 to 1901, praised Magdalene Prince as a "glowing example" for German women to follow in his autobiographical *90 Tage im Zelt*, which he published in 1897, after returning from a visit to Uhehe.<sup>42</sup> In short, published works from Prince's day to the 1930s described her as just the sort of woman that the Women's League of the German Colonial Society, according to Wildenthal, promoted in pursuing their own colonial purposes.

Such a narrative demanded an adversary worthy of its heroine, and it was the leading family of the Hehe people. Military, geographical, and missionary publications alike described the Hehe as a warlike "tribe" that controlled one of the colony's major caravan routes, a picture that novelists like Kranz adopted.<sup>43</sup> They described Mutwa Mkwawa as setting ambushes and conducting hit-and-run raids, while Mpangile was presented as the intelligent and open-minded brother who was friendly and cooperative with the Germans. That is, there were two strong and clever Africans; one was bad and the other was good. The story was as simple and neat as that. Mpangile was the good man, and the good-looking man. For example, the Catholic missionary Alfons Adams published a book about his two-year stay in German East Africa in which he spent a whole chapter on Mpangile, calling him his friend and praising his intelligence and "open and good looking appearance."<sup>44</sup>

Certainly there were other narratives, at least about the Prince's. The glowing picture of Magdalene Prince reflects just one perspective, the one that Magdalene Prince had herself fashioned. Unpublished sources give a different picture of Prince and her husband. The Catholic missionary Severin Hofbauer, who was in charge of the nearby mission station at Tosamaganga, complained several times in the mission's chronicle about the unfriendly and domineering commander and his wife.<sup>45</sup> And the colonial archive holds files from the period after 1900, when Prince was living as a planter in the Usambara Mountains, that tell the story of a racist woman who frequently yelled at and hit her workers.<sup>46</sup> These accounts at least give us a different picture from the one that Prince carefully produced and spread.

At the same time, they reveal what Heike Schmidt calls “colonial intimacy,” by which she means, in part, that the daily lives of colonists were characterized by quarrels, envy, resentment, and their defamation of one another.<sup>47</sup> However, “colonial intimacy” also describes the daily communal lives of Europeans and Africans. Schmidt very convincingly argues for the importance in the “colonial situation” of living side by side in “shared spaces.”<sup>48</sup> The government’s files say that in Usambara Magdalene Prince, who lived in close contact to her workers and servants, abused them and ignored their needs. None of these sources hint about such behavior during her time in Uhehe. However, there is evidence that she may have engaged in another form of intimacy.

### Mpangile and Magdalene: A love story?

In her diary, Magdalene Prince spends a lot of time glorifying Mpangile; she wrote about a hero, which I read as a hidden memorial to him. But, as there was a tradition in German literature of writing about “noble” Africans, what I believe to be a memorial might just be a trope.<sup>49</sup> The “beautiful black” expressed exotic colonial fantasies that resonated in the German Empire.<sup>50</sup> So, making Mpangile into a black Winnetou was probably a good way of selling the book. Geographers and members of the German military also described the Hehe as a beautiful people. For example, in describing his expedition in the late 1870s the British geographer Joseph Thomson wrote, “The Wahehe are upon the whole a rather good-looking class of negroes, not very dark colored, and having very fine muscular figures.”<sup>51</sup>

However, let us have a look at the words Prince used to describe Mpangile and see if they seem to be just tropes. She repeatedly emphasized the chief’s bearing and wrote that his “brave stature” attracted attention, he differed “favorably” from his fellows and his “energetic, free appearance, and his candid look reveal the best of his race.”<sup>52</sup> She added that he was a “tall, handsome man.”<sup>53</sup> However, it was more than his beauty that attracted Prince; she also stressed Mpangile’s outstanding wit and intelligence. She seemed to have enjoyed their conversations: “They [Mpangile and his half-brother, B.B.] know how to converse well, their bright questions reveal inquisitiveness and intelligence, they try to adopt our European behavior.”<sup>54</sup> Prince did not condemn, in accord with European “theories

of dissimulation,”<sup>55</sup> her guests’ adoption of European manners; on the contrary, she appreciated it. She went so far as to say, “One does not get the feeling of talking to blacks.”<sup>56</sup> She also remarked in that same entry that Mpangile and his half-brother were very gallant in that they always kissed her hand.

The diary’s climax is the inauguration of Mpangile as *Sultan* on Christmas 1896. As the diarist described the event (using the less common spelling “Mpangire” instead of “Mpangile”): “On Tom’s right-hand side was the proud, stately appearance of Mpangire who carries himself in full consciousness of his dignity – every inch a king, a true representative of the Mkwawa lineage.”<sup>57</sup> And she proudly stated that all eyes were on her husband and Mpangile, even referring to them as a “focal point: my husband and Mpangire.”<sup>58</sup> Her words tell of the two men as bound together, standing equally in the center of attention, thus verbally breaking the “color bar” that she at the same time helped to maintain with the publication of her diary.

Like many of her contemporaries, Magdalene Prince usually thought of Africans as “children.”<sup>59</sup> Though she mentioned that she had learned to differentiate among members of “the black race” and remarked that some were knowledgeable even without schooling, she still used the child topos.<sup>60</sup> In writing that she could distinguish members of different African populations, she presented herself as an experienced colonist of distinguished knowledge of Africa. However, another of her publications proves that this self-attribution of expertise was self-serving. In 1907, Prince published an article on her life as a planter in the Usambara Mountains. In this article, we again find the remark that Africans are children, but she added that they would never grow up.<sup>61</sup> In sum, her attitude reveals her conviction of white superiority. Thus, her putting Mpangile and Tom together as the center of attention without qualification is extraordinary in light of her racial thinking.

Later, though, at the end of January 1897, Prince’s diary reveals her doubts about Mpangile’s loyalty. The author was still meeting with Mpangile but wrote that she was more distant, having heard rumors of his secret cooperation with Mkwawa. Prince also mentioned that her husband did not fear the consequences of Mpangile’s collaboration with his brother. Nevertheless, Tom Prince had Mpangile arrested for treason in mid-February.<sup>62</sup>

Mpangile did not confess which Magdalene Prince took as proof that Hehe men were not traitors but “significant and able negroes.”<sup>63</sup> She wrote that she

was emotionally unable to attend the trial and, instead, spent the time with Mpangile's imprisoned wives. In fact, she stated that she "could not motivate herself to do anything."<sup>64</sup> According to Prince, Mpangile's last concern just before his execution was about what would happen to his children. After Mpangile's death, Prince summarized her feelings as follows:

All Europeans fancied him, I was also so dazzled by his pretty face, the free gaze, the big eyes, the mannerly and gentle nature, the chivalrous tone, his fast, smart grasp of things, that his sudden end affected me deeply; I wept bitterly, and still I am in mourning for the black gentleman, even though my rationality struggles against it.<sup>65</sup>

This statement contains all of her previous praise: beauty, gallantry, wit, and intelligence. The dazzled Magdalene Prince cited no less than eight attributes to explain her attraction, which is why I claim that she built a verbal memorial in her diary to the handsome and bright gentleman whose last thoughts were of his children.

Adams, the missionary who was also impressed by Mpangile, attributed a different last concern to the *Sultan*. According to him, Mpangile asked the surrounding Hehe to support his brother in his fight against the Germans: "The mood of the people was uncomfortable. From the scaffold Mpangire called on the Wahehe to carry on a war against the Masungu. From then on treacherous murder started."<sup>66</sup> In contrast to Prince's narration about a caring father, this is a description of a doomed man calling for vengeance. Adams' description supports my contention that Prince wrote a memorial.

In her depiction of herself, Prince mourned the loving father and the black gentleman. At that time, she had known Mpangile for five months during which she had met with him regularly. The entry in which she noted that she was still mourning him was dated two days after the hanging. This entry remained in every edition of the diary, even the third, extended edition, which came out more than ten years later.<sup>67</sup>

Reading through all of the passages concerning Mpangile, one cannot find a single critical word about him. Even his presumed collaboration with his brother is depicted as the story of a courageous man. In the relevant passages of the above-mentioned novel by Kranz, who obviously had spoken with Prince, this image becomes even brighter. The fictional Mpangile had sworn to

help his brother Quawa and was too honorable a man to break his word. From the first appearance in the book to the last, Mpangile remains a gentleman torn between his family ties and the benefits to his people of Tom Prince's reasonable rule.<sup>68</sup> That is to say, the wholehearted admiration that Magdalene Prince expressed in her diary and probably communicated to Kranz goes beyond colonial convention and the trope of the "noble savage." It is plausible to read it as a sign of her deep attraction to Mpangile.

In publishing her diary, Prince was aware of the German readership, and she wanted to promote the colonial project. Thus, one might think that her infatuated way of writing about Mpangile employed already established modes of description to pay tribute to the *Sultan* for her intended audience. However, if one compares her style with, for example, Frieda von Bülow's travel diary, it is obvious that von Bülow's view of the "pretty Africans" is always from a distance.<sup>69</sup> As Cheryl McEwan has pointed out for British female travelers in West Africa, "West Africans, through travel narratives and missionary reports, were to varying degrees objectified and appropriated by women travel writers."<sup>70</sup> That, however, is not the case with Magdalene Prince. Rather, she privatized and individualized the beautiful Hehe warrior, which is the opposite of an objectifying exoticization.

### Just in case of a love affair

If there was deep attraction, or even an affair, it had, of course, to be hidden. If, as I mentioned at the beginning in referring to Wildenthal's study, an African-German couple from Germany was not even allowed to enter the colony, an affair between a local chief and a married German woman, or the latter's desire for one, would have caused an outrage.

It would also have destroyed Tom Prince's career. Two examples are evidence of how binding the sexual-normative order in Iringa was. The first, which concerns Tom Prince's attitude, is an episode taken from the colonial archive, which demonstrates his insistence on a "color line."<sup>71</sup> In 1899, Leopold Hierl, a planter from Augsburg, where he had been convicted twice for battery, was accused of raping his African housemaid who, the file suggests, was between nine and twelve years old. Hierl did not deny that he had had sex with the girl,

but he said that he thought that she was over fourteen and that she had consented. At the time, Prince was in command of the military station in Iringa, and, so, in charge of the situation. Prince sent Hierl to Dar es Salaam for trial, after which he was released. Hierl's case reflects the colonial sexual order and Schmidt's "colonial intimacy" because the whole sequence of events happened in "shared spaces" and Hierl's crime was brought to light as a result of a quarrel among German men in a pub. But it also demonstrates Prince's attitude. When Prince first heard about the case, he did not have Hierl arrested, and, when he finally did, he sent the accused to Dar es Salaam because, as Prince wrote, Iringa lacked a prison suitable for a European, and, moreover, imprisoning a European would undermine the authority of white men.<sup>72</sup> This concern demonstrates Prince's anxiety to maintain the "color bar" even to the extent of permitting a European who was a former violent criminal and had admitted to having intercourse with an obvious child to remain free.<sup>73</sup>

The second example is from about the same time. Gossip about a European woman's promiscuity was circulating in the colony. In March 1899, the missionary Severin Hofbauer wrote in the chronicle of the mission at Tosamaganga his reflections on the historical value of the colonial project.<sup>74</sup> Discontent, as usual, with the behavior of colonists, he mocked it. To justify his criticism, he repeated a rumor he had heard from a colleague of his, a White Father. According to the story, a "European lady," who was employed by the German military (he did not say as what), had become pregnant. She demanded money from her lovers, among them her employers. They paid, and she left and gave birth to a "colored boy."<sup>75</sup> Hofbauer expressed his conviction that the colonial project had failed as a civilizing project because of the immorality of its participants. Such rumors, which were widespread in the colonies,<sup>76</sup> are further evidence of the rigidity and at the same time fragility of the prevailing sexual order, for it is only if the sexual relationship between a European woman and an African man violated a taboo that missionaries would, as the gatekeepers of morality, address it.

In sum, the different examples I have provided show the power of the normative-sexual order and therefore give an idea of the scandal a military commander's wife's violation of the "color bar" would have caused. Thus, a memorial hidden in her diary may have been the only way that Magdalene Prince could have expressed her grief, and her love.



## Today's perspectives: Western historians

European and US-American researchers never read Prince's diary as a lover's disguised confession. Rather, they take the execution of Mpangile to be part of the military history of German colonization. In his telling of the story, the US-American historian David Pizzo, who wrote his dissertation about the Hehe wars, writes that Mpangile was cooperating with Mkwawa. However, in a footnote he mentions a different version, which he had heard in Tanzania in 2005. According to his informant Mungai, Mkwawa was angry with his brother for having had sex with some of his, Mkwawa's, wives and threatened him in a face-to-face meeting; Tom Prince then learned of their contact by accident. The story is about sex, but it remains a story about what transpired between the brothers.<sup>77</sup>

The military historian Thomas Morlang tells a story of the cruelty of the German conquest of Uhehe, which is based largely on John Iliffe's path-breaking work from the 1970s on the colonial history of Tanzania. In this story, Mkwawa was conducting a guerrilla war against the Germans who, under the leadership of Tom Prince, retaliated with enormous brutality. They burned down villages, destroyed crops, and seized livestock. Morlang mentions Mpangile's installation as *Sultan*, but he passes over his execution, saying only that the Germans killed all suspected collaborators.<sup>78</sup>

In her military history of German forces in East Africa, the Swiss historian Tanja Bühler writes that Tom Prince suspected Mpangile of collaborating with his brother and therefore had him executed. In a footnote, she claims that whether Mpangile betrayed the Germans or not cannot be determined.<sup>79</sup> Bühler, like Morlang, reconstructs the history of the war against the Hehe from German files, but she also, and repeatedly, consults Magdalene Prince's diary. Nevertheless, hers is a history of extreme violence between just two opponents, Prince and Mkwawa. And Prince won.<sup>80</sup>

To sum up, current European military history tells important parts of the brutal story of the Germans in Africa but does not pay attention to some important details. Though it is not my aim to diminish the brutality of the colonial situation, I shall argue that the dominant story assigns agency to too few people. Its protagonists are Mkwawa and Tom Prince. As Prince represents the German forces, in the end victory and agency belong to the colonizers but condensed into one figure.

## A Tanzanian perspective

In 2011, the Tanzanian filmmaker Seko Tingitana-Shamte made a documentary called *Mkwawa. Shujaa wa Mashujaa*, which means “Mkwawa. Warrior among Warriors.” *Shujaa* also means “hero” and, indeed, the movie is the story of a hero, Mutwa Mkwawa. It begins with the Hehe occupation of Uhehe and the unification of the Hehe under Mkwawa’s father Munyingumba and ends with the return of Mkwawa’s supposed skull to Tanganyika in 1954. The film includes statements of historians, including well-known East African professors like Abdul Sheriff and other scholars, and a voice-over narration. Sometimes historians are shown sitting and talking; sometimes they speak in voice-over. Most of the film is re-enactment. The re-enacted, or, to be more precise, fictional scenes are mostly interpretations of European sources.

The movie includes one scene of thirty seconds<sup>81</sup> that can be described as follows. Under a very blue sky, three people are sitting on stools next to a mud hut. The ground and the hut are the same brownish color. In the left background are green trees. The three, two men and one woman, are sitting in a circle facing each other. The viewer sees the men in profile and the woman face-on in the center of the screen. She wears a light brown skirt, a white blouse and a brown-beige scarf; on her head is a beige straw hat. The man on her right also wears beige; it looks like an oversized uniform. On his head sits a slouch hat; his feet are stuck into old black shoes; his stockings blouse his trousers. On the woman’s left-hand side sits a man in white linen. The linen wraps most of his body, but one can see his muscular left shoulder and arm. He wears a white turban on his head. The white of the linen contrasts with his dark brown skin, whereas the clothes and skin of the other two blend together. The contrast of black and white and the variations of beige give the impression that colors are important to the scene, as they show the construction of race.

The man in the slouch hat is trying to talk to the man with the turban, but the latter is distracted by the woman, who repeatedly smiles at him and then casts her eyes on the ground. She is flirting with the man, whom she obviously admires. The scene is without sound. The English-speaking narrator says in voice-over that the Germans installed Mkwawa’s brother Mpangile as chief, but the chieftom did not last long because of private arguments between Tom

Prince and Mpangile. The narrator insinuates that there was a secret affair and that Mpangile was put to death as a result.

The Tanzanian historian Frank Edward from the University of Dar es Salaam, who appears in the film, did research on the Mkwawa family for the filmmaker. When I asked Edward about the love affair he said that the film uses information that he and a colleague had collected in Iringa, and he also referred to the work of the anthropologist Alison Redmayne.<sup>82</sup>

Redmayne, who lived in Uhehe at the beginning of the 1960s, wrote in her PhD thesis on the Hehe about “Magdalene’s love for Mpangile.”<sup>83</sup> She recorded Hehe songs and interviewed relatives of Mutwa Mkwawa. She also read Magdalene Prince’s diary. However, Redmayne did not conclude that Mpangile was hanged because of a love affair with Prince. She offered two different explanations. One was the dominant story about Mpangile’s alleged treason; the other was a story told to her by Gaudensio Malangalila, according to whom Mkwawa and Mpangile were indeed collaborating, but they quarreled over cows and as a result Mkwawa made it possible for Prince to find out that Mpangile was a traitor.<sup>84</sup>

On the basis of the memories of relatives and Redmayne’s remark that Magdalene Prince was in love with Mpangile, Tanzanian historians tell a story of intimate betrayal. This is the story that Tingitana, the filmmaker, picks up and condenses into the fictional scene described above. After analyzing Prince’s diary, I would argue that the diary gives more than one reason for such an interpretation.

## The families

A direct descendant of Mutwa Mkwawa, his great grandson, who collects information about his ancestors and runs the Mkwawa family homepage, told me that in their family Mkwawa is said to have caused Mpangile’s hanging.<sup>85</sup> According to this family story, Mkwawa was angry with his brother for his collaboration with the Germans; so, he made it look to Tom Prince as if Mpangile were still in close contact with him. This version is close to one that we can find in the Western research. I have to add that the Mkwawa family is large, and I have talked only to descendants of Chief Mkwawa’s son Sapi but

none of Mpangile's descendants. And I think that in their family story, which is based on a male tradition and male circulation of knowledge,<sup>86</sup> a love affair is less important than the relationship between the brothers. However, in their story both Mpangile and Mkwawa were active agents. Mpangile was not a tool of German policymaking; he was in charge of Hehe policymaking.

Two female descendants of Magdalene Prince smiled when asked about an affair. One said that the story would fit with family gossip that Magdalene had a lover in German East Africa. The other, her granddaughter, who grew up in the territory of Tanganyika, said that she would not be surprised if the story were true, as Magdalene was a lonely woman because her husband was often away.<sup>87</sup> Neither knew anything about the hanging; they have only general memories of Tom Prince's war against the Hehe and the suicide of Mutwa Mkwawa.

### Conclusion: More than one story

The Nigerian novelist Chimanda Ngozi Adichie gave a TED talk in 2009 entitled "The Danger of a Single Story."<sup>88</sup> The talk was autobiographical, but Adichie claimed that its theme was universal. She related, for example, how her roommate in the US thought that she must be poor because she came from Africa. One point she wanted to express was that life in general comprises different stories, that there is no "single story" for anyone. She spoke of her desire that we see and live diversity and ambiguity in very lyrical ways.

European and US-American research tell a single story about the German occupation of Uhehe. This story is dominant, I argue, because of the still resonating colonial sexual order. Stories about European men having affairs with African women circulated, and newspapers covered the trials of colonists who had sexually abused African women and girls.<sup>89</sup> As a result the Women's League of the German Colonial Society found new professional opportunities for German women, specifically, marrying supposedly morally endangered male colonists, and, consequently, the European hegemonic gender order generated a discourse in which it was not possible for European women, still less upper-class women, to become involved with African men. As an

aristocratic woman, Prince was especially excluded from the accusation of “going native.”

In this article, I have wanted at least to add important though ambiguous details to the story of Mpangile’s execution. My purpose was not to reconstruct a love affair. In fact, I think that it is of no importance whether or not Mpangile and Magdalene had a sexual relationship. Mpangile may have betrayed the German colonial state by collaborating with its enemy, he may have only collaborated in the betrayal of the commander of the military station at Iringa or he may have been the victim of his brother’s betrayal. And Magdalene Prince may have used the romantic trope of the “beautiful black” as part of exaggerating her admiration for Mpangile in order to create a larger German female readership for her diary. Any of these may have been the case.

What, if anything, of this history would have changed if Mpangile had had an affair (or been flirting) with Magdalene Prince, and he was hanged because of her husband’s jealousy? The colonial sexual order would have been seriously disturbed. And as the sexual order had an impact on the political order, the latter would also have been seriously endangered. Therefore, every effort would most likely have been made to conceal the affair. Thus, taking the possibility of an affair into account appropriately complicates today’s view of the colonial situation. We can see the agency of more people at work and the history of the “colonial situation” as more entangled and multilayered than we usually acknowledge. Consequently, we must question dominant interpretations of processes of colonization.

I propose that it is considering such possibilities that makes the difference. In claiming that there was an affair between a European woman and an African man during colonization, Tanzanian historians have marked a blind spot in European historical writing.<sup>90</sup> As Koponen points out, much of our knowledge is still based on colonial knowledge. And the colonial construction or manifestation of a gendered image of conquest and surrender has lasting after-effects. In the case under consideration, the hanging of Mpangile is another example of the structural violence and, therewith, of the agency of European men during the period of colonization. Hence, one after-effect is the disappearance of non-Europeans’ and women’s agency. However, this is no “safety argument.”<sup>91</sup> The aim is not to give Magdalene Prince, Mkwawa, and Mpangile a voice—their voices resonate quite audibly, and they do not need a

historian as advocate—but to complicate our understanding of colonial history. We repeat a single story if we miss the hidden affairs.

## Notes

- 1 I very much thank Dörte Lerp and Ulrike Lindner for their helpful critique and comments on the chapter and Greg M. Sax for his ongoing questioning and considerate editing. I owe thanks to Levke Harders for very valuable literature tips, especially Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED talk.
- 2 A remark about the terms I use: I am aware that the terms 'colonizer' and 'colonized' construct a dualism that postcolonial and other research convincingly question and problematize. In this article, I use those terms exclusively to point at a normative colonial concept. When I use 'European' and 'African' I merely refer to continents of origin. I use the adjectives 'black' and 'white' without quotation marks but explicitly to point at racial concepts.
- 3 Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker differentiate between 'relative' and 'categorical identification', which means that one can define oneself in terms of one's relations to others or in terms of categories like ethnicity, class, nationality, and gender. Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, 'Identität', in *Kolonialismus denken*, ed. Frederick Cooper (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2012), 131.
- 4 Pierson, e.g., stresses the 'rigid boundaries' that were based on the category of race. Ruth Roach Pierson, 'Introduction', in *Nation, Empire, Colony. Historicizing Gender and Race*, ed. Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri (Bloomington (Ind.): Indiana University Press, 1998), 5. The colonial encounter was itself gendered as colonialism was based on 'feminizing the land'. Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather. Race, Gender and Sexuality in Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 28. For the alliance generally of categories like race, sexuality, and gender in colonialism, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire. Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).
- 5 'Going native,' the corresponding term in German was 'Verkafferung,' referred to Europeans having intimate relationships with the people they were colonizing. The term suggested a degeneration of what it meant to be European by trespassing the 'colour bar,' to use another contemporary European term. Ulrike Lindner, 'Contested concepts of "white"/"native" and mixed marriages in German South-West Africa and the Cape Colona 1900–1914: A histoire croisée,' *Journal of*

- Namibian Studies* 6, (2009): 62; for the use of 'colour bar' see, e.g., Rudolf Asmis, *Erfahrungen aus meinen kolonialen Wanderjahren* (München: Eher, 1941). This is the colonial revisionist publication of a former colonial clerk. For a very critical discussion of the term 'native' as a racist categorization, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Define and Rule. Native as Political Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012), 7, 47–49.
- 6 Ulrike Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen. Deutschland und Großbritannien als Imperialmächte in Afrika 1880–1914* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 2011), 31. See also Carina E. Ray, *Crossing the Color Line. Race, Sex, and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2015), 6.
- 7 Lora Joyce Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001). See also Anette Dietrich, *Weißer Weiblichkeiten. Konstruktionen von 'Rasse' und Geschlecht im deutschen Kolonialismus* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2007); Birthe Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten. Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2003), 77–96.
- 8 Lindner, 'Contested concepts', 62.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2002), 102. 'Mixed marriages' between African men and European women were also officially banned in the Italian Empire in the late 1930. See Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean', in this volume, 36.
- 11 Philippa Levine, 'Sexuality and Empire', in *At Home with the Empire. Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 134.
- 12 Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 223–234.
- 13 Wildenthal, *German Women*, 111–117. Birthe Kundrus describes a similar case in the German colony of Togo. Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 224–225.
- 14 Katja Kaiser, "'Mischehen" in Kiautschou. Die deutsch-chinesische Familie Li', in *Frauen in den deutschen Kolonien*, ed. Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2009), 91–95.
- 15 On the importance of class see also Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates', in this volume, 185 and Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean', in this volume, 45–47.
- 16 Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science* 2, (2002): 100 [Author's emphasis].
- 17 Georges Balandier, 'Die koloniale Situation. Ein theoretischer Ansatz' [1952], in *Moderne Kolonialgeschichte*, ed. Rudolf von Albertini (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1970), 106–124.

- 18 I understand agency, with Joan W. Scott, as something that ‘is created through situations and statuses conferred on them [the subjects, B.B.]’. Joan W. Scott, ‘The Evidence of Experience’, *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991): 793. See as a critical statement on the use of agency in African and gender history Lynn M. Thomas, ‘Historicising Agency’, *Gender & History* 28, no. 2 (2016): 324–339. Thomas convincingly urges historians to see the revelation of agency, e.g., of African women, as the terminal point of their insight. One of the dangers she sees is that within their ‘salvific narratives’ they reinvent an autonomous subject. *Ibid.*, 328.
- 19 Juhani Koponen, ‘Knowledge, Power and History: German Colonial Studies in Tanzania’, in *Tanzania: koloniale Vergangenheit und neuer Aufbruch*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden and Achim von Oppen (Münster: LIT, 1996), 118.
- 20 On German colonialism in East Africa in general, see John Iliffe, *Tanganyika under German Rule 1905–1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Juhani Koponen, *Development for exploitation. German Colonial policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1884–1914* (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1994); Michael Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika. Expeditionen, Militär und Verwaltung seit 1880* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 2005).
- 21 ‘Mutwa’ is the word for male leader in the Hehe language. The historian (and member) of the Mkwawa family, Fulgens Malangalila, calls all male leaders in the Mkwawa family ‘Mutwa.’ Fulgens F. A. Malangalila, *Mwamuyinga. Mtawala wa Wahehe* (Ndanda Peramiho: Benedictine Publications, 1987). In his Hehe dictionary, the German missionary Cassian Spiß wrote for the German word ‘Häuptling,’ which meant leader or chief, ‘mutwa, mtemi, mlugu, chota.’ Cassian Spiss, ‘Kihehe-Wörter-Sammlung. Kihehe-Deutsch und Deutsch-Kihehe,’ *Mittheilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen* 3, (1900): 160.
- 22 For geographical sources, see, e.g., Victor Giraud, *Les Lacs de L’Afrique Équatoriale. Voyage d’exploration exécuté de 1883 à 1885* (Paris: Hachette, 1890), 129–142; Joseph Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and back: The Narrative of the Royal Geographical Society’s East Central African Expedition, 1878–80. With a short biographical notice of the late Mr. Keith Johnston, portraits, and a map* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1881), 229–238; for the construction of a ‘tribe,’ see sources like Eduard von Liebert, *Neunzig Tage im Zelt. Meine Reise nach Uhehe Juni bis September 1897* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1898); Tom Prince, ‘Ueber einen Zug nach der Landschaft Uhehe und die Begründung einer Station in Kuirenga’, *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* 7, (1896): 773–775; Alfons A. Adams, *Im Dienste des Kreuzes. Erinnerungen aus meinem Missionsleben in Deutsch-Ostafrika* (St. Ottilien: Missionsverlag St. Ottilien, 1899). For the



- history of the Hehe, see especially the works of the anthropologist Alison Redmayne, who spoke to many of Mkwawa's descendants in the course of her extensive research in the Iringa region during the 1960s. Alison Redmayne, *The Wahehe people of Tanganyika* (Diss. phil. University of Oxford, 1964); Alison Redmayne, 'Mkwawa and the Hehe Wars', *Journal of African History* 9, no. 3 (1968): 409–436. 'Tribe' is a contested term because German and British colonizers alike constructed tribes in order to differentiate among the members of and, in consequence, rule society. Iliffe wrote, 'The British wrongly believed that Tanganyikans belonged to tribes; Tanganyikans created tribes to function within the colonial framework.' This claim is also true for the German period. Iliffe stressed that in pre-colonial East Africa people referred to various identifying categories like family and chiefdom. Iliffe, *History of Tanganyika*, 318.
- 23 'Pulverfass' is the German word he uses. All translations in this chapter are mine unless otherwise indicated. Tanzania National Archives (hereafter abbreviated TNA), German Records, G 9/77, letter from Captain Nigmann to government in Dar es Salaam, November 11, 1908. Nigmann was the leader of the military station in Iringa from 1903 to 1910. He published a contemporarily much-cited work about the Hehe. Ernst Nigmann, *Die Wahehe. Ihre Geschichte, Kult-, Rechts-, Kriegs- und Jagd-Gebrauche* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1908).
- 24 Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft*, 192; Tanja Bühner, *Die kaiserliche Schutztruppe für Deutsch-Ostafrika. Koloniale Sicherheitspolitik und transkulturelle Kriegführung, 1885 bis 1918* (München: Oldenbourg, 2011), 189.
- 25 Bühner, *Die kaiserliche Schutztruppe*, 261 mentions cruelties, which most of the research applies only to the later Maji Maji war (1905 to 1908).
- 26 The still not fully reconstructed story of the skull has remained interesting for scholars until today. For a recent discussion, see Jesse Bucher, 'The Skull of Mkwawa and the Politics of Indirect Rule in Tanganyika', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 10, no. 2 (2016): 284–302.
- 27 Prince mentioned in her diary that she was the first 'white woman' ('weiße Frau') to see the interior of Africa. Magdalene Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau im Innern Deutsch-Ostafrikas. Elf Jahre nach Tagebuchblättern erzählt* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 2nd edn 1905), 50. Unless otherwise indicated, citations refer to the second edition, reprinted in 2012. In his novel, Herbert Kranz emphasised the pioneering role of Magdalene Prince. Herbert Kranz, *Abenteuer in Uhehe* (Köln/Leipzig: Volker Verlag, [1937]), 21.
- 28 [Hans Schmiedel], *Deutsch Ostafrika. Hauptmann der Deutschen Schutztruppe. Tom von Prince. Bwana Sakkarani und seine Zeit 1869–1914*, vol. 1. The manuscript remains unpublished. I refer to the manuscript that is in the Haak family archive, but there is also one in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz.

- 29 For the first explanation, that Mpangile betrayed the Germans, see, e.g., the work of the physician and explorer Friedrich Fülleborn, *Das Deutsche Njassa- und Ruwuma-Gebiet, Land und Leute, nebst Bemerkungen über die Schire-Länder* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1906), 212. For the second explanation, which sees Mkwawa as a manipulator, see the missionary Alfons Adams. Adams, *Im Dienste des Kreuzes*, 48–50.
- 30 For everyday violence and uprisings, see Michelle R. Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries. African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014).
- 31 Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*.
- 32 Bernhard Fetz. 'Die vielen Leben der Biographie. Interdisziplinäre Aspekte einer Theorie der Biographie', in *Die Biographie – Zur Grundlegung ihrer Theorie*, ed. Bernhard Fetz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 52–53.
- 33 Prince had at least two African girls, one of whom was a gift from Mpangile. Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 55–56. Research so far has neglected this practice of human gift exchange. I shall examine those practices more closely in my broader project on colonial biographies. Prince expressed her hierarchical thinking when she literally assumed a higher position when talking to African men by choosing a higher chair. Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 57.
- 34 Herbert Kranz, *Die weiße Herrin von Deutsch-Ost* (Köln/Leipzig: Volker-Verlag, [1936]) and Kranz, *Abenteuer in Uhehe*. Both volumes have a short introductory remark that the story is based on the destiny (*Schicksale*) of Magdalene Prince.
- 35 Kranz, *Die weiße Herrin*.
- 36 Wissmann and others are called by their real names. For Herrmann von Wissmann (1853–1905), who conquered the coast of German East Africa from 1889–1891, see Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft*, 271.
- 37 That is the perspective of the novel. Of course, the German career was not at all as promising as the British. However, recent historical research has argued that members of the German military in Africa had higher pay and greater chances for posting and decoration than in other parts of the empire or at home. Bühner, *Die kaiserliche Schutztruppe*, 121; Christoph Kamisseck. "‘Ich kenne genug Stämme in Afrika’. Lothar von Trotha – eine imperiale Biographie im Offizierkorps des deutschen Kaiserreiches', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 40, no. 1 (2014): 67–93.
- 38 Tom and Magdalene are called Lutz and Maleen but Mkwawa, like Wissmann, is called by what is supposed to be his real name, written in the contemporary common German spelling.
- 39 Kranz, *Abenteuer in Uhehe*, 58. 'Schauri' is a word often used by Germans. It is taken from Swahili and means negotiations. For 'Schauri' as an autocratic form of colonial rule. see Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft*, 277–283.

- 40 For movies and literature, see, e.g., Wolfgang Struck, 'Die Geburt des Abenteurers aus dem Geist des Kolonialismus. Exotistische Filme in Deutschland nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg,' in *Phantasiereiche. Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus*, ed. Birthe Kundrus (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2003), 263–281.
- 41 Another novel that is written as a compilation of autobiographical sources is Herbert V. Patera, *Bwana Sakkarani. Deutsch-Ostafrika 1888–1914. Leben und Taten des Schutztruppenhauptmannes Tom von Prince. Herausgegeben nach Aufzeichnungen und Tagebuchblättern* (Wien: Krystall-Verlag, 1933). Patera wrote about Tom von Prince and also told the story of the brave couple that went together to war. See, e.g., Patera, *Bwana Sakkarani*, 154–155. Tom Prince's biographer, Hans Schmiedel, also tells the same story. Schmiedel's extensive manuscript is based on interviews with Prince family members, letters, and every autobiographical source he could find. [Schmiedel], *Tom von Prince*. For a theatre play, see Hans W. Ernst, *Mama Yetu. Historisches Schauspiel aus deutscher Kolonialzeit* (Nürnberg: Spandeldruck [1937]). See also Silvan Niedermeier's discussion on Mary Denison, an US-American officer's wife in the Philippines and her self-positioning, Silvan Niedermeier, 'Colonial self-positioning' in this volume, 125–126.
- 42 Liebert, *Neunzig Tage im Zelt*, 23.
- 43 Kranz, *Abenteurer in Uhehe*. For sources on a warlike 'tribe', see FN 19.
- 44 Alfons, *Im Dienste des Kreuzes*, 55.
- 45 See, e.g., Archiv St. Ottilien (hereafter abbreviated AStO), Z.2.1.19, Peracta Tosa-Magangae Tempora, February 23, 1899.
- 46 See the different complaints in TNA, German Records G 8 /142. According to the local German administration, after she became a widow she lost her temper too often and beat her workers so much that they ran away. See *ibid.* letter from Köstlin, September 10, 1915.
- 47 Heike Schmidt, 'Colonial Intimacy: The Rechenberg Scandal and Homosexuality in German East Africa,' *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 1 (2008): 25–59.
- 48 Schmidt, 'Colonial Intimacy,' 29. See generally the discussion of intimacy and shared spaces in colonial situations by Dillenburg, Bischoff, and Niedermeier in this volume.
- 49 See, e.g., Barbara Riesche, *Schöne Mohrinnen, edle Sklaven, schwarze Rächer. Schwarzendarstellung und Sklavereithematik im deutschen Unterhaltungstheater (1770–1814)* (Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2010). Riesche stresses the trope of the 'noble savage' in plays and literature, *ibid.*, 230.
- 50 Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies. Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Birthe Kundrus

- (ed.), *Phantasiereiche: Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus* (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2003).
- 51 Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and back*, 234; see also, e.g., Nigmann. *Die Wahehe*, 4.
- 52 'Stattlicher Wuchs'; 'vorteilhaft'; 'energisches, freies Auftreten, sein offener Blick zeigen Rasse.' Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 56.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 54.
- 54 'Sie wissen sich gut zu unterhalten, aus ihren klugen Fragen sprechen Wißbegierde und Intelligenz, unsere europäischen Gewohnheiten suchen sie sich möglichst anzueignen.' *Ibid.*, 60.
- 55 Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen*, 319.
- 56 'Man hat wirklich nicht das Gefühl, sich mit Schwarzen zu unterhalten.' Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 60.
- 57 'Rechts zur Seite Toms die stolze, stattliche Erscheinung des Mpangire, der seiner Würde bewußt einherschreitet – "jeder Zoll ein König", ein echter Vertreter des Quawageschlechts.' *Ibid.*, 62. In contemporary sources, the *Sultan* is sometimes called Mpangire, but most of the times he is Mpangile.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 63.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 168. For the contemporary comparison of Africans with children, see Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen*, 308. For 'colour bar', see FN 4.
- 60 Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 78 and 88.
- 61 Prince, Magdalene, 'Vom Schreibtisch und aus dem Atelier. Wie unsere Plantage in Deutsch-Ostafrika entstand', *Velhagen & Klasings Monatshefte*, Sonderdruck (1907): 95. See Mary Denison Thomas' slightly differing view of people in the Philippines in Silvan Niedermeier, 'Colonial self-positioning,' in this volume, 126.
- 62 Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 66–71.
- 63 '[...] daß sie bedeutende und befähigte Neger sind.' Prince, *Ibid.*, 73.
- 64 '[...] zu nichts aufschwingen können.' *Ibid.*, 74.
- 65 'Alle Europäer waren für ihn eingenommen, auch mich hatte das hübsche Gesicht, der freie Blick, daß [*sic*] große Auge, das manierliche und nette Wesen, der chevalereske Ton, sein schnelles, kluges Auffassen so geblendet, daß mir sein jähes Ende sehr nahe ging; ich habe bitterlich geweint, und noch jetzt traure ich um den schwarzen Gentleman, trotzdem meine Vernunft sich dagegen sträubt.' *Ibid.*, 74–75.
- 66 Adams wrote this in the unpublished chronicle of the mission. AStO, Z.2.1.19, Peracta Tosa-Magangae Tempora, Entry February 21, 1897. 'Masungu' was and is a Swahili term for Europeans. In his published book, Adams repeated Mpangile's alleged request to make war. However, it is interesting that he also wrote that Mpangile pled for mercy. Adams, *Im Dienste des Kreuzes*, 61. Hence, publicly he presented a weaker and more vulnerable person.

- 67 Prince, *Eine deutsche Frau*, 76.
- 68 Kranz, *Abenteuer in Uhehe*, 58–101.
- 69 Katharina von Hammerstein, “. . .ein segenspendendes Werk zur Ehre der deutschen Nation.” Vorschlag einer Lesart von Frieda von Bülow's national-kolonialistischen Aufzeichnungen aus Deutsch-Ostafrika, in *Frieda Freiin von Bülow. Reiseskizzen und Tagebuchblätter aus Deutsch-Ostafrika*, ed. Katharina von Hammerstein (Berlin: trafo, 2012), 30–34.
- 70 Cheryl McEwan, *Gender, Geography and Empire. Victorian Women Travellers in West Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 93.
- 71 For the following case, see TNA, German Records, G 21/680, Strafsache gegen den Pflanzler Hierl 1899–1900.
- 72 TNA, German Records, G 21/680, letter from Prince to government, September 19, 1899: ‘[. . .] hier kein passender Internierungsraum ist, Inhaftierung eines Europäers das europäische Ansehen beeinflussen könnte [. . .].’
- 73 Maintaining the colonial order was also a crucial element in trials against Germans who were accused of same-sex relations with African men. See Severin, *Male Same-Sex Conduct*, in this volume, subchapter Colonial peculiarities.
- 74 For the following, see AStO, Z.2.1.19, Peracta Tosa-Magangae Tempora, March 22, 1899.
- 75 Ibid. The German words are ‘europäische Reichsdame’ and ‘farbigen Jungen.’
- 76 For the role of rumour in colonization, see Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft*, 204–206; see also Schmidt, ‘Colonial Intimacy.’
- 77 David Pizzo, ‘To Devour the Land of Mkwawa’. *Colonial Violence and the German-Hehe War in East Africa c. 1884–1914*, Chapel Hill 2007 (Dissertation), <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:045c9840-b79b-450e-935c-1aec6b0c62e0210> [accessed July 13, 2016].
- 78 Thomas Morlang, “Die Wahehe haben ihre Vernichtung gewollt.” Der Krieg der “Kaiserlichen Schutztruppe” gegen die Hehe in Deutsch-Ostafrika (1890–1898), in *Kolonialkriege. Militärische Gewalt im Zeichen des Kolonialismus*, ed. Thoralf Klein and Frank Schumacher (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition 2006), 88–95. See also Iliff, *History of Tanganyika*, 114.
- 79 Bühner, *Die kaiserliche Schutztruppe*, 221 and footnote 53.
- 80 Ibid., 217–222. Therefore, it is not surprising that along with this story comes the conclusion that during the main uprising in German East Africa, the Maji Maji War between 1905 and 1908, the Hehe did not fight the Germans. Bühner, *Die kaiserliche Schutztruppe*, 222; see also Morlang, ‘Krieg’, 90 and Redmayne, ‘Hehe Wars’, 432. As a matter of fact, my research leads to a different conclusion. There are sources that describe the great danger in Iringa and Tosamaganga. For example, according to the Benedictine missionary Michael Hofer, some Hehe

- planned an uprising already in 1904, and when the first Maji Maji fights broke out, Nigmann, then the commander of the military station in Iringa, tried to prevent a war in Uhehe. Michael Hofer and Frumentius Renner, *Im Dienst und Schutz des Höchsten. Bruder Michael Hofer erzählt sein Leben* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1978), 212–220.
- 81 Mkwawa. Shujaa wa Mashujaa, Scene in sec. 59.39–1.00.19.
- 82 Interview with Frank Edward, Dar es Salaam, February 25, 2014.
- 83 Redmayne, *Wahehe People*, 212.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 209–211.
- 85 Interview with Is-Haka Mkwawa in Plymouth, July 20, 2015. For his story of the Mkwawa history, see his homepage <http://www.mkwawa.com> [accessed July 19, 2016].
- 86 In 2014, I talked to Fulgens Malangalila, who told me that he got his knowledge from his father and that this was the way the Hehe handed knowledge down, *viz.*, from father to (favourite) son. Interview with Malangalila, Iringa, February 20, 2014. See also the preface of his book, in which he claims that he talked to some elders and used only the sources he had gathered. Malangalila, *Mwamuyinga*, preface. I thank Frank Edward for his continued help with Swahili texts.
- 87 Interview with Anuschka Haak, Berlin, June 24, 2014; Massowia Haywood, London, March 11, 2015. The women I interviewed regret what happened in German East Africa and look for reconciliation. There are different opinions in the family and therefore I am very grateful for their frank and open talk. Families usually have consistently positive memories of their colonizing ancestors. They remember a single story of the peculiar but friendly colonist. Britta Schilling, *Postcolonial Germany. Memories of Empire in a Decolonized Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 180–181.
- 88 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *The Danger of a Single Story* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009). <http://ssw.unc.edu/files/TheDangerofaSingleStoryTranscript.pdf> [accessed July 13, 2016]. TED (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) is a non-profit organization. See TED.com.
- 89 See, e.g., Rebekka Habermas, ‘Lost in Translation: Transfer and Nontransfer in the Atakpame Colonial Scandal’, *The Journal of Modern History* 86, (2014): 47–80.
- 90 Without Frank Edward’s statement in the movie, I would not have seen this other possible story, and I would not have revisited the research on the first years of the colonization of Uhehe. Oswald Masebo introduced me to Frank Edward at the University of Dar es Salaam in 2014. In her article about decentred history writing, Natalie Zemon Davis wrote: ‘Indeed, the direct exchange among scholars across boundaries is one of the best paths to discovery in our globalized latter-day times.’

Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Decentering History: Local stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World', *History and Theory* 50, (2011), 202. I thank Oswald Masebo and Frank Edward for their intervention into the single story.

91 It is meant to be safe because it 'will not be deemed incorrect by others in the field.' Thomas, 'Agency', 329.





## Colonial Self-positioning. Approaching the Snapshots of an American Woman in the Philippines (1900–1902)

Silvan Niedermeier

In April 1900, in the midst of the Philippine-American War, the twenty-five-year-old American Mary Denison Thomas traveled to the Philippines to join her husband, Jerome Beers Thomas Jr., who worked there as a contract surgeon for the US Army. For the next five years, the Thomases lived in various more-or-less pacified regions of the Philippines. While her husband worked in field hospitals and at times participated in war excursions against Philippine revolutionaries, Denison managed their household, gathered with other American women or female members of the local Filipino elites, explored her surroundings alone or with her husband, and went on extended trips through the Philippine countryside together with fellow American colonialists and accompanied by Philippine guides and servants. In 1901 she worked temporarily as a teacher in a local Philippine school.

Throughout her stay abroad, Denison wrote extensive letters to her family in Dayton, Ohio, in which she reported in great detail on her experiences in the Philippines. In addition, she drew watercolor paintings of Philippine scenes, which she sent to her family, sold to fellow American colonialists, or kept for herself. Beyond that, Denison was one of the few white women in the Philippines at the time that used a portable roll-film camera to capture her impressions abroad. Her remaining photographs allow us to reconstruct the ways in which a US-American woman used the new medium of roll-film photography to portray and frame her everyday experiences in the colonial setting of the Philippines at a time when the US Army's war against the

Philippine independence movement escalated into even greater brutality. As my analysis will show, Denison used her camera to express and communicate her experience as a white woman exploring the colonial Philippines and her relation to the Philippine space and its inhabitants. Through a close examination of her private snapshots, my chapter seeks to shed new light on the gendered self-positioning of white Western women in colonial spaces.

I proceed in three steps. After providing a short overview of the history of the Philippine-American War, I will examine the significance of gender in the legitimization of the United States' quest for empire during the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century and sketch the role of American women in this undertaking. Second, I will discuss the historical background of Denison's use of her roll-film camera in the Philippines. As I will show, Denison's photographic practices must be understood primarily from her position as a young white educated upper-middle-class woman at a time when women's roles and opportunities in the United States fundamentally changed and expanded and a related notion of photography as a tool of modern women's self-expression evolved. Furthermore, I will argue that Denison's pictures also reflect her peculiar positioning as a white American/Western woman within the colonial order of the Philippines. While Denison's life in the Philippine colony was restrained by a strict division of gender roles that reserved the terrains of warfare and colonial administration for American men, her whiteness and nationality still put her in a privileged position within the Filipino communities she lived in, which in turn shaped the choice and array of motifs preserved in her photo collection.

In the third and final section, I will analyze Denison's snapshots of the Philippines. After first examining Denison's portraits of Filipino children, which constitute a prominent motif in her photographic work, I discuss several photographic portraits of Denison herself in the Philippines.

### The Philippine-American War and the role of gender in the United States' quest for empire

When Mary Denison Thomas went onboard the US Army transport *Hancock* to travel to the Philippines in April 1900, the country was in the midst of a

bloody colonial war. Two years previously, American warships had destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, following the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. Shortly afterwards, US troops arrived in the Philippines with the order to defeat the Spanish colonial troops in the islands. At the same time, Emilio Aguinaldo, the erstwhile leader of the Philippine independence movement against Spain, returned to the Philippines. In June 1898, Aguinaldo declared the country independent, after his troops had pushed the Spanish colonial troops back to Manila. The United States and Spain, however, refused to acknowledge Philippine independence. Instead, US forces took control of the city of Manila after secret negotiations with Spain and barred the Philippine troops from entering the city. Three months later, Spain agreed to sell the Philippine Islands to the United States for twenty million US Dollars by signing the Treaty of Paris.

Before the US Senate decided to ratify the treaty and keep the Philippines as a colony on February 6, 1899, the newly founded Philippine congress proclaimed the so-called Malolos Constitution and inaugurated the First Philippine Republic. On February 4, war broke out between the stationed US Army troops and the Philippine Revolutionary Army.

During the first month of the war, Philippine regiments fought a conventional trench war against the advancing US troops. After severe losses, Emilio Aguinaldo ordered the establishment of decentralized guerilla units to continue the fight against the US occupiers. In response, the US government followed a twofold strategy. On the one side, it implemented a colonial policy of attraction to win over the support of the Philippine population. Framing their mission in a language of tutelage and assimilation, the Second Philippine Commission under William Howard Taft set out to organize a civil service system, improve the islands' infrastructure, and create a public-school system run by US-American teachers.<sup>1</sup>

On the other side the US government reacted with augmented force and an increase of troops to the emerging guerilla war. After President McKinley's re-election in November 1900, the US Army established martial law in the Philippine Islands, securing protection only for those Filipinos who demonstrated their strict obedience to US military commanders. To cut the guerillas off from local support, US troops devastated entire provinces, destroyed local food resources, and forced rural inhabitants into so-called

“reconcentration centers,” where diseases claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people. The racial degradation of the Filipinos by US politicians, military officers, and soldiers facilitated the further brutalization of the war. In response to guerilla attacks, US troops engaged in the torture and killing of Filipino prisoners of war and massacres against civilians, which led to heated debates about the war in the United States.<sup>2</sup> When the new US president Theodore Roosevelt declared the war to be over in July 1902, 20,000 Philippine soldiers and 4,200 US soldiers were dead. According to conservative estimates 250,000 Philippine civilians had lost their lives in the war. In the Philippine south, resistance against the American colonizers continued until 1913.<sup>3</sup>

During the last two decades, historians have pointed to the crucial role of gender in the outbreak and course of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars.<sup>4</sup> As Kristin Hoganson has shown, gender concepts were highly important for the US government’s decision to enter into the war against Spain in April 1898. The war was legitimized as a “chivalrous crusade” to “redeem American honor” from the alleged attack on the warship *Maine* and to “liberate Cubans,” especially Cuban women, “from Spanish oppression.”<sup>5</sup> When the US government confronted the question of whether to keep the Philippines as a colony, gender concepts again figured largely. Calling the Filipinos unfit for self-government and in need of “benevolent assimilation,” US imperialists conflated notions of white racial superiority with gender stereotypes. Not only did they argue that Filipino men lacked the “manly character seen as necessary for self-government,” but in addition, Filipinos were described as backward and childlike and therefore in need of tutelage and guidance by the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, contemporaries described the Philippine-American War and the colonization of the Philippines as a masculinizing undertaking that would save both American men and the American political system from racial degeneration. The most prominent proponent of this argument was the later US president Theodore Roosevelt. In his “doctrine of strenuous life,” which Roosevelt, then Governor of New York and acclaimed leader of the “Rough Riders” regiment in the war against Spain in Cuba, first presented in a speech in April 1899, he urged US-American men “not to shy away from confrontation and desire easy peace” but to strive tirelessly for success. “We admire the man who embodies victorious efforts,” Roosevelt claimed. As most Filipinos were in

Roosevelt's eyes "utterly unfit for self-government, and show[ed] no signs of becoming fit,"<sup>7</sup> he argued that American men must take up their responsibility and guide them into their future. War and colonial rule thus followed from Roosevelt's doctrine of "strenuous life," as both were means through which to strengthen US-American manhood and "win the goal of true national greatness."<sup>8</sup>

Many of the more than 120,000 US soldiers, who participated in the war between 1898 and 1902, embraced this notion of colonial war as a practice of masculinization and a racial and national duty. As I have shown elsewhere, this became especially apparent in the photographs US soldiers took and collected in the Philippines. In snapshots and photo albums, they framed their personal war experiences as triumphant stories of male imperial conquest that dwelled on notions of racial superiority and exoticism, thereby connecting these personal experiences to the concept and geography of the American nation and its emergence as an overseas empire.<sup>9</sup>

Much less attention has been paid to the question of how American women figured in the gendered rhetoric of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars, and what self-conception guided their participation in the war efforts at home and abroad. Not surprisingly, Roosevelt and his fellow imperialists embraced a patriarchal rhetoric when it came to specifying women's role in America's imperial endeavors. While men had to prove their manliness in war and colonial conquest, women had to preserve the fate of the American race and nation through motherhood. As Roosevelt declared in his "strenuous life" speech, "[t]he woman must be the housewife, the helpmeet of the housekeeper, the wise and fearless mother of many healthy children."<sup>10</sup> With such traditional role models, imperialists wanted to counter women's increased political activism and independence from male dominance in the turn-of-the-century United States.<sup>11</sup>

In reality, however, women embraced multiple roles and self-perceptions prior to and during America's quest for empire. When the US government decided to wage war against Spain, patriotic women activists of the Daughters of the American Revolution buttressed the call for war while anti-interventionist women opposed the war on pacifist grounds. Furthermore, many American women supported the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars at the home front by shifting their energies to military aid and providing

food and health-care services for the thousands of stationed soldiers in American camps. Other women went abroad to Cuba and the Philippines to serve as Army nurses.<sup>12</sup> After the US government's decision to keep the Philippines as a colony, many wives of high-ranking US military officers and colonial administrators—such as Mary Denison Thomas—accompanied their husbands to the Philippines, where they lived in Manila or in other pacified cities and towns in the colony. Furthermore, several hundred American women traveled to the Philippines to work as teachers in newly established public schools.<sup>13</sup> Women's fundamental contributions to war and colonialism did also reinforce their political claims. At the close of the Spanish-American War, women's suffragists argued that women's war efforts at home and abroad should finally entitle them to full citizen privileges. On the other side of the Atlantic and around the same time, British suffragists too made the case for women's full citizenship on the basis of their services to the British Empire during the Anglo-Boer War.<sup>14</sup>

### The discourse of women's photography and Mary Denison Thomas's positioning within the Philippine colonial terrain

In contrast to other American women who went to the new Philippine colony as teachers and nurses, Mary Denison Thomas did not travel to the Philippines with the official mission to participate in the colonization of the islands. Many of her letters show that she felt privileged to be able to go to the Philippines as a woman of her age and class. In the first letter sent to her mother from on board the US Army transport *Hancock* in April 1900 she wrote:

We sit around all day talking to each other and having the best and laziest time you ever heard of, with the blue sea all around us and the wind blowing and the sun shining till one feels at peace with the whole world. I never saw anything in the world so blue as the sea when the sun shines on it. I never imagined it and I am sure you never did.<sup>15</sup>

As Denison described her trip through the Pacific as an elevating and sublime experience the likes of which she herself and her mother had never conceived of, her quote indicates that she was well aware how exclusive this undertaking was for her as a woman of her descent and social background.

According to the census of 1880, Denison was born in 1874 in Dayton, Ohio, as the oldest of three children of Abraham D. and Ella B. Wilt. Her father chaired the Miami Commercial College in Dayton, a pioneering school for business education, while her mother was a housewife.<sup>16</sup> In 1900, the Wilts lived in their own house and employed a female servant in their household, both indicators of their upper-middle-class status. After receiving her high-school education, Denison graduated from Wellesley College, the renowned private women's liberal-arts college in Wellesley, Massachusetts. As the finding aids to her papers at Stanford University record, she was "an avid student and keen member of the women's rowing crew."<sup>17</sup>

From the outset, Denison resembled in many regards the prototype of the New Woman that emerged as a prominent trope in the debates on American middle- and upper-class womanhood during the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. As white American women strove for freedom from Victorian role models and male control they expressed this desire in the realms of clothing, physical exercise, and travel.<sup>18</sup>

The emergence of snapshot photography in the late nineteenth century was inextricably entwined with these developments, as it offered women a novel opportunity to capture, express, and convey the desire for female self-assertion and independence. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, Eastman Kodak's successful marketing of lightweight hand cameras with roll films revolutionized the practice of photography in the United States and beyond. As roll-film cartridges significantly reduced the weight of cameras in comparison to the conventional glass plates and could be loaded in daylight, they enabled a more spontaneous use of photography in everyday life that found its expression in the newly emerging term and concept of the "snap shot."<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Kodak's simple box cameras with fixed lenses and few technical settings dramatically facilitated the practice of photography and opened it up to a wide range of users. At the same time, the circle of photographic practitioners was expanded through Kodak's methods of mass-scale production, which reduced the prices of cameras and photographic equipment.<sup>20</sup>

Shortly after the introduction of the first roll-film camera on the US-American market, Eastman Kodak started to target women as consumers of photography.<sup>21</sup> The means by which this goal was to be attained was the iconic figure of the "Kodak Girl," which capitalized on the flourishing image of the

New Woman. Invented in 1893, the Kodak Girl sought to associate the use of the Kodak cameras with notions of “freedom,” “energy,” and “vitality” as well as with the above-mentioned qualities of simplicity, lightness, and user-friendliness.<sup>22</sup> As Nancy Martha West has observed, the image of the Kodak Girl both extended and constricted women’s engagement with the medium of photography. While the young and stylish Kodak Girl called for white women to express themselves with the use of their cameras, it also played upon the “troublesome yet prevalent association of femininity with technological simplicity.”<sup>23</sup>

In a 1901 advertisement for the Folding Pocket Kodak, we see the Kodak Girl striding in an elegant dark dress, the camera in a leather bag hanging from her shoulders like a purse. She wears a mink stole around her neck and a flower-decorated hat while smiling self-confidently over her left shoulder in the direction to the photographer/onlooker. The accompanying text alludes to the high quality of the camera, the value and appearance of its bag, and its lightness and durability: “Made of aluminum and covered with the finest seal grain leather, the Folding Pocket Kodaks are as rich and dainty as a lady’s purse, and are hardly heavier, yet they withstand the rough usage of travels and changes of climate far better than any heavier camera” (Figure 5.1).<sup>24</sup> The accompanying injunction “Take a Kodak with You” further underscored the notion of the Kodak camera as a desirable companion during one’s travels and outdoor excursions. Taking on the iconography of the self-reliant New Woman, the advertisements presented the camera as a prime instrument for capturing white middle- and upper-class women’s individual experiences of travel, and for communicating these experiences to others.

As I will show in the following discussion, Mary Denison’s photographic endeavors in the Philippines responded in many regards to these notions and desires. At the same time, we can observe that her photographic practices and choices of motifs stood in close relation to her role as a white woman in the Philippines. As Vincente Rafael has pointed out, American women who came to the Philippine colony as wives of US Army officers and colonial administrators were “both captive to and empowered by empire.” While their everyday lives in the colony took place outside of the spheres of war and colonial administration, their whiteness, class, and nationality provided them with an exclusive access to the resources of power and wealth provided by the



775

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Figure 5.1 Eastman Kodak advertisement, 1901. Courtesy George Eastman Museum.

American colonial state and put them in a privileged position within the Philippine communities they lived in.<sup>25</sup> The experiences of American women in the Philippine colony thus mirrored those of European women in African or Asian colonies. As for example Susan Strobel has shown, women in the second British Empire too were perceived as “the inferior sex within the superior race.” Occupying their particular position, Strobel argues, these women “carved out a space amid the options available to them: options for the most part created by imperialism and limited by male dominance.”<sup>26</sup>

The letters of Denison show that she readily embraced both the confines of white women’s gender roles in the Philippine colony and the privileges that came along with them, but also acted as a self-reliant woman within the context of the options available to her.

Denison’s description of her actions after her arrival in Manila in June 1900 serves to illustrate this point. Since her husband Jerome had been transferred at short notice to the city of Angeles, located seventy miles north of Manila, and could thus not meet her on her arrival, Denison decided to travel to him if this was possible. After inquiring about the possibility of such an undertaking, she noted that some colonial officer first told her that she “could not get to the front.”<sup>27</sup> Only after Denison was able to present several letters from her husband in which he asked her to come to Angeles did she receive a pass that allowed her to leave Manila and travel on a military train to her husband in the company of two colonial officers.

Denison’s account of her travel arrangements shows that she acted self-consciously within the narrow confines open to her as a woman in the male terrains of colonial administration and warfare. In the following passage, Denison described her actual journey to Angeles, where Major Matthew A. Batson<sup>28</sup> and an unnamed lieutenant accompanied her:

It seemed strange to be actually going through the country I had read of in the papers, and to be looking on the battlefields I’d so often heard of. Major Batson and the Lieut. pointed out all the points of interest to me and told me that the artillery had made the hole in this building or had knocked down that wall or had demolished that old house, or whose brigade had gone across that field or through that thicket or what men had been in the trenches we saw at all points. We went through Caloocan and Malolos and San Fernando, each of which has its war history and everywhere the center of

interest was the American woman with her particular hat of black and red with red berries on it—I trimmed my red and black hat with rose berries. They thought I was carrying the berries there to eat and there was much comment regarding the peculiar custom.<sup>29</sup>

As Denison traveled through the areas that had one year before been the scene of severe military engagements between US and Philippine troops, her raced, classed, and gendered positioning within the colonial space became more clearly delineated. Describing the peculiar experience of seeing firsthand the places of war she had formerly read of in the newspapers, Denison was aware that she was exploring a space outside women's regular field of vision. At the same time, the trip accentuated her constricted role within the colonial space she was about to live in. As the two escorting officers explained to her the marks on the battlefield outside the train window, they made obvious that the sphere of war and colonial politics in the Philippines was an exclusively male realm. Prefiguring in many regards Denison's experience in the Philippines, the passage reveals that American women's sphere of activity was supposed to take place outside the arenas of war and colonial administration and within the duly "pacified" areas of the Philippine colony, where the wives of American officers and officials were expected to organize their colonial households, oversee their Philippine servants, and engage in leisure activities.<sup>30</sup> As the scholarship on colonial gender roles in European empires has shown, a similar separation between a "male" public and a "female" domestic sphere of activity pervaded most colonial situations in both Africa and Asia at the time.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, Denison's description of her train ride to Angeles points to a second dimension of her positioning in the colonial order of the Philippines: As her appearance in the Philippine train stations and her fashionable outfit created a sensation, it prefigured her elevated status as a white American woman in the Filipino communities she and her husband would live in. Owing to her whiteness and upper-middle-class background Denison not only received the special attention of the local Filipino elites, but her position as a white woman and wife of a well-respected US Army surgeon also enabled her to make contact with the less privileged ranks of the local Philippine society, especially with Filipino children, whom she felt especially drawn to.

In the extensive letters Denison wrote to her family during her stay abroad, she depicts her life in the Philippine colony as a sequence of delightful

experiences and encounters, seemingly undisturbed by the ongoing war against the Philippine independence movement. "I have never had much more thorough happiness than I have had in this little town of Apalit," Denison wrote in a letter in November 1900 after she had returned from one of her frequent visits to Manila.<sup>32</sup> Only when the Thomases moved to Tagbilaran at the island of Bohol in July 1901, did Denison come in closer contact to the war as she saw her husband participating in the US Army's struggle against the local Philippine resistance movement under the leadership of Colonel Pedro Samson.<sup>33</sup>

In her letters to her family, Denison rejected all-to racist perceptions of Filipinos. Commenting on her acquaintance with certain members of the local Filipino elite in Apalit she wrote: "These people represent the highest type of Filipinos and show what the fine Filipino can be when he has the advantage of good education but there [are] not a great many of that type in the islands."<sup>34</sup> In another passage in the same letter, she rejected the comparison between the American and the Philippine fight for independence, which was brought forward at the time by Philippine revolutionaries and American anti-imperialists to buttress the Philippine claim for independence:

It is absurd to think of or compare these people with the Americans who fought for independence, because there are scarcely two things about them or their way which could be considered at all analagous [*sic*]. The Americans come from a stock accustomed for years to education and thought and were themselves a thinking people. These people, the majority of them, are still not far advanced beyond the state of barbarism in which they have lived in older times and from which the Spaniards did so little to draw them, while many 'nations' of them are actually barbarous. In intellect they are like bright children who are capable of learning but have as yet not the rudiments of knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

While Denison differentiated between "types" of Filipinos, she still adhered to the racist underpinning of the American colonial mission in the Philippines. Perceiving most Filipinos as unfit for self-government and in need of US tutelage and guidance, she saw Filipino children as the prime target of the US colonial mission in the Philippines and as future "hope"<sup>36</sup> of the colony. As we will see in the following, Denison's ambivalent position towards the Filipino population is also reflected in the photographs she took in the Philippines.

At the same time, her pictures allow us to review how she let others use her camera to construe and frame her role and perception as a white American woman in the colonial setting of the Philippines.

### Colonial views: Approaching Mary Denison Thomas's photographs and portraits

Denison's photographs are preserved in two albums that are today located in the archival collection of Stanford University's Green Library. Both albums appear to be self-made, as they consist of thin yellow-brown rectangular papers with the dimensions five-and-a-half by eight-and-a-half inches, bound together with simple thread. Each page consists of two sheets of paper, the uppermost of which bears four or eight incisions made with a sharp utensil, probably a razor blade, with the lower paper glued onto its back to allow the insertion of one or two square images, each three-and-a-half by three-and-a-half inches. The titles on the front of the two albums show that both were created by Denison as gifts. One of the albums bears the title "Pictures of Life in the Philippines. Taken by Jerome and Denison. 1900," and is dedicated to Denison's mother on her birthday in May 1901.<sup>37</sup> While the title says that both Jerome and Denison took the pictures, the choice of images included in the book indicates that most pictures were taken by Denison. The other album is dedicated to her husband Jerome, and titled "October 17, 1900. Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit. Made for Jerome Boer Thomas, as a Recuerdo [Spanish for "gift," S.N.]. from Denison Wilt Thomas." Since some of the photographs included are of a later date, it seems that Denison continued to add pictures to the album throughout her stay abroad.<sup>38</sup>

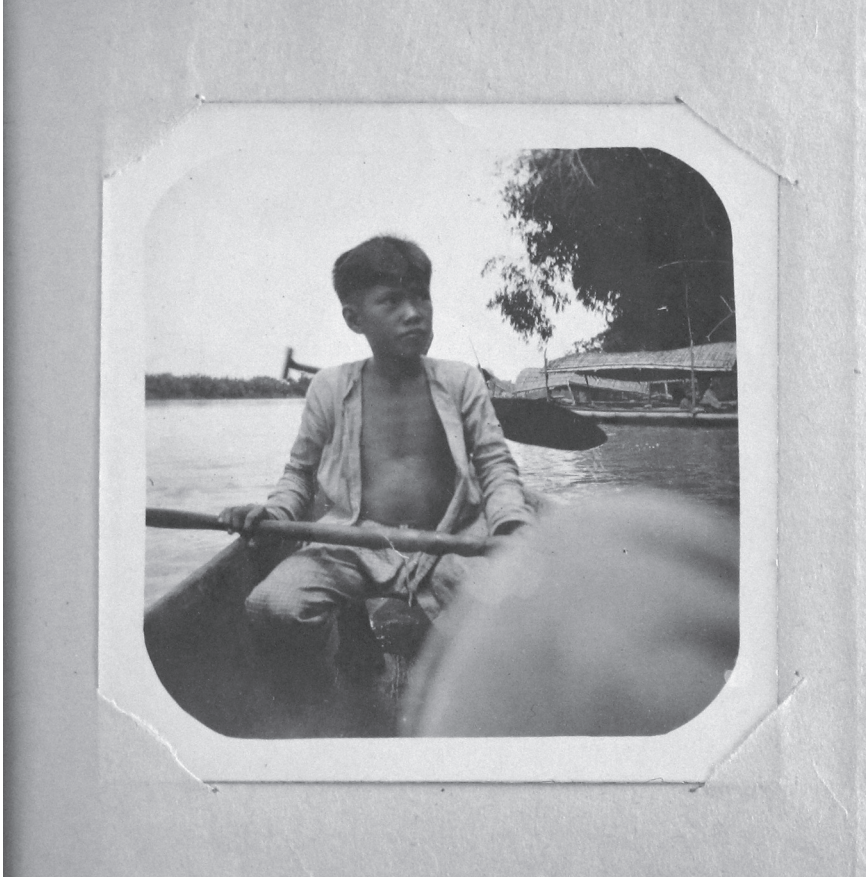
In several letters back home to her family, Denison mentioned her wish to send photographs back to provide a more immediate impression of her experiences abroad. Writing to her mother and extended family from Manila shortly after her arrival in the Philippines, Denison stated: "I wish I could give you a picture of it which would take you into the atmosphere of it all, for I am afraid I can't because words can really not describe it." In another passage in the same letter she described the houses in Manila as "different from anything you ever saw in your life [. . .] admirably suited to the climate," before she announced

her intention to send “some pictures some day when I can get some films and print some.”<sup>39</sup> Apparently, Denison perceived photography as a most capable tool for authenticating and enhancing her much-awaited written accounts of her exotic experiences and picturesque impressions she sent to her family. Beyond that, her statement reveals that her photographic endeavors were hampered by the shortage of photographic equipment in the Philippines, a fact that also impaired US soldiers’ use of cameras during the Philippine-American War. Even though photographic studios had existed in Manila and other cities of the Philippines since the 1870s<sup>40</sup>, photographic equipment for roll-film cameras only became available after the arrival of the first US troops in the Philippines in the summer of 1898, and was a much sought-after item during the first years of the war.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, the date given in Denison’s caption to her albums indicates that she was able to acquire film cartridges shortly after her announcement to her mother, most likely from a photo shop in Manila.

### Proximity and distance: Denison’s snapshots of Filipino children

The largest number of Denison’s photos from the Philippines consists of views taken outside her colonial home in Apalit, where the Thomases stayed from July 1900 to January 1901. Extending her appreciation for picturesque and exotic motifs to her photographic work, Denison took many photographs of local landscapes and river views, often taken from riverboats on which she traveled on numerous occasions. Her most frequent photographic subjects, however, were Filipino children. The following picture (Figure 5.2) is included in her album to her husband and shows a young boy sitting in a canoe with his hands resting on a paddle.<sup>42</sup> Behind him, one can see an elevated paddle held by another person, not visible in the photograph. In the background to the left one sees a brushy lake- or riverside; to the right several constructions with flat roofs can be recognized along the bank, probably a landing pier. The boy looks to his left, showing his face in half-profile. His shirt is partly opened revealing his upper torso.

Several questions occur to the viewer of the image: Did Denison take this photograph secretly, unnoticed by the boy? The boy’s gaze to the side suggests so. Also, the blurry white object in the lower right corner indicates this. Most



**Figure 5.2** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino boy, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

likely this was a part of Denison's leg or arm protruding into the lens of the box camera that sat on her lap, which in turn indicates that the picture was taken without much preparation. Also: Why did Denison take this image? Again, we can only guess. But what pierces the eye of the onlooker is the candidness of the photographer's gaze at the boy, and the proximity between herself and him. Contrary to anthropological photographs at the time, which depict Filipinos standing and in front of a neutral white background for the sake of physical comparison and racial classification,<sup>43</sup> Denison photographed the boy in a natural pose from below eye level, thus foregrounding his individuality. At the same time, the snapshot hints at several transgressive dimensions. Most likely,

the picture was taken on one of Denison's various boat rides on the Pampanga River, together with fellow American colonialists, and the boy depicted was one of the several Filipino guides and servants in their company. As the boy's opened shirt indicates the physical exertion involved in his rowing services for the Americans, it also subjects him to the further service of serving as a desired exotic motif of Denison's camera.

A mix of proximity and distance, affection and exoticization can also be observed in several pictures of younger Filipino children included in Denison's album to her husband. One of them shows a young boy of probably two years of age in a white shirt and with naked legs holding a bundle of firewood on his left shoulder with both arms (Figure 5.3).<sup>44</sup> He stands in profile in bright



**Figure 5.3** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino boy, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.



sunlight in front of a stone wall of a house, not far from a doorframe. Two earthen pots stand behind him by the wall. The boy looks into the sun at Denison's camera. Apparently, he had been asked to stop his movement and hold his pose before the camera.

Another picture shows a little girl with a cropped top and naked lower body on a dirt road in front of a bamboo fence and house (Figure 5.4).<sup>45</sup> Her lifted right foot indicates that Denison captured her image while the girl was walking. The girl holds her right hand to her mouth, while her gaze back at the camera leads one to assume that she is aware of being photographed. In Denison's photo book, both pictures are captioned with the word "Apalit," where the photographs were apparently taken.



**Figure 5.4** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Filipino girl, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

By portraying Apalit's children alone and in their local environment during their everyday activities, Denison not only put the children's individuality in the foreground but also expressed an affective, paternalistic, and objectifying attitude towards them. This mix of motives and intentions can also be observed in a letter Denison wrote to her mother in November 1900, in which she described her first closer interactions with the local Filipino children as follows:

And now I am going to get acquainted with the children at last, I think, for I have undertaken to teach them a bit of drawing while I am here. It will be only a half an hour each day and may not amount to much for them but it will help along their English and will be an interesting experience for me. You see they have never done in their lives a bit of drawing and have no preconceived ideas of things as our children have so it is a virgin soil. The greatest difficulty is that of the language as they do not all understand Spanish, and none of them understand much English. I am not an accomplished teacher either, but the contact with the children is going to be most interesting. Now don't tell me that I ought not do it, because I am determined to get acquainted with the children here in some way. I had a lesson this morning and you would be surprised to see how well some of the children did the work I gave them.<sup>46</sup>

Denison's letter points out that she had long been desirous to "acquaint" herself with the local children. While this wish had long remained unfulfilled, probably due to the local children's hesitation to interact with a female representative of the newly arrived occupiers, she was "at last" able to connect to them by sharing her drawing skills with them. Her quote indicates that her decision to teach the local children was for a large part motivated by the paternalistic impulse to raise the local children's level of education.<sup>47</sup> As mentioned above, Denison perceived the children as the future hope of the Philippines and saw their education in English as the only way towards the country's unification and pacification.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, it appears as if Denison's willingness to make contact with the Filipino children was in part guided by maternal feelings. Much to Denison's regret, she and her husband remained childless throughout their marriage, and it appears that her contact with the local Filipino children in part served to compensate for this unfulfilled desire.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, the statement reveals that teaching the local children how to draw provided Denison with the opportunity to extend her constricted sphere of social

interaction in the colony and pass on her knowledge and abilities. The letter shows that the prospect of teaching the local children elicited such enthusiasm in Denison that she was even willing to face her mother's criticism for engaging in such an activity. Apparently, Denison assumed that her mother perceived this activity as unbecoming and inappropriate for a white woman of her social standing.

In her portraits of Filipino children, Denison translated this affective and paternalistic attitude towards the children of Apalit into concrete images. As the images foreground the children bodies, faces, and gazes into her camera, they mirror Denison's paternalist regard for, and desire for an affective bond with, the children of the colonized. At the same time, the images account for Denison's use of the camera as a medium of artistic expression. As she portrayed the girl and the boy on a rural road and in front of a stone wall, she used characteristic background motifs of rural genre paintings. Evidently, Denison extended her training as a painter to her use of the camera in the attempt to convey a seemingly "authentic" and aesthetically pleasing impression of children's lives in the Philippines to outside viewers which capitalized on the notions of the picturesque. As an avid painter, Denison must have been well aware of the nineteenth-century aesthetic ideal of picturesque beauty that was widely shared among American middle-class painters and photographers. Among the preferred motifs at the time were scenes of everyday rural life, which often reveal a "pictorial fascination with domestic labor."<sup>50</sup> Seen from this perspective, Denison's photos of Filipino children also reveal an objectifying stance and a desire for the exotic. As Denison turned the children into aesthetically pleasing motifs she inadvertently documented the raced and classed distance existing between her and the children she photographed. This becomes most evident in the display of nakedness in all three images discussed here. As Nerissa Balce and others have argued, the display of the naked skin of the colonized in European and American visual discourse must be interpreted as a sign of conquest and domination, as it established a border between the civilized and the barbaric and provided a foil for the colonized women's sexual exploitation.<sup>51</sup> By placing the children's nakedness in the focus of her camera, Denison inadvertently embraced this dichotomy.

Furthermore, I would argue that the last two pictures above are also indicative of the children's distanced relation towards the photographer. While

the young boy adopts a sideways pose, he avoids direct confrontation with the camera. As the young girl, walking on the street away from Denison, turns her face and holds her hand to her mouth she appears to be caught between curiosity and caution in view of the photographing woman behind her. As the children reluctantly gaze back into Denison's camera and towards us as viewers, they prompt us to reflect on the subjectivities that structured *their* perceptions of and relations with the colonizers.

### Colonial self-fashioning: Mary Denison's photographic portraits in the Philippines

Denison's self-positioning within the colonial setting of the Philippines can be further accentuated by an analysis of several portraits taken of her during her stay in the Philippines.

Figure 5.5 shows the first portrait of Denison included in the photo book to her husband.<sup>52</sup> We see Denison through a doorframe from an adjoining room, in a room in the corner of a house with wooden walls, while she sits back in a rocking chair reading a book. A window is positioned to the left of the photographer. A curtain or hammock lies on the floor in front of it. The walls of both rooms are sparsely decorated with quivers made of bamboo, and a sickle. A rug lies on the floor of the back room below the rocking chair. Two mounted photographs or art prints hang on the wooden blinds of the back room. Denison herself wears a white blouse and a long pale skirt with her hair pinned up. Her eyes seem to be half-closed or even closed, while she holds an open book with both of her hands. Why the numbers 3 and 8 are written on and below the photo remains unclear. The photograph is also marked by a circled "10" in the middle, which stems most likely from the frame number printed on the paper backing of the film.<sup>53</sup>

Since the photo was taken in a private setting, it is very likely that Denison's husband Jerome took the picture. Whether he did so unobserved by Denison remains unclear. However, various aspects indicate that she was aware of her photograph being taken. Not only does the curtain to the left appear to be arranged for the photograph, but also the material precondition of the image suggests so. Due to the low light sensitivity of photographic films at the time,



**Figure 5.5** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

indoor shots had to be taken using long exposures, involving the opening of the aperture for a certain number of seconds, to let enough light enter the camera.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, any movement by Denison would have blurred the photograph. Moreover, a note in one of her letters to her mother even indicates that Denison consciously arranged her own portrait. In a letter of November 4, 1900, Denison mentioned a Spanish Teniente (Lieutenant, S.N.) whom she had met named Cuartero, who, before his departure to Madrid, had sent her a “huge [...] pile of books [...] most of them bound in cloth.” “Think how kind of him!” Denison added, “I shall revel in Spanish poems and novels for month to come.”<sup>55</sup> The photograph might depict Denison in just this situation of

enjoying her privileged ability to read a bound volume of Spanish poems and novels in her house in Apalit while she lets her husband take a photo of her. Whether consciously staged or not, the photo lets us participate in Denison's gendered self-positioning via the means of photography.

As it shows Denison in a pose of relaxation and contemplation apparently absorbed by the book in her hand and at peace with the world and herself, it frames her life in the Philippines as a privileged experience, which enabled her to enjoy the opportunities for leisure, self-education, and contemplation reserved for women of her "race" and social standing in the Philippine colony. Furthermore, the photo brings her domestic role in the colonial realm to the forefront. As numerous scholars have shown, colonial households were the most important arenas of white women's participation in the project of colonization. Through the running of their colonial households, they not only buttressed the imperial project but also gained a hitherto refused position of authority and source of respectability.<sup>56</sup> By portraying Denison alone in her colonial home, the photographer charged her position within the colonial space with those many-faceted connotations of colonial domesticity.

A second picture will serve to accentuate a further layer of Denison's gendered self-expression through the medium of photography (Figure 5.6)<sup>57</sup>. It shows her sitting on a seat in a Philippine canoe. She wears a white blouse with white bow tie and a long dark skirt. A large round hat rests upon her head while she holds a sturdy wooden paddle with both hands. The boat seems to lie on the banks of a river or a lakeside; water and a waterfront with palm trees stretch behind Denison and the boat. A bent roof covers a part of the boat behind Denison. On a float in the water to the rear of the boat sits a person, probably a child. A caption saying "D.W.T. at Apalit" is written in pencil below the picture. As the scenery is similar to Denison's portrait of the boy in the boat, is possible that both photographs were taken during the same boat trip. Denison looks directly into the camera, seemingly well aware of her pose and impression. Her demeanor indicates that she self-consciously appropriated the photographic moment to play to the gallery of potential onlookers at home.

Several details of Denison's portrait catch the eye of the observer. As Denison poses with the paddle in a boat, she not only alludes to her own past rowing experiences in college but also plays upon the above-mentioned visual



**Figure 5.6** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas in a boat, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

register of the New Woman, who expressed her desire for freedom and independence in her indulgence in sports and outdoor activities. Furthermore, as Denison chose to be portrayed with a large round woven bamboo hat, typically worn by Christianized lowland Filipinos at the time,<sup>58</sup> she consciously associated herself with the local Filipino culture. By adopting the Philippine hat for the photograph, she possibly attempted to convey an interesting and exotic impression of herself, while her blouse, skirt, and pose bear witness of her adherence to white women's rules of attire in the colony. Most importantly, however, the photograph shows Denison in a pose of apparent self-reliance, seemingly independent of the support of American men or Filipino servants.

As she holds the paddle in her hands, Denison stages her own agency in the exploration of the Philippine space surrounding her. Through these various pictorial elements, the image thus conveys the impression that Denison perceived her trip on a canoe through the Philippine nature as a liberating experience, which appeared to fulfill a desire for self-reliance, independence, and exploration.

Two further portraits complicate Denison's use of the medium of photography as an instrument of self-fashioning. Both photos show her sitting sidesaddle on a pony with leashes in her hands on a public street, most likely in their first hometown Apalit (Figures 5.7 and 5.8)<sup>59</sup>. Apparently, one of the



**Figures 5.7 and 5.8** Photo album of Mary Denison Thomas, Mary Denison Thomas on a horse, 1900. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.





**Figures 5.7 and 5.8** *Continued*

photos was taken shortly after the other as they show her from two different angles. Denison wears a white blouse, a long skirt, a dark necktie scarf, and a dark hat above her pinned-up hair. In the first image, a Filipino boy in white clothing and with a hat upon his head stands on the left holding the bridle of Denison's pony. Denison is photographed from the side, apparently unaware of the photograph being taken. Bamboo thatched houses and trees can be seen in the background. The second image shows Denison and the pony without the boy; the view of the camera is slightly shifted to the right, with a banana plant and two bamboo houses in the background. A man in US Army clothing stands on the street in the background and at least one person sits on the porch

of the house to the right, both looking towards Denison. She is shown from her right side, while she smiles in the direction of the camera, holding the pony reins in her left and a riding crop in her right hand.

The two onlookers indicate that the taking of Denison's photographs attracted at least some attention within the local neighborhood. Being photographed while sitting elevated on a pony on a street in her Philippine hometown, Denison's whiteness, class status, and gender were put on display. Her elevated social status is further accentuated by the service provided by the Filipino boy, probably her servant, holding the bridle of her pony in Figure 5.7. Furthermore, by wearing a long skirt, a blouse, a silken scarf, and a hat when on the horse, Denison signaled her adherence to the unwritten rules of conduct and attire in the colony, where white women had to dress and behave as ladies to preserve the social boundaries between the colonizers and the colonized.<sup>60</sup>

Moreover, as Denison takes her pose sidesaddle on the pony she concurs with the gendered conventions of horse riding in Europe and the United States at the time. Up until the first decades of the twentieth century, men's concerns about women's sexual arousal by horse riding and conventions of "modest" female conduct and appearance mandated that women should not sit spread-legged on horses. One of the consequences of using the far more dangerous sidesaddle pose was that women depended on the help of others, usually men, to be lifted into the saddle, while a groom had to hold the horse.<sup>61</sup> As the Filipino boy holding her horse in Figure 5.7 indicates, Denison too needed the help of others to get into her saddle before the pictures of her were taken.

Interestingly, Denison's use of a sidesaddle pose in the two portrait shots stands in direct contradiction of several episodes in her letters to her family in which she wrote about her riding experiences in the Philippines. In a letter written shortly after her arrival in the Philippines, she reported:

Yesterday afternoon I went horse back riding with Major Hoyt and Captain Fenton. I had a little Filipino pony with a little Spanish saddle upon him and I rode 'A La Honolulu.' It was great sport and the best of the fun was learning to make him go as I wanted him to go. [...] We rode out on fields which had not so very long ago been swept by bullets, and everywhere we could see the trenches where our men had held forth. I am going every evening when it does not rain.<sup>62</sup>

As the passage reveals, riding the pony, controlling its movements while exploring the surrounding fields and former sites of colonial warfare provided Denison with an elevating feeling of freedom and self-authority. When Denison notes that she rode “A la Honolulu,” she makes clear that she rode her pony spread-legged, as women in Hawaii did at the time.<sup>63</sup> Apparently, the realm of the colony allowed Denison to sit on a horse like her male companions and defy the gendered conventions of horse riding in Europe and the United States.

Since the two photos show Denison in a sidesaddle pose, they indicate that she and her husband felt a need to closely adhere to the established gender norms when it came to take a picture of Denison that would be shared with their families in the United States. As the different portraits of Denison in the Philippines oscillate between female dependence and independence, they reveal both the encompassing meaning of gender norms at the time and the emancipative function of photography as a means to explore new forms of modern female subjectivity.

## Conclusion

“Snapshots are part of the material with which we make sense of our wider world. They are objects which take their place among the other objects which are part of our personal and collective past, part of the detailed and concrete with which we gain some control over our surroundings and negotiate with the particularity of our circumstances.”<sup>64</sup> As Patricia Holland observes here, vernacular photographs first and foremost tell us something about ourselves and our relation to the world. Rather than neutrally documenting the world surrounding us, they are indicative of our relationship with this world, and an important technique of subjectivation. Seen from this perspective, Mary Denison Thomas’s snapshots of the Philippines do not allow us to analyze the social reality of the American colonization of the Philippines. Instead they enable us to reconstruct a woman’s desire to frame her experiences in the colonial order of the Philippines and communicate it to her family back home.

The rise of roll-film photography in the late nineteenth century enabled this undertaking as it allowed a privileged sector of American society to create a

visual record of their life experiences and craft their individual visual memories according to their personal desires and normative expectations. As white middle- and upper-class American women strove to emancipate themselves from Victorian gender norms, they used the modern medium of snapshot photography to document this undertaking by putting their individual lives and experiences in the focus of their cameras.

Mary Denison Thomas's photographs of the Philippines provide us with an example of such efforts. As Denison photographed her encounters with the Philippine space and its people, and also let others photograph her, she acted upon women's desire for self-authentication and self-realization, which stood at the core of the contemporary discourse of new womanhood and the emancipative notion of snapshot photography as a prime instrument for women's self-expression. As Denison allowed others to take her portraits in the Philippines, she used the technology of her roll-film camera to frame and communicate her emancipative experiences as a woman in that colonial setting.

At the same time, her photographs hint at the strict division of gender roles that shaped her experience in the colony. This becomes most evident in the almost complete absence of scenes of war in her albums.<sup>65</sup> At a time when the Philippine guerilla war against the American occupiers led to extreme brutality on both sides and claimed thousands of civilian lives, Denison's photographs of Filipino children foreground her affective and paternal regard for the new colonial "offspring" who in her view embodied the promise of successful colonization and civilization. As Denison's photographic gaze towards the photographed children oscillates between proximity and distance, affection and exoticization, maternal care and voyeurism, it reveals the other side of the forceful implementation of US colonial rule in the Philippines. Her pictures of Filipino children visualize what historian Vincente Rafael has aptly termed "white love," the sentimental and paternalistic attitude of American colonizers towards the Filipino population, which stood alongside the extreme violence of the war.<sup>66</sup> Rather than providing "neutral" or "authentic" information, Denison's snapshots thus let us participate in the complex *mélange* of motives and desires that guided American women's participation in the colonization of the Philippines, and the emancipative and subjecting meaning of photography within this undertaking.

## Notes

- 1 Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 112–114.
- 2 Kramer, *Blood of Government*, 130–151; Frank Schumacher, “‘Marked Severities’: The Debate over Torture during America’s Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1902’, *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 51, no. 4 (2006): 475–498.
- 3 Kramer, *Blood of Government*, 157.
- 4 Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995);
- 5 Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 133.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 134.
- 7 Theodore Roosevelt, ‘The Strenuous Life, April 10, 1899’, in T. Roosevelt, *American Ideals: The Strenuous Life; Realizable Ideals. The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, 13 (New York: Scribner, 1926), 319–331, 329.
- 8 Roosevelt, ‘Strenuous Life’, 331; See also Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 192–196. For the discussion of manliness in the colonial situation see Jan Severin, ‘Male Same-Sex Conduct and Masculinity’, in this volume, 150.
- 9 Silvan Niedermeier, ‘Imperial Narratives: Reading US Soldiers’ Photo Albums of the Philippine–American War’, *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 18, no. 1 (2013): 28–49.
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- 13 Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner and Judy Celine A. Ick, *Bearers of Benevolence: The Thomasites and Public Education in the Philippines* (Pasig City, Philippines: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2001).
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- 20 Nancy Matha West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 48–53; R. Kroes, *Photographic Memories: Private Pictures, Public Images, and American History* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Press, 2007), 63.
- 21 N. West, *Kodak*, 53.
- 22 Harriet Riches, "Picture Taking and Picture Making." Gender Difference and the Historiography of Photography', in *Photography, History, Difference*, ed. Tanya Sheehan (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Press, 2015), 128–150.
- 23 N. West, *Kodak*, 53. See also Riches, 'Picture Taking and Picture Making'.
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- 25 Vincent L. Rafael, *White Love: And Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 54.
- 26 Margaret Strobel, *European Women and the Second British Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), xi. See also Frances Gouda, 'Das "unterlegene" Geschlecht der "überlegene" Rasse. Kolonialgeschichte und Geschlechterverhältnisse', in *Geschlechterverhältnisse im historischen Wandel*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 1993), 185–203. For white women's roles in the eighteenth-century British Empire see for example: Kathleen Wilson, 'Empire, Gender, and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century', in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14–45.
- 27 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Angeles, Luzon, June 13, 1900, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 8.

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- 29 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Angeles, Luzon, November 4, 1900, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 8.
- 30 See Rafael, *White Love*, 52–75.
- 31 See for example Katharina Walgenbach, 'Die weiße Frau als Trägerin deutscher Kultur.' *Koloniale Diskurse über Geschlecht, 'Rasse' und Klasse im Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt a. M. [u.a.]: Campus, 2005); Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Hauke Neddermann (ed.) *Frauen in den deutschen Kolonien* (Berlin: Links, 2009); Julia A. Clancy-Smith, Frances Gouda (ed.), *Domesticating the Empire. Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1998); Strobel, *European Women*. See also Bettina Brockmeyer, 'Interpreting an Execution in German East Africa,' in this volume, 91–93.
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- 33 See for example Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Loboc, Bohol, September 13, 1901, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 11.
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- 35 Ibid. See Magdalene Prince's slightly different view on indigenous people in German East Africa; she denied their capability to learn. Bettina Brockmeyer, 'Interpreting an Execution in German East Africa,' in this volume, 95.
- 36 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Tagbilaran, Bohol, December 30, 1901, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 12.
- 37 Photo Album 'Pictures of Life in the Philippines,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 3.
- 38 Photo Album 'Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 5.
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- 40 Gael Newton, 'Southeast Asia: Malaya, Singapore, and Philippines,' *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*, ed. John Hannavy, Vol. 2 J– Z, Index (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 1313–1316.
- 41 In June 1901 an advertisement of 'Photograph and Typewriter Supply, CO.' in the Manila Times for the first time offered Kodak equipment for sale. See 'Kodaks, Films, Papers, Plates,' *Manila Times*, June 2, 1901.
- 42 Photo Album 'Pictures of Life in the Philippines,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 3.
- 43 On US anthropological photography in the Philippines see for example Mark Rice, *Dean Worcester's Fantasy Islands. Photography, Film, and the Colonial Philippines* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014).
- 44 Photo Album 'Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 5.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Apalit, Luzon, December 19, 1900, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 9.
- 47 See also the discussion on colonial education in Jana Tschurennev, 'Women and Education Reform in Colonial India,' in this volume.
- 48 See for example letter of M. D. Thomas to A. D. Wilt, January 16, 1901, Apalit, Luzon; Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, December 30, 1901, Tagbilaran, Bohol, both in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 10.
- 49 See letter of Denison to E.B. Wilt, January 31, 1902, Tagbilaran, Bohol, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 13.
- 50 See Jay Ruby, *The World of Francis Cooper: Nineteenth-Century Pennsylvania Photographer* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 131–171, 155.
- 51 Nerissa Balce, 'The Filipina's Breast. Savagery, Docility, and the Erotics of the American Empire,' *Social Text* 24, no. 2 (2006): 89–110; Roland S. Coloma, 'White Gazes, Brown Breasts: Imperial Feminism and Disciplining Desires and Bodies in Colonial Encounters,' *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 2 (2012): 243–261.
- 52 Photo Album 'Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 5.



- 53 Similar errors can be found on many prints of the time. As Eastman Kodak did not use circled numbers on the back of their film rolls, they probably stem from the paper backing of another film supplier at the time. Author's email conversation with Todd Gustavson, Curator of Technology Collection, George Eastman Museum, March 28, 2016.
- 54 Eastman Kodak, *Picture Taking*, 15–17.
- 55 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Apalit, Luzon, November 4, 1900, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 9.
- 56 See for example Rosemary M. George, 'Homes in the Empire, Empires in the Home', *Cultural Critique*, 26 (1993/1994): 95–127; Strobel, *European Women*, 17–33. See also the discussion on home and empire in Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates,' in this volume and Eva Bischoff, 'Being at Home,' in this volume.
- 57 Photo Album 'Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 5.
- 58 See Ruth Linker, 'Philippine Hats', *Expedition* (Fall 1991): 31–36. <http://www.penn.museum/documents/publications/expedition/pdfs/4-1/philippine.pdf> [accessed October 4, 2016].
- 59 Photo Album 'Sketches and notes of the people, homes, and country, in and about Apalit,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 5.
- 60 See Strobel, *European Women*, 1–15.
- 61 Nancy F. Anderson, *The Sporting Life: Victorian Sports and Games* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, 2010), 34–35, 119–122.
- 62 Letter of M. D. Thomas to E. B. Wilt, Angeles, Luzon, June 13, 1900, in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 1, Fol. 8.
- 63 Nineteenth century travel writers repeatedly noted that Hawaiian women did not sit sidesaddle while riding horses. See for example Annie Allnut Brassey, *A Voyage in the 'Sunbeam': Our Home on the Ocean for Eleven Months* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1879), 228.
- 64 Patricia Holland, 'Introduction: History, Memory and the Family Album,' in *Family Snaps: The Meaning of Domestic Photography*, ed. Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (London: Virago, 1991), 10.
- 65 In fact, a single series of photographs in Denison's photo albums depict what appears to be scenes of war. The pictures show American soldiers and Philippine aides transporting a mounted cannon through rough terrain. The series of images

is presented at the end of Denison's album to her mother and family. Possibly these pictures were taken by Jerome Thomas. See Photo Album 'Pictures of Life in the Philippines,' in Thomas Family Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California, Box 4, Fol. 3.

66 Rafael, *White Love*.

## Male Same-Sex Conduct and Masculinity in Colonial German Southwest Africa

Jan Severin

In the morning of April 16, 1914 the farmer Maximilian von Rudno-Rudzinski was arrested by local German police authorities of the district of Okahandja, transported to the prison of Windhoek, the capital of the German colony of German Southwest Africa (GSWA), and taken into custody.<sup>1</sup> Von Rudno-Rudzinski was thirty-nine years old and married. He originated from the province of Silesia in south-eastern Prussia, came from an aristocratic family, and lived and worked on his farm not far from Okahandja.<sup>2</sup> The arrest was initiated after four of his male Herero workers asked the local district administration to be assigned to a new employer because von Rudno-Rudzinski had forced them to engage in sexual activities with him.<sup>3</sup> The legal background of their complaint was that some forms of sexual activities between men were sanctioned under the term “unnatural fornication” in Section 175 of the *Reichsstrafgesetzbuch* (RStGB), the German penal code.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, sexual activities between women were not explicitly sanctioned by law, as they were not in most penal codes.<sup>5</sup> The subsequent investigation showed that von Rudno-Rudzinski had had sexual contact with at least ten indigenous men and underage boys, in all cases initiated by him through intimidation or violence, or having been endured by the victims out of fear of von Rudno-Rudzinski’s powerful position as a white German citizen, farm head, and employer.<sup>6</sup> Von Rudno-Rudzinski confessed to most of the acts testified to by his workers at the first questioning. He tried to defend himself with the statement that his drive to “unnatural fornication” started with his arrival in GSWA, and asked for a medical examination to find out if his desire was the product of an abnormal disposition, which forced him to act like this and therefore suspended his free will.<sup>7</sup>

In the main hearing von Rudno-Rudzinski was found guilty by the court of the violation of Section 175 in several cases and was sentenced to eight months in jail.<sup>8</sup> His confession was accepted as a mitigating circumstance, as well as the fact that he had not previously been convicted and that the government physician Dr. Seibert attributed to him a “perverse” disposition, although this disposition supposedly did not suspend his free will. As aggravating circumstances, the large number of acts and of persons involved were brought in, as well as the claim that “he had strongly damaged the white race vis-à-vis the indigenous people through his activities.”<sup>9</sup> Seemingly, his most condemnable crimes were not the sexual activities themselves, but rather the endangering of the status of the white population. Despite the testimonies of the affected indigenous workers, his acts of violence, intimidation, and coercion had no relevance for the sentence.

The case of Rudno-Rudzinski shows that some forms of sexual activity—of men with other men—were persecuted in GSWA and Germany alike. But it also points to the possibility that there were some peculiarities linked to the colonial context of this trial, such as the assessment of some specific aspects as mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Against this backdrop, in the following pages I will analyze the situation to determine whether hegemonic masculinity in GSWA was as clearly defined as being heterosexual as it was in Germany.<sup>10</sup> This question might sound quite banal if one considers the legal, political, and day-to-day persecution of homosexuality in Imperial Germany and the not-so-liberal-attitude that pervaded most of its colonies.<sup>11</sup> Also, the policy concerning relationships between white men and indigenous women and their offspring, with a ban on so-called “mixed marriages” from 1905 onward along with other provisions against such sexual relationships, was even more rigid than in most other colonies, and suggests at first glance a generally tight regulation of sexuality between white and indigenous persons.<sup>12</sup> But research on sexualities in—mostly British—colonies draws a more ambiguous picture. While some studies understand the colonies as places where white men could often pursue sexual interests that were restricted or illegal in the metropole with less fear of being persecuted—such as male same-sex desire<sup>13</sup>—others argue that in the context of the British Empire sex between men was potentially regarded as the most dangerous of all “non-masculine” sexual practices and as a threat to family, nation, and empire.<sup>14</sup> And for two

British colonies in southern Africa—South Africa and Southern Rhodesia—serious concerns especially over sexual contact between indigenous men, and a significant level of legal and police persecution of sexual contact between men in general are documented, although the form, extent, and publicity of the linked debates differed considerably between both colonies.<sup>15</sup> These mentioned differences in research on colonial sexualities advise against generalizations and call for a careful analysis of specific colonial contexts.

The question of the importance of heterosexuality for colonial hegemonic masculinity can be linked to the question of similarities and differences of the policing of male same-sex conduct<sup>16</sup> in Germany and in GSWA, or—in other words—to the question of whether there are differences in the specific hegemonic masculinities in Germany and in the colonial context of GSWA visible through the policing of male same-sex conduct. This will be the second research question in the following pages.

As a central approach, I will use a conceptual framework developed by historian Lora Wildenthal in her study *German Women for Empire*, which addresses a change in the form of colonial hegemonic masculinity. She identifies a shift of hegemonic masculinity and the groups linked with it during the German colonial period in GSWA, from “imperial patriarchs” to “liberal nationalists.”<sup>17</sup> In short, in the early period of German colonial rule the hegemonic conception of masculinity centered around the freedom and personal autonomy of the masculine settler subject, including also the autonomy of the male white settler to freely choose his sexual partner. In this conception, sexual relationships between white men and indigenous women did not challenge the authority of these men or of German colonial rule, but expressed it.<sup>18</sup> This shifted in the course of German colonial rule in GSWA to a conception of masculinity which partially limited the autonomy of the male settler subject and centered around notions of rationality, self-control, and the subordination under norms of behavior, which were thought to serve the interests of colonial rule and above all to sharply demarcate borders between colonizers and colonized.<sup>19</sup> Thus, this latter conception of masculinity was strongly linked to locating the male settler in the framework of a patriarchally structured, functional white family. This was—as a matter of course—strongly opposed to any same-sex sexual activities of white settlers. Wildenthal’s concept contains an abstraction as well as a focus on settler masculinity in

GSWA, and therefore at least partially exhibits a tendency to simplify complex developments and to blend out other groups like missionaries or soldiers.

### The historical source material: Its pitfalls and its limitations

The source material used here consists almost exclusively of the sources produced by the official, judicial persecution of male same-sex conduct in GSWA: the files of trials against men who were accused of an offense against Section 175, and a few expulsion procedures resulting from these trials. As already mentioned, Section 175 sanctioned only some forms of sexual activity between men under the term “unnatural fornication.” It was aimed at activities which were considered as “resembling cohabitation.”<sup>20</sup> This excluded for example kissing or cuddling, and made the persecution of consensual sexual activities between men more complicated.<sup>21</sup> But it was also a term left wide open for interpretation, which strengthened the personal, arbitrary power of the judges.<sup>22</sup>

The focus on these court files as source materials for research on the policies concerning male same-sex conduct in GSWA is not a voluntary or arbitrary choice, but is due to the fact that these are almost the only sources broaching this issue. In contrast to the metropolitan context there is a total absence of personal accounts made by white colonial men desiring other men. There are no traces of the gray literature produced by gay or lesbian subcultures generated in metropolitan cities like Berlin or Paris; neither are there scientific reports or political pamphlets like the ones the developing gay movements there produced.<sup>23</sup> At least in the settler community in GSWA, no subculture existed and no movement that, for all the repression, persecution, or rejection it faced, also promoted some form of the self-conscious identity which often went hand in hand with producing documents about oneself and the social situation one faced.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, the existence of subcultures in general was strongly hampered by the relatively low number of settlers (see below) with only a few rather rural hubs like Windhoek, Okahandja, or Swakopmund—a stark contrast to a distinct urban metropolis like Berlin or a huge bustling harbor town like Hamburg, with their respective gay subcultures. Franz Joseph von Bülow, co-founder of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee (*Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee*),

maybe the most influential organization of the gay movement in the *Kaiserreich*,<sup>25</sup> spent three years in GSWA in the early 1890s. But even in his published account of his visit there, neither the issue of his interest in other men, nor the topic of male same-sex conduct in general is ever mentioned or implied.<sup>26</sup>

This very specific provenience of the source material available has some limiting and problematic repercussions concerning research on male same-sex desire and conduct in GSWA, on which this article is based. Three of them will be mentioned briefly.

Firstly, due to its background the source material largely represents a position which is shaped by a criminalization of this conduct and by regarding it “perverse” and “unnatural.” At least in the case of the court files used here, personal testimonies of these men—aside from a handful of letters between lovers included in the files<sup>27</sup>—exist only in a barely visible form in the interrogations by police officers or judges, strongly filtered through the juridical language used, the guidelines of interrogation protocols, and the classifications regarding which statements and details were judicially relevant and which were not.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, as Heike Schmidt remarks regarding similar court cases in German East Africa, due to the focus on witness accounts in the German legal system, court files like these provide an insight into everyday colonial life.<sup>29</sup>

Secondly, the article concentrates on the representations of male same-sex conduct and the respective policies. The analyzed trials targeted only white men. This was caused by a general separation between white and indigenous people in the German colonial court system and also by the different codes of law used.<sup>30</sup> The German codes of law—including the German penal code relevant here—applied only to the European population, while the indigenous population was subject to the so-called *Eingeborenenrecht* or “indigenous law,” which was composed of local law codes and decrees issued for the different colonies by the German authorities.<sup>31</sup> The German penal code was only applied in cases where white people were part of a trial, as victims or as perpetrators, while so-called “indigenous law” was applied when solely indigenous people were affected. Seemingly, the latter was less concerned with penalizing sexual contacts between men,<sup>32</sup> and no official decrees were issued which targeted these contacts. There are no documented legal persecutions of indigenous men because of sexual activities with other men. This was a striking difference to colonial jurisdiction in some other colonial contexts in southern Africa,

namely South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, where indigenous men were regularly charged with having had sexual activities with other men.<sup>33</sup> One possible reason for this is that the judicial segregation between white and indigenous persons in the German colonial law system was particularly strict compared to other colonial powers.<sup>34</sup>

In all the trials in GSWA a clear division existed between white men who were accused and depicted as active perpetrators and indigenous men who participated in the trials as witnesses or victims. Possibly, an active participation of indigenous men in sexual activities with white men troubled notions of colonial dominance and its patterns of activity and passivity too much to be seriously considered. What can be said quite definitely is that no contemporary discourse assuming a greater inclination of indigenous people of GSWA toward same-sex conduct existed. Quite to the contrary, the historian Marc Epprecht identifies a tendency in different colonies in southern Africa at that time to assume a lesser inclination on the part of indigenous men toward same-sex conduct and to ascribe it to external influences when it was encountered: "In most cases, however, African homosexual behavior was linked to the specific conditions created by colonial rule and racial capitalism."<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, there exist some rare accounts, mainly by anthropologists, about same-sex conduct of indigenous people in GSWA. Especially the article *Homosexualität bei den Eingeborenen in Südwest-Afrika*<sup>36</sup> by Kurt Falk—who carried out his research during the German colonial period—is of interest here because he focuses explicitly on same-sex sexuality among different indigenous groups. Nonetheless, his account has to be treated with caution because it is pervaded by contemporary colonialist racism. In his article Falk lists step-by-step the frequency and forms of same-sex sexuality in several indigenous groups and at specific locations such as the diamond mining fields near Lüderitzbucht. He considers specific forms of male same-sex activity as quite common in most indigenous groups to some degree.<sup>37</sup> Falk objects to a position allegedly held by some unfortunately not explicitly named German publications that indigenous people were harmed through the contact with white male homosexuals and stresses in contrast: "It would be more correct to say that the harm is to the whites by their proximity to the natives."<sup>38</sup> This notion is of interest insofar as it was never put forward as an argument in the trials concerning Section 175.



There is almost no further information on Falk or his background other than that his “experiences [...] arise from a twelve-year residence as a sexologist among the natives.”<sup>39</sup> Falk’s critical stance concerning Section 175,<sup>40</sup> his self-description as “sexologist,” his referencing of Magnus Hirschfeld—one of the pivotal protagonists of the fight against Section 175 and of the scientific as well as popular research on homosexuality in the *Kaiserreich* and Weimar Republic—and the printing of the article in the *Archiv für Menschenkunde*, which was published on behalf of the Hirschfeld-fronted “Institute for Sexology,” locates him in the sphere of Section 175-critical sexologists of the late *Kaiserreich* and the Weimar Republic.<sup>41</sup> At least partially, Falk’s article could be read as an appendix, focused on GSWA, to Hirschfeld’s own comprehensive volume on contemporary homosexuality published in 1914.<sup>42</sup>

Thirdly, this article deals only with male same-sex conduct. There is not the smallest hint about sexuality between women in the historical source material apart from some remarks in the article by Falk. Here, he depicts sexual activities between women as not uncommon in some indigenous groups like Herero or Nama.<sup>43</sup> Against the backdrop that women were not targeted by Section 175, the almost complete lack of any sources on sexuality between women is at least partially linked to the aforementioned problem that there are only sources emanating from a state-run, legal repression, a phenomenon certainly not limited to GSWA alone.<sup>44</sup> For the colonial context of Southern Rhodesia it is mentioned in a similar way by Epprecht.<sup>45</sup>

### The trials concerning Section 175: An interpretation and contextualization of their gradual increase during the German colonial period

There were around twenty-five trials against men who were accused of violations of Section 175 during the German colonial period. All these trials took place between 1900 and 1915, with an increase from 1906 onward when nearly every year two or three persons were accused. This number may not sound very high, but regarding the rather small number of white inhabitants in GSWA it was not lower than in contemporary Germany itself on a per capita level.<sup>46</sup> This is a first hint that maybe there was at least not a fundamental shift of the colonial

government and the administration away from metropolitan policies concerning male same-sex conduct. The trials involved different constellations of sexual activities practiced by white men: sexual acts with indigenous men and boys, sexual acts with other white men which were reported by the latter, sexual acts with other white men which were reported by a third person, sexual acts with underage white boys, and in some cases also sexual acts with indigenous women and girls, when the same white men who were tried for violating Section 175 were also accused of sexual abuse of these women and girls.<sup>47</sup>

How can the complete absence of trials in the first half of the German colonial period and their increase from 1906 onward be interpreted? One relevant aspect could be the small number of white settlers in the early period of GSWA and the gradual increase in white population over time. While in 1894, only 969 white inhabitants were counted in GSWA, this number rose to 4,640 in 1903, to 11,791 in 1909, and to 14,830 in 1913.<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, there were simply less people who could violate Section 175 in the early years of GSWA, and the gradual increase of the population corresponds with an increase in the number of trials. Besides, in the years from the outbreak of the war with Herero and Nama in 1904 onward a growing number of German soldiers were present in GSWA.<sup>49</sup> However, one has to be cautious in attributing the significant increase in numbers of German troops in GSWA to the increase in numbers of trials. Only in two of them were soldiers involved in male same-sex encounters.

Another reason for the mentioned increase of trials related to Section 175 could be that in the first years of the century and especially in the years during the war with Herero and Nama from 1904 until 1908, huge parts of the German administration developed, as did a more diverse and capable colonial government structure. There are relatively few government and court files before 1900 in general, a significant increase afterwards, and virtually an explosion from the years 1905 and 1906 onward. Thus, it is possible that there were trials concerning violations of Section 175 before 1900, but they were not recorded or archived. This is supported by the perception that the practice of archiving official files in the respective areas before 1905 was often rather cursory.

This relatively weak structure of the colonial administration and the government was closely linked not only to a deficit in self-administration and in archiving but also to a generally rather narrow limit of the reach, efficacy,

and grasp of German colonial power in the first period of colonial rule in GSWA.<sup>50</sup> Accordingly, German officials and the police had a limited ability to control the white as well as the indigenous population, to notice violations of law, and to sanction them. Besides, an attempt to explain the development of these trials over time could also take into consideration the question of the interest and will of the German colonial authorities to punish male same-sex conduct. In the context of the war against Herero and Nama and the widespread opinion that this war revealed the inefficiency of the prevalent colonial policies, new forms of population policies concerning white as well as indigenous inhabitants, including a comprehensive, racist segregation policy with the nearly complete expropriation of indigenous land and the implementation of a rigid labor system which was to guarantee the extensive exploitation of indigenous labor, were installed to render colonial rule more stable and effective.<sup>51</sup> These policies included measures to enforce behavioral norms of an idealized German colonial settler and to sanction deviant behavior which allegedly threatened colonial rule—such as white male same-sex conduct.

Arguably, this thesis would rest on a very thin basis if its main argument was the increase from none to one to two or three trials per year over time. But it becomes much more plausible when the view is broadened to encompass a whole range of accompanying official orders and developments at that time in GSWA. For example, the ban on so-called mixed marriages between white men and indigenous women, mandated by the deputy governor Tecklenburg in 1905,<sup>52</sup> the introduction of rigid pass and work legislation for indigenous people in 1907,<sup>53</sup> and the considerable increase of expulsions of mainly white male persons due to allegedly endangering behavior from GSWA from 1905 onward<sup>54</sup> all point to a strengthening of the reach and grip of colonial rule over its white as well as indigenous subjects, and to an enforcement of specific behaviors which was intended to guarantee the stability and productivity of colonial rule. This intensification of population policies was linked to the already mentioned expansion of administrative and political structures, where the increased ability to enforce norms and sanction deviations met with the increased will to do so. Thus, the small increase in numbers of trials mentioned can be understood not as an isolated and possibly not very relevant shift in the colonial governance of male same-sex conduct, but rather as part of a much more fundamental and far-reaching shift of colonial politics.

The already mentioned study by Lora Wildenthal grasps this shift on the level of hegemonic masculinity. The patriarchal autonomy of the early male settlers was by-and-by transformed to a form of masculinity which was no less patriarchal, but which subjected them under the notion of being functional for the specific interests of state, nation, and “race.” From a mostly private issue, their choice of sexual partners came to be a publicly debated and strongly moralized as well as politicized topic. The central theme here was that of the so-called mixed marriages and especially the offspring of these legal unions, which were seen as an imminent danger to German colonial rule. But also the stricter sanctioning of male same-sex conduct—as shown in the increase in numbers of trials relating to Section 175—can be understood quite convincingly as a part of this shift, though it is important not to oversimplify this shift in general. Some aspects of male (settler) autonomy—for example the ownership of cattle and land—remained significantly more important for colonial than metropolitan hegemonic masculinity. Colonies like GSWA were still imagined as spaces where German men could regain their full masculinity, while in Germany itself they were hampered by modernity, liberalism, and the rise of women’s and workers’ movements.<sup>55</sup> But in other aspects such as the choice of a spouse, white male settlers came to be even more strictly regulated than in Germany.

## Sexual contact between white men in GSWA

The following two subchapters will center on an analysis of the differences and similarities in sexual contact and relationships between men and their policing in GSWA and Germany. I distinguish here analytically between sexual contact among white men and sexual contact between white and indigenous men, due to the reason that in the colonial context of GSWA sexual contact between white and indigenous persons was subject to a different set of power structures, regulations, and notions than sexual contact among white persons.<sup>56</sup> The following two subchapters will show that this was also the case regarding criminalized forms of sexuality.

Concerning the sexual contact among white men, the colonial context did not seem to have a significant effect on the commonness of these contacts, nor on the sentences accused men had to face. Ronald Hyam argues that so-called

situational homosexuality—male same-sex sexual contact elicited by social circumstances such as a primarily homosocial environment, and not by a deeper, long-term desire—were spurred by the colonial environment.<sup>57</sup> There is no evidence for this in the trials analyzed. There were some trials of men in the colonial army and of members of ships' crews, two environments which were and are often labeled as enabling or promoting sexual contact between men. In 1909 for example, there was a trial of the seamen Benthien, Meyer, and Breznik at the court in Swakopmund, during which it became clear that the former two joined together in sexually harassing Breznik.<sup>58</sup> Benthien and Meyer were convicted to two days in prison for “unnatural fornication” and incitement to do so respectively, while their victim, Breznik, was found not guilty because the court believed that he was forced to participate in the “unnatural fornication.”<sup>59</sup> There are—as in the trials against soldiers—no hints as to why the actions of these men should have been initiated through the specific colonial situation, especially taking into consideration that in Germany itself sexual contact between soldiers were quite a topic and did not seem to have been uncommon.<sup>60</sup> Maybe their professional environment was homosocial, but the colonial society was far from it. Opportunities for cheap sex with women, often under very harsh and violent conditions, were available most of the time to soldiers in GSWA.<sup>61</sup>

Of course, there were differences already mentioned between GSWA and some major cities in the *Kaiserreich*. In this sense, white men desiring other white men had, as a tendency, fewer opportunities in GSWA than in Berlin or Hamburg. However, this was not a distinctive feature caused by the colonial context. Therein, GSWA possibly resembled smaller towns or rural areas in Germany rather than urban centers.<sup>62</sup>

### Violence, coercion, and asymmetries: Colonial power relations as part of sexual contact between white and indigenous men

Not surprisingly, the picture generated through an analysis of the trials concerning sexual contact between white and indigenous men differed fundamentally from those related to sexual contact between white men in

GSWA. The hierarchic setting of the colonial context clearly informed the sexual contact between men: at least in the files accessible there is no case visible where a mutual affection existed. White men initiated the contacts and tried—not in every case successfully—to dictate their course following their own desire. The desire and the wishes of the indigenous had—aside from their acts of resistance—no significance for them.

The practices of Rudno-Rudzinski—threats, physical violence, and the exploitation of his position—were by no means an isolated case, but pervaded in some form most of the trials which included sexual acts of white with indigenous men. White men did use their position of power regularly to enforce their sexual desire in a ruthless manner. It is especially striking that in most cases where the sexual acts were initiated by white employers, a strong tendency toward an extreme degree of coercion and violence existed. Often, violence grew with personal power. The behavior of Rudno-Rudzinski was similar to the behavior of persons like Victor van Alten, who brutally abused indigenous employees in several cases,<sup>63</sup> or the British citizen James Morton, who tried to exploit his position as an overseer at the guano station of Cape Cross in combination with small donations of food, tobacco, and alcohol to force his sexual desire on indigenous workers.<sup>64</sup>

Occasionally, prior to or after the sexual contact, white men gave some money or provided some alcohol—as James Morton did. In a very few cases transactions like these could be read as a form of partaking in prostitution. Sometimes, they were used to persuade the indigenous man or boy to comply. In other cases the payment of a very small amount of money after a sexual assault had the function of ensuring the silence of the indigenous man<sup>65</sup> or of self-legitimizing the conducted sexual abuse retroactively.

Not all sexual contact between white and indigenous men was necessarily marked by open coercion and violence.<sup>66</sup> Also, the form and the extent of the coercion and violence differed significantly from contact to contact. Besides, the concrete focus of Section 175 on sexual acts between men resembling cohabitation led to the tendency that mainly sexual interactions were pursued which involved conflicts between the involved men.<sup>67</sup> However, it cannot be assumed that coercion was not part of the sexual contact where it was not openly visible. The colonial setting in GSWA resulted in rigid hierarchies and a power of disposition by white men which put into effect a potentially violent

relationship of coercion and compulsion, even if it was not invoked directly. Dependence on the employer, material precarity, preceding experiences of force, powerlessness and violence, and the awareness of being legally and juridically treated as a second-class person could lead to an enduring of coerced sexual acts which were thus not openly resisted. For example, the Herero Johannes followed the order from Rudno-Rudzinski to undress and to have sex with him out of fear of being punished if he refused to do so.<sup>68</sup>

This does not imply that the indigenous men had no options for acting or resisting. In plenty of cases indigenous men tried to resist the advances of white men, sometimes successfully. Before working as an overseer at Cape Cross, Morton tried to sexually abuse the black seaman John Tobby on board the German steamship *Gertrud Woermann*. Tobby defended himself and punched Morton out of the cabin, an action which was later also declared legitimate by the white officers and the captain of the ship.<sup>69</sup> Some indigenous men also reported sexual abuses by white men either directly to an official person or to other white men,<sup>70</sup> who handed the information over to the police. This sometimes resulted in an official prosecution—as in the case of von Rudno-Rudzinski, Morton, and van Alten. However, it is not clear how often this strategy was successful and how many reports never initiated an investigation but were ignored by members of the white colonial society.

### Colonial peculiarities in judging male same-sex conduct in GSWA

After this overview of the impact of the colonial context on sexual contacts between men in GSWA, I discuss the question of whether the colonial context had any influence on the severity of the sentences delivered in these trials and the consequences for the convicted. There are some context-related peculiarities, especially concerning the reasons given for the judgment.

In some cases, for example the trial of von Rudno-Rudzinski, the fact that the sexual contact involved indigenous men was brought in as aggravating. This was considered as endangering the status of German rule and of the white population in general because these actions were understood as a harmful contrast to the aura of self-ascribed superiority in terms of morality and

civilization. In a similar trial against the German citizen Friedrich von Fürstenberg the sentence was aggravated with the argument that a light sentence would diminish the reputation of the colonial government among the indigenous population, who could not develop any respect for “the white man” who claims to rule them but commits such a crime.<sup>71</sup> It was considered even more severe if these sexual acts of white men happened on multiple occasions with different indigenous men or with one repeatedly. It is no coincidence that only the cases in which white men had sex with indigenous men several times initiated an expulsion process and a subsequent deportation of the convict from the colony. These expulsion procedures were an instrument specific to the colonial context, since in contrast to the situation in Germany not only foreign people could be deported but also German citizens.<sup>72</sup>

Expulsions of a person from the territory of GSWA or from another German<sup>73</sup> colony were deemed legitimate for two reasons: if a person was not able to provide for him or herself, and if the person endangered the security of the colony. The first reason mainly targeted people who were or could become a burden for social welfare and thus for the precarious economic situation of the German colonial state. The second reason targeted a much broader range of undesired or deviant behaviors and activities—from political agitation against German interests and trading with insurgent indigenes, to participation in illegal diamond trading, a nomadic and allegedly non-productive way of life, prostitution,<sup>74</sup> procuration, the illegal distribution of alcohol to indigenes, or violations of Section 175.<sup>75</sup> Convictions, or in some cases also suspicions, linked to these forms of alleged misconduct could lead to the initiation of a formal expulsion process and as a consequence—if the transgression was considered so grave that it endangered the stability of German rule—to deportation from GSWA. There were four expulsions linked to a violation of Section 175 in GSWA. One was the expulsion of von Rudno-Rudzinski, which was not put into effect because of the beginning of the First World War.<sup>76</sup> The violations of Section 175 in these cases were not seen as isolated incidents, but traced back to an alleged deviance deeply rooted in the deficient character of the convicted men.<sup>77</sup> The central legitimization for all these expulsions was precisely the supposed repeated threatening of white status and dominance mentioned in the sentence against Rudno-Rudzinski. The colonial context here provided one specific instrument for penalizing men having sex with



other men. The expulsion procedures share a nearly identical development in their numbers with the trials concerning Section 175. In the early colonial period in GSWA there are hardly any of these procedures documented, while there was a strong increase from 1905 onward.<sup>78</sup> I suggest this may be read as another practice in which the shift that Wildenthal mentions is visible.

In contrast to these aggravating effects, in quite a few cases the colonial context had mitigating effects on the sentences. For example, some offenses were not subsequently prosecuted, even if they were penalized by German law. The most striking example here is that Section 176<sup>1</sup>, which sanctioned violence during sexual contact among other offenses, was only rarely applied in the trials, although accounts by indigenous witnesses of such actions were abundant. In most cases this was completely ignored or had no impact on the sentence. The trial against von Rudno-Rudzinski is a distinct example of this practice. One reason for this is that Section 176<sup>1</sup> was not applied in Germany as well when men were victims of sexual violence because it mentioned exclusively women as victims, but instead Section 240, which targeted “coercion.”<sup>79</sup> Sexual violence against men could therefore legally never be categorized as rape but only as sexual assault. However, in none of the opinions of the courts were either Section 240, or violence or coercion, mentioned at all. The indigenous person and the harm inflicted on him or her was legally not relevant, in contrast to the violation of alleged norms of “civilized behavior” by white men. Thereby, the coercion and violence were not openly legitimized or apologized for with regard to the colonial context, but plainly ignored or hushed up.

A similar tendency can be found in an offense targeted by Section 176:<sup>3</sup> sexual actions with a person under the age of fourteen. In the trials in GSWA where white men were convicted because of sexual actions with white underage boys, the age of the boys strongly aggravated the sentence. Dimitris Sametes, who was accused of sexual acts with three underage white boys in 1908 by the court in Windhoek, was subsequently sentenced to three years in prison—the strictest sentence of all trials related to Section 175.<sup>80</sup> The verdict explicitly mentioned a violation of Section 176.<sup>3</sup> A comparatively severe sentencing was also the case in some trials where sexual actions by white men with underage indigenous boys were debated.<sup>81</sup> But in a significant number of cases this fact was ignored or downplayed. Section 175 was applied, while Section 176,<sup>3</sup>

which would have been applicable without any doubt, was ignored or had at least less impact on the severity of the penalty. White underage boys were granted—as were all underage persons by law—a special status of protection. They were seen as victims of a seduction or coercion by adult men which allegedly—in addition to the physical harm done—endangered the development of a “normal,” male and heterosexual sexuality,<sup>82</sup> and therefore a “healthy,” normal family life<sup>83</sup> in an age where the underage persons were seen as morally weaker and therefore more vulnerable than adult persons.<sup>84</sup> This endangerment of the hegemonic masculinity included in this notion called for immediate intervention by the state. Concurrently boys and young men and their sexuality were marked as susceptible and in need of protection.<sup>85</sup> This specific protected status was often denied to indigenous boys who in the rigidly racist structured context of GSWA were never meant to inhabit hegemonic masculinity and to form the pivotal core element of colonial society. Again, at least in some cases, the harm and the possible traumatization inflicted upon the indigenous person were neglected. The transgression of the so-called “racial border” in the course of a sexual act with an indigenous male person was sharply criticized and sanctioned, while the violence, as well as the status of the person as underage, were often ignored.

In some cases it was almost a zero-sum game for the accused white men because their sentence was aggravated by the fact that they had had sex with indigenous men and mitigated by the fact that the courts ignored the coercion and violence which were part of these acts. However, this peculiarity of judging same-sex conduct is far from irrelevant because it shows quite strikingly the impact of the colonial context on the legal persecution and on the—in most cases—ruthless neglect of the harm and suffering inflicted on indigenous people.

### White male same-sex conduct in GSWA: Legally persecuted but not officially scandalized

I will now come back to the initial questions. The trials show quite clearly that hegemonic masculinity was defined as heterosexual in GSWA. At least from the time when the policies of the colonial state concerning sexuality and the

linked hegemonic settler masculinity shifted in the way Wildenthal described, violations against Section 175 were prosecuted to an extent which did not seem to be much greater or lesser than in Germany. But in this colonial context homosexual acts of white men were regarded as especially dangerous when they occurred with indigenous men. Given the possibility of an expulsion even of German citizens the government had one powerful (albeit, in the case of male same-sex conduct, not often used) instrument to set a (sexual) norm, punish the persons transgressing it and remove them from colonial society. Due to the absence of a comprehensive survey of expulsions in the different German colonies it cannot be determined whether expulsion, as an instrument of formation of the colonial society, was more regularly used in GSWA due to its status as a settler colony than in other colonies without a significant German settler community. A cursory comparison with German New Guinea, where at least three expulsions with regard to Section 175 happened,<sup>86</sup> does not support such an assumption.

The rigid punishment of white men having sex with indigenous men could lead to the conclusion that colonial hegemonic masculinity was even more strongly marked as heterosexual than in Germany. However, this thesis is challenged by the complete lack of any public or administrative debate concerning male same-sex conduct in GSWA. Hardly any of these trials were publicly discussed or debated, either in GSWA or in Germany. Possibly locals noticed them and talked about them, but there was no coverage in the colonial newspapers, nor was the topic debated by the government or the administration. The case of Victor van Alten produced some discussions and some correspondence but this was mainly because of the extensive trials in which van Alten appealed and—unsuccessfully—brought in more than ten opinions, some of well-known German physicians and scientists, which attested to his non-accountability.<sup>87</sup> Also, after his deportation to Germany, he conducted, also unsuccessfully, a lawsuit against the German government because of the financial loss caused by the deportation.<sup>88</sup> But even these lengthy lawsuits did not initiate a real debate. Neither the public, nor the media, nor the government or administration in GSWA and Germany regarded male same-sex conduct in GSWA a relevant, dangerous, or fundamental problem.

This stood in distinct contrast to the *Kaiserreich* itself, where the topic was part of heated debates circling around a series of scandals about alleged

homosexual activities in the army and of high-ranking members of society,<sup>89</sup> and around the attempts of an emerging gay movement and its supporters to abolish Section 175. In the public silence about this topic GSWA also differed from German East Africa, where accusations against Governor Rechenberg of having a sexual relationship with one of his servants initiated a prolonged scandal which resembled the scandals in the *Kaiserreich*.<sup>90</sup> There is no clear explanation for this lack of debate in GSWA. In then contemporary debates about male same-sex conduct, normative conceptions of sexuality were negotiated or (re)produced, but other topics—such as different ideas of a foreign policy regarding France—were also raised, using male same-sex conduct for example as a synonym for allegedly weak and “unmanly” politics. Possibly, conflicts about the policing of the colony were carried out on different grounds. And in contrast to Germany, there was no movement questioning normative assumptions about male same-sex desire and conduct and its current criminalization by opening a debate, and discourses about the moral and political decadence of modern life in the rapidly growing cities—which had male same-sex conduct as one topic—did exist in GSWA but centered on Germany and not on the colony, which initially was understood as an antithesis of these developments.

It is possible that in GSWA specific norms of sexual behavior were first and foremost—and maybe more strongly than in other colonies because of GSWA’s status as a settler colony—negotiated or stated in the very central domain of sexual contact between white men and indigenous women, and not so much in the domain of sexual contact between men. One reason for this could lie in the pivotal danger that was ascribed to mixed marriages, because they could result in persons who were regarded as indigenous holding a German citizenship.<sup>91</sup> This was seen as a grave threat to a colonial society which was based upon rigid “racialized” hierarchies and in the case of GSWA (at least in its latter period) even more strongly than in other German colonies upon the exclusively white settler family as its core element.<sup>92</sup> Other sexual contacts between white men and indigenous women, even if they created offspring, were seen as a status problem and as transgressing so-called “racial” borders and were socially ostracized in the years after the war with Herero and Nama, but did not pose such a fundamental and material threat as the mixed marriages did. Something similar could be said about the sexual contact between white and indigenous

men. They were seen as dangerous and were punished harshly at times, but there was no danger that they resulted in indigenous persons owning German citizenship.

A second reason could be that none of the trials disclosed intimate social companionship between white and indigenous men. The sexual contact between white and indigenous men was seen as taking the form of exclusively sexual encounters. In contrast, relationships between white men and indigenous women, and especially mixed marriages, were regularly seen as promoting the often lamented “going native” of white men due to close social contact with indigenous women and their families.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, the absence of intimate social contact between white and indigenous men who had sexual contact marks a difference from German East Africa, where the debates about Rechenberg and other members of the colonial administration centered precisely on the allegations that they had had sexual contact with their indigenous servants.<sup>94</sup> This could be another reason why there was a debate in German East Africa but not in GSWA.

In general, a detailed analysis of the policing of male same-sex conduct and activities in different German colonial contexts would be interesting. Daniel Walther sees no huge ambiguity in various German colonial contexts in the policing of male same-sex conduct in contrast to the policing of heterosexual contact.<sup>95</sup> For the field of expulsions resulting from trials regarding Section 175—which he exclusively addresses—a comparison of his article with the material analyzed here supports his conclusion, while the debates in German East Africa suggest that there were at least some differences.

In a comparison of the policy regarding male same-sex conduct in GSWA and in the British colonies of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia the differences between the British colonies seem to be not much smaller than between those colonies and GSWA. At least the numbers for Southern Rhodesia—thirty-nine cases from 1892 to 1935<sup>96</sup>—did not suggest a significantly different rate of trials against white men than in GSWA. As already mentioned, sexual contact between indigenous men was judicially prosecuted in both British colonies, in contrast to GSWA, and the trials in which indigenous men were accused outnumbered those in which white men were accused considerably.<sup>97</sup> But while in South Africa a significant administrative and public debate about sexual contact between indigenous

men developed, which led to an official survey in 1907,<sup>98</sup> this did not happen in Southern Rhodesia, where no debate about either white or indigenous men having sex with other men occurred,<sup>99</sup> as in GSWA. This is remarkable because in all three colonies quite similar patterns of male same-sex activities in the respective mining compounds and settlements are documented. One reason for this could be that the phenomenon was deemed more relevant because the South African mines, especially in the Witwatersrand area, had, through the influx of much larger number of male indigenous migrant workers<sup>100</sup> (at least more than at the diamond fields near Lüderitzbucht or the copper mines near Tsumeb in GSWA), a much greater demand for commercial sex, and were much more at the center of attention of a white colonial society.

The colonial situation in GSWA generated an ambiguous situation regarding white male same-sex conduct.<sup>101</sup> On the one hand, legal persecution by the authorities continued and male homosexual acts across the so-called “racial divide” were regarded particularly dangerous. Furthermore, GSWA lacked a gay scene with its increasing opportunities for men desiring other men, as especially Berlin but also other larger German cities offered. Against this backdrop, it seems unlikely that escaping persecution or the hope of broader possibilities for living out male same-sex desire in the colony were relevant motivations for German men coming to GSWA, as Hyam assumed it was for other colonial contexts. But on the other hand, the colonial situation also created options for white men who were interested in sex with other men because it brought them into a position where they had control over indigenous people. In a context of harsh hierarchies and the denial of fundamental human rights to indigenous people, asymmetries of power facilitated sexual assaults and lowered the chance that white men had to fear punishment or face resistance.

The ambiguous position of white male same-sex conduct in GSWA is also connected to ascriptions of gender and especially of masculinity: contrary to a still existing tendency to feminize men desiring other men,<sup>102</sup> the positions of power that von Rudno-Rudzinski and other men occupied and used for their interests were strongly linked to hegemonic or dominant forms of masculinity. These men embodied and exercised masculine power while deviating from masculine norms of sexuality at the same time. Concerning sexual violence and abuse, white men who desired other men could realize at least partially

something which I would call a “colonial dividend” in analogy to the term “patriarchal dividend,” coined by Raewyn Connell, describing the benefits most men receive simply through their ascribed status as men, even if they did not embody the contemporary hegemonic form of masculinity.<sup>103</sup> However, it is important to underline that this was not a special feature of white male same-sex conduct, but was a common feature of white male colonial sexuality. The overwhelming majority of acts of sexual violence and abuse were perpetrated by white men upon indigenous women.

It is important to note that the colonial policy regarding male same-sex sexual conduct, as well as hegemonic masculinity itself, was far from static. Both were subject to transformations closely linked to changes in colonial politics and ideologies and in the population of the colony on a more general level. One could argue that while the colonial hegemonic masculinity in the early years of GSWA included sexual activity in a rather general form, the form of masculinity becoming hegemonic around 1905 featured a specific sexuality focused on the reproduction of the white, heterosexual family as a core element of German colonial rule in GSWA. However, the rejection of male same-sex conduct included herein seemed not to be of pivotal importance. It generated no public debate and the judicial persecution it suffered differed mainly in the application of actions and circumstances as aggravating or mitigating from the German context. More relevant was the judging of sexual contact between white and indigenous men as especially dangerous, and the sometimes simultaneous judicial ignorance regarding the violence and coercion experienced by indigenous boys and men as part of these incidents. Possibly, the heterosexual norm was seen as unquestionable to such an extent in GSWA that a few white men having sex with other men were not seen as a danger to this norm, while in Germany this norm was already much more contested through an emerging gay movement and visible gay (and lesbian) subcultures, at least in the larger cities.

## Notes

1 National Archives of Namibia (NAN) GWI 733 3K7/14, 9.

2 NAN GWI 733, n.f.

- 3 NAN GWI 733, 1a–7v.
- 4 For the exact wording of Section 175 in the German penal code from 1871 see [https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Strafgesetzbuch\\_für\\_das\\_Deutsche\\_Reich\\_\(1871\)#.C2.A7.\\_175](https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Strafgesetzbuch_für_das_Deutsche_Reich_(1871)#.C2.A7._175) [accessed March 29, 2016].
- 5 An exception here is the penal code in Austria-Hungary which also sanctioned sexual activities between women even if it was seldom applied. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Berlin: Marcus, 1914), 543.
- 6 The testimonies of the affected indigenous men are archived in NAN GWI 733, 1a–8 and 15–16v. There was no hearing of them during the trial because upon petition of his advocate the confession of Rudno-Rudzinski was deemed extensive and credible enough to cancel their appearance at the court hearing. *Ibid.* Bl. 18–19.
- 7 NAN GWI 733, 10–13.
- 8 NAN GWI 733, 26–27.
- 9 NAN GWI 733, 27.
- 10 I borrow the concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ from Raewyn Connell. Raewyn Connell: *Masculinities* (Berkeley/London/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2nd edn, 2005), 76–81. However, it is debatable whether it is adequate to use the term ‘hegemonic’ in the context of German colonialism in GSWA due to the lack of a consensus-oriented policy on the part of the German authorities, at least regarding the indigenous population, and the barely existent structures and institutions of a civil society strongly linked to a process of fabricating hegemony in a Gramscian sense. Against this background, it might be more suitable to speak of ‘dominant’ masculinities in some regards but this question cannot be discussed here in the necessary depth.
- 11 On the legal, political, and day-to-day persecution of male homosexuality in Imperial Germany see Kai Sommer, *Die Strafbarkeit der Homosexualität von der Kaiserzeit bis zum Nationalsozialismus: Eine Analyse der Straftatbestände im Strafgesetzbuch und in den Reformentwürfen (1871–1945)* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1998) and Hans-Georg Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland: Eine politische Geschichte* (München: Beck, 1989).
- 12 Concerning the so-called ‘mixed marriages’ see for example Dag Henrichsen, “... unerwünscht im Schutzgebiet. . . nicht schlechthin unsittlich.” “Mischehen” und deren Nachkommen im Visier der Kolonialverwaltung in Deutsch-Südwestafrika, in *Frauen in den deutschen Kolonien*, ed. Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2009); Birthe Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten. Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 223–279; and Ulrike Lindner, ‘Contested concepts of “white”/“native” and mixed marriages in German South-West Africa and the Cape Colony 1900–1914: A *histoire croisée*’, *Journal of Namibian Studies* 6, (2009).



- 13 For example, Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1991), 70–71. See also the discussion on manliness and the colonial endeavor in Silvan Niedermeier, ‘Colonial Self-positioning,’ in this volume, 119.
- 14 For example, Philipa Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York/London: Routledge, 2003), 272.
- 15 Marc Epprecht, *Hungochani: The History of a Dissident Sexuality in Southern Africa* (Montreal/Kingston/London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004).
- 16 I use the term ‘same-sex conduct,’ ‘same-sex desire,’ and ‘men desiring other men’ rather than ‘homosexuality’ for my analysis of the trials because in most cases the court files give no information as to whether the accused men identified themselves as homosexual or—another contemporary term—‘*konträrsexuell*’ (contrary sexual) and some of the accused had also had sex with women.
- 17 Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire: 1884–1945* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2001), 4, 79–84.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 80.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 20 Sexual activities between women were not penalized, as they were not in most penal codes. An exception here being the penal code in Austria-Hungary, which also sanctioned sexual activities between women, even if it was seldom applied. See Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes*, 543.
- 21 See Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 23–24.
- 22 See Sommer, *Die Strafbarkeit der Homosexualität*, 49.
- 23 Such as for example the yearbooks published by the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee. Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 48.
- 24 A contemporary account about the gay and lesbian subcultures—mainly but not exclusively in Berlin—can be found in Hirschfeld, *Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes*, 675–699.
- 25 For a short overview of the history of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, founded in 1897, see Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 34–48.
- 26 Franz Joseph von Bülow, *Drei Jahre im Lande Hendrik Witboois: Schilderungen von Land und Leuten* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1896).
- 27 As part of the trial against the merchant Freiberg, some letters between him and his part-time lover Hand Weiss were archived in the respective court files. See NAN GLU 267 3D86/10.
- 28 Most interrogation protocols of cases regarding Section 175 in GSWA were strongly edited and not direct transcripts of the respective interrogations.
- 29 Heike I. Schmidt, ‘Colonial Intimacy: The Rechenberg Scandal and Homosexuality in German East Africa,’ *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 1 (2008): 31.

- 30 Jürgen Zimmerling, *Die Entwicklung der Strafrechtspflege für Afrikaner in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1884–1914: Eine juristisch/historische Untersuchung* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, 1995), 46–49.
- 31 Ulrike Schaper, *Koloniale Verhandlungen: Gerichtsbarkeit, Verwaltung und Herrschaft in Kamerun 1884–1916* (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2012), 11.
- 32 Although at least one ethnographer reported that, for example, some Ovambo leaders did not tolerate sexual activities between their male subjects. Kurt Falk, ‘Homosexuality among the Natives of Southwest Africa’, in *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African Homosexualities*, ed. Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 189.
- 33 For Southern Rhodesia, see Marc Epprecht, “‘Good God Almighty, What’s This!’ Homosexual “Crime” in Early Colonial Zimbabwe’, in *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies in African Homosexualities*, ed. Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 197–221.
- 34 See Schaper, *Koloniale Verhandlungen*, 80.
- 35 Epprecht “‘Good God Almighty’”, 197. See also Epprecht, *Hungochani*, 8–9.
- 36 There is an English translation of his article titled ‘Homosexuality among the Natives of Southwest Africa’. Kurt Falk, ‘Homosexuality among the Natives of Southwest Africa’, in *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African Homosexualities*, ed. Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 187–196.
- 37 Falk, ‘Homosexuality’, 195–196.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 195.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 196.
- 40 Even if he links in one case an exceptionally widespread practice of homosexuality to extremely low morals. *Ibid.*, 194.
- 41 See for example Martin Lücke, *Männlichkeit in Unordnung: Homosexualität und männliche Prostitution in Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik* (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 2008), 55–96.
- 42 Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes*.
- 43 Falk, ‘Homosexuality’, 189, 191–192, 194.
- 44 The research on lesbians in Germany during the *Kaiserreich* and also during the period of National Socialism has to face similar problems regarding their source material. For the policy concerning lesbians under National Socialism and the research on it see Claudia Schoppmann, ‘Zeit der Maskierung. Zur Situation lesbischer Frauen im Nationalsozialismus’, in *Der homosexuellen NS-Opfer gedenken*, ed. Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (Berlin: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 1999), 37–38.
- 45 Epprecht, “‘Good God Almighty’”, 204.

- 46 Sommer has listed the number of trials concerning Section 175 for every year from 1902 until 1939 in Germany. Sommer, *Die Strafbarkeit der Homosexualität*, 376–377.
- 47 As was the case in the lawsuit against Walter Soltzick concerning the violation of Section 175 with several indigenous men. He was also accused of raping an indigenous woman. NAN GWI 732 3K5/13.
- 48 See Daniel J. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad: Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 58.
- 49 Marion Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the beginning to 1990* (London: Hurst & Company, 2011), 162–163. The number of soldiers was dropping sharply after the war. See Jürgen Zimmerer, *Deutsche Herrschaft über Afrikaner: Staatlicher Machtanspruch und Wirklichkeit im kolonialen Namibia* (Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2004), 117.
- 50 See among others Wallace, *A History of Namibia*, 131–154 and Zimmerer, *Deutsche Herrschaft über Afrikaner*, 21–31.
- 51 See especially Helmut Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1894–1914* (Hamburg: Leibnitz, 1968), 208–213.
- 52 See Robbie Aitken, *Exclusion and Inclusion: Gradations of Whiteness and Socio-Economic Engineering in German Southwest Africa, 1884–1914* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), 109–117 and Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 219–223.
- 53 See Zimmerer, *Deutsche Herrschaft über Afrikaner*, 68–84.
- 54 See Jan Severin, ‘Ausweisungen als Element der (Re-)Produktion kolonialer Männlichkeit während der deutschen Kolonialherrschaft in Deutsch-Südwestafrika (1884–1915)’, in *Männlichkeit und Reproduktion: Zum gesellschaftlichen Ort historischer und aktueller Männlichkeitsproduktionen*, ed. Andreas Heilman et al. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2015), 237.
- 55 See Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 92–93.
- 56 The policies concerning so-called ‘mixed marriages’ were a telling example of this.
- 57 Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality*, 212.
- 58 See the testimony of Breznik filed under NAN GSW 407 D100/09, 4–5v.
- 59 NAN GSW 407, 13–13v.
- 60 For example, in the form of the so-called ‘Soldatenprostitution’ (soldiers’ prostitution) which gained public attention in the context of the alleged ‘homosexuality scandals’ in the military and in the higher circles of society during the first decade of the twentieth century. See Norman Domeier, *Der Eulenburg-Skandal: Eine politische Kulturgeschichte des Kaiserreichs* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 2010), 335–338.
- 61 A part of the prisoners-of-war camp in Windhoek was reserved for indigenous women who provided sexual services to the German soldiers. Though this brothel,

- organized by the colonial authorities, did not exist for long. Wolfram Hartmann, 'Urges in the Colony. Men and Women in Colonial Windhoek 1890–1914', *Journal of Namibian Studies* 1, (2007), 43–44. Quite regularly, German soldiers went to the areas where indigenous people had to reside, the so-called 'Werften,' to find indigenous women to have sex with them. The German colonial government tried to restrict this common practice by banning white persons from entering the 'Werften' at night. This had only a limited effect because soldiers and other white men continued to go there, as documents of the police authorities on illegal entering of the 'Werften' show. See for example NAN DOK S.17.g., 20–25.
- 62 There is still a lack of studies on male same-sex desire and activities in rural areas or smaller towns of Germany in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. A noteworthy example for such a study, albeit with a focus on the canton of Schaffhausen in Switzerland, bordering Germany, is Christoph Schlatterer, *'Merkwürdigerweise bekam ich Neigung zu Burschen': Selbstbilder und Fremdbilder homosexueller Männer in Schaffhausen 1867 bis 1970* (Zürich: Chronos, 2002).
- 63 See the files on the court hearing and the verdict in Windhoek in the third trial against van Alten on April 27, 1906, NAN GWI 587 D6/06, vol. 1, 68–79v.
- 64 See the court files at NAN GSW 361 D39/03.
- 65 Rudno-Rudzinski gave the Herero Johannes two Marks after abusing him sexually, with the advice that Johannes should tell nothing about it to the other boys. NAN GWI 733, 5v. The Herero Joseph received three Marks from von Rudno-Rudzinski for the same reason. NAN GWI 733, 7.
- 66 In fact, most were, but there are some testimonies of indigenous men in which no explicit coercion or violence was mentioned, such as in the testimony of the Damara Jan who told the court about the sexual activities the accused trader Walter Vogel performed with him. NAN GWI 654 91/12, 1–1v. This does not mean for certain that there was no violence or coercion practiced by Vogel in this case. The position of Vogel as an active part of the interaction in any sense, and his attempt in another case to hold an indigenous boy against his will to kiss him suggest the contrary (NAN GWI 654 91/12, 2), but the testimony of Jan contains no evidence in this regard.
- 67 Epprecht argues similar in the case of Southern Rhodesia. Epprecht, "Good God Almighty", 203.
- 68 NAN GWI 733, 3v.
- 69 See NAN GSW 361 D39/03.
- 70 Ulrike Schaper points out that colonial legal systems also effectively had enabling implications for indigenous persons despite their embedded racism and their supportive function for the colonial order. Schaper, *Koloniale Verhandlungen*, 26, 30.

- 71 NAN GSW 346 C41/01, 78–79.
- 72 See Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten*, 117. However, the number of foreign citizens deported after a successful expulsion procedure was significantly higher than the number of German citizens. Severin, 'Ausweisungen als Element', 238. Some expulsion procedures were markedly informed by nationalism as well as anti-Semitism, which led to a greater chance of being expelled for Jewish persons and, temporarily, also Boers. Severin, 'Ausweisungen als Element', 241–242.
- 73 Expulsions resulting from a conviction concerning Section 175 were not limited to GSWA. In his article 'Racializing Sex: Same-Sex Relations, German Colonial Authority and Deutschtum' Daniel J. Walther analyses four expulsions from other German colonies: one from Cameroon, and three from German New Guinea. Daniel J. Walther, 'Racializing Sex: Same-Sex Relations, German Colonial Authority and Deutschtum', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 1 (2008): 11–24.
- 74 Only women were expelled with regard to their work as prostitutes. See for example the expulsion procedure against Gertie Weinberg, Regina Abrahams, and Wally Evert (together with the pimp Joe Lis) in 1906, NAN ZBU 757 G II.1.2, 142–145.
- 75 See Severin, 'Ausweisungen als Element', 238–246. See also the discussion on the strong connections between morality and racial constructions in Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean,' in this volume, 40–41.
- 76 NAN GWI 733, 46–52v.
- 77 See also Walther, 'Racializing Sex', 20.
- 78 Severin, 'Ausweisungen als Element', 236–237.
- 79 Tanja Hommen, *Sittlichkeitsverbrechen: Sexuelle Gewalt im Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt a. M./New York: Campus, 1999), 49.
- 80 See the verdict against Sametes, filed under NAN GWI 725 3K21/08, 19–20.
- 81 One example here is the trial against the mason Salomon Süsken in 1908, who was convicted to one year in prison for sexually abusing three indigenous underage boys. NAN GWI 723 K5/08. Against the backdrop of anti-Semitic tendencies of some German officials in GSWA (for an example see Severin, 'Ausweisungen als Element', 241) it is possible that the quite strict judgement of the court was influenced by the fact that Süsken was Jewish.
- 82 See, albeit with a focus on the second half of the twentieth century, Magdalena Beljan, *Rosa Zeiten?: Eine Geschichte männlicher Homosexualität in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren der BRD* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2014) 121.
- 83 Lücke, *Männlichkeit in Unordnung*, 125.
- 84 Hommen, *Sittlichkeitsverbrechen*, 54–63.

- 85 Ibid., 56–58, 60. However, the contemporary debates centered mainly around underage girls and the endangerment of their sexuality, not around boys.
- 86 Walther, 'Racializing Sex', 13–14.
- 87 NAN GWI 587, vol. 1, 198–222 and NAN GWI 587 D6/06, vol. 2., 1–52. There is even an opinion put forward by Magnus Hirschfeld who testified to van Alten's non-accountability. NAN GWI 587, vol. 2, 200–201v.
- 88 BArch R 1001/1918, 66.
- 89 The greatest public attention was generated by the so-called 'Eulenburg-Skandal,' which centered on the alleged homosexuality of Philip, Prince of Eulenburg, a close friend of the German emperor Wilhelm II. See Domeier, *Der Eulenburg-Skandal*.
- 90 The historian Heike Schmidt analyzes this scandal in depth in her article 'Colonial Intimacy: The Rechenberg Scandal and Homosexuality in German East Africa.' See Schmidt, 'The Rechenberg Scandal'.
- 91 See Lindner, 'Contested concepts', 251–252 and Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur*, 91–92. On the regulation of such marriages in the Italian Empire on the Greek archipelago see Alexis Rappas, 'Mixed Marriages in the Fascist Aegean,' in this volume.
- 92 On other settler societies and how they dealt with sexual transgressions between indigenous and white persons see also Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates,' in this volume, 184.
- 93 See Lindner, 'Contested concepts', 61, concerning the danger seen in alleged 'going native' or 'Verkafferung' as it was called in contemporary GSWA.
- 94 Schmidt, 'The Rechenberg Scandal', 53–54.
- 95 See Walther, 'Racializing Sex', 23.
- 96 Epprecht, *Hungochani*, 106.
- 97 Ibid., 105.
- 98 Ibid., 65.
- 99 Ibid., 126.
- 100 Ibid., 110.
- 101 See Schmidt, 'The Rechenberg Scandal', 29, 59.
- 102 Connell, *Masculinities*, 78–79.
- 103 Ibid., 79.

Part III

Indigenous Servants and  
Colonial Homes





## Domestic Servant Debates and the Fault Lines of Empire in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa and New Zealand

Elizabeth Dillenburg

At the turn of the twentieth century, the British Empire faced a “servant crisis.” The attraction of better paying, less labor-intensive, and more respectable jobs for girls and women made a good servant hard to find and even harder to keep. Rising literacy and education levels among girls as well as new employment opportunities led more girls and women to eschew the menial status and long hours of domestic service. The shortage of servants presented not only practical difficulties, by leaving households without servants to perform domestic labor, but also created an identity crisis among the British, who viewed domestic servants as necessary to preserving notions of domesticity and by extension respectability and morality. The sense of crisis was especially acute for British settlers in the colonies, surrounded by the supposedly “contaminating” and “degenerative” colonial environment.<sup>1</sup> For settlers, servants—and specifically white servants—were not just fulfilling a domestic responsibility but an imperial one by helping to solidify notions of Britishness and reinforce colonists’ professed social and racial superiority.

Although the “servant crisis” was the product of broader social and economic forces within the British Empire, the problem and the response to it were also shaped by local conditions. This chapter focuses on the responses of South Africa and New Zealand to the “servant crisis” and specifically examines two moments in the early twentieth century when issues of domesticity, service, masculinity, femininity, and race came to the forefront in public discourse. In New Zealand, this moment occurred following the proposal of a

plan at the Maori Congress in 1908 to train Maori girls as domestic servants, and in South Africa, it arose in the wake of the “black peril” scares and the consequent 1912 Commission on Assaults on Women. Focusing on discussions of domestic service in newspapers and government reports as well as in personal papers, including correspondences and memoirs, this chapter examines why issues of domesticity became important at these moments and how these discourses intersected with broader political, economic, and social debates as well as how both local and transnational forces shaped the nature of these debates. This chapter particularly analyzes why respective plans to train Maori girls and African girls as domestic servants failed and how debates about the “servant problem” brought to the forefront anxieties about racial, class, sexual, and gender boundaries within New Zealand, South Africa, and the wider British Empire. These debates over the “servant girl problem” demonstrated that domestic service was not just a domestic matter but one of imperial and racial importance.

### “The root of the evil”: Black peril, the Commission on Assaults on Women, and debates about employment of African servants

In response to a growing number of reports of black men assaulting white girls and women, the South African government established a Commission on Assaults on Women in June 1912 to investigate causes of the “black peril” scares and provide potential solutions. Although “black peril” ostensibly referred to fears about assaults of black men on white girls and women, these scares were symptomatic of complex economic, racial, social, and gender anxieties in the settler society. While concerns about assaults were omnipresent in the region during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these fears became more acute at particular moments, specifically 1893, 1904 to 1905, 1907 to 1908, and 1912, which scholars have shown coincided with periods of economic, political, and social instability. In *The Witches of Suburbia: Domestic service on the Witwatersrand, 1890–1914*, Charles van Onselen describes how a confluence of circumstances gave rise to the “black peril” panics, writing “it still remains that these complex human fears and

anxieties chose to surface collectively under the very distinctive social and economic conditions [...] It was as if at certain times there were witches at loose in suburbia – black witches which a tense and neurotic white society sought to exorcise from its midst.”<sup>2</sup> Van Onselen focuses in particular on underlying economic causes and connects the emergence of “black peril” panics to times of depression and periods of economic tensions, including strikes, union formations, and periods of falling wages. Subsequent scholars have called attention to not just economic concerns but broader social, cultural, and political anxieties.<sup>3</sup> For example, in his study of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, Dane Kennedy argues that the obsession with “black peril” was rooted in the nature of the household economy in southern Africa and its dependence on black male labor.<sup>4</sup> Kennedy argues that these fears over “black peril” were used to attain social and political objectives, namely reinforcing a sense of solidarity among white settlers.<sup>5</sup> Jock McCulloch does not discount the importance of economic and political causes of the “black peril” scares in his study, *Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia, 1902–1935*, but highlights the significance of gendered anxieties and how the “black peril” emerged at moments when white men felt most powerless.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of the “black peril” scare of 1912, which led to the Commission on Assaults on Women, all these factors—political, cultural, social, and economic—came into play. The 1912 panic was reportedly sparked by two incidents—the “Lyndhurst Outrage,” in which an unknown person attacked a governess while riding a bicycle, and the Harrison Case, in which a group of black men attacked a housewife, who committed suicide three days later by taking poison.<sup>7</sup> In *Witches of Suburbia*, van Onselen emphasizes the economic context of the panic that emerged out of these two incidents, noting that they coincided with a period of economic recession in the region.<sup>8</sup> However, the scare in 1912 also crucially reflected anxieties over broader social and political transformations occurring in South Africa at the time as the new nation struggled to recover from the brutality of the South African War. The period following the end of the South African War (1899 to 1902) and the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, which made South Africa a self-governing dominion, represented a critical period when the people of South Africa were going through a process of recovery, reconciliation, and redefinition. The

war—and specifically the prolonged nature of the conflict and its brutalities, epitomized in the establishment of British concentration camps for Boer women and children—called into question the identities of colonists as bearers of civilization as well as British supremacy in the region. Settlers in southern Africa sought to produce a stable, self-producing, and secure British population in the region, but the demographic imbalances revealed a different reality. According to the first official census of the Union of South Africa, taken in 1911, African and non-European populations outnumbered the European population nearly four to one.<sup>9</sup> The British also formed a minority within the European population of South Africa, with Afrikaners composing nearly three-fifths of the European population, heightening fears about British settler's racial supremacy.<sup>10</sup> The declining birth rate among white women in southern Africa and the rising numbers of mixed-race children further compounded these fears.

In the face of new threats, or perceptions of threats, British settlers sought to reaffirm class, gender, and racial hierarchies and reassert their whiteness by expelling African servants and constructing new boundaries to further divide the home from a threatening and foreign world.<sup>11</sup> This emphasis on the need to reaffirm proper race relations and hierarchies emerges in the Report of the Commission on Assaults on Women, which drew particular attention to the lifestyles of white colonists and the close contact of black and white people in the private sphere of the home. As the Report noted, “[b]y closer contact with the white race in towns the natives have learned that very often white people lead immoral lives.”<sup>12</sup> The Report concluded that this lowering of esteem and loss of prestige was the root cause of “black peril.” According to the Report, “the native’s estimate of the European’s virtue has suffered,” which was “the first beginning of the evil.”<sup>13</sup> To preserve the “influence of the white race” and its “moral reputation,” the Commission advocated the re-establishment of “proper” race relations and reforming the habits of white colonists.<sup>14</sup> The solution to “black peril,” according to the Report, was for white settlers to set an example of “clean, healthy and decent conditions of family and social life.”<sup>15</sup> These actions would in turn be “upholding, and where necessary uplifting, the status and prestige of the white race, by maintaining the respect in which it should be held, and by doing away with aught and all that may tend to diminish that status, prestige and respect.”<sup>16</sup>

While the Report noted other sources of the problem of “black peril,” it described the “houseboy system” as “a great danger” and “the root of the evil.”<sup>17</sup> The origins of the “houseboy system” extended back to the seventeenth century with the implementation of British slavery and forced labor in the region. However, even after the abolition of slavery in the early nineteenth century, African men continued to be employed in European homes, especially in Natal and the Transvaal, because they were seen as a less expensive, albeit secondary, alternative to employing British female servants.<sup>18</sup> Yet various social and economic changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fueled resentment at the “houseboy system” among British settlers, who in turn called for its replacement. The attraction of other employment prospects as well as rising wages, brought about in part by the Mineral Revolution and then the South African War, led to a shift in the labor market and meant that British settlers could not rely on African servants in the same way that they once had. This idea emerges frequently in the correspondences of Stuart Barnardo to his father, Thomas Barnardo, who established the well-known child charity in Britain, Dr. Barnardo’s Homes. During his tour of South Africa following the conclusion of the South African War, Stuart recorded his conversations with a British settler, Mrs. Fox-Smith, who reported that African servants had been “spoilt by the military,” meaning “there is a chance he will never be available for labor as in the past.”<sup>19</sup> Mr. A.O. Lambert, the former mayor of East London, echoed this observation, telling Barnardo “[t]hat owing to the military paying the Kaffirs about twice the usual wage it is impossible to get ‘Kaffir Boys’ to work in the town as domestics. They are now so rich that they can buy several wives who do all the work.”<sup>20</sup> These economic shifts, coupled with white racial anxieties in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, led to increasing resistance among British settlers over the continued presence of black male servants. Newspapers described African servants as “unutterable beasts,” reinforcing ideas that Africans introduced uncivilized, savage elements into British colonial homes, and their employment as “horrible, scandalous, and a menace to the purity of the white race.”<sup>21</sup> The description of African servants as a “menace to the purity of the white race” suggests that the close contact between black servants and white settlers seemingly undermined British conventions of respectability and identity and by extension notions of Britishness and British racial superiority in the colonies.

As suggested by these newspaper articles and the Report, the presence of African servants in the household had repercussions beyond the domestic sphere and was seen as a potential danger to national, imperial, and racial security. In a speech to the South African Colonisation Society in 1908, Leo S. Amery—a correspondent for *The Times* who would later become Secretary of State for the Colonies (1924 to 1929)—expressed concern about the effects of the close interaction between black servants and white settlers, stating:

People talk a great deal about making South Africa a white man's country. But to do that you must first of all have a country where the home life is white. A country where the domestic duties of the household are performed by natives, where children are largely brought up in contact with natives, is not a country that can be called a white man's country.<sup>22</sup>

As Amery's speech suggests, the shortage of white servants and consequent employment of African servants was a matter at the heart of British identity. For British settlers in the colonies, servants were fulfilling an imperial duty by creating "British" homes and making "home life white." The notion of the home acted as a model of the state and society also appears in a report of "The Annual Meeting of the British Women's Emigration Association" published in *The Imperial Colonist*. Emphasizing the importance of the home, the report asks: "What is the secret of this great world power, laying the foundations of new nations? Home life is its strength and the secret of its greatness."<sup>23</sup> The article proceeds to describe how the Empire "cannot exist without homes."<sup>24</sup> As reflected in this article, "the home" was an integral part of colonial project. Since it acted as a microcosm of the state and society, reaffirming British settler's sense of identity began in the home with the reassertion of purity, order, cleanliness, Christianity, and respectability. It also meant that racial transgressions in the home were symptomatic of broader racial contraventions in society. As alluded to in Amery's speech, concerns about racial transgression and degeneration were particularly acute in households with white children, since parents feared that children's close proximity to African servants had a corrupting influence and exposed their children to risk.<sup>25</sup>

The use of African servants not only threatened to subvert racial identities but also called into question gender and class hierarchies. Contemporary discussions about "black peril" often remarked that the danger of employing

African servants was that they were not only black but also male. For example, in a speech entitled “Girls vs. House Boys in South Africa,” politician Lionel Phillips advocated for the “expulsion of the pampered houseboy from his effeminate occupation, with the consequent obligation to seek and perform a man’s work, and the installation of White working women in their proper sphere.”<sup>26</sup> As Phillips’s speech suggests, the presence of African servants violated the separation of spheres and undermined traditional gender roles. It was feared that the close physical proximity of the African servants to the British settlers, and especially British women, would create an emotional intimacy. The Commission’s Report draws attention to the dangers of this intimacy and especially the behavior of white women in relating to their servants. It criticizes the “indiscreet conduct on the part of the white women” and “the freedom and undue familiarity with which he [the African servant] is so frequently treated.”<sup>27</sup> This focus on the relationship between white mistresses and African servants reflects anxieties not only about the destabilization of racial and gender boundaries but also the subversion of class distinctions. Concerns about mistress–servant relationships formed part of a broader critique about the rise of the *nouveau riche* in South Africa, who were seen to lack the upbringing and knowledge of how to be proper masters and mistresses.<sup>28</sup> Like their mistresses, white female servants, who were often recent emigrants to the colony, lacked experience and knowledge about the complicated racial dynamics of the colonies. According to the Report, this ignorance created additional problems since “they did not know how to act around native servants.”<sup>29</sup> To help mediate the threat of “black peril,” the Report of the Commission recommended that both mistresses and servants “should be taught how to treat the native” and “[n]o familiarity should be allowed by the mistress of the house between the white servant and the native.”<sup>30</sup> Training white mistresses about their proper social role and responsibilities would in turn reconstruct racial, class, and gender hierarchies and help mediate the threat of “black peril.”

Although servants occupied a seemingly powerless position in social and domestic hierarchies, the close contact within the home gave servants knowledge of the most confidential and secret aspects of masters’ and mistresses’ lives and thus considerable influence that challenged traditional class hierarchies. Colonial homes with servants had a panoptical quality, and as Michel Foucault has argued in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*,

consciousness of permanent visibility acts as a form of power and means of domination.<sup>31</sup> Members of the household—particularly British masters and mistresses—were subjected to the constant possibility of observation and the “unequal gaze” of African servants, giving servants a form of social power. Their presence and familiarity violated a fragile balance within colonial households. The potential subversion of hierarchies and the transgression of separate spheres posed by the presence of African servants within the colonial household revealed the inherent instability of dichotomies—between private and public, men and women, colonizer and colonized, civilized and savage, working class and middle class—that were integral to British colonial identities.<sup>32</sup>

### “White peril”: Debates over the question of African girls as domestic servants

Due to the problems caused by the presence of black male servants in British colonial households, the Report on the Commission on the Assaults on Women outlined alternative solutions to the “houseboy system,” including the employment of black and coloured (mixed-race) girls. Although less common than “houseboys,” African girls were employed, particularly in the Cape Colony, and integral to the running of British households.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, despite the demand for servants and anxieties about employing African men and boys, proposals to institute more extensive and systematic training and employment programs met with widespread opposition from both African communities and white settlers.<sup>34</sup> General fears by British settlers about degeneration and the presence of the “savage” within the “civilized” space of the home were even more pronounced in the case of African girls and women than African boys and men. This view in part stemmed from the belief that black women—especially unmarried black women who would typically be employed as servants—had uncontrollable sexuality.<sup>35</sup> Unlike white women, who were seen as possessing a refining and civilizing influence on men and society, black women—like black men—were viewed as potential contaminants in the household. This notion emerges as a frequent theme in writings by British colonial women. For instance, in her memoir *The Cape as I Found It*, Beatrice



Hicks describes how “the Kaffir women as servants leave much to be desired—dirty and lazy, stupid and stealing.”<sup>36</sup> A similar portrayal of African girls and women appears in Lady Mary Anne Broome’s memoir, *Colonial Memories*. Broome describes the difficulty of trying to train African girls as servants by recounting the story of “a young Zulu girl who had been left an orphan and been carefully trained in a clergyman’s family” for domestic service.<sup>37</sup> Despite displaying all the markers of “civilization”—including being able to write, read, and speak in Dutch and English—she decided after some years to return to “the savage life” and “took to it with delight.” Broome describes this story as “an amazing instance of the strength of the race-instinct” and the “thinness of surface civilisation among these people.”<sup>38</sup> As reflected in Broome’s story, British colonists viewed African girls and women as less “civilized” and thus more difficult to manage as domestic servants.

While there may have been concerns about the difficulty of training African girls as servants, the more compelling reason behind British settlers’ opposition to employing African girls was the potential it created for relationships between white men and black female servants. The Report of the Commission on Assaults on Women expressed anxieties about the relationships between white men and black female servants and described how the relationship between white males and black females “was the cause of all the trouble.”<sup>39</sup> Of particular concern was the growing number of mixed-race children, who served as visible reminders of blurred racial lines and consequently threatened ideas of racial purity and white prestige.<sup>40</sup>

While British settlers were primarily concerned with the effect of African servants on white prestige, African men, and ministers in particular, opposed plans to employ girls as servants on the basis that it jeopardized their welfare and specifically that it could endanger their character and “purity” by making them “street girls (or Harlots).”<sup>41</sup> They associated domestic service with prostitution, in part because service often required girls and young women to live away from their home communities without parental supervision. This relative freedom combined with the conditions of domestic service—particularly the long hours and low pay—was seen as driving girls and young women into prostitution.

Concerns over domestic service and its association with prostitution formed a central topic at the Natal Native Ministers’ Conference in 1911.

Representatives at the Conference argued that African girls were not immune to the dangers posed by “black peril” and faced even greater threats than their European counterparts.<sup>42</sup> For instance, John Langalibalele Dube—an educationalist and the first president of the South African Native National Congress—described how “[t]he ‘black peril’ was a peril as great and as harmful to them—the black race—to their fair name, their peace, their honour, their political prospects, as it was to the European community” and argued that African girls were “infinitely more helpless and unprotected,” because they faced threats from both white and black men.<sup>43</sup> At the Conference, Jacob Manelle, a priest in the Cala parish of South Africa, also expressed his opposition to proposals to employ girls as servants by pointing out the risks of sending daughters to work as servants: “I would never send my own daughter to be servant in a village, in a European household. When we let our girls go into service we simply give them up as harlots.”<sup>44</sup> In contrast to the rhetoric of British imperial propagandists, like Amery, Manelle’s comments demonstrate that the British home was viewed as a corrupting, not purifying, influence on colonial society. The South African writer and politician Sol Plaatje similarly critiqued the civilizing myth of imperialism in his pamphlet, *The Mote and the Beam*. Plaatje begins his tract by describing his intention “to give the other side of the same picture” and provide a counter-narrative to stories of “black peril” perpetuated by “white contributors of the daily press.” In the concluding section of his pamphlet, entitled “Is it a ‘Black’ or a ‘White’ Peril?” Plaatje describes the sexual exploitation of black women by white men. He concludes with the statement, “as it is true that white men brought Christianity and civilization to Bechuanaland, it is also true that the first authenticated cases of rape, murder and suicide in Bechuanaland were the work of a white man.”<sup>45</sup> Like Manelle, Plaatje’s writings use “black peril” and “white peril” to call attention to the degrading and destructive effects of British colonialism.

A year after the Natal Native Ministers’ Conference, the subject of “black peril” and “white peril” arose at another meeting involving African leaders, including Dube and Plaatje. At the inaugural meeting of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912, one of the key agenda items at the first meeting included “The Black Peril and White Peril.”<sup>46</sup> Dube, the first president, Plaatje, the first secretary-general, and the other founders of the SANNC recognized that addressing the problem of black and white peril was

necessary to achieve their primary goals of “progress,” for African peoples, and “co-operation,” both within African communities and with non-African communities.<sup>47</sup> For both the African and British communities, the re-making of South Africa required not just broader political, social, or economic changes but a reformation of “the home life.”

### “The best British” and “better Blacks”: Racial ideologies in New Zealand

The South African War was not just a national war but an imperial one, and its reverberations extended beyond the region and reshaped imperial and national policies. Forces from colonies throughout the British Empire, including New Zealand, supported the British settlers in the conflict. New Zealand’s participation and frequent news coverage of the progress of events in South Africa made New Zealanders more aware of their place in the British Empire and their connection to other parts of the empire.<sup>48</sup> The South African War and its aftermath also coincided with a key period when New Zealanders debated their identity, their relationship to Britain, and their role in the British Empire. In 1901, New Zealanders rejected joining the federation of Australia. Supporters of the decision not to join the Australian federation emphasized New Zealand’s unique identity from Australia by presenting it as more British than Australia and as the “Britain of the South.” In 1907, New Zealand sought to further distinguish itself from its “convict” Australian neighbors and cement its relationship with Britain by becoming a dominion of the British Empire, rather than a colony, which elevated its position within the British Empire. In the course of these debates about federation with Australia and becoming a dominion, New Zealanders cast themselves as “not only British, but the best British,” a myth that had existed since the mid-nineteenth century but one that gained increasing currency in the context of these debates in the early twentieth century.<sup>49</sup> To bolster their claims, British New Zealanders proudly touted that the colony was 98.5 percent British, a claim that was not based on census data but on Australia’s claim to be 98 percent British.<sup>50</sup> The 1911 census revealed that British actually made up 94.8 percent of the population, the result of the rapid decline of the Maori population over the second half of the nineteenth

century.<sup>51</sup> Although arguably not far from 94.8 percent, New Zealand's claim to be 98.5 percent British demonstrates New Zealanders' concerted desire to be regarded as the "best British."

British New Zealanders not only envisioned themselves the "best British" but also considered the Maoris "better blacks" and emphasized Maoris' superiority to indigenous peoples of the other colonies. Unlike African populations in South Africa or the Aboriginal peoples in Australia, which according to the racial ideology would always remain a distinct and inferior race, New Zealanders believed that the Maori—these "better blacks"—were the "most convertible" who could be Europeanized or civilized. This ideology is crudely expressed, for example, in an article in the *Press* newspaper on "the native question," which compared the Maori and African peoples: "There is as much difference between a donkey and a thoroughbred as there is between the Kaffir and the Maori. Understand, it is not the colour; it is the want of ability to learn, to become civilised."<sup>52</sup> This idea of Maoris as "better blacks" not only elevated the Maori people but also the Pakeha (a term for British settlers) since they could consequently claim that they interacted with a superior type of "native" and thus reinforce their professed superiority to white Australians. Citing these notions of the Maoris as "better blacks," Pakeha New Zealanders cultivated the belief that they had the best race relations in the world and emphasized the colony's relative racial harmony.<sup>53</sup> Since the Maoris were "better blacks," British settlers in New Zealand claimed to have less anxiety about interracial relationships. In contrast to other colonies, including South Africa, which advocated the segregation of different races, the Pakeha ostensibly accepted interactions and even relationships with these "better blacks," particularly as a means to assimilate the Maori into Pakeha culture and "whiten" the Maori people.<sup>54</sup>

### "The uplift of the Maori people": The civilizing mission of domesticity and the proposal to train Maori girls as domestic servants

The domestic sphere formed an important component of this identity as the "best British." As previously discussed, British settlers sought to export

models of the Victorian middle-class family and home to the colonies to counteract their contaminative environments and by extension elevate the status and morality of colonial societies. The key qualities of Victorian domesticity—including order, cleanliness, and purity—consequently acted as markers of civilization. Karen Sánchez-Eppler and others have demonstrated the ways that domestic ideology and rhetoric has reinforced the “civilizing mission” of imperialism. As Sánchez-Eppler argues, “Western assertions of cultural superiority have rested on the comparison of domestic norms.”<sup>55</sup> This connection between domesticity and civilization is seen for example in the 1911 Maori census, with the enumerators’ reports containing references to the nature of Maori domestic life as a way to gauge the progress of civilization in various regions. For instance, a report by E.A. Welch, an enumerator for the Wairarapa region (in the southeastern part of the North Island), noted that: “The Maoris are making continuous progress towards the complete adoption of civilized modes of life. It is a rare exception to find a Maori living in one of the old-time whares, the houses being constructed on European plans.”<sup>56</sup> Similarly, in his report on the Makara region (along the western coast of the North Island near Wellington), enumerator William Pitt observed: “The Maoris generally have adopted the European methods of living in houses of their own in preference to the old communistic habit of living all together in big meeting-houses. They are also much more industrious than formerly.”<sup>57</sup> As reflected in these reports, the adoption of European domestic practices portended the Europeanization and civilization of the Maori people.

At the Maori Congress in Wellington in 1908, Lady Anna Stout proposed a plan that would hasten this process of civilization and Europeanization and “uplift the Maori people.”<sup>58</sup> Stout—a well-known figure in New Zealand and in Britain for her work in the suffrage and temperance movements—advocated training Maori girls to work as servants as a way to solve the critical shortage of servants.<sup>59</sup> Domestic service in New Zealand had been done primarily by girls of European descent, but the “servant crisis” forced British settlers to consider new, more inventive alternatives.<sup>60</sup> In outlining her plan, Stout emphasized its mutual benefits to both the Maori and British settlers: it would provide the Pakeha with a ready supply of servants, and “[t]he Maori girl would benefit by the training she would receive in service, and she would also benefit by receiving wages.”<sup>61</sup> Stout’s proposal built upon long-established

beliefs that the reform of the Maori people would begin with the home and the training of girls. In the nineteenth century, missionaries to New Zealand had employed Maori girls as servants in their households in order to convert them to a Christian and “civilized” way of life.<sup>62</sup> In her proposal, Stout echoed this idea, stating: “It is generally recognized by those who have pondered on the problem of the uplift of the Maori people that one of the first requisites of any scheme of reformation is that their womenkind should be induced to accept the modern standards of domestic economy and to model their homes on the European plan.”<sup>63</sup> Girls’ perceived malleability and their destined roles as wives and mothers meant that they acted as valuable conduits through which British habits, values, and culture could enter Maori communities.<sup>64</sup> Stout, like her missionary predecessors, hoped that girls would return to their communities with acquired Pakeha habits, values, and culture and create more “modern” homes, leading to the reformation of the Maori people—and New Zealand society more broadly.

In addition to emphasizing the long- and short-term benefits to the Pakeha and Maori peoples, Stout also argued that the plan would improve race relations by acting as “the means of breaking down the race prejudice, which could only be dissipated by closer contact.”<sup>65</sup> Despite this contention, her plan functioned in reality as a means of racial exclusion. The desire to have Maori servants stemmed from a fear of a worse alternative—the employment of Chinese servants. The growth of Chinese immigration in the late nineteenth century generated fears that the burgeoning Asian population in New Zealand would overrun “civilized” New Zealanders.<sup>66</sup> Robert Stout—president of the Anti-Chinese League and husband of Anna Stout—expressed this idea when arguing for a greater restriction on immigration, stating the Chinese “have a lower civilisation, which, if introduced into the colony, is bound to affect our civilisation.”<sup>67</sup> The South African War had fomented new fears about racial degeneracy not only in South Africa but also in Britain and throughout the Empire. The war drew attention to low birth rates and the unfitness of soldiers and in turn called into question the vitality of Britain’s “empire builders.”<sup>68</sup> Fears over the “Asian menace,” which had existed in the decades before the turn of the century, received new attention in this climate of growing fears about racial decline. Unlike Pakeha–Maori relations, there was great anxiety

about interactions between the British and Chinese. For example, Vincent Pyke, a Member of the House of Representatives, decreed that the Chinese should “not mix or consort with Europeans, nor Europeans with them” and that “the Chinese are not desirable associates for European colonists.”<sup>69</sup> Growing anti-Chinese sentiment was formalized in Chinese Immigrants Amendment Act of 1907, which set an English reading test, and the Immigration Restriction Act of 1908, which ceased the naturalization of Chinese immigrants and required thumb-printing of Chinese who wanted re-entry permits, and also through the establishment of a plethora of anti-Chinese organizations, including the Anti-Chinese Association, the Anti-Chinese League, the Anti-Asiatic League, and the White New Zealand League.

The discourse about Chinese servants paralleled the discourse surrounding the “African houseboy” in South Africa, with opponents in both cases expressing fears about the savagery of Chinese or African servants and their corrupting presence in the home.<sup>70</sup> For instance, W.E. Swanton wrote in his *Notes on New Zealand* that “yellow servants” were “inexpensive, industrious, and willing,” but “they are apt to spoil one’s appetite when they wait at table.”<sup>71</sup> Opponents also criticized the brutality of Chinese men to white women and the subversion of gender roles, since men assumed women’s tasks.<sup>72</sup> An article in the *Thames Advertiser* describes how Chinese servants “cannot however, bear to be ordered about by women” and details two cases of Chinese servants who “chased their mistresses out of their houses with axes.”<sup>73</sup> These incidents apparently demonstrated not only the uncivilized, inhuman temperament of the Chinese but also the consequences of violating gender and racial boundaries by employing Chinese men as domestic servants. As in the South African context, opponents to the employment of Chinese servants cited fears about their corrupting presence in the home. Although this discrimination reflected worries about economic competition from Chinese immigrants, it also reflected fears that the presence of the Chinese would compromise the identity of New Zealanders as “best British” and undermine efforts to “Keep New Zealand White.” Situated within this discourse about the “best British,” “better blacks,” and “yellow menace,” it is evident that, like in South Africa, the preservation of white respectability, racial purity, and social order underlay the plan to train Maori girls as servants.

## “A proud race”: Maori reactions to the proposal of Maori servants

The responses of various groups to the proposal to train Maori girls as servants revealed differing visions of New Zealand society and the future of Maori and Pakeha communities at this critical juncture in New Zealand's history. As in the South African context, sections of British society opposed the plan, fearing the presence of the racial “Other” within the home, but some Pakeha—especially women eager for servants—supported the scheme and cited successful examples of Maori girls working as domestic servants to prove the viability of the plan.<sup>74</sup> Stout's proposal also received support from prominent Maori leaders, including members of the Young Maori Party, a group of Maori men dedicated to improving the Maori people. The Young Maori Party was formed during a crucial time for the Maori people, when the Maori population was rapidly declining and colonists presaged their imminent assimilation, leading to concerns among the Maoris that they belonged to a “dying race.”<sup>75</sup> Unlike previous Maori movements, the Young Maori Party emphasized cooperation—not competition—with Pakeha as well as selective adaptation to European culture while also encouraging the revival and preservation of many Maori traditions and culture.<sup>76</sup> Since most Young Maori members believed that improving the Maori race meant the adoption of some European ways of life, they supported Stout's plan as complementary to their objective of improving Maori welfare. Before Stout proposed her plan at the Maori Congress in 1908, members of the Young Maori had put forward their own proposal to train Maori girls as servants at the 1907 Conference of the Te Aute College Students' Association, which was a forerunner to the Young Maori and founded in 1897 with the twin objectives of social reform and improving Maori educational achievements. At this Conference, Reweti Kohere, a Young Maori clergyman who co-founded the Association for the Amelioration of the Maori Race, presented employment in service as a way of instructing future Maori mothers in the methods of the Pakeha and argued that such knowledge could not be acquired in Maori communities.<sup>77</sup> The Conference supported the training of Maori girls as domestic servants, emphasizing its potential to both improve race relations and preserve the Maori race.<sup>78</sup> The resolution of the Conference stated:



That this Conference, believing that the future welfare of the Maori race is largely dependent on the work of women in the management of the home, and the training of their children, would strongly advocate Maori girls seeking employment in good pakeha homes as domestic servants, where they may most effectively be fitted to benefit both themselves and their race.<sup>79</sup>

These views were echoed a year later when Stout proposed a similar idea to the Maori Congress. In reaction to Stout's speech, Apirana Nagata—a Member of the New Zealand Parliament and one of the most well-known members of the Young Maoris—acknowledged that the “Maori must somehow learn to know the meaning of ‘home’ as Europeans should understand it.”<sup>80</sup>

Despite receiving support from some Young Maori members, the idea of training Maori girls as servants also encountered opposition from other members of the Young Maori and the broader Maori community. Critics expressed fears that the plan was “very risky.”<sup>81</sup> Like in South Africa, domestic service was seen as a route to prostitution, making Maori families reticent to send their girls into service. The Maori predominantly lived in rural areas, so employment in domestic service would require girls moving far away from their families and home communities. Attendees at the Maori Congress expressed trepidation at “the great moral harm suffered by Maori girls, and through them by the whole Maori race” by their employment in domestic service and “urge[d] parents and guardians of young girls to deter them from seeking such employment.”<sup>82</sup> One Young Maori member—Frederick Augustus Bennett—emphasized the risks of domestic service and argued that he “could see grave danger, unless the greatest care was exercised in placing the girls in good, Christian households.”<sup>83</sup> In addition to expressing fears over the damaging conditions of domestic service, Young Maori members questioned whether working as a servant would really “uplift” the Maori people. In response to Stout's argument that domestic service would improve the lives of Maori girls, Maui Pomare—the Native Health Officer and co-founder of the Association for the Amelioration of the Maori Race—“urged that to uplift the girls what was required was not the kitchen atmosphere, but the influence of the drawing-room, with its refinement and culture.”<sup>84</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa—a Young Maori member who worked under Maui Pomare as a medical officer to the Maori—also objected “to their being made to occupy lowly positions in European households.”<sup>85</sup>

Like Pomare and Hiroa, Maori women criticized the logic of Stout's proposal that service would "uplift" girls and instead contended that such work would degrade girls—who came from "a proud race"—by making them "slaves of the pakeha."<sup>86</sup> They realized that domestic service was an avenue not of social mobility but of exploitation. In an article entitled "The Pride of Race," Miria Pomare, the wife of Maui Pomare and one of the more vocal critics of Stout's plan, argued: "I have yet to learn that any race in the history of the world has been uplifted through the medium of domestic service."<sup>87</sup> Pomare challenged not only the genuineness of Stout's desire to uplift the Maori people but also her rhetoric of equality. Despite Stout's emphasis that domestic service could be ennobling, Pomare reasoned that domestic service still kept the Maori people in a subservient position. She—like her husband and other Young Maori members—did not disagree with Stout's intention to help the Maori but opposed the means to achieve this end—domestic service. Moreover, like Bennett, Pomare warned about the risks associated with servant life and argued that employment in domestic service would introduce Maori girls to a lower-class of white people and be "bringing the Maori girl into contact with this class of pakeha at the most impressionable period of her life."<sup>88</sup> Pomare's observation undermined the notion of service as means of elevating the Maori. Like critics in the South African context, the Maori recognized that British homes had the potential to corrupt colonial societies. In arguing against the practicality of Stout's scheme, Maori women also cited the incompatibility of domestic service with the Maori way of life, since a Maori girl was "born an open-air girl" and not suited to the confined space of the home.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, girls typically worked as servants during their adolescent and teenage years between childhood and adulthood, a stage that Maori girls did not experience because they married earlier.<sup>90</sup> In response to Stout's belief that education could mediate the differences between Maori and Pakeha girlhoods, Maori women instead emphasized the different cultural values of the Maori and Pakeha and resisted the potential reformation of girlhood—and Maori culture more broadly. This plan would disrupt the Maori way of life and extend the influence of the colonial government into the "uncolonized" sphere of the Maori home.<sup>91</sup> Due to the vociferous opposition by the Maori, the Maori Congress dismissed the proposal, concluding that "the employment of Maori girls as domestic servants amongst Europeans was not desirable in general practice."<sup>92</sup>

## “Where the home life is white”: Concluding thoughts

At first glance, the situations in South Africa and New Zealand seem to have few points of intersection. Conflicts and racial tensions plagued South Africa, while New Zealand professed to have the “best race relations” in the world. Different racial ideologies shaped South Africa’s and New Zealand’s responses to the “servant crisis.” Vastly outnumbered by the African and Afrikaner populations, British settlers in South Africa strove to exclude the colonial “Other” and keep Africans out of the household, while British settlers in New Zealand vastly outnumbered the Maori and advocated for the “domestication” of the Maori “Other,” but did so as a means to exclude the Chinese “Other.” As these cases illustrate, domestic life in the colonies depended paradoxically upon the inclusion and exclusion of the colonial “Other.” British settlers sought to create a “pure” and “white” “little Britain” within colonial homes, but the operation of British colonial households simultaneously required the employment of outside, foreign help.

Despite being separated by over 7,000 miles and their different histories, societies, and racial dynamics, the situations in South Africa and New Zealand bear notable similarities and demonstrate the ways that imperial and local discourses intersected. The South African War and growing international competition and tensions during the first decade of the twentieth century, which would ultimately precipitate the First World War, called into question beliefs in Britain’s imperial security and racial supremacy. The first decade of the twentieth century represented a moment of crisis for the British Empire generally but also locally. The emergence of servant debates occurred at particularly crucial times for both South Africa and New Zealand—economically, socially, and geopolitically—and when ideas of the nation and national identities was undergoing a transition. Both colonies used servants as part of their attempts to construct social boundaries and reassert class, gender, and specifically racial hierarchies, which were integral to their respective visions of colonial societies.

The employment of servants transformed the home into a significant but contested “contact zone.”<sup>93</sup> British settlers sought to create an empire of home by creating an empire within the home. But while the domestic world was a site of colonial power, it was also a site of resistance, and the servant debates

reveal the precariousness of colonial power. When looking at the failed plans to train African and Maori girls as domestic servants, scholars often focus on British settlers' racial prejudices as a decisive factor without acknowledging the importance of the resistance of the Maori and African communities to the proposals. The SANNK and Young Maori—both dedicated to the improvement and advancement of their respective communities—used similar rhetoric in articulating their resistance, namely by challenging myths of the British as bearers of civilization. The discourses employed by both British settlers and African and Maori peoples reveal the centrality of marginal figures, like servants, in the colonial project and the high stakes invested in this seemingly minor subject of domestic service. The home—far from being an apolitical realm—was inextricably connected to ideas of national, racial, and imperial survival.

## Notes

- 1 Contemporary commentators viewed the climate in South Africa as full of temptations and encouraging immoral behaviour. These concerns, for example, come up repeatedly in the letters of Stuart Barnardo to his father, Thomas Barnardo, during his tour of South Africa following the conclusion of the South African War. See for example Stuart Barnardo's letters to Thomas Barnardo from August 20, 1902, A2/52/13; November 9, 1902, A2/52/115; November 15, 1902, A2/53/120; December 17, 1902, A2/53/183. The letters are held at Barnardo's in Plaistow, London. These perceptions were not exclusive to South Africa. Elizabeth Buettner has written about fears of cultural contamination in India in *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), esp. chapter 1. See also Anne McClintock's study, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995). For discussions of these themes in the Dutch colonial context, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) and also *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).
- 2 See Charles van Onselen, 'The Witches of Suburbia: Domestic service on the Witwatersrand, 1890–1914', *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886–1914, Vol. 2: New Nineveh* (New York: Longman, 1982): 53.

- 3 See for instance Gareth Cornwell, 'George Webb Hardy's *The Black Peril* and the Meaning of "Black Peril" in Early Twentieth Century South Africa,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 22, no. 3 (1996): 441–453; Norman Etherington, 'Natal's Black Rape Scare of the 1870s,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15, no. 1 (1988): 36–53; Timothy Keegan, 'Gender, Degeneration and Sexual Danger: Imagining Race and Class in South Africa, ca. 1912,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27, no. 3 (2001): 459–477; John Pape, 'Black and White: The "Perils of Sex" in Colonial Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16, no. 4 (1990): 699–720.
- 4 Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890–1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 140.
- 5 Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White*, 146. See also Pape, 'Black and White.'
- 6 Jock McCulloch, *Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia, 1902–1935* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), especially the 'Introduction.'
- 7 Van Onselen, 'The Witches of Suburbia,' 50.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 9 According to the census, the total population was 5,958,499. European or White: 1,278,025; Natives (i.e., African): 4,061,082; Mixed or Other Colored (including Indian and Asian): 619,392. *Census 1911: Preliminary Returns of Census Taken on 7th May 1911* (Pretoria: The Government Printers and Stationary Office, 1911), 2. As numerous scholars have demonstrated, these census categories are highly problematic. These categories were constantly changing and being redefined and, in the process, becoming more racialized. For a greater discussion of the employment of racial classifications in the South African census, see Akil K. Khalfani, Tukufu Zuberi, Sulaiman Bah, and Pali J. Lehohla, 'Population Statistics,' in *The Demography of South Africa*, ed. Amson Sibanda, Tukufu Zuberi, and Eric O. Udjo (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), 9–17. Scholars have shown how the census and racial classifications served a key part of colonial governance and a technology of colonial rule. See for example Benedict Anderson, 'Census, Map, Museum,' in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, rev. edn, 2006), 164–70; and Karl Ittmann, Dennis D. Cordell, and Gregory H. Maddox (eds.), *The Demographics of Empire: The Colonial Order and the Creation of Knowledge* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).
- 10 Stanley H. Palmer, 'The Power of Numbers: Settler and Native in Ireland, America, and South Africa, 1600–1900,' in *Transatlantic History*, ed. Steven G. Reinhardt and Dennis Reinhartz (Arlington: University of Texas, 2006), 130.
- 11 For a discussion of the domesticity and imperialism in the American context, see Amy Kaplan, 'Manifest Domesticity,' *American Literature* 70 (1998): 581–582. See

- also the discussion on the home and domesticity in the Australian context Eva Bischoff, 'Being at Home,' in this volume, 209.
- 12 South Africa, *Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into assaults on women* (Cape Town: Cape Times, Government Printers, 1913), 21.
- 13 Ibid., 21.
- 14 Ibid., 13, 37.
- 15 Ibid., 28.
- 16 Ibid., 13.
- 17 Ibid., 24. For more on the houseboy system, see Cecillie Swaisland, *Servants and Gentlewomen to the Golden Land: The Emigration of Single Women from Britain to Southern Africa, 1820–1939* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 95; Ellen Boucher, 'The Limits of Potential: Race, Welfare, and the Interwar Extension of Child Emigration to Southern Rhodesia,' *Journal of British Studies* 48 (2009): 914–934; and Karen Tranberg Hansen, *Distant Companions: Servants and Employers in Zambia, 1900–1985* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).
- 18 For more on the origins and decline of the 'houseboy system' in South Africa, see Jeremy C. Martens, 'Settler Homes, Manhood and "Houseboys": An Analysis of Natal's Rape Scare in 1886,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 379–400; Deborah Gaitskell, Judy Kimble, Moira Maconachie, and Elaine Unterhalter, 'Class, Race and Gender: Domestic Workers in South Africa,' *Review of African Political Economy* 27/28 (1983): 86–108; and Cherryl Walker, 'Gender and the development of the migrant labour system, c. 1850–1930: An overview,' in *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, ed. Cherryl Walker (Cape Town: David Philip, 1990), 179.
- 19 Stuart Barnardo, Letter to Thomas Barnardo, December 17, 1902, A2/53/186. This view is reiterated in Stuart Barnardo, Letter to Thomas Barnardo, September 22, 1902, A2/52/54. Together, Stuart Barnardo's letters paint a vivid portrait of a country at a critical time. Over the course of his five-month journey, Stuart Barnardo traversed the breadth of the country, arriving in Cape Town in late August and then travelling to the Orange River Colony/Orange Free State through the Transvaal and back through Natal and then the Cape Colony before departing in late December 1902.
- 20 Stuart Barnardo, Letter to Thomas Barnardo, November 24, 1902, A2/53/131.
- 21 A Flippant Contributor, 'Casual Remarks,' *The Natal Witness* (September 9, 1880); "'The Black Peril.'" Shocking South Africa. The Girls of an Orphanage. Journalist Hardy Vindicated,' *New Zealand Truth* (June 29, 1907), 8; 'Domestic Native Question,' *Natal Witness* (June 6, 1881). Despite this resistance, houseboys would remain the norm through at least the interwar years until the Second World War. See Gaitskell, Kimble, Maconachie, and Unterhalter, 'Class, Race and Gender'; and

- Jacklyn Cock, *Maids and Madams: A Study in the Politics of Exploitation* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1980).
- 22 L.S. Amery, 'The South African Colonisation Society', *The Imperial Colonist* 6, no. 78 (1908): 7–8. The South African Colonisation Society was an emigration society that encouraged the settlement of young British women in South Africa. For similar discussions in Australia see also Eva Bischoff, 'Being at Home,' in this volume.
- 23 'The Annual Meeting of the British Women's Emigration Association', *The Imperial Colonist* 7, no. 89 (May 1909): 68.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 68–69.
- 25 See for example the discussion of 'illicit intercourse' occurring between British girls and African domestic servants in *Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth General Missionary Conference of South Africa Held at Cape Town, July 3–9, 1912* (Cape Town: Townshend, Taylor and Snashall, 1912), 88.
- 26 L. Phillips, 'Girls v. House Boys in South Africa', *The Imperial Colonist* 7, no. 87 (1909): 36–37. See also Bettina Brockmeyer, 'Interpreting an Execution in East Africa,' in this volume, 88.
- 27 *Report of the Commission*, 24.
- 28 See for example, *Report of the Proceedings*, 95.
- 29 *Report of the Commission*, 28.
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).
- 32 There is extensive scholarship on the construction of binaries and hierarchies in the context of imperialism and colonial rule. See for instance, Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- 33 For more on the integral role of African girls and women as servants in colonial households, see The Editor of Rhodesia, 'Woman's Life in South Africa', *The Imperial Colonist* 1, no. 8 (1902): 70–72. In her correspondences, Olive Schreiner repeatedly references her reliance on her African girl servants. See for instance, Olive Schreiner, Letter to John Brown and Mary Brown, October 14, 1903, Olive Schreiner: John & Mary Brown MSC 26/2.2.14, National Library of South Africa, Special Collections, Cape Town, Olive Schreiner Letters Project, [www.oliveschreiner.org/vre?view=collec tions&colid=58&letterid=13](http://www.oliveschreiner.org/vre?view=collec tions&colid=58&letterid=13) [accessed November 30, 2015].
- 34 For discussions of establishing more programs and institutions to train African girls as servants, see the following records at the Derbyshire Record Office,

Matlock: D3287/93/4/71, W.H. Milton, Letter to Sir (Secretary, British South Africa Company), March 1, 1902; D3287/93/3/51, Letter to the Bishop of Mashonaland, November 13, 1901; and D3287/94/16/55, Edith Gell, 'Rhodesia Subcommittee', July 1, 1901, 93.

- 35 For a greater exploration of this point, see van Onselen's 'The Witches of Suburbia' and Keegan's 'Gender, Degeneration and Sexual Danger'.
- 36 Beatrice M. Hicks, *The Cape as I Found It* (London: Elliot Stock, 1900), 148.
- 37 Lady Broome, *Colonial Memories* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1905), 211. See similar stories on the training of Aborigine girls in Bischoff, *Being at Home*, in this volume, subchapter *The Home as the Site of Colonial Benevolence*.
- 38 Broome, *Colonial Memories*, 214.
- 39 'A National Peril', *The Rhodesia Herald* (May 3, 1912), 9.
- 40 For this reason, the Report also ruled out the employment of mixed-race—or coloured—girls as a solution to the domestic servant problem. *Report of the Commission*, 27. This concern over the growing number of relationships between African servants and white men is reflected, for example, in a letter to Edith Gell, who was an ardent proponent of British women's emigration to South Africa and the chair of the South African Expansion Company, from Muriel Dayrell Browning, who wrote in support of plans to emigrate domestic servants from Britain, hoping that more British women would mean that 'men who now keep a Kaffir menage (with horrid little coffee-coloured children running around) will find the position untenable.' Muriel Dayrell Browning, 'Extract from the Private Letter of a Young Married Woman to Mrs. Lyttelton Gell', ca. 1902–1903, Derbyshire County Record Office, Matlock, D3287/76/2/2/88. See also 'Universal Races Congress', *The Times*, July 29, 1911, 4. For more on the liminal position of mixed-race children in the colonies, see Buettner, *Empire Families*. Similar racial ambiguities and anxieties also existed in other colonial empires. On colonial Latin America, see Ann Twinam, 'The Church, the State and the Abandoned: *Expósitos* in Eighteenth-Century Havana', in *Raising an Empire: Children in Early Modern Iberia and Latin America*, ed. Ondina E. González and Bianca Premo (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 163–186. On mixed-race children in the French Empire, see Owen White, *Children of the French Empire: Miscegenation and Colonial Society in French West Africa 1895–1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Emmanuelle Saada, *Empire's Children: Race, Filiation and Citizenship in the French Colonies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012). On the Dutch Empire, see Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire and Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.
- 41 'The Month', *The Christian Express* (August 1, 1911), 114. I.N.N, 'Education and Religion', *Ilanga Lase Natal Olwe Sihlanu* (October 21, 1910), 14.



- 42 Similar fears also emerge see *Report of the Proceedings*, 75 and 87–88.
- 43 Rev. J.L. Dube, 'A Notable Native Utterance', *The Christian Express* (August 1, 1911), 117.
- 44 'The Month', p. 114.
- 45 Sol Plaatje, 'Pamphlet, The Mote and the Beam: An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'twixt White and Black in British South Africa (1921)', in *Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings*, ed. Brian Willan (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996), 283.
- 46 "'Native Union.'" Article by Pixley Isaka Seme, in Imvo Zabantsundu, October 24, 1911', Sheridan Johns III, 'Protest and Hope, 1882–1934, Volume 1', in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964*, ed. Gwendolen M. Carter and Thomas Karis (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 73.
- 47 "'Native Union.'" Article by Pixley Isaka Seme, in Imvo Zabantsundu, October 24, 1911', 72.
- 48 For a greater discussion of this point, see John Crawford and Ian McGibbon (eds), *One Flag, One Queen, One Tongue: New Zealand, The British Empire and the South African War* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002).
- 49 Robert F. Irvine, Oscar Thorwald, and Johan Alpers, *The Progress of New Zealand in the Century* (London: W. & R. Chambers, Limited, 1902), 421. For more on this context of growing nationalism, see David Capie, 'New Zealand and the World: Imperial, International and Global Relations', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey W. Rice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 582. See also Barbara Brookes, 'Gender, Work and Fears of a "Hybrid Race" in 1920s New Zealand', *Gender & History* 19 (2007): 514.
- 50 On New Zealand's identity as the 'best British,' see especially James Belich's *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880's to the Year 2000* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002). See also David Thomson, 'Marriage and Family on the Colonial Frontier', in *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Past*, ed. Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006), 140. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper, and Robin Law, 'Situating Gender', in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890–1939*, ed. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper, and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 3; Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland & Scotland 1800–1945* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008)
- 51 The census for 1911 recorded: White 1,002,959; Maori 49,844; Half-Castes: 2,879; Chinese: 2,630. 'Results of a Census of the Dominion of New Zealand', Statistics New Zealand, [www3.stats.govt.nz/historic\\_publications/1911-census/1911-results-census.html#d50e714](http://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic_publications/1911-census/1911-results-census.html#d50e714) [accessed March 29, 2015].

- 52 'South African Union: Some Obstacles in the Path', *The Press* (September 11, 1908), 8.
- 53 Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 229 and 545. Colin McGeorge, 'Race, empire, and the Maori in the New Zealand primary school curriculum 1880–1940', in *The Imperial Curriculum*, ed. J.A. Mangan (London: Routledge, 2012), 65–78.
- 54 Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Brookes, 'Gender, Work and Fears of a "Hybrid Race"', 501.
- 55 Karen Sánchez-Eppler, 'Raising Empires like Children: Race, Nation, and Religious Education', *American Literary History* 8, no. 3 (1996): 412–413.
- 56 E.A. Welch, 'Pahiataua, Akitio, Eketahuna, Mauriceville, Masterton, Castlepoint, Wairarapa South, and Featherston', in 'Census of the Maori Population', *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, H–14a (1911): 16.
- 57 W. Pitt, 'Hutt, Makara, Horowhenua, Manawatu, Kairanga, Oroua, Pohangina, and Kiwitea', in 'Census of the Maori Population', *AJHR*, H–14a (1911): 17.
- 58 'Maori Maids', *Poverty Bay Herald* (July 24, 1908), 4. The Maori Congress was responsible for legislation dealing with the Maori people.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 4.
- 60 Charlotte MacDonald, 'Taking Colonialism Home: Cook Island "Housegirls" in New Zealand, 1939–1948', in *Colonization and Domestic Service: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Victoria K. Haskins and Claire Lowrie (New York: Routledge, 2014), 273–88.
- 61 'Maori Women. A Notable Gathering. Hope for the Girl', *Evening Post* (July 16, 1908), 3. See also 'Maori Maids', 4.
- 62 'Colonial housekeeping and moving in society', in *My Hand Writes What My Heart Dictates: The Unsettled Lives of Women in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand as Revealed to Sisters, Family and Friends*, ed. Frances Porter and Charlotte MacDonald with Tui MacDonald (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996), 148. See for example, Jane Boughton to Donald McLean, Wellington, February 2, 1870, repr. in *My Heart Writes What My Heart Dictates*, 432.
- 63 'Maori Maids', 4. See also Divya Kannan, 'Missionary Encounters', in this volume, 273–274.
- 64 For a discussion of how the domestic education of girls in British Protestant mission schools in Palestine was inextricably connected to conversion efforts and the civilizing mission of imperialism, see Nancy L. Stockdale, 'Palestinian Girls and the British Missionary Enterprise, 1847–1948', in *Girlhood: A Global History*, ed. Jennifer Helgren (Piscataway: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 217–233.
- 65 'Maori Maids', 4. 'Domestic Service Maori Girls: Lady Stout's Scheme Discussed by Congress', *Evening Post* (July 20, 1908), 7. See also 'Maori Welfare', *The Auckland Star* (June 7, 1937), 8.

- 66 Similar fears and prejudices about the Chinese also existed in South Africa around the same time. See Rachel Bright, *Chinese Labour in South Africa, 1902–10: Race, Violence, and Global Spectacle* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
- 67 ‘Asiatics Restriction Bill’, 23 June 1896, *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, Third Session of the Twelfth Parliament. Legislative Council and House of Representatives* 92 (June 11–July 7, 1896), 253. Anna Stout expressed more conciliatory views toward the Chinese, praising qualities such as honesty, sobriety, and industry.
- 68 See for example, Anna Davin, ‘Imperialism and Motherhood’, *History Workshop Journal* 5, (1978), 9–65. For more about how different groups of British people employed discourses about the South African War and about African bodies in social debates and particularly in discussions about the franchise, see Zine Magubane, “‘Truncated Citizenship’: African Bodies, the Anglo-Boer War, and the Imagining of the Bourgeois Self’, in *Bringing the Empire Home. Race, Class and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa*, ed. Zine Magubane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 95–128.
- 69 Mr. Vincent Pyke to Mr. W.J. Steward, September 9, 1871. Reprinted in ‘Ad Interim Report (No. 1) of the Chinese Immigration Committee’, *AJHR* 2:2, H–5, (1871), 17.
- 70 The 1911 Census records 2,542 Chinese men and 88 Chinese women living in New Zealand. The census records 27 Chinese men engaged as domestic cooks and only one Chinese woman as being employed in domestic service. ‘Results of a Census of the Dominion of New Zealand’, [http://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic\\_publications/1911-census/1911-results-census.html#d50e714](http://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic_publications/1911-census/1911-results-census.html#d50e714) [accessed March 29, 2015]. This great gender imbalance was not only due to the nature of the work available—mainly mining—but also the cost of the poll tax, which prohibited many wives from immigrating with their husbands to New Zealand.
- 71 W.E. Swanton, *Notes on New Zealand* (London: Eden, Remington & Co., 1892), 244.
- 72 See for instance, ‘The Chinaman as a Domestic Servant’, *Thames Advertiser* (July 17, 1895), 1.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 For example, Miss Morrison, who was in charge of the Government Women’s Employment Bureau, admitted that the employment of Maori girls provided a good solution to the insatiable demand for emigrant servants, stating a ‘well-trained Maori girl made one of the very best household assistants.’ See ‘The Servant Problem’, *Evening Post* (July 17, 1909), 9. See also ‘Maori Girls as Domestic Servants’, *West Coast Times* (April 8, 1907); and C.A. Younge, ‘Maori Education’, *Otago Witness* (April 22, 1908), 88; ‘The Servant Problem’, *Evening Post* (July 17, 1909), 9.

- 75 This view that the Maoris were facing extinction as a race was examined in George H. Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture and the Contact of Races: An Anthropological and Psychological study of the Laws of Racial Adaptability, with special reference to the Depopulation of the Pacific and the Government of Subject Races* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1927). Many Young Maori members read Pitt-Rivers's work, including Apirana Ngata. For more on this point, see Brookes, 'Gender, Work and Fears of a "Hybrid Race"', 504.
- 76 For example, see Belich's *Paradise Reforged* and John A. Williams's *Politics of New Zealand Maori: Protest and Cooperation, 1891–1909* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969). Although the Young Maori have been criticized, particularly from members of the Maori Renaissance in the 1970s, recent historians have emphasized how cooperation was a more effective means to safeguard Maori interests and the best option.
- 77 Sandra Coney, 'Maori Women Shun Domestic Service', in *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women since They Won the Vote*, ed. Sandra Coney (Auckland: Viking, 1993), 225.
- 78 'Maori Girls as Domestic Servants',
- 79 'Maori Girls as Domestic', *The Manawatu Daily Times* (April 6, 1907), 4.
- 80 Williams, *Politics of the New Zealand Maori*, 154.
- 81 'Maori Girl Domestic', *Taranaki Daily News* (April 6, 1907), 2.
- 82 'Wild Utterances', *Marlborough Express* (April 29, 1911), 6.
- 83 'Maori Girl Domestic', 2.
- 84 'Maori Maids', 4. See also 'Servant Girl Problem', *Nelson Evening Mail* (February 7, 1912), 4.
- 85 'Maori Girl Domestic', 2.
- 86 'Maori Maids', 4. 'Maori Domestic', *Marlborough Express* (July 18, 1908), 4.
- 87 'A Native Woman's Protest: The Pride of Race', *Evening Post* (July 20, 1908), 7. Pomare (1877–1971) —whose full name was Mildred Amelia Woodbine Johnson—was the daughter of a Pakeha father and Maori mother and raised with a bi-cultural education.
- 88 'Maori Maids', 4.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Charlotte Macdonald, 'Strangers at the Hearth: The Eclipse of Domestic Service in New Zealand Homes, c. 1830s–1940s', in *At Home in New Zealand: Houses, History, People*, ed. Barbara Brookes (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2000): 51.
- 91 For more on these points in the Indian context, see S. Sen, 'The Savage Family: Colonialism and Female Infanticide in Nineteenth-Century India', *Journal of Women's History* 14, no. 3 (2002): 54. See also Ruby Lal, 'Recasting the Women's

Question: 'The Girl-Child/Woman in the Colonial Encounter', *Interventions* 10, no. 3 (2008): 321–39.

92 'Maori Maids', 4.

93 This idea is first introduced by Mary L. Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone', *Profession* (1991): 33–40.



## Being at Home

### Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender in Settler Colonial Australia<sup>1</sup>

Eva Bischoff

Being “at home” with the Empire,<sup>2</sup> did not come easy to nineteenth-century Britons. To be comfortable with imperial power, they discursively “bifurcated” the domestic from the colonial along the same ideological lines that separated public and private spheres: “Home was supposed to keep empire—with its strange peoples and landscapes, its flora and fauna, its languages, cultures and histories, its armies and military power—at a distance, geographically distinct, separated by land masses and seas.”<sup>3</sup> In this “imagined geography” the Empire was marked as a different space, the space of the colonized Others.<sup>4</sup> “Being in the bosom of one’s family meant,” by contrast, “being at home in a place that was supposedly safe, a place of belonging.”<sup>5</sup> In addition, the idea of domestic space—“home”—was closely linked to intersecting notions of gender, class, and British national identity.<sup>6</sup>

For those Britons living in diasporic communities across the Empire,<sup>7</sup> notions of home and domesticity fulfilled a similar function: they separated European colonists from their colonial subjects, both physically and socially. As Ann L. Stoler has demonstrated, regulating the “tense and tender ties” that constituted domestic space was crucial to establishing and maintaining imperial rule.<sup>8</sup> Picking up her argument, historians traced the ways in which “masters and mistresses as well as governors and councillors” regulated “individual and collective behavior,” and how their capacity to reproduce British manners, organize labor regimes, and establish racialized social

hierarchies determined the success of a colonial enterprise. They reconstructed “a rationality that linked a well-governed colony with well-governed families and self-governing individuals” and that structured colonial policies.<sup>9</sup> Feminist historians, investigating the role of white women in the colonies, come to similar conclusions. They argue that creating and maintaining a “proper” home, i.e., a household that adhered to the standards of bourgeois respectability, was the duty of the white man’s European wife. Her efforts determined his standing within colonial society just as much as his economic or political success.<sup>10</sup>

The daily rituals of domesticity were, however, not only to be practiced by the colonizers themselves. Core values and norms such as cleanliness, diligence, and patriarchal heteronormativity were considered essential elements of civilization. They were thus included in the curricula of missionary schools and other educational institutions that aimed to “lift” the colonized up to higher cultural and moral standards. Mirroring philanthropic efforts in the “motherland” to elevate “the great unwashed” by encouraging working-class women to be “proper” homemakers and mothers, missionaries and colonial administrators alike strove to teach needlework, cooking, and hygiene.<sup>11</sup>

These observations hold true for settler colonies as well: the family home was considered the privileged site of familial love and affection, “a haven of moral and social protection,” and a “training ground, a space of orderly habits, cleanliness, neatness and discipline, in which ideal citizens might be produced.”<sup>12</sup> Indigenous women and girls were transferred to schools and private households to be trained as domestic servants. Housewives, as a consequence, acted as educators and agents of cultural genocide: They contributed to the forced assimilation and destruction of Indigenous identities by separating and alienating these young women from their families and instructing them in European bourgeois norms and values.<sup>13</sup>

Consequently, the private home transmuted into a cultural contact zone, into “fluid sites of affective and emotional cross-cultural encounters where colonial relations played out on an often daily basis.”<sup>14</sup> In addition, the “hierarchical paternalism” of the family was employed to control and discipline convicts, particularly convict women, under a regime of forced labor.<sup>15</sup>

Despite these findings, settler colonial theory has, so far, concentrated on binary categories such as settler/native, investigating confrontations rather than encounters or translational processes. Following Patrick Wolfe’s dictum



“settler colonizers come to stay” scholars focus on the socio-ecological transformation of colonial into domestic space and the genocidal “logic of elimination” this violent process entailed.<sup>16</sup> According to this view, Indigenous people were regarded either as potential laborers or as obstacles that needed to be removed, be it by assimilation or extirpation.<sup>17</sup> An increasing number of scholars have started to criticize this perspective. Lisa Ford and Tim Rowse, for instance, have pointed out that such a perspective does not account for lines of conflict or differentiation within Aboriginal communities.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, as Jody Byrd and Sara Ahmed have argued, it does not account for discrepancies within settler society. The experiences of non-voluntary colonists, so-called “arrivants,” such as slaves or, in the case of the Australian colonies, convicts, are hidden by focusing on settler-Aboriginal binarism.<sup>19</sup> Generally speaking, as Manu Vimalassery, Juliana Pegues, and Aloysha Goldstein have summarized, settler colonial theory relies on the “cartographic model [. . .] of the frontier,” reproducing and thereby re-enforcing colonial categories instead of questioning the contentious processes and power relations from which they have emerged.<sup>20</sup>

Picking up these arguments, my chapter sets out to explore the historical dimensions of the settler home as a socio-political space. It juxtaposes two cases from two different contexts of early nineteenth-century colonial Australia, namely Van Diemen’s Land (VDL) and South Australia (SA). It concentrates on two families, that of George Washington and Sarah Benson Walker, and that of Joseph and Hannah May, who settled in these colonies during the 1830s and 1840s. In doing so, this chapter combines the analysis of the social and material constitution of the settler home in two very different Australian colonies, that of a convict colony characterized by the genocidal conflict between the settlers and the Aboriginal custodians of the land (VDL), and that of a free settler colony whose founders vowed to respect Indigenous land rights and followed the principles of “systematic colonization” (SA). Both the Walkers and the Mays were Members of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers. Friends came to the Antipodes equipped with a specific combination of economic strategies, traditions, and evangelical convictions that enabled them to adapt their households to their new environment seamlessly. Quaker women, as this chapter will demonstrate, played a particularly important role in this process.

Friends constituted a small minority in Australian colonial society: between 1788 and 1860, 987 Friends came to the Antipodean colonies—in relation to a total population of 1,145,585 in 1860.<sup>21</sup> Statistically speaking, they cannot be considered representative. However, studying their experiences opens up a window into mundane life of early nineteenth-century settlers in Australia.<sup>22</sup> It is through this window, as I would like to demonstrate on the following pages, that we can take a closer look at the intersections of race, class, and gender in early nineteenth-century settler colonial Australia.

### The Quaker family home

The Religious Society of Friends had emerged from the upheaval of seventeenth-century English revolutionary wars. As so-called dissenters, Quakers were prosecuted and excluded throughout late seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century Britain. It took until 1832, for instance, for Friends to be eligible for membership in Parliament. Despite exclusion and the threat of imprisonment, Quaker communities thrived over the course of the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup> Their resilience drew upon strong kinship networks. One key element of these networks was the family home as a space in which Quaker faith and identity was practiced, children were educated in the Quaker way, and comfort among Friends could be found. Yet the Quaker home was not a closed social space: Friends frequently accommodated traveling ministers, visiting kin, and activists from different religious and social backgrounds as Quakers became involved in various humanitarian causes, most prominently the abolitionist movement.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, early nineteenth-century Quaker homes were characterized by shared responsibilities and an underlying hierarchical structure. On the one hand, Friends upheld a long-established tradition of gender equality such as the female ministry. Quaker women administered Quaker poor relief and visited families to ensure their well-being, and also their adherence to the Society's norms and values. They exercised what Annemieke van Drenth and Francisca de Haan have called "caring power," a "mode of power that operates through care, [...] a commitment to the well-being of others."<sup>25</sup> In addition, female Friends led family businesses while their husbands, fathers, and brothers

were imprisoned for refusing to pay tithes (church taxes) or submit to military service. Quaker men and women shared child-care and other domestic responsibilities, especially when one or even both spouses were in the ministry.<sup>26</sup> These elements of gender equality were upheld even in the face of the evangelical revival, which swept through British Quaker communities around 1800 and which preached notions of gendered “separate spheres” and of the home as “Heavenly Haven.”<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, Quaker notions about domesticity and family, which had formed in the Atlantic world of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, pictured the family home as a hierarchically structured, multi-ethnic space, acknowledging the presence of Native American and African slaves in Quaker households. As early as 1676, George Fox, the founding father of the Society, had laid down the core principles of this concept: In this epistle “Gospel family-order” he described Quaker men as “Christians, Masters, Governours [*sic*] and Rulers of Families” who were responsible for the spiritual well-being of every family member. Specifically addressing Friends living in the Caribbean colonies, he emphasized their duty to instruct all members of the household (born or bought) in the Christian belief. He reminded them that “Christ dyed [*sic*] for all, [...] for the *Tawnes* [Native Americans] and for the *Blacks*, as well as for you that are called *whites*” and urged his brethren to practice manumission and let their “Servants [...] go free after a considerable Term of Years, if they have served them faithfully.”<sup>28</sup>

As a result, Quaker settlers carried a complex and multilayered set of notions of the family home with them to the Antipodean colonies. They derived from long-standing Quaker traditions as well as early nineteenth-century developments and evangelical influences. All these notions underwent a stress test in the Australian colonies.

### The Walkers: A family in Van Diemen’s Land

The Walkers lived in Hobart, the main urban settlement on the island and capital of the colony. Sarah Benson Walker (1812–1893) came to VDL in 1822. Her father, Robert Mather (1782–1855), a devout Methodist, had decided to emigrate with his family to support his church’s missionary work in Australasia

and Oceania.<sup>29</sup> Sarah converted to Quakerism in 1834.<sup>30</sup> Her husband, George Washington Walker (1800–1859), was a convert as well.<sup>31</sup> Both became ministers of the Vandemonian congregation in 1837.<sup>32</sup> George Walker came to Tasmania in February 1832, accompanying the traveling minister James Backhouse (1794–1869). The two men founded the first Australian Quaker Meeting in Hobart, on September 20, 1833.<sup>33</sup>

Sarah and George married on December 15, 1840.<sup>34</sup> The couple had ten children, with an equal number of sons and daughters. With the help of his friends and connections in England, George Walker opened a draper business in Hobart.<sup>35</sup> Following his evangelical convictions, he concentrated exclusively on woolen materials from 1848 onwards, in order not to encourage vanity and luxury in his customers.<sup>36</sup> He also pursued another strategy which had turned many Quakers into successful and respected businessmen in Britain during the course of the eighteenth century: banking. He was co-founder and manager of the Hobart Savings Banks which started operating in 1845.<sup>37</sup>

Both Sarah and George Walker were involved in several benevolent societies. He was, to name only a few examples, co-founder of the Van Diemen's Land Auxiliary Temperance Society and the Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1842. He acted as the financial manager of the latter until 1844.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, he was a member of the colony's Bible Society, the board of education, and the Royal Society of Tasmania.<sup>39</sup> He was invited onto the committee for the investigation of the situation of female convicts in the colony in 1842/43 and served as treasurer to the so-called Magdalen Society between 1848 and 1851.<sup>40</sup> Sarah, as I will discuss later on in more detail, shared her husband's concern for the welfare of female convicts and became a member of the so-called Ladies' Committee, a group of middle- and upper-class women who visited female prisoners at the Cascades Female Factory, spear-headed by Jane Franklin (1791–1875, née Griffin), wife of John Franklin (1828–1847, Governor of VDL from 1837 to 1843), in 1842.<sup>41</sup>

As traveling minister, George Walker had interacted with members of the colonial elite, including the residents of Government House. He and his wife maintained many of these social and political contacts throughout their lives. The Walkers were, for instance, invited by Jane Franklin to the official opening of the Ancanthe Museum on October 26, 1843.<sup>42</sup> As a result, their household resembled that of urban British Quakers not only economically but also socially.

As Quakers, the Walkers were part of a community which had come into being just after the colony had gone through a violent crisis. Founded as a convict colony in 1803/04, the settlement expanded drastically during the 1820s: In 1819 Indigenous and European populations were still about par (ca. 5,000 compared to 4,350, respectively). In 1824 as many as 12,643 colonists lived on the island, among them 1,500 free settlers and their families.<sup>43</sup> This influx resulted from both a change in colonial policy and the encouragement of free settlers to come to the Australasian colonies, and rising convict rates in postwar Britain. The settlement expanded rapidly into Palawa Country.<sup>44</sup> Between 1824 and 1831, the government granted more than 1 million acres to the settlers.<sup>45</sup> Pastoral farming was introduced to the island and the number of sheep multiplied from 200,000 in 1823 to one million in 1830.<sup>46</sup> As a result, Palawa Country was physically transformed into an agricultural zone of the world-encompassing British imperial economy; clans were severed from access to sacred sites and/or food supplies.

The Aborigines took to guerrilla warfare to fight off what can only be described as an invasion and to protect their women and children from abduction by white men (the so-called “gin raiding”). A local war ensued in which, in 1830 alone, 250 Europeans were reported dead (“Black War,” 1826–1832).<sup>47</sup> On January 7, 1832, the leaders of those clans which had led the anti-colonial struggle, today summarized as the Oyster Bay and the Big River Nations, officially capitulated to Lieutenant-Governor George Arthur (1784–1854, in office 1824–1836). Subsequently, Tasmanian Aborigines either went voluntarily or were forcibly deported to a settlement on Flinders Island.<sup>48</sup>

### The settler home and as part of the colonial penal system

Vandemonian colonial society was structured by transportation with a total of 72,000 prisoners deported to the island until 1853. Only about 12,500 of them were women.<sup>49</sup> Convicts outnumbered free settlers 3 to 1 between 1830 and 1850.<sup>50</sup> Starting in 1824, convicts were assigned as (unfree) servants to settlers. They worked as domestic servants, farm hands, or any other trade they knew. Their masters were responsible for them just as they would have been for an

apprentice: they had to provide food, clothing, and medical treatments if necessary.<sup>51</sup>

The assignment was part of a multi-level system which combined sanctions and incentives designed to correct and transform the prisoners into law-abiding, civilized subjects of the Crown. As a result, the settler family home became the key of this innovative (and very effective) penal system. The patriarchal authority of the family's head of household was employed to educate the criminals in bourgeois norms and values, cleanliness, sobriety, and work ethics. The settler was expected to lead by example. If he transgressed the boundaries of his role (i.e., if he fraternized, shared alcohol), the economic advantage of the assigned convict labor was withdrawn. The family home became a space of "authority, labour discipline and moral fashioning."<sup>52</sup>

This system was experienced differently by men and women due to gendered working patterns and moral norms in early nineteenth-century colonial society. The vast majority of male convicts were employed in rural farming businesses that needed male farm hands and shepherds (so-called "stock-keepers") to establish and operate their farms or sheep runs. Merchants, artisans, or tradesmen in Hobart or Launceston, the colony's two urban centers, relied on male unfree labor to a lesser degree.<sup>53</sup> Both rural and urban households, however, needed female servants to maintain a household, a home.<sup>54</sup> As a result, female convicts were under closer surveillance than their male counterparts, who often worked outdoors and more independently, especially if they were managing cattle.<sup>55</sup>

In addition, nineteenth-century gender norms called for a continued supervision and control of female delinquents under sentence.<sup>56</sup> These mores were reinforced by the results of the Molesworth Committee of 1837, which found the assignment system lacking in this regard and concluded that it fostered prostitution among convict women.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, sexual exploitation of female servants was widespread, and it can be argued that the colonial government tacitly accepted this as male settler privilege.<sup>58</sup> When in June 1840 a mandatory "probation" period was introduced during which each newly arrived convict was employed in public works (often in chain gangs) prior to transfer into private service,<sup>59</sup> women were exempted from this procedure, against the recommendation of the Molesworth Committee. Penny Russell has suggested that this decision was motivated by the settlers' interest in

maintaining their access to convict women's bodies—as was their opposition to the activities of the Ladies' Committee.<sup>60</sup>

Existing literature on the assignment systems focuses on the male head of household and his patriarchal power (in the double meaning of the word).<sup>61</sup> Yet, supervision, instruction, and discipline of the female staff were, traditionally, part of the responsibilities of his wife. This is reflected in everyday Vandemonian Quaker life: Sarah B. Walker fulfilled her duties carefully. Several of the "testimonials" she prepared for leaving servants during the 1860s testify to her diligence.<sup>62</sup> When parting from Marian Jennings, a "good needle woman," for instance, she noted: "I have great pleasure in testifying to her thorough good character and conduct."<sup>63</sup> Jennings had been with the Walkers for more than four years. Mary Phelan, who barely stayed twelve months, was, by contrast, simply characterized as a "good General servant" and "honest, sober and industrious."<sup>64</sup>

Convict servants did not receive a written letter of reference from their employer (this was the prerogative of the free). But we can safely assume that Sarah B. Walker supervised these just as diligently because she was actively committed to the welfare of female prisoners in VDL in general. She was, for instance, a member of the Ladies' Committee, who visited convict women at the Cascades Female Factory.<sup>65</sup> Her activism also provides a good example of how settler wives participated in creating and maintaining a gendered penal system of surveillance, control, and discipline in colonial VDL by extending their housewifely duties into the public sphere.

The object of the committee's attention, the Hobart Female Factory, originally a whiskey distillery, had been redesigned during Arthur's administration, along specifications of the famous Quaker and prison reformer Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845, née Gurney) in order to house the increasing numbers of female convicts arriving in the colony. It was operational from 1828 to 1856.<sup>66</sup> Following Fry's example, the members of the Ladies' Committee gave addresses to the Factory's inmates, taught them their letters, and conducted communal prayers.<sup>67</sup> According to the facility's matron, Mrs. Hutchinson, they visited "about once a fortnight & remain[ed] in the building an hour at a time or more," and succeeded in teaching basic reading skills to several of the inmates.<sup>68</sup>

The activities of the Ladies' Committee raised quite a stir in the colony. Originally founded by Jane Franklin after the arrival of Kezia Elizabeth Hayter

(1818–1885) in July 1841,<sup>69</sup> the women's organization was publicly criticized in the colony. Disapproval concentrated on Hayter's involvement. Although she was an official agent of the British Society of Ladies for the Reformation of Female Prisoners, founded by Elizabeth Fry, and her protégé she was seen as unsuitable for the task because of her youth and her status as an unmarried woman. Hayter stepped down in reaction to this criticism. Jane Franklin, whose support for the committee had never been strong, waived, and the committee temporarily ceased its activities.<sup>70</sup>

Other women, however, insisted on continuing its work and Sarah B. Walker was among them.<sup>71</sup> In February 1843, their spokesperson, Louisa Cotton, wife of the colony's irrigation engineer Hugh Calveley Cotton (1798–1881), implored Jane Franklin to reinstate the committee and to help "the unfortunate female convicts, whose situation appears to us so truly lamentable, & which seems so imperatively to call upon any Christian female to lend her aid in endeavoring to ameliorate their condition both in a spiritual and temporal point of view."<sup>72</sup>

In joining the committee, Sarah Walker followed in the footsteps of her philanthropic female brethren in England, exercising a "caring power." She continued her commitment despite public criticism of the committee's work. Her example demonstrates how settler wives became active agents in the political arena by extending their domestic role. It also shows how these women, in addition to exercising disciplinary powers as part of the penal system in their individual homes, reinforced the colonial penal system in general by endorsing its underlying gender norms and validating its control of convict women.

### The settler home as a site of cultural genocide

The Tasmanian colonial home was, however, not only part of the prison system. It was also a site of cultural genocide. As several historians have demonstrated, taking in children of Aboriginal descent as apprentices and/or servants was a common practice in Tasmania from the early days of the colony. Governmental attempts to curtail these abductions failed.<sup>73</sup> These kidnappings stood at the beginning of those infamous nineteenth- and twentieth-century Australian



policies that organized mandatory transfer of Aboriginal children into the foster care of white families (summarized today as “Stolen Generations”).<sup>74</sup> In VDL, child abduction was part of frontier warfare.<sup>75</sup> It was also motivated by a combination of economic interests, willful sexual exploitation, and colonial benevolence. The latter aimed at imparting “civilized” norms and values upon the children such as industriousness, cleanliness, and obedience.<sup>76</sup> As a result, the family home transformed into a location of colonial biopower and the homemaker became an active agent of “civilization” and the elimination of indigeneity.

Since no government records were kept on the number of Aboriginal children abducted and private material refers to them only in passing it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of persons involved. Colonists considered them not worth mentioning, taking “the presence of Aboriginal children for granted.”<sup>77</sup> Anna Haebich estimates that eighty-nine Palawa children, orphaned by massacres or skirmishes and removed from their clans, lived in European households between 1810 and 1836.<sup>78</sup> James Boyce reports that twenty-six Aboriginal children had been baptized by 1820 by Reverend Robert Knopwood (1763–1838).<sup>79</sup> Yet many of the abducted children were not christened and his parish register is incomplete. As a result, this number represents only a fraction of those taken.

According to the sources available, there were no Aboriginal children present in the Walker household, either as apprentices or as servants. This does not indicate, however, that the Quakers were opposed to the practice; quite the contrary. After visiting the Aborigines’ reservation on Flinders Island in 1833, George W. Walker and his fellow traveling minister, James Backhouse, handed in a summary of their findings. In this report, they lauded Arthur’s removal policy and proposed an education policy specifically targeting Aboriginal children.<sup>80</sup> In order to “qualify them for usefulness in the community,” Backhouse and Walker suggested it would be necessary to separate the children from their families, to educate them in the Orphan School in New Town (part of Hobart), and to train them “in the habits of the Europeans.”<sup>81</sup> They explicitly recommended the children’s employment as laborers (boys) and domestic servants (girls).

There are some prominent cases during the 1830s and 1840s, for instance that of Jane Franklin, who “adopted” an Aboriginal girl, named Mathinna

(alternatively written Methina) or Mary,<sup>82</sup> daughter of Towterer and Wongerneep, members of the West Coast Port Davey clan, and one Indigenous boy, named Timemenidic, son of Wymerric and Langatong of clans residing on the northwest side of Arthur River. Both came to Government House from Flinders Island where they had been named Mary and Timmie (also Adolphus). Jane Franklin referred to the boy as Timeo.<sup>83</sup>

Franklin's educational "experiment" was widely known and commented on in public.<sup>84</sup> The Walkers were personally familiar with the household at Government House as explained above. The Walkers did not protest against the educational "experiment" of the colony's First Lady or the removal of Indigenous children in general. On the contrary, George Walker explicitly endorsed the separation of Aboriginal children from their families and their transformation into "productive" members of settler society. Thus, although there is no archival evidence for the presence of Indigenous boys or girls in the Walker household, they supported and helped to maintain one of the key practices of cultural genocide: the abduction and forced assimilation of Aboriginal children.

### The Mays: A family in South Australia

Joseph May (1787–1878) and his wife Hannah (1790–1860, née Morris) came to SA in September 1839. They were accompanied by their eleven children, the oldest being twenty-four, the youngest seven years of age, and Joseph's elder brother Henry May (1786–1846).<sup>85</sup> In contrast to the Walkers, they settled in a rural area. Following the advice of a fellow Quaker, John Barton Hack (1805–1884), who had arrived in the colony in February 1837, the Mays settled at Mount Barker, a district that had been surveyed and opened up for settlement only recently.<sup>86</sup>

The May household was considered a shining example of a self-contained Quaker household, lauded for its effectiveness and internal cohesion.<sup>87</sup> Their house served as meeting house for the little Quaker community in the district, prior to the erection of the Quaker meeting house in Adelaide in 1840. Even after its completion, their home at Mount Barker formed one of two centers of South Australian Quakerism because many members were unable to travel to

the colony's capital on a weekly basis.<sup>88</sup> Just like in European Quaker homes, guests were always welcome, including neighbors on their way from or to Adelaide and traveling Quaker ministers, i.e., Frederick Mackie (1812–1893) and Robert Lindsey (1801–1863), who visited the family home in 1854.<sup>89</sup>

The Mays had chosen to settle in a colony that was founded under the impression of an ongoing public debate on settler colonial expansion and its disastrous impact on Indigenous peoples.<sup>90</sup> Originally, the initiative to establish a colony in this area of the Australian mainland was a joint effort of a group of investors and colonial enthusiasts, the “South Australian Association,” put forward in August 1834.<sup>91</sup> The project was based on the concept of “systematic colonization,” developed by Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796–1862). The original association, however, dissolved and when its legal successor, the “South Australian Company,” approached the Colonial Office in 1835, its representatives were confronted with a new group of administrators, who held high humanitarian ideals.<sup>92</sup> In view of the events in 1820s VDL and the ensuing Tasmanian genocide, discussed by the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements) of the House of Commons (1835–1837),<sup>93</sup> they issued stipulations that aimed at protecting the Indigenous population by respecting the Aborigines' land rights and ensuring their so-called “civilization.”<sup>94</sup> The company, eager to get the project launched, promised to adhere to these conditions.

Due to these promises, early SA was accompanied by high hopes amongst British reformers. As a result, the South Australian Quaker community was put under the spotlight in a manner unknown to Tasmanian Friends during their early colonial years. Official communiqués from the national Quaker administrative committee (the Meeting for Sufferings) set a high moral standard: “Christianity teaches us to consider all men as our Brethren, as the children of our Father in heaven and as the objects of that Redemption which comes by the Lord Jesus.”<sup>95</sup> Aborigines were therefore to be met with “kindness.” Quaker emigrants were called upon to “[b]efriend these poor destitute fellow-creatures” and to be “instrumental in bringing them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.”<sup>96</sup>

The colony started out as a localized settlement, namely the city of Adelaide and its immediate vicinity. In a surge of settler expansion similar to one during the second half of the 1820s in VDL, SA spread out into Aboriginal Country

in 1838/39. The European population rose from 546 in 1836 to a total of 10,315 in 1839.<sup>97</sup> Along with the growth of the settler population, the number of sheep and cattle rose dramatically after the first animals had been successfully driven from Melbourne and Sydney to Adelaide across the country along the Murray and Darling rivers in April and July 1838.<sup>98</sup>

The basic principles of “systematic colonization” encompassed the regulation of the influx of colonists in terms of both numbers and social composition. The aim was to transplant an idealized version of the hierarchically structured society of rural Britain to the Antipodes. Accordingly, settlers were to be selected from different social classes, couples and families enjoyed preference over single men, to avoid the gender imbalance that plagued the convict colonies of New South Wales and VDL. A scheme of assisted immigration was set up to attract desirable colonists. Access to land was regulated (by price) to restrict land ownership to a “respectable” elite and to ensure an adequate number of un-landed laborers.<sup>99</sup> As a result, the social composition of the South Australian Quaker community was more homogeneous than that of its counterpart in VDL.

### The settler home as a unit of socio-ecological transformation

The family farm transformed the Australian landscape, introducing *portemanteau biota*, i.e., plants, animals, and micro-organisms from Europe or other colonies, putting the land under the plow, commencing pastoral farming, connecting it to local, regional, and global markets.<sup>100</sup> Most South Australian colonists tended to establish large sheep runs which were managed on-site by a small group of employees, mostly men but also couples. The runs’ owners and their families often lived in one of the larger, more urban parts of the settlement, Adelaide or Port Lincoln.

The May family, as mentioned above, lived on their land and concentrated on dairy farming and cereal production. They also laid out a garden for personal supplies in vegetables and fruits and for trade with their neighbors and at the local market. From the letters of Margaret May (1822–1902), the second eldest daughter of the family, we know that the household was organized according to a traditional rural gendered division of labor: men tended to the

fields and the cattle, women concentrated on the vegetable garden and the dairy. Margaret described in great detail which kinds of fruit trees, shrubs, vegetables, and flowers the family grew and how they obtained the necessary seeds, bulbs, and seedlings. She thereby gives a detailed account of how the May family contributed to the introduction of *portmanteau biota* to Australia. The list includes, among others, plants that had circulated across the globe since the beginning of the Columbian exchange (e.g., potatoes); tulips, the famous sixteenth-century colonial cash crop; and fruit trees of Mediterranean climes, namely peach and nectarine trees. The Mays did not employ farm hands or domestic servants but hired additional labor for specific time periods and purposes (harvest, washing).<sup>101</sup>

### The home as cultural contact zone

The May home was also a space of intercultural encounter and exchange, especially the kitchen and the veranda, a feature missing in Vandemonian settler residences, which were built to emulate English cottages and estates. South Australian colonists, by contrast, often modeled their homes after the colonial architecture that had been developed in other British colonies of warmer climates, namely India and South Africa (as did many mainland settlers): a one-story building with a roof drawn out to provide shade and protection. To minimize fire risk, the kitchen was often set apart in a different, smaller building. Nineteenth-century drawings show that the Mays erected a hybrid construction: it retained an English front and combined it with a colonial veranda at the back.<sup>102</sup>

Members of the Aboriginal clan, who lived on and cared for the land the Mays' estate was located on, bonded closely to the Quaker family. They visited the settlers often, calling the Europeans by name.<sup>103</sup> In their interactions, the Aborigines displayed a high degree of trust: women who came to the farmhouse, for instance, were frequently accompanied by small children. They often stayed on the house's veranda. The Quakers shared food and cared for the clan's elderly.<sup>104</sup> The Mays, in turn, became acquainted with this particular Indigenous group as well. They were well informed about the marital relationships, the births and the deaths amongst them.<sup>105</sup> In addition to

members of the local clans, other Aboriginal people also visited the family farm. These were either passing through during traditional seasonal migratory movements to Mount Barker Summit, which was held sacred by the Indigenous inhabitants, or had been displaced by expanding European settlements in the plains along the River Torrens and the Murray River.<sup>106</sup>

Traveling Aborigines stopping at the Mays' farm followed a distinct pattern: They came to the doorstep, often directly to the kitchen, addressed the women of the household, and asked for needles, melons, bread, grease, or fire to light a pipe, or permission to glean the fields. Frequently, the Indigenous persons involved carried out small chores on the farm such as chopping wood or carrying water ("going in"). The gendered division of labor practiced on the farm put the preparation and dispensation of food into female hands. Aboriginal visitors seemed to have been well aware of this fact. They addressed the May women directly and purposefully yet called upon male authority in case the articles they were interested in were not provided by the women. In some instances, these situations became quite tense.<sup>107</sup>

Notably, the Quaker family never resorted to violence to "resolve" conflicts or to drive Aboriginal persons off the property, as was customary amongst other settlers.<sup>108</sup> Instead, they relied on the presence of a male authority figure, the negotiating skills of the May women, and the intervention of Aboriginal women as cultural translators (or any combination of these three elements). Negotiations were conducted primarily along female lines of communication. In early colonial VDL, due to the steep demographic imbalance among the convict population, this form of interaction was impossible. On the contrary, European men abducted Aboriginal women and girls to exploit them sexually and to benefit from their work force, thereby disrupting the social cohesion of Palawa communities severely. However, despite these peaceful interactions and regardless of official Quaker discourse that considered Indigenous people to be "fellow-creatures,"<sup>109</sup> the Mays did not perceive Aborigines as equals; quite the reverse. To give just one example: In a letter published in the Quaker periodical *The Friend* in 1843, William May (second son, 1816–1903) claimed that among the local Aborigines there were "some of whose features would exhibit nothing more intellectual than those of an ape."<sup>110</sup> To him, Aboriginal nomadic culture resembled that of "English gypsies, constantly migrating, accomplished beggars, and certainly disliking any continuous labour."<sup>111</sup>

## The home as the site of colonial benevolence

The May family farm was, however, more than just an intercultural meeting place and a unit of socio-ecological transformation. The Mays' household also functioned, at least temporarily, as a site where colonial benevolence was enacted in a manner that resembled the Vandemonian practices I have described earlier.

In 1843, the Mays took in a young Aboriginal woman of mixed descent who had been "found on the shore at Rapid Bay" by Joseph Phillip (1813–1900), a fellow Quaker and brother of Henry Weston Phillips (1811–1898) who had married Maria May (1818–1909), the eldest daughter of the May household, earlier the same year.<sup>112</sup> According to Margaret May's report, Phillip suggested they might "try whether we could make her useful and teach her at the same time how to do things well and to behave properly." Mary, as the young woman was called by the family, "for the first few days did pretty well."<sup>113</sup> But soon it became clear that she had no inclination to be patronized, exploited as a domestic servant, or molded after the European's notions of a hierarchically structured, racialized society. Instead, she displayed a level of obstinacy German historians have termed *Eigensinn*.<sup>114</sup>

She [...] would do nothing unless someone stood by her all the while, and from the manner in which she had been brought up she could not understand that one person was in the least above another, she wanted to sit in the parlour with us, to go out with us, and to do just as we did. [...] She was very quick and when she liked could do very nicely, but she very seldom did like, and then she was as slow and awkward as possible.<sup>115</sup>

After only a few weeks, the Mays capitulated and Mary was eventually transferred to the care of the colony's Protector of the Aborigines.<sup>116</sup>

## Conclusion: Being at home in settler colonial Australia

The Australian settler colonial family home was, as my analysis of two Quaker households has demonstrated, a multidimensional space. Three of these elements have been previously identified by scholars: its affective dimension, its capacity to safeguard its family members from moral and social ruin, and its role as a "training ground" to convey bourgeois norms and values.<sup>117</sup>

All of them feature prominently in this chapter. Looking at the May family, especially the emotional, moral, and social aspects came to the fore. Their family home doubled as a place of worship while the official meeting house had not yet been built, or because dispersed settlement patterns and resulting travel distances rendered some members unable to participate in meetings in the capital regularly. It was also a social hub for the community on a more practical level. The Mays extended their hospitality to numerous visitors, among them traveling Quaker ministers.

My investigation has also shown the ways and means by which Quaker households served as the aforementioned “training ground.” This dimension of the Quaker home related directly to more general colonial policies of cultural genocide by taking in, condoning, or encouraging the abduction of Aboriginal children and their education in settler households and their integration into a hierarchically structured, racialized society. Quakers supported these practices of forced assimilation or even actively pursued them as part of their evangelical commitment to “better” their fellow human beings. The very driving force behind their activism on behalf of slaves, prisoners, and the mentally ill therefore also motivated their collaboration in settler policies aimed at eliminating Aboriginal cultural identity. These efforts were, however, not always successful, as seen with regard to the Mays’ attempts to “educate” a young woman of Aboriginal descent. At least some Aboriginal persons subjected to this form of colonial benevolence rejected the position assigned to them by the settlers.

But the settler family home encompassed even more dimensions. In addition to the three characteristics named above, the family home was, fourthly, also an integral part of the penal system. The family was considered a model for heteronormative patriarchal settler society as a whole. Conveying bourgeois norms such as cleanliness or diligence was part of the disciplinary apparatus to control and regulate convict lives. My inquiry into the Walker family suggests that women were deeply involved in establishing this form of colonial governmentality. First, as homemakers they were responsible for supervising and disciplining domestic servants; a responsibility which also would have included female convict servants. As a result, it is safe to assume that settler wives exerted a disciplinary power similar to that of the male head of household.



Secondly, as my case study indicates, settler wives could also actively pursue projects that extended their domestic role into the public sphere. Sarah B. Walker supported a project to “elevate” the inmates of the Cascades Female Factory in Hobart. She thereby exercised the “caring power” of benevolence and philanthropy for which her female brethren in Britain were widely known and respected. Her efforts buoyed a penal system based on the exploitation of female labor and governmental control of women’s bodies. And just as with Quaker endorsement of and support for the removal of Aboriginal children, Friends’ benevolence buttressed settler colonial governmentality.

A fifth characteristic of the settler family home was its capacity to transform colonial space into settler domestic space on a very practical, material level. Again, this aspect has been commented on before, particularly with regard to the dispossession of the Aboriginal Australians,<sup>118</sup> yet without taking Indigenous resilience and adaptation into account. A settler home, as my investigation of the interaction between members of the May family and the Aboriginal people has shown, became a place of social exchange and negotiations; in other words, “fluid sites of affective and emotional cross-cultural encounters.”<sup>119</sup> It was, at least temporarily, a space of comfort (for the elderly), of shared intimacy (caring for children), of barter and trade (for food, clothing, or amenities such as tobacco). Thus, their home also functioned as an intercultural, if uneven, meeting ground.

Members of the Religious Society of Friends constituted, as mentioned at the very beginning of this chapter, a minority within settler society. Yet Quaker settlers and their families were particularly well equipped to act as part of the penal system on the one hand and to form cross-cultural affective bonds on the other: Their long-established tradition of thinking of the family home as a hierarchically structured multi-ethnic sphere; Quaker notions of gender roles, shared domestic responsibilities, and hierarchically structured ethnically mixed social units blended with early nineteenth-century evangelicalism and philanthropy, enabling them to adapt their households to colonial Australia easily. The assertiveness of Quaker women in exercising a “caring power” constituted a key element in this process.

On a more general level, the Quaker example indicates the existence of a multiplicity of positions within white settler society worth exploring in further detail. Binary concepts of Aboriginal-settler relations, such as the “frontier”

cannot gauge this complexity. Considering its key role in settler colonial discourse and practice and its multidimensional character, home or domestic space could also provide alternative “socio-spatial imaginaries”<sup>120</sup> to develop a more nuanced, intersectional analysis of Australian settler colonialism past and present.

## Notes

- 1 Many thanks to Dörte Lerp and Ulrike Lindner for their patience and their support.
- 2 Ranajit Guha, ‘Not at Home in Empire’, *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 3 (1997): 483–485; Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, ‘Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire’, in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 24.
- 3 Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son: Architects of Imperial Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), xxii.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 242–288. See also the discussion on the home in settler societies in Elizabeth Dillenburg, ‘Domestic Servant Debates’, in this volume, 182.
- 7 Zoë Laidlaw, ‘Breaking Britannia’s Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain’s Imperial Historiography’, *Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 807–830.
- 8 Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post)Colonial Studies’, *Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (2001): 829–865.
- 9 Kathleen Wilson, ‘Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-century British Frontiers’, *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (2011): 1300. See also: Matthew P. Fitzpatrick and Susie Protschky, ‘Families, Frontiers and the New Imperial History’, *The History of the Family* 14, no. 4 (2009): 323–324.
- 10 Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in Twentieth-century Colonial Cultures’, in *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 344–373.
- 11 Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, ‘Home Made Hegemony: Domesticity and Colonialism in South Africa’, in *African Encounters with Domesticity*, ed. Karen T.

- Hansen (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 37–73; Elizabeth Elbourne, 'Domesticity and Dispossession: The Ideology of the "Home" and the British Construction of the "Primitive" from the Eighteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries', in *Deep hiStories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa*, ed. Wendy Woodward (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 29–33; Angela Middleton, 'Missionization in New Zealand and Australia: A Comparison', *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 14, (2010): 170–187. See for the similar role of missionary women in South India in early nineteenth-century Kannan, Missionary Encounters, in this volume, before and after note 6.
- 12 Penny Russell, "Unhomely Moments": Civilizing Domestic Worlds in Colonial Australia', *The History of the Family* 14, no. 4 (2009): 328.
- 13 Margaret D. Jacobson, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 229–280, 281–327. The term *cultural genocide* is defined as 'the purposeful weakening and ultimate destruction of cultural values and practices of feared out-groups' (Lawrence Davidson, *Cultural Genocide* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012, 18–19). It is not a juridical term of international law but is derived from the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (adopted 1948) to describe the specific threat forced assimilation poses to Indigenous peoples (Lindsey Kingston, 'The Destruction of Identity: Cultural Genocide and Indigenous Peoples', *Journal of Human Rights* 14, no.1 (2015): 63–83).
- 14 Margaret D. Jacobson, 'Crossing Intimate Borders: Gender, Settler Colonialism and the Home', in *Gendering Border Studies*, ed. Jane Aaron, Henrice Altink and Chris Weedon (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), 165.
- 15 Kirsty Reid, *Gender, Crime and Empire: Convicts, Settlers and the State in Early Colonial Australia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 112–117, quote 112.
- 16 Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 388.
- 17 Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds, 'Introduction: Making Space in Settler Colonies', in *Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspectives on Race, Place and Identity*, ed. Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 2, 4.
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- 'Recuperating Binarism: A Heretical Introduction', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–4 (2013): 257–279.
- 19 Jody A. Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 53.
- 20 Manu Vimalassery, Juliana H. Pegues and Aloysha Goldstein, 'Introduction: On Colonial Unknowing', *Theory & Event* 19, no. 4 (2016), <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/633283> [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 21 William N. Oats, *A Question of Survival: Quakers in Australia in the Nineteenth Century* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985), 39; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Population by Sex, States and Territories, December 31, 1788 onwards (Table 1.1)', 3105.0.65.001—Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2014: Population Size and Growth, released September 18, 2014, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3105.0.65.0012014?OpenDocument> [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 22 Sigurdur G. Magnússon and István Szijártó, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 19. See also: Matti Peltonen, 'Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research', *History and Theory* 40, no. 3 (2001): 347–359.
- 23 Arthur Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry: Being an Account of the Quaker Contributions to Science and Industry During the 17th and 18th Centuries* (New York: Kelley, 1968), 35–39, 43–44; David H. Pratt, *English Quakers and the First Industrial Revolution: A Study of the Quaker Community in Four Industrial Counties, Lancashire, York, Warwick, and Gloucester, 1750–1830* (New York: Garland, 1985), 1–12, 19–20; James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray, 1997), 61–104.
- 24 Christopher L. Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 392–394.
- 25 Annemieke van Drenth and Francisca de Haan, *The Rise of Caring Power: Elizabeth Fry and Josephine Butler in Britain and the Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 11.
- 26 Sandra S. Holton, *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780–1930* (London: Routledge, 2007), 53–55, 68–69.
- 27 Edwina Newman, 'Quakers and the Family', in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. Stephen W. Angell and Pink Dandelion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 434.
- 28 George Fox, 'Gospel Family-Order: Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both of Whites, Blacks and Indians (1676)', 13–14, 16, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore College Libraries: Triptych, [http://triptych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/ref/collection/HC\\_QuakSlav/id/595](http://triptych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/ref/collection/HC_QuakSlav/id/595) [accessed June 26, 2017].

- The epistle was originally delivered as a sermon to the Quaker meeting on Barbados in 1671.
- 29 *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, s.v. 'Mather, Robert (1782–1855)', by Robert Mather, originally published 1967, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mather-robert-2438/text3247> [accessed June 26, 2017].
  - 30 Tasmania University Archives [TUA], Quaker Special Collection, Society of Friends, Records of Hobart Regional Meeting, Minute Books Hobart Monthly Meetings (September 20, 1833 – December 3, 1857), S 1/A/1, Vol. 1 (1833–1835), August 7, 1834, 37–39 and *ibid.*, October 2, 1834, 43–51.
  - 31 James Backhouse and Charles Tylor, *The Life and Labours of George Washington Walker, of Hobart Town, Tasmania* (London: A.W. Bennett, 1862), 1–2. Walker became a member of Hull Monthly Meeting in 1827. The couple married in December 1840 (TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Society of Friends, Records of Hobart Regional Meeting, Minute Books Hobart Monthly Meetings (September 20, 1833 – December 3, 1857), S 1/A/1, Vol. 3 (1839–1841), January 28, 1841, 229–235).
  - 32 TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Society of Friends, Records of Hobart Regional Meeting, Minute Books Hobart Monthly Meetings (September 20, 1833 – December 3, 1857), S 1/A/1, Vol. 2 (1836–1838), July 6, 1837, 132–134; *ibid.*, Vol. 2 (1836–1838), August 3, 1837, 135–139.
  - 33 TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Society of Friends, Records of Hobart Regional Meeting, Minute Books Hobart Monthly Meetings (September 20, 1833 – December 3, 1857), S 1/A/1, Vol. 1 (1833–1835), September 20, 1833, 9–10.
  - 34 Marriage Certificate of George W. Walker and Sarah B. Mather, married at Friends Meeting House, Hobart, December 15, 1840, TUA, Walker Family Papers W 9/A/3/1; TUA, Society of Friends, Records of Hobart Regional Meeting, Minute Books Hobart Monthly Meetings (September 20, 1833 – December 3, 1857), S 1/A/1, Vol. 3 (1839–1841), January 28, 1841, 229–235.
  - 35 Letter George W. Walker to Margaret Bragg, November 10, 1834 (with addendum November 25, 1834), TUA, Walker Family Papers, Letterbook (1831–1836) W 9/A/1/26, 24; Letter George W. Walker to John Macleod, August 1, 1837, TUA, Walker Family Papers, Letterbook (1836–1838) W 9/A/1/27, not paginated; George W. Walker to Charles Bragg, April 8, 1840, TUA, Walker Family Papers, Letterbook (1839–1844) W 9/A/1/29, not paginated; George W. Walker to Joseph Procter, April 4, 1840, TUA, Walker Family Papers, Letterbook (1839–1844) W 9/A/1/29, not paginated.
  - 36 Letter George W. Walker to Morland & Son, December 23, 1848, TUA, Walker Family Papers, Business Correspondence (1844–1852) W 9/A/1/30, not paginated.

- 37 Bank Documents 1848–1849, State Library New South Wales [SL NSW], Papers of Walker, George Washington (1800–1859), III: Miscellaneous Papers (1845–1849) ML MSS 11/5.
- 38 Papers of the Tasmanian Total Abstinence Agency Association (1846–1847), SL NSW, A 585; V.D.L. Total Abstinence Society (1844–1857), TUA, Walker Family Papers W 9/A/6/1–15 and *ibid.*, 17–25; Bank Book of the Society [for the Suppression of Vice] (1842–1844), SL NSW, Walker, George Washington, 1800–1859: II. Papers re Membership of Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1842–1844, ML MSS 11/4.
- 39 Letter Colonial Secretary to George W. Walker, December 31, 1856, TUA, Walker Family Papers, Letters to G.W. Walker (1820–1858) W 9/A/1/7.
- 40 Documents relating to the Van Diemen's Land Asylum (Magdalen Society), 1848–1851, TUA, Walker Family Papers W 9/A/7/1.
- 41 Alison Alexander, *The Ambitions of Jane Franklin: Victorian Lady Adventurer* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2013), 99.
- 42 Letter Jane Franklin to George W. Walker, October 25, 1843, TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Walker Family Papers, Letters to G.W. Walker (1820–1858) W 9/A/1/11 (transcript at: *ibid.*, Walker Family Papers, George W. Walker—Ann Mather Correspondence W 9, not accessioned). Today, the building is the institutional home of the Art Society of Tasmania.
- 43 Lyndall Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines: A History since 1803* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2012), 74.
- 44 Palawa Kani is a generic Aboriginal Tasmanian language, reconstructed from preserved fragments of the various languages spoken by Indigenous Tasmanians prior to European contact. Tasmanian Aborigines today often refer to themselves as Palawa. See: 'palawa kani (Aborigines talking)', Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre Inc., <http://tacinc.com.au/programs/palawakani> [accessed August 3, 2017]. Palawa Country refers to the territory claimed by the various Indigenous Tasmanian clans (effectively the entire island). The capitalization indicates the traditional economic and spiritual relationship between Palawa clans and their territories.
- 45 James Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne, Vic: Black Inc., 2008), 261–262.
- 46 Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines*, 74.
- 47 Nicholas Clements, *The Black War: Fear, Sex and Resistance in Tasmania* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2014), 2. The 'Black War' was, in fact, a series of hostilities between settlers and Aborigines and not an openly declared military conflict. Whereas its end can be positively identified with the surrender of the Oyster Bay Nation on January 7, 1832, the beginning is much more difficult to determine. I suggest November 1826, when Arthur declared all Palawa people in the settled districts to be 'rioters' and 'open enemies,' thereby excluding them from

- the protection of the law they (at least theoretically) enjoyed as the Crown's subjects ('Government Notice, November 29, 1826', House of Commons, Sessional Papers No. 259, 31. Sept. 23, Correspondence Concerning Military Operations against Aboriginal Inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land <1831-Vol. XIX.175.> Van Diemen's Land. Copies of all Correspondence between Lieutenant-Governor Arthur and His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the Subject of the Military Operations lately carried on against the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land, 20–21.
- 48 Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines*, 196.
- 49 Henry Reynolds, *A History of Tasmania* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 138.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 386–393; Reid, *Gender, Crime and Empire*, 111–117, 127–130.
- 52 Hughes, *The Fatal Shore*, 388–390; Reid, *Gender, Crime and Empire*, 130, 112 (quote).
- 53 Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land*, 165.
- 54 Deborah Oxley, *Convict Maids: The Forced Migration of Women to Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 188.
- 55 Reid, *Gender, Crime and Empire*, 135–137.
- 56 Ibid., 110–112, 115.
- 57 Ibid., 174–179.
- 58 Penny Russell, "Her Excellency": Lady Franklin, Female Convicts and the Problem of Authority in Van Diemen's Land', *Journal of Australian Studies* 21, no. 53 (1997): 45.
- 59 Ian Brand, *The Convict Probation System: Van Diemen's Land 1839–1854* (Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1990), 5–23.
- 60 Russell, 'Her Excellency', 44. This assessment sits uncomfortably with the involvement of George W. Walker in the governmental committee of 1842/43 appointed to investigate the situation of the women detained in the Cascades Factory. The evangelical Quaker certainly did not willfully support sexual exploitation.
- 61 Reid, *Gender, Crime and Empire*, 75–87, 123–137; Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 67–97.
- 62 The Walker Family Papers (TUA, Quaker Special Collection, W9/B3) contain the 'testimonials' of six women: Marian Jennings, Mary Phelan, Mary McArthur, Mary Badman, Catherine Hassett, Melia Watson.
- 63 Testimonial Marian Jennings, TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Walker Family Papers W 9/B/3/1.

- 64 Testimonial Mary Phelan, TUA, Quaker Special Collection, Walker Family Papers W 9/B/3/2.
- 65 van Drenth and de Haan, *The Rise of Caring Power*, 15; Alexander, *The Ambitions of Jane Franklin*, 99.
- 66 Dianne Snowden, 'Female Convicts', *University of Tasmania, The Companion to Tasmanian History*, released 2006, [http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion\\_to\\_tasmanian\\_history/F/Female%20convicts.htm](http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/F/Female%20convicts.htm) [accessed June 26, 2017]; Lucy Frost, 'Female Factories', *University of Tasmania, The Companion to Tasmanian History*, released 2006, [http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion\\_to\\_tasmanian\\_history/F/Female%20factories.htm](http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/F/Female%20factories.htm) [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 67 Alexander, *The Ambitions of Jane Franklin*, 97.
- 68 Statement of Mrs. Hutchinson No. 2, Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Female Convict Prison Discipline, Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office, Colonial Secretary's Office, Correspondence, 'Legal Branch' (January 1, 1841 – December 31, 1847) CSO 22/1/50, 125–134, quote 131, 132. I follow the transcript by Lucy Frost and Sally Rackham available online at: *Female Convicts Research Centre*, <http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au/docs/disciplineinquiry/TranscriptofInquirywithtables.pdf> [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 69 See date of arrival in: Description List of Female Convicts (October 1, 1828 – December 31, 1853) CON 19/1/1; Alexander dates the arrival of the ship to May 1841 (*The Ambitions of Jane Franklin*, 96).
- 70 Russell, 'Her Excellency', 40–41; Kenneth McGoogan, *Lady Franklin's Revenge: A True Story of Ambition, Obsession and the Remaking of Arctic History* (London: Bantam Press, 2006), 214; Alexander, *Ambitions of Jane Franklin*, 99.
- 71 Letter from Louisa Cotton to Jane Franklin, February 4, 1843, TUA, Papers of Sir John and Lady Franklin, RS 17/1, 2.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land*, 88. With the death of Lieutenant-Governor Collins in 1810, the official ban was lifted (*ibid.*, 84).
- 74 Jan Kociumbas, *Australian Childhood: A History* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 1997), 1–20; Anna Haebich, *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families, 1800–2000* (Freemantle: Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 2000), 65–130; Shirleene Robinson, 'Regulating the Race: Aboriginal Children in Private European Homes in Colonial Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies* 37, no. 3 (2013): 302–315.
- 75 Victoria Haskins and Margaret D. Jacobs, 'Stolen Generations and Vanishing Indians: The Removal of Indigenous Children as a Weapon of War in the United States and Australia, 1870–1940', in *Children and War: A Historical Anthology*, ed. James A. Marten and Robert Coles (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 227–241.



- 76 Haebich, *Broken Circles*, 65–130; Robinson, ‘Regulating the Race’, 302–315; Boyce, *Van Diemen’s Land*, 86–87; Dirk A. Moses, ‘Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History’, in *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History*, ed. Dirk A. Moses (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 3–48. The abduction or organized transfer of Indigenous children was a prominent tool of genocidal settler policies across the Anglo-world, as Margaret Jacobson has demonstrated (Jacobson, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 149–192). See also the discussion on civilizing the indigenous population in the Philippines in Silvan Niedermeier, ‘Colonial Self-positioning’, in this volume.
- 77 Boyce, *Van Diemen’s Land*, 84.
- 78 Haebich, *Broken Circles*, 85.
- 79 Boyce, *Van Diemen’s Land*, 84–85.
- 80 James Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies* (London: Hamilton Adams & Co., 1843), lxiii.
- 81 *Ibid.*, lxxv–lxxvi, quote lxxv.
- 82 McGoogan, *Lady Franklin’s Revenge*, 211–213; Lyndall Ryan, ‘Mathinna’, in *First Australians*, ed. Rachel Perkins, Marcia Langton and Wayne Atkinson (Melbourne, Vic: Miegunyah Press, 2010), 68–70; Penny Russell, ‘Girl in a Red Dress: Inventions of Mathinna’, *Australian Historical Studies* 43, no. 3 (2012): 341–362. ‘Mathinna’ was, according to a note by George Washington Walker in 1834, the Aboriginal name for the shell necklaces handcrafted by Tasmanian Aboriginal women (George W. Walker, ‘Description of the making of Tasmanian Aboriginal sea shell necklace “Mathinna”, Van Diemen’s Land, 1834’, TUA, Special and Rare Materials Collection, last modified 2014, <http://eprints.utas.edu.au/6141> [accessed January 23, 2017]).
- 83 Russell, ‘Girl in a Red Dress’, 345, 347–348.
- 84 *Hobart Town Mercury*, February 20, 1857, 2.
- 85 See the entry for the *Anna Robertson*, ‘South Australian Passenger Lists 1839’, Diane Cummings, *Bound for Australia: Passenger Lists, 1836–1851*, launched as CD in 2005, <http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/BSA/1839AnnaRobertson.htm> [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 86 ‘Letter William May, October 20, 1839’, in *Two Letters Describing the Voyage of the May Family to South Australia in 1839, and its Settlement near Mount Barker, in that Colony*, ed. William L. May (Hobart: J. Walch & Sons, 1911), 25–26. For the arrival of John B. and Bridget Hack see the entry for the *Isabella*, ‘South Australian Passenger Lists 1836–1837’, Diane Cummings, *Bound for Australia: Passenger Lists, 1836–1851*, launched as CD in 2005, <http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/BSA/1837Isabella.gif> [accessed January 22, 2017].
- 87 Oats, *Question of Survival*, 215.

- 88 Ibid., 208–209.
- 89 Ibid., 216; Frederick Mackie, *Traveller under Concern: The Quaker Journals of Frederick Mackie on his Tour of the Australasian Colonies, 1852–1855* (Hobart: University of Tasmania, 1973), 212–217.
- 90 Alan Lester, ‘Humanitarians and White Settlers in the Nineteenth Century’, in *Missions and Empire*, ed. Norman Etherington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 64–85.
- 91 South Australian Land Company, *Proposal to His Majesty’s Government for Founding a Colony on the South Coast of Australia* (London: Nicol 1831); Act 4 and 5 William IV, Cap 95: An Act to Empower His Majesty to Erect South Australia into a British Province or Provinces, and to Provide for the Colonization and Government Thereof (August 15, 1834), in *Coming to Terms: Aboriginal Title in South Australia*, ed. Shaun Berg (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2009), 275–284.
- 92 Namely Charles Grant/Sir Glenelg (1778–1866) as Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Sir George Grey (1799–1882) as Under-Secretary and James Stephen (1789–1859) who first served as an assistant and in 1836 became Under-Secretary himself. See: Helen T. Manning, ‘Who Ran the British Empire 1830–1850?’, *Journal of British Studies* 5, no. 1 (1965): 88–121.
- 93 The Select Committee was appointed on the initiative of Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786–1845), the respected evangelical politician and leader of the abolitionist movement. Buxton had familial ties to Quaker philanthropic networks. On the work of the committee and its debates see: Elizabeth Elbourne, ‘The Sin of the Settler: The 1835–36 Select Committee on Aborigines and Debates over Virtue and Conquest in the Early Nineteenth-century British White Settler Empire’, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 4, no. 3 (2003), <https://muse.jhu.edu> [accessed August 3, 2017]. The committee’s reports were submitted in 1837. As Zoë Laidlaw has shown, Buxton’s female Quaker relatives were instrumental in preparing this report (Zoë Laidlaw, ‘“Aunt Anna’s Report”: The Buxton Women and the Aborigines Select Committee’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 32, no. 2 (2004): 1–28).
- 94 ‘Letters Patent Establishing the Province of South Australia, February 19, 1836’, Transcript at: *Museum of Australian Democracy Old Parliament House in Cooperation with National Archives of Australia, Documenting a Democracy: South Australia Documents*, [http://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/resources/transcripts/sa2\\_doc\\_1836.pdf](http://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/resources/transcripts/sa2_doc_1836.pdf) [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 95 London Yearly Meeting/Meeting for Sufferings, An Affectionate Address to the Members of our Religious Society in South Australia, October 5, 1838, Friends House Library, Port 8/4.
- 96 Ibid.

- 97 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Population by Sex, States and Territories, December 31, 1788 onwards (Table 1.1)', 3105.0.65.001—Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2014: Population Size and Growth, released September 18, 2014, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3105.0.65.0012014?OpenDocument> [accessed June 26, 2017].
- 98 Aboriginal nations of the Murray River area reacted with guerilla warfare. Robert Foster and Amanda Nettelbeck, *Out of the Silence: The History and Memory of South Australia's Frontier Wars* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2012), 32–39.
- 99 Tadhg Foley, "An Unknown and Feeble Body": How Settler Colonialism Was Theorized in the Nineteenth Century', in *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, ed. Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 10–27.
- 100 Norbert Finzsch, "[...] Extirpate or remove that vermine." Genocide, Biological Warfare, and Settler Imperialism in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Genocide Research* 10, no. 2 (2008), 219; Norbert Finzsch, "The intrusion therefore of cattle is by itself sufficient to produce the extirpation of the native race." Social Ecological Systems and Ecocide in Conflicts between Hunter-Gatherers and Commercial Stock Farmers in Australia', *Settler Colonial Studies* 7, no. 2 (2017): 164–191.
- 101 Letters Margaret May to Maria Morris, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.1 – 2.3.
- 102 Frederick Mackie, Fairfield, Mt. Barker, Jos[eph]. May's residence, 1854 (pencil drawing, 12 x 19.8 cm), National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK2092/54; Frederick Mackie, Mt. Barker, Jos[eph]. May 1854 (pencil drawing), National Library of Australia, Manuscripts Frederick Mackie, MS 9947/6. See on the home as highly problematic cultural contact zone in South Africa Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates,' in this volume, 180.
- 103 They inquired, for instance, about Margaret's elder sister Maria (1818–1909) who had left the family farm and had taken up residence in Adelaide with her husband in 1843. Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, April 20, 1844, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 73.
- 104 Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, November 1–2, 1844, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 195.
- 105 See, for instance, Margaret May's reports on an Aboriginal woman called 'Mount Barker Mary' (Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, March 21, 1844, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 61 and August 6, 1845, *ibid.*, 347).

- 106 Margaret May distinguished them in European terms into Adelaide and Murray or Angas 'natives' instead of giving their Aboriginal self-identification, i.e., *Kaurna* and *Ngarrindjeri*.
- 107 Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, May 26, 1845, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906) PRG 131/2.3, 314.
- 108 Robert Foster, Amanda Nettelbeck and Rick Hosking, *Fatal Collisions: The South Australian Frontier and the Violence of Memory* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2001), 5.
- 109 London Yearly Meeting/Meeting for Sufferings, An Affectionate Address to the Members of our Religious Society in South Australia, October 5, 1838, Friends House Library, Port 8/4.
- 110 William May, 'Letter from South Australia (Continued from Page 152)', *The Friend* 1, no. 8 (1843), 175–176, here 176.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 175.
- 112 Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, November 5, 1843, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 27; Oats and Oats, 'Biographical Index', 170.
- 113 Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, November 5, 1843, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 27.
- 114 Alf Lüdtke, 'Geschichte und *Eigensinn*', in *Alltagskultur, Subjektivität und Geschichte: Zur Theorie und Praxis von Alltagsgeschichte*, ed. Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1994), 139–153. See the discussion on the training of servants in South Africa in Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates,' in this volume, 187.
- 115 Letter Margaret May to Maria Morris, November 5, 1843, SL South Australia, May and Coleman Families Papers (1839–1906), PRG 131/2.3, 27.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 28. Margaret May does not give any further information about Mary's fate.
- 117 Russell, 'Unhomely Moments', 328.
- 118 Finzsch, '[. . .] Extirpate or remove that vermine', 219; Finzsch, 'The intrusion therefore of cattle', 164–191.
- 119 Jacobson, 'Crossing Intimate Borders', 165.
- 120 Vimalassery, Pegues and Goldstein, 'Introduction: On Colonial Unknowing'.

## Part IV

# Education and Schooling



# Women and Education Reform in Colonial India

## Trans-regional and Intersectional Perspectives

Jana Tschurennev<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The reform and regulation of gender relations, sexuality, and reproduction were central concerns of British colonial governance in India. From the 1820s onwards, interventionist social policies were formulated in the name of an imperial civilizing mission, to further “the moral and material progress” of India.<sup>2</sup> Even after the British approach to social reform became more cautious—particularly after the large-scale uprising of 1857, and the turning of “British India” into a crown colony in 1858—gender, marital, and sexual relations remained subject to the state’s policing and governance. Such regulations, however, were not a one-sided venture. Colonial interventions were embedded in intense public debates, which included not only British missionaries and civil society associations, but diverse Indian reform and “regeneration” movements.<sup>3</sup>

In Bengal, an important center of the colonial encounter, the response of the educated indigenous elite, the *bhadralok*, was shaped by a complex dynamic of appropriation and resilience. Women, religion, and the home were imagined as the refuge of cultural self-assertion, a safe space against the modernizing forces in the “outer world.”<sup>4</sup> As a major site for the formation of caste, class, and religious-communal identities, however, the “home” was subject to intense socio-political contestation.<sup>5</sup> Reforming women became the aim of Hindu and

Muslim social reform movements in several parts of India.<sup>6</sup> By the early twentieth-century, Indian reformers' efforts to reform the domestic sphere took a bio-political turn. It was now the health and strength of the national body, which was to be secured by mothers knowledgeable in hygiene, nutrition, and child-development. Even the emerging women's movement took part in this "nationalization of domesticity."<sup>7</sup>

In the socio-political contestations over the home, "female education" was a crucial issue. Together with new genres of vernacular literature, schooling for girls was devised as an instrument to improve the minds, morals, and habits of future mothers. At the same time, however, educating women was considered dangerous. It is not only the new literature on the history of colonial education in India that understands that students always deal with school situations in their own ways—sometimes supporting, sometimes "warp[ing] the system."<sup>8</sup> The figure of the "wrongly" educated and empowered woman features prominently in nationalist male anxieties.<sup>9</sup> Also, from the 1880s onwards, many personal accounts testify to individual women's desires, and their illicit, secret striving for education in a patriarchal home.<sup>10</sup>

In this chapter, however, the major focus is not on women as recipients of education, but on women's agency in education reform and policymaking. How did women educational reformers participate in the politics of gender and domesticity? I am comparing two experiments in "female education" in nineteenth-century India: first, the efforts of missionaries and school societies in the 1820s to introduce schooling for girls in Calcutta and Bombay; and secondly, the educational reform activities of "Pandita" Ramabai Dongre Medhavi (1858–1922), whom Clare Midgley has called "a foundational figure in the global emergence of modern feminisms."<sup>11</sup> Ramabai's activism was mostly located in the Bombay Presidency, but she was closely connected with the reform movements in Bengal. My comparative analysis is intended to shed light on the complexity of women's educational politics in colonial India in a local, as well as a trans-regional frame.

On the one hand, I am drawing from the debates on intersectionality as a critical social science approach,<sup>12</sup> in order to place imperial power relations in a wider "matrix of domination."<sup>13</sup> Coming from the tradition of Black feminist thought, intersectionality refers to the fact that individuals and groups can be privileged in regard to some markers of social difference and inequality, such



as gender, racial categorization, and class (or caste, as we have to add for the Indian context), and at the same time disadvantaged in regard to other ones.<sup>14</sup> This implies that the disadvantaged struggling to empower themselves, to claim a “power to,” sometimes end up exerting “power over” others.<sup>15</sup> As Ian Tyrrell commented on the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union—one of the major actors in the expansion of America’s “moral Empire”<sup>16</sup>—“History is replete with ironies in which the dominated become agents of domination.”<sup>17</sup> Against this background, I look at how the education politics of British female missionaries, and upper-caste Indian feminists were embedded within, and able to overcome, existing social hierarchies of caste, class, and Empire.

On the other hand, I want to explore the regional scope of women’s educational reform activism. Both analyzed cases were in different ways connected with the circulation of educational ideas, within the British Empire and beyond. Throughout the nineteenth century, we can not only trace a diversification in the transcontinental channels of pedagogical knowledge transmission; there are also remarkable shifts in the patterns of knowledge exchange among women.

## Reforming the domestic sphere

From the 1820s onwards, “female education” became a prominent site for debates about social reform in India. The new interest in the education of girls can also be read against the background of an emerging discourse in England on the “education of the poor.” Two influential voluntary associations claimed responsibility for organizing the expansion and reform of public, fee-free elementary schooling for the working class, hoping thus to counteract both pauperism and political unrest.<sup>18</sup> The British and Foreign School Society (BFSS), was founded in 1808 by an alliance of liberal-oriented groups, such as religious non-conformists, and Utilitarians. Its rival, the National Education Society (NES), was set up in 1811 by the conservative church faction.<sup>19</sup> Both societies promoted their own version of a new model of schooling, the so-called monitorial system of education, which promised the cheap and effective spread of elementary instruction by means of employing more advanced

students as instructors of their peers.<sup>20</sup> This model of a school as a “moral and intellectual machine” combined the experiences of Andrew Bell (1753–1832), who had conducted an “experiment in education” in a school for military orphans in Madras, with the innovations of young London schoolmaster Joseph Lancaster (1778–1838).<sup>21</sup> In the context of the mushrooming of missionary societies, the BFSS and NES formed close ties with the foreign mission movement: “for if the world were full of Bibles,” Andrew Fuller of the Baptist Missionary Society preached on behalf of the BFSS, “it would be of little avail if the people were not taught to read them.”<sup>22</sup>

Thus, the BFSS started to understand “the great cause of universal instruction”<sup>23</sup> in an imperial, and even global frame. Moreover, both the BFSS and NES established wide-reaching networks of cooperation. In Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, missionaries initiated the formation of education societies such as the Calcutta School Book Society (CSBS), the Calcutta School Society (CSS), the Bombay Native Education Society (BNES), and the Bombay Education Society (BES), the latter one explicitly following the model of the NES in London. Moreover, the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) became involved in the monitorial movement, particularly in the Bombay Presidency.<sup>24</sup> A civil society network emerged, which consisted of educational societies in Britain, their colonial counterparts, and missionary societies which provided an important part of the early nineteenth-century communication infrastructure for education within the British Empire. Together, they aimed to promote modern public elementary schooling as a means for the “diffusion of knowledge.”<sup>25</sup>

The nineteenth-century version of “Education for All” was marked by a drive towards incorporation, i.e., a will to “train” and “civilize” whole populations. At the same time, however, it stressed the need for differentiation<sup>26</sup>: “instruction [...] should be such as to render the inhabitants of a country happy in their own sphere, but never take them out of it.”<sup>27</sup> Those were the words of the Baptist missionaries of Serampore (Bengal), William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward, arguing against providing fee-free English education, instead of vernacular instruction, for rural Bengali students. In similar terms, Andrew Bell warned the English public that there was “a risk of elevating, by an indiscriminate education, the minds of those doomed to the drudgery of daily labour, above their condition, and thereby rendering them

discontented and unhappy in their lot.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, the educational reformers were trying to find a way between what they saw as “the Scylla of Brutal Ignorance and the Charybdis of a Literary Education.”<sup>29</sup>

As a solution to this problem of schooling’s potential to further social mobility, different educational programs were formulated within a framework of class, Empire, and gender. While religious instruction and basic literacy aimed at the moral and material uplift of the English working class, there was a specific additional component for the “poor Europeans” in the colony: a bilingual education that would allow students to become mediators between the colonial administrators and the mass of the colonized.<sup>30</sup> In the early nineteenth century, the social category of “European poor” comprised of the descendants of Catholic Portuguese traders, low-class British, and children of British men and Indian women.

In the new “native schools” under the supervision of the Serampore missionaries, religious instruction was partially substituted by science. Science, they hoped, would prepare the ground for the adoption of protestant Christianity, which they regarded as a rational religion. The Serampore missionaries’ “course of moral and scientific instruction”<sup>31</sup> was also adopted by the CSBS, CSS, and BNES as model lessons. Finally, there was a particular agenda—and a particular curriculum consequently—for the girls and women within these groups.

The first girls targeted by the missionaries in Calcutta and Bombay belonged to the category of the European, and “Eurasian” (i.e., partially European) poor, as part of an “internal” civilizing mission. A sermon preached by Archdeacon Barnes on behalf of the BES included a “specific appeal on part of the girls.” The “indigent” European and “Eurasian” girl, he said, was even “more neglected, and certainly more exposed to danger and temptation” than her male counterpart. While a male youth, Barnes explained, “may maintain himself from an early age as a sailor, a soldier, a mechanic, a labourer,” there were very few “trades and occupations” by which “circumstances” and “nature” would allow a young woman to support herself. Indigence would easily lead a young woman to informal relationships and prostitution. Since many students were the offspring of European soldiers with Indian women—unions which were considered “illegitimate” in the eyes of the British authorities—the female students were seen as particularly endangered by their mothers’ bad example.<sup>32</sup>

The girl students of the boarding school run by the BES were therefore subjected to a much stricter control regime than the boys; the curriculum particularly emphasized moral education. Lessons in Christianity and needlework were seen as the best means to prepare them for marriage within their social class. The number of young women who entered proper marriages with low-class Europeans was often cited as a marker of the success in the BES's annual reports. Moreover, the female members of the BES's managing committee prided themselves that their graduates were "in great request in the families of Ladies as domestic servants, where their general superiority of conduct and habits to the general description of native women is very observable."<sup>33</sup>

"Native female education" was another important aspect of the "external" civilizing mission of the early nineteenth-century educationalists.<sup>34</sup> Schooling was presented to the British public as a means to rescue Hindu women, and liberate them from the shackles of despotic-oriental patriarchy.<sup>35</sup> This shows particularly in the connection between fund-raising for establishing female schools in India and the campaign in England for the abolition of *suttee*.<sup>36</sup> Since the early nineteenth century, the prohibition of *suttee*, or widow-burning, came to symbolize British interventionist social policy in the name of "saving women."<sup>37</sup> Throughout the 1810s and 1820s, the legitimacy of such intervention into what was re-imagined as the private domain of family and religion became hotly debated among British missionaries and administrators, and the Bengali intelligentsia.<sup>38</sup> It is in this context that William Ward of Serampore—one of the protagonists of the Bengal debate on *suttee*—started a fund-raising campaign in England in 1820. In his appeals for donations to the "ladies of Britain," Ward presented "native female education" as the most promising means to prevent further *suttees*.<sup>39</sup> In cooperation with the Ladies' Committee of the BFSS, a female expert in the new system of instruction was to be sent to Calcutta. There, her task would be to initiate a system of "native female education," including the training of women teachers. The educator consequently engaged, Mary Ann Cooke, embarked for Calcutta together with William Ward, on May 28, 1821, expecting to be received and supported by the CSS.<sup>40</sup>

Clare Midgley has argued that in the evangelical missionary discourse, the social wrongs of India have been represented as "family, fireside evils" (William

Wilberforce)—in contrast to the “fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness” (William Cowper) which distinguished the ideal Christian household.<sup>41</sup> In her account on *Hindoo Female Education* Priscilla Chapman opined that the “greatest evil” of India rested “in the home circle, where discord, confusion, and misery reign, from the long-established idea that the wife [. . .] ought to be the slave, instead of the help-meet.”<sup>42</sup> The missionaries, therefore, were convinced that no social reconstruction was possible without the reconstruction of the domestic sphere, and this, in turn, depended on the education of women: “Wherever, therefore, this sex is left in a state of ignorance and degradation, the endearing and important duties of Wife and Mother cannot be duly discharged; and no great progress in civilization and morals can, in such a state of things, be reasonably hoped for.”<sup>43</sup>

Again, needlework and moral education stood at the core of an education, which firmly placed women in the domestic sphere. And since for the protestant reformers moral education was only thought possible on the basis of Christianity, the direct teaching of the foreign religion, which was initially avoided in boys’ schools, was central to the curriculum of the girls’ schools set up under the supervision of Mary Ann Cooke.<sup>44</sup> The crucial aim of female education—for Indian as well as poor European girls—was to train them according to a modern-bourgeois ideal of “the universal rational mother.”<sup>45</sup> Educated mothers who properly exercised their authority in bringing up their children as moral subjects were, it was hoped, to become powerful agents of civilization and modernity.<sup>46</sup>

## Imperial feminism

It is worth taking a look at this first wave of educational expansion for girls in colonial India from an intersectionality perspective. The monitorial movement promoted popular elementary schooling in a period in which the colonial state focused its scarce educational investment almost exclusively on higher education for the social elites. However, the protestant missionaries and their partners did not pursue a social egalitarian agenda; rather, they sought to substitute the prevalent social hierarchies with a modern-colonial “grammar of difference.”<sup>47</sup> In terms of gender relations, missionaries wanted to substitute

the cultural norm of the “patriarchal, patrilocal, and patrilineal extended family” with the romanticized “patriarchal nuclear family.”<sup>48</sup> This approach of educational differentiation, apt to produce and regulate, but not abandon, social inequality, had a long-lasting legacy. Its trajectories can be traced to the (Hindu) nationalist opposition to mass education,<sup>49</sup> as well as to many projects of industrial and vocational education pursued by the colonial state and missionaries.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, throughout India, many colonial administrators, missionaries, and nationalist reformers would equally conceptualize women’s education as a tool to reform the domestic sphere.<sup>51</sup>

While the agenda of schooling for poor English girls, and for colonial women, was limited to training up “enlightened mothers” and “superior domestic servants,” the engagement with “female education” opened a range of opportunities for British middle-class women. Female education became a crucial field for the development of women’s reform activism and professional activities. From the 1820s onwards, British women used the engagement with the imperial “civilizing mission” as a way to enter the public sphere.<sup>52</sup> Within the evangelical-imperialist discourse, British women were particularly called on to “offer themselves to take that share in the work which can be taken by none but females.”<sup>53</sup> Because “Indian manners [forbade] females to be placed under the tuition of men,” British women were called on to act as the “natural guardians of [the] unhappy Widows and Orphans in British India.”<sup>54</sup> While the evangelical ideology of “separate spheres” excluded women from becoming independent missionaries, and especially from preaching,<sup>55</sup> it regarded them as indispensable, even if subordinate, “help-meet[s].”<sup>56</sup> However, these ideological elements were used by women to claim a “female colonial authority” on the basis of their responsibility for the domestic sphere.<sup>57</sup> This authority enabled “respectable” women to enter public debate; to found committees within the established societies, such as the “Ladies’ Committee” of the BFSS; or even to establish associations run by women independently, such as the Ladies’ Society for Native Female Education, an association founded to support the work of Mary Ann Cooke.

As the example of Mary Ann Cooke shows, engaging with female education enabled single women to go abroad as professional educators. Quitting her low-prestige position as a governess, Cooke was the first unmarried British woman to go to India in the missionary context, where she eventually assumed

a prominent public position. Her contemporary, Cynthia Farrar, the first unmarried woman recruited by the ABCFM, was sent out to Bombay in 1827 to supervise the development of girls' schooling.<sup>58</sup> Cooke can be placed in a long line of British women who went out as imperial educators and reformers throughout the nineteenth century, such as Mary Carpenter (1807–1877).<sup>59</sup> While the engagement with colonial education—at first, female education—can be said to have prepared British women's entering the public sphere and opened professional opportunities, it also prepared the way for the development of an “imperial feminism” or the notion of the “white woman's burden.”<sup>60</sup>

Another level of intersectional complexity, however, is added if we look at some of the social effects of the girls' schools introduced by the monitorial movement, both intended and unintended. In the case of Cooke's schools in Calcutta, it is remarkable that the students did not come from an elite background. On the contrary, there is much concern in the reports about the opposition of the “respectable” castes to send their daughters to the new schools. This, however, implied that it was the lower castes who started first to avail themselves of missionary schooling for girls. Among the girls who made use of the teacher-training facilities offered by Cynthia Farrar, Cooke's American counterpart in the Bombay Presidency, we find Savitribai Phule (1831–97).<sup>61</sup> Together with her husband Jotirao, Phule was a major representative of the early anti-caste movement in Western India,<sup>62</sup> and a pioneer of the institutionalization of girls' education. She was also among the earliest promoters of schooling for the so-called “untouchables,” those who stood lowest in India's caste hierarchy.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the early nineteenth-century Protestant schools sometimes had unforeseen repercussions, which were part of the major reconfigurations of Indian society's “matrix of domination” in the nineteenth century.<sup>64</sup>

### Indian women's agency

Around the mid-nineteenth century, the educational landscape in India became more diversified. Missionaries and British civil society associations remained important actors in the provision and reform of education, but in addition Indian reformers, such as Savitribai and Jotirao Phule, entered the field.

Moreover, the colonial state started to shift towards a politics of mass schooling. In 1882, the Indian Education Commission was appointed primarily with a view to examining why educational policy had failed to effectually promote the expansion of general elementary education.<sup>65</sup> This commission invited educational experts and practitioners all over India—including European and American missionaries, local colonial administrators, and Indian reformers—to submit memorials, and testify as to the state and potential improvement of Indian education. Among the witnesses thus heard in the Bombay Presidency were three Indian women: Francina Sorabji, the founder of a pioneering higher education institution for girls, Victoria High School, in Poona; Vithabai Sakharam Chowdari, a professional educator who had started her education in the schools set up by the Phules in Poona in the early 1850s; and, maybe the most prominent of the three, a Sanskrit-educated Brahmin widow and social activist in her early twenties, Pandita Ramabai.<sup>66</sup>

Tracing Ramabai's educational reform activities, I want to point out three interrelated developments taking place in the last decades of the nineteenth century. First, there was a new dynamic of women's reform activism, particularly organized activism, in India, as well as internationally. This increased activism coincided, secondly, with new opportunities for trans-regional interaction and exchange for Indian women also beyond the frame of the British Empire. Thirdly, women started to gain access to higher education. While women's education was still highly gendered, professional training for an emerging public care sector became a new option. Health-care, teaching, and child-care were the first fields in which educated women could build a professional career. While this did not change the gendered nature of care work—teaching and nursing were, after all, often “seen as an extension of the nurturing work that women do within the home”<sup>67</sup>—it opened up new opportunities for financial income and intellectual development. Moreover, many medical doctors and professional educators were found in Indian women's activism.

Ramabai was admitted to testify to the Indian Education Commission on behalf of a reputation she had gained for being highly learned in the Sanskrit tradition—knowledge she had gained as the daughter of an impoverished Brahmin scholar. After the death of her parents, Ramabai became part of the Hindu religious reform movement surrounding the *Brahmo Samaj* in Calcutta.



Ramabai broke caste rules by choosing a non-Brahmin husband. Bipin Bihari Madhavi was an educated lawyer from an upper-caste *kayasth* community, whose ritual status as a *shudra*, however, was still considered unfitting. Widowed after only two years of marriage, with an infant daughter to support, Ramabai returned to Poona in 1881, where she joined the liberal reform milieu, in which many of her caste-fellows, the so-called Chitpavan Brahmins, were active. In order to promote women's education, she established the *Arya Mahila Samaj* (AMS), an association of Brahmin "ladies." Her statement to the commission was also legitimized by her status as the AMS's representative.<sup>68</sup>

In contrast to the missionary educators of the early nineteenth century, Ramabai understood education for women as a means for social emancipation, and intellectual and economic independence. In a meeting with Bengali "ladies" from the *Brahmo Samaj* circles, she called on women to study the Sanskrit literary tradition, as a means to discover the high status of women in an imagined Vedic golden age—a common trope in some currents of Hindu religious reform: "Sanskrit learning will make you acquainted with the women of ancient times. You will find that female education existed in olden times. You will also find that our women enjoyed liberty and independence."<sup>69</sup>

In her testimony to the Education Commission, Ramabai raised two concerns. First, she argued for female supervision and control of girls' education, and the need for better-educated female teachers. Second, she stressed the need to educate women as medical doctors, so that they would take responsibility for maternal and infant health-care. With this argument—that under conditions of female seclusion and norms of decency, only female health-care providers could combat maternal and infant mortality—Ramabai was part of a movement which led to the formation of the National Association for Supplying Medical Aid to the Women of India (1885). This association, also known as the Lady Dufferin Fund, started funding medical training for Indian women.<sup>70</sup> Medical training was one of the first professional fields for educated, upper-caste women. Prominent cases included Kadambini Ganguly (1861–1923), the first woman who graduated from Calcutta University in 1886,<sup>71</sup> and Anandibai Joshi (1865–87), Ramabai's relative, who graduated from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in the very same year.<sup>72</sup>

The story of Ramabai's international travels, during which she became "internationally iconized as an Indian Christian emancipator of the 'oppressed

Hindu womanhood”<sup>73</sup> is by now well known. Building on the missionary connections with the Anglican sisters of St. Mary the Virgin in Wantage, Ramabai traveled to England in 1883 in order to further pursue her own education. However, despite her conversion to Christianity in 1884, and the establishment of personal friendships, she did not find much “sisterly” solidarity among the Anglican community.<sup>74</sup> This contrasts strongly with her much more positive experiences with the liberal-protestant reform milieu of the United States, where Ramabai traveled in 1886 in order to attend Anandibai Joshi’s graduation ceremony. Ramabai stayed in the US for two years, which proved quite important for her project to pursue education reform and feminist politics in India. Back in Bombay, she published a travelogue in Marathi, which provides us with a fascinating account of her American experiences.<sup>75</sup>

On the one hand, Ramabai observed the workings of large-scale women’s organizations, particularly the American Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). This nationwide association of local unions had emerged from the “women’s crusade” against saloons and liquor stores in 1873.<sup>76</sup> Under the leadership of its second president, Francis Willard (1839–1898), the WCTU broadened its focus to include several issues of “moral” and social reform. Its so-called “do-everything” policy<sup>77</sup> included “purity” and anti-vice activism, as well as, most prominently, campaigning for Anglo-Saxon women’s right to vote.<sup>78</sup> The US-American WCTU, and the international platform, the “World’s WCTU” which they initiated in 1884,<sup>79</sup> understood itself as the representation of the “Christian Women of the World,”<sup>80</sup> a vision which appealed to Ramabai.

Despite the WCTU’s racist and imperial tendencies,<sup>81</sup> the cooperation with Ramabai was rather successful. The WCTU’s organizational structure provided Ramabai with a basis for the lecture tour with her book, *The High Caste Hindu Woman* (1888)—a vivid critique of Hindu patriarchy, which ended in a fund-raising appeal to the American Christian public—and for the formation of the Ramabai Association, which mobilized funds for her plans to further the education of high-caste widows.<sup>82</sup> Impressed by the WCTU’s broad reform agenda and democratic organizational structure, which reflected the political structure of the USA, she recommended it as an example worthy of Indian women’s emulation. The WCTU was one of the “praiseworthy and

marvelous” associations, by means of which American women had been able to overcome “English-style seclusion” and rise above the condition of “mere prisoners, like slaves,” in which they were to be found only a couple of decades previously.<sup>83</sup> As Meera Kosambi has highlighted, Ramabai deployed the praise for American democracy and independent women’s organizations as a means of critiquing Victorian Britain, and presenting an alternative to the imperial power.<sup>84</sup>

An interesting episode sheds further light on the interaction of Ramabai with the WCTU. On the way to Tennessee, where she attended the WCTU’s annual convention, Ramabai stopped in Louisville, Kentucky, “to address a meeting at the insistence of the people there.” She asked to be joined on the podium by “some eminent women of the town.” Since in the South “the female sex has not advanced [...] as it should,” the local women, however, were too shy: “We have never done such a thing in our lives, how can we bring ourselves to do so now?” I said, ‘Ladies, [...] what is the harm in making a beginning?’ [...] Needless to say, they came to no harm.”<sup>85</sup> Despite her admiration for American women’s organizations, she did not place herself in an inferior position, but confidently sought to empower American women as well.

The other crucial means of women’s emancipation, as Ramabai saw it, was the advancement of education. In Philadelphia, Ramabai reported, she took the opportunity to study “the public-school systems and [to take] a thorough course of kindergarten training.”<sup>86</sup> She also recounts her meeting with Elizabeth Peabody (1804–1894), a transcendentalist, educator, and promoter of the kindergarten movement in the US.<sup>87</sup> Ramabai recommends kindergarten pedagogy as “excellent,” because of its combination of intellectual and physical activity for small children. She also found it particularly adapted for the education of blind children, another aspect of American education which impressed her.<sup>88</sup>

The idea of the kindergarten was first developed by the Thuringian schoolmaster Friedrich Fröbel (1782–1852). The notion of the “children’s garden” invoked notions of both careful tending and growth as a natural unfolding of the child’s mind. Fröbel suggested it as the appropriate educational institution for all German children from the ages of three to six.<sup>89</sup> In the German states, Froebel’s suggestions were enthusiastically taken up and supported by the liberal reformers of 1848.<sup>90</sup> Women’s rights activist Bertha

von Mahrenholtz-Bülow (1810–1893) became a crucial figure in the proliferation of Froebelian ideas in the German states and abroad. Since the Prussian government banned kindergartens in 1851 as part of the reaction to the liberal movement, Mahrenholtz suggested seeking “to gain over foreign countries, so that we may open the way from them for the cause in Germany.”<sup>91</sup>

The first station of Mahrenholtz’ international lecture tour led her to London, where the Froebel Society for the Promotion of the Kindergarten System was formed in 1874. There were important personal overlaps between this society and the National Indian Association, a society founded by Mary Carpenter in 1870 in order to facilitate the communication between British and Indian reformers. The country where the new educational model proved most successful, however, was the United States. In the first decade of the twentieth century, kindergartens were incorporated into the public-school system.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the US became a center for the further international proliferation of what was termed now “the kindergarten system.” By 1900, the International Kindergarten Union, which had been founded in 1892, was the third largest educational organization in the world.<sup>93</sup> The founding of fee-free kindergartens for lower-class children became an important project of the WCTU, and one of its formal departments of work. Moreover, the “World’s WCTU” promoted kindergarten education abroad.<sup>94</sup>

One aspect of the kindergarten movement which particularly resonated with Ramabai was the creation of professional opportunities for women: “[F]rom its beginnings the kindergarten movement was a feminist cause, and its development was linked to that of feminist movements in both Germany and the United States.”<sup>95</sup> Fröbel’s “dictum—that the ideal teacher of young children is like ‘a mother made conscious,’”<sup>96</sup> was further elaborated upon by German feminists, who argued that woman’s special talent for nurture would benefit not only her immediate family but society at large, if they received scientific training. From the outset, the kindergarten movement was “concerned not only with preschool children but with the education and status of the women to whom their care was entrusted.”<sup>97</sup>

Being trained as kindergarten teachers, therefore, became an important prospect of livelihood for the students of the Sarada Sadan, or, home of learning, the school which Ramabai founded after her return in Bombay, in 1889. The school was designed as a model project for the education and

empowerment of young high-caste Hindu widows—the Sarada Sadan admitted children and women up to the age of twenty-five. “A real Frobel kindergarten” was connected to the school, in which, by 1898, “seventy little children [were] taken care of by our own trained kindergartner.” Moreover, Ramabai was invited by the Poona Branch of the National Indian Association to join its working committee and “help forward women’s education in private and public,” among other means, “by giving lectures to [schoolmistresses] on the kindergarten system.”<sup>98</sup> On Ramabai’s suggestion, the students had also formed a Women’s Christian Temperance Union among themselves. This measure was hoped to “encourage the development of public spirit among our girls, and [...] teach them to conduct their own meetings.”<sup>99</sup>

### Brahminical feminism

In her book, *The High Caste Hindu Woman*, Ramabai had particularly emphasized the plight of widows—many of them children, due to the custom of child marriage among the upper castes. For her, the practice of *suttee* was the best illustration of the treatment of widows in Hinduism.<sup>100</sup> Since the norms of “brahminical patriarchy” prevented upper-caste Hindu widows’ re-marriage, taking up teaching, child-care, and nursing emerged as important professional alternatives.<sup>101</sup> These options would allow them to conform to the brahminical ideal of ascetic widowhood, but at the same time enable economic self-sufficiency and public activism.<sup>102</sup> The latter option would be the road pursued by Ramabai herself, who embodied the model of ascetic activism—a model which seemed to have resonated well with her American supporters.

I want to now look at Ramabai’s educational and feminist reform activism from an intersectionality perspective, particularly in relation to caste. On the one hand, Ramabai’s personal rejection of caste boundaries became visible in her choice of marriage. She was also an outspoken critic of brahminical patriarchy: “I beg my western sisters not to be satisfied at looking at the outside beauty of the grand philosophies [of Hinduism] but to open the trap doors of the great monuments of ancient Hindoo intellect and enter into the dark cellars where they will see the real workings of these philosophies.” The reality, she said, was that “these possessors of superior Hindoo spirituality [...]

oppress the widows and trample the poor, ignorant low caste people under their feet.”<sup>103</sup> Her critique of Hindu patriarchy and her struggle for women’s independence made her a favorite target of the Hindu nationalist polemic against women’s education, which presented her as an “enem[y] of the people.”<sup>104</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Indian feminists—similarly to the anti-caste movement—were increasingly caught up in the “contest between the British Raj and Indian nationalism.”<sup>105</sup> Ramabai, however, also broke with the liberal social reform movement, after the conversion of some of her students to Christianity had caused a public scandal.

On the other hand, Ramabai’s feminism was still bound up within the framework of caste hierarchies. This already began with the design of the Sarada Sadan. Accepting that high-caste families would never let their young female members join the school if there was intermixing with “lower” castes, she would exclusively admit high-caste students. Only those would be part of a new generation of female teachers and professionals. While this might have been a strategic decision, Ramabai’s option for ascetic widowhood, as well as her vegetarianism, show that “Ramabai distance[d] herself from the doctrine but not the culture of Hinduism.”<sup>106</sup> This entailed a lifelong appreciation of Sanskrit, but also an association of learned culture with Brahmins, and an assumption of Brahmin intellectual superiority. In *The High Caste Hindu Woman*, Ramabai states that “[o]ur most pressing want [...] is women-teachers of our own nationality.” Since “the high caste people [...] have been a refined and cultivated race for more than two thousand years,” the women of these castes would be the perfect candidates to teach their countrywomen. Although they have long been “kept in ignorance, [...] they have inherited from their fathers to a certain degree, quickness of perception and intelligence.” The examples of educated Brahmin ladies, such as Kadambini Ganguly and Anandibai Joshi, would testify to their potential as “competent teachers and able workers.”<sup>107</sup> Another noteworthy point is that Ramabai never allied herself with the anti-caste movement, although it included radical feminist voices,<sup>108</sup> and despite the fact that Jotirao Phule had publicly defended her decision to convert to Christianity.<sup>109</sup>

Not dissimilarly from the earlier missionary educators, Ramabai combined a Christian universalism—a belief in the ability of all human beings to reach salvation through the Gospel—with a “maternalist”<sup>110</sup> attitude, and an approach

toward educational differentiation. This can be observed in Ramabai's most durable educational-humanitarian venture, the Mukti (salvation) Mission. During the plague and resulting famine of 1896/97 Ramabai shifted the Sarada Sadan to the village of Kedgaon, near Poona, and embedded it in a wider institutional complex. As a learning institution, however, the Sarada Sadan "was kept quite separate" from the other branches: the Mukti Sadan, which provided shelter, humanitarian relief, as well as elementary and vocational education to widows and orphans of all castes; and the "Kripa Sadan or the Home of Refuge," for "fallen women."<sup>111</sup> Moreover, there were schools and institutions for the blind, the disabled, and the elderly. In 1900, up to 2,000 people were included in the compound.<sup>112</sup> The separation of knowledge and charity does not only reflect a maternalist approach towards the "ignorant, poor low caste people." One of the aspects of Christian charity, which most attracted Ramabai in England, was also the "mercy" (another possible translation of *kripa*) shown to prostitutes. Thus, her own "refuge" for prostitutes very much followed the example of European "rescue work" aimed at victims of vice in need of moral reform. We can thus observe a tendency towards a separation of the project of women's emancipation for Brahmin women, from an exertion of "caring power"<sup>113</sup> over lower-caste, laboring, and sexually non-conforming women.

While the Mukti Mission, in the twentieth century, continued as a faith mission with links to global Pentecostalism,<sup>114</sup> Ramabai's reform activism in Bombay and Poona had a lasting impact on the development of women's education. Ramabai's former student Shewantibai Nikambe founded her own school, particularly for married girls and women.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, the anxieties over a Christian convert teaching Hindu widows inspired direct competition. The Hindu Widows' Home Association—an influential educational reform body which later established the Indian Women's University (1916)—was initiated in 1896 with a view that "an institution such as the Sharda Sadan under the sole management of the Hindus was regarded as urgently necessary."<sup>116</sup> She also inspired educationists in the Indian women's movement of the twentieth century. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya (1903–1988), the first organizing secretary of the All India Women's Conference, visited Ramabai several times. She called her the "greatest Indian woman of our time."<sup>117</sup> Ramabai's work was also appreciated by prominent Muslim reformers, such as Nawab Sultan Jahan, Begum of Bhopal,<sup>118</sup> and by Rokeya Sakhawat Hossein

(1880–1932), who modeled her feminist utopia—a vision of a learned women’s community, Tarini Bhavan—after the institutions in Kedgaon.<sup>119</sup> Ramabai thus became a pioneer of a women’s national reform tradition.

## Conclusion

In the course of the nineteenth century, “[t]he expansion of women’s education has brought women into the public sphere but not on equal terms” with men.<sup>120</sup> Women in many countries, including colonial India, established themselves not only as recipients of education, but also as professional educators and public experts on issues of education. However, women’s educational reform projects were also not egalitarian. This chapter has traced some of the complexities of women’s engagement with educational reform, and the ways in which efforts toward self-empowerment reinforced patterns of social domination. I have shown this for the examples of Empire, class, and caste.

As the case of British educator Mary Ann Cooke in the early nineteenth century showed, educational activities of voluntary associations, as well as the missionary enterprise, offered a new field of employment and opportunity to British women in the colonies. This opened up spaces for individual choice as well as for educated middle-class women to engage with reform activism. The same educational movement, however, promoted an agenda of education which placed subaltern women firmly in the domestic sphere, as mothers and domestic servants.

In the later part of the nineteenth century, Ramabai, an Indian Christian feminist, promoted a different agenda for women’s education, one that emphasized professional development, independent learning, and financial independence. With this vision, she participated in reform currents which promoted the professionalization of health-care and child-care: the British imperial movement for the training of Indian women as medical doctors, and the global Kindergarten Movement. One of the ambiguities of this venture was that the gendered nature of care work did not change. Even more importantly, the new professional developments were directed towards a particular group of women, namely upper-caste widows. This was certainly a highly disadvantaged group, subject to deprivation, abuse, and exploitation.



However Ramabai, a Brahmin widow herself, also developed her educational projects in a casteist frame.

Another interesting shift can be traced in the geographical reach and exchange patterns of trans-regional women's activism. First, British and American women, such as Mary Ann Cooke and Cynthia Farrar, went to India to promote new forms of schooling. The most important space for educational interaction was the British Empire. In the later part of the nineteenth century, in contrast, Indian women such as Anandibai Joshi went abroad to study. While the imperial channels of communication remained important for women's educational reform activism—such as Ramabai's contacts with Wantage, and her cooperation with the National Indian Association in Poona—with the rise of America's "moral Empire," a new dimension was opened up. The US not only enabled Ramabai to learn about educational developments and women's independent organizing; American democracy also provided an alternative to Victorian Britain.

## Notes

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## Missionary Encounters

### Female Boarding Schools in Nineteenth-Century Travancore<sup>1</sup>

Divya Kannan

#### Missionary women and education in Travancore

In 1819, Martha, a young and newly married woman, sailed from England to Travancore, a princely state on the south-western coast of colonial India which is part of what is today known as Kerala.<sup>2</sup> Sent out as a “helpmeet” to her husband, Rev. Charles Mault of the London Missionary Society (henceforth, LMS or the Mission), she was expected to fulfill the role of a missionary’s wife dutifully. Her significant tasks involved the evangelization of indigenous girls and women through schools, Bible classes, prayer meetings, and sewing activities, apart from undertaking her own various domestic responsibilities. Cast in the role of “companions,” Protestant British women, such as Martha, reached colonial lands to propagate the Gospel as well as impart new ideas of femininity, domesticity, and work.<sup>3</sup> They were the earliest to initiate formal schooling for indigenous females in Travancore and its neighboring princely state, Cochin. At a time when poor, young girls were subject to numerous social burdens, and denied the right to formal education, Protestant missionary schooling challenged dominant strictures and invoked new tensions within local society.

Ruled by an orthodox Hindu administration, Travancore was rigidly stratified along the lines of caste. Certain social groups such as the Brahmin Namboodiris and non-Brahmin Nairs claimed upper-caste status, along with a

host of privileges over land, wealth, and the labor of those they labeled as “defiling.” These were the agricultural lower castes known as the Shanars, Ezhavas, and the slave castes such as Pulayas, Parayas, and their sub-castes.<sup>4</sup> The upper castes relegated the laboring groups to the bottom rungs of society and practiced a system of cruel untouchability and “unseeability.”<sup>5</sup> These lower castes were denied basic freedoms such as the right to use public roads, transport, wells, hospitals, schools, and courts, as well as the rights to engage in non-manual work, wear proper clothing and jewelry, and to housing, access temples, and to intermarry or dine with other castes. The suffering of girls belonging to these downtrodden communities in particular was multiplied by their vulnerability to sexual exploitation as well. They were bonded laborers, controlled by upper-caste landlords, and were unable to access any form of literary skill.

Armed with the Bible to attract new converts to the Protestant fold, missionary women soon found themselves in a position of authority, albeit limited, and their interactions with the indigenous population were mediated through networks of caste, gender, and race in the colonies. The advent of small mission schools for indigenous girls in the early decades of the nineteenth century threw up challenges for both mission educators and the young girls who dared to attend them. What were the implications of a mission education for poor, lower-caste girls, Christian and non-Christian? Did it signify a larger Christianizing project? Who was an “ideal” girl, according to the missionaries? The following analysis seeks to address these questions by examining the boarding school establishments of the LMS in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Travancore.

Owing to gender hierarchies in contemporary British society which were also reflected in the functioning of evangelical societies, women were often relegated to secondary roles. This was evident in official mission reports, which did not provide adequate attention to the work of married Protestant women (as they were not considered mission employees) in the field, or any direct funding for their educational work from the LMS Directors. But notwithstanding gender-differentiated roles within their churches, British Protestant women such as Martha Mault zealously undertook educational activities, supported by a burgeoning philanthropic network of Ladies’ Committees, church associations, and children’s working parties in England.<sup>6</sup>

Unlike their husbands, who failed to gain access to the households of colonized women, married missionary women were able to utilize their position to engage with different strata of women with varying degrees of success. Despite enjoying racial affinity with British colonial administrators, these female missionaries negotiated multiple tensions both in the metropole and colony.<sup>7</sup> In historicizing their roles, we must be wary, as Kumari Jayawardena points out, not to reduce their activities to merely being agents with good/bad intentions, or as collaborators/opponents of imperialism.<sup>8</sup> The relationships between “white” and colonized women were far more nuanced than what is generally assumed. As Jane Haggis asserts, “[F]ocusing on gender to the exclusion of race or class does little to capture the nature of relations between women across the colonial divide, while white women’s own historical agency is limited by her all-encompassing status as patriarchal victim.”<sup>9</sup>

Various “white” women in South Asia, in differing capacities as teachers, doctors, explorers, writers, reformers, socialists, and trade unionists, involved themselves in shaping colonial societies. Their work, as Jayawardena argues in the context of colonial Sri Lanka, also contributed to the spread of strands of feminist thought in varying degrees.<sup>10</sup> Thus, middle-class British feminism often functioned in an imperial context with missionary women’s work assuming a highly ideological and political character, belying the oft-quoted assumption that women were simply the “softer, evangelical” faces of the Empire.

From the 1870s onwards, prominent British Protestant missionary societies such as the LMS and the Church Missionary Society (CMS) realized the indispensability of evangelical women in the missionary movement, and began recruiting young, unmarried women as paid, professional workers.<sup>11</sup> Yet again, unpaid married evangelical women were sidelined despite their lasting contributions in the mission fields. Nevertheless, in subsequent decades, these married and single missionary women ran a network of day schools and boarding schools for female pupils, providing both religious and secular instruction, in Travancore.

A general consensus prevailed in England on the “helpless, unenlightened and secluded” condition of women in colonial India, stripped of any agency in determining their life choices and circumstances. Such a depiction of the “heathen” female subject justified the entry of the “white” woman into the

colony, and, by default, their homes.<sup>12</sup> But the category of the colonized female expanded with the realization that missionary men and women were often unwelcome in the homes of their desired targets: the so-called Hindu upper castes. Evangelists and Christian converts were assaulted by the upper castes with tacit state support.<sup>13</sup> The staunch defense of the “private realm” of family and women’s lives, supported by dominant caste norms, raised many obstacles to European missionaries who knew that, without conversions, their project stood on shaky ground. The universality of “sisterhood,” which they often trumpeted, couched in the language of “benevolence” and “salvation,” revealed deep fractures within. By contrast, though wary of missionary interventions, the objections from the untouchable castes were less harsh. For instance, some of the Tamil-speaking Shanars, in Nagercoil and Neyoor, the chief LMS stations in south Travancore, viewed the missionaries as close allies of the colonial government and approached them for protection and legal help.<sup>14</sup> Others, in a bid to escape the wretched system of agrestic slavery were more receptive to the Gospel. In subsequent decades, the bulk of the converts to the LMS belonged to these untouchable groups, whose entry also threw up further challenges for the nature of indigenous Christianity in Travancore.

As educators, British women often blurred the lines between a “missionary worker” and a “missionary wife,” teaching and preaching, while interacting with a significant number of adults and children. They received donations of money, clothing, toys, books, and other gifts from parts of British India and Europe, and many pupils in the girls’ boarding schools were named after their benefactors. While the key focus until the late nineteenth century was the imparting of Protestant Christian virtues in which the married missionary women themselves were socialized, their work also influenced the forging of new norms of respectability and professionalism for local Christian women through the boarding schools.<sup>15</sup> Here, I argue that it was mission schooling which opened up a nascent discourse of rights for poor women in nineteenth-century Travancore, and aided them in occupying new spaces in society, albeit marked by elements of ambiguity.<sup>16</sup>

In Travancore, untouchable females did not neatly fit into the categories of the average Indian woman depicted in missionary literature, the most usual of which was the “zenana.”<sup>17</sup> The “zenana” woman referred to secluded Hindu and Muslim women of upper-caste communities, away from agricultural

labor and the general public gaze. The LMS had a separate sphere of work among them labeled the “Zenana mission,” which was largely carried out by Bible-women, who were Christian converts from erstwhile untouchable communities, educated in the boarding schools. Unlike the upper castes, untouchable women often stepped outside the domain of the household to undertake arduous labor. The British missionary women, acutely aware of this harsh reality experienced by Shanar, Pulaya, and Paraya girls, made attempts to reform their faith, conduct, and deportment according to the yardstick of an evangelical morality. They knew that neither could poor women in Travancore be withdrawn from agricultural work nor could the caste grip be easily loosened, but they aimed to recast the girls as individuals in their own right through formal schooling and religious instruction. Immense efforts were made to instill in them ideas of better parenting, efficient household management and use of money, hygiene, and practices of worship. But the discourse of maternalism undergirding the earliest group of missionary women could not be easily transplanted upon the laboring poor in Travancore.<sup>18</sup>

### Boarding schools and the making of “Christian” pupils

Martha and Charles Mault reached south Travancore to assist with the work of Rev. Charles Mead and his wife, Johanna.<sup>19</sup> The earliest LMS boarding school for girls was established by Johanna Mead at Nagercoil, a Tamil-speaking mission station, in 1819. In the wake of widespread opposition to mission activities from non-Christian, upper-caste communities, she chiefly admitted the daughters of LMS catechists and school teachers as well as a number of orphans, destitute, and sick from untouchable castes in the villages, over whom the missionaries could exert greater control. Gradually, other boarding schools came to be established by resident missionary couples in the major mission stations of Neyoor, Parachaley, Santhapooram, Quilon, and Trevandrum.<sup>20</sup> In her letter to mission supporters, Martha Mault wrote that “the number is small at present and has to struggle with great opposition, as the dreadful custom prevails all over India, to teach females nothing.”<sup>21</sup>

Educational activities among colonial girls were perceived to be the responsibility of married missionary women in the LMS stations. The boarding

schools for boys and girls were located within the mission compounds, and in close proximity to the couple's bungalow. Lodging, clothes, and food were provided by the LMS, and missionary women were assisted by ayahs or matrons and Christian school teachers.<sup>22</sup> However, the lack of adequate funding from the LMS affected the management of these schools, and missionary women constantly made appeals for donations from their supporters in England and elsewhere, to keep the schools running.

The idea of educating colonial children, away from natal settings, was already underway in many evangelical mission stations across the world during the nineteenth century. Christian missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, emphasized a Christian education as a way of effecting inter-generational change. The conversion of "heathen" children and the reinforcement of the "Christian-ness" of the children of converts were the foremost aims of such an educational space. As bearers of an evangelical morality, the faith of children, particularly girls, was to be the medium through which Christianity took root in families and local societies.<sup>23</sup> Schoolgoing children, able to read the Bible, were pivotal in spreading practices of piety, and overturning indigenous modes of parenting. This trope was an underlying feature of mission education which was largely based on binary categories, pressing upon the marked difference between their (boarding school girls') behavior and of those who have been brought up by their own parents. Boarders were depicted by the LMS as emblematic of what Christianity could achieve in the colonies.

The Boarding School is a new world to these children, the outward change that soon passes over them is striking. After receiving years of training [...] the girls return to their homes; most of them well fitted to occupy respectable positions and exercise an influence for good on their respective congregations [...]<sup>24</sup>

However, poor lower castes such as the Shanars and slave Pulayas among whom the LMS preached and won converts found it difficult to educate daughters due to the overwhelming problem of poverty, control exerted by upper-caste landlords, marriage, and caste violence. In the case of slave children, their labor was not spared and landlords had the ultimate say in what was possible. Hence, from the beginning of a modern system of education in



Travancore, geared towards examinations for government employment, the demand was mainly for the education of male children. To address widespread illiteracy in the Christian congregations, mission rules for baptismal candidates required the minimum ability to read portions of the Bible. This witnessed the gathering of local Christian children in Sunday and day schools, though infrequently. Schoolmasters and catechists were also provided a small monetary incentive to collect children for these schools.<sup>25</sup>

Notwithstanding various attempts to address the issue in subsequent decades, female education continued to lag behind that of boys in south Travancore owing to financial shortage and the pressing poverty of some of the congregations. Mission vernacular day schools attracted upper-caste children, whose communities staunchly opposed the entry of lower-caste children, much to the chagrin of the LMS. Besides, the difficulty of attracting Christian girls from erstwhile untouchable castes also frustrated the LMS missionaries. Almost seven decades later, in 1892, Mrs. Annie Allan lamented about the continuous so-called lack of desire among Christians in and around Nagercoil to educate girls beyond the standard of the village school. She was keen that Christian girls be educated in order to improve the overall condition of the congregations, pointing to the generational change it would bring about.

It is example not precept that the children need. If it is true that the India of the future will be what its mothers make it, then how important it is to see to it that we are doing all in our power to raise and train alright the girls entrusted to our care who are to be mothers of the future! Our own experience is, that, while exceptions have to be regretfully acknowledged, mothers who themselves have enjoyed the benefits of a boarding school education are generally the most anxious to push forward the education of their daughters.<sup>26</sup>

Christian parents attributed their inability to send their daughters to school to their poverty, but Annie smugly dismissed it. "This however can hardly be the only reason," she recorded, "for a girl is fed and educated at a charge of eight annas a month, whereas to keep their girls at home must cost at least four times that amount. More probably, the real reason is lack of interest and the desire to have their girls at work in the house."<sup>27</sup> Although Christian parents were blamed for the slow progress of female education, Annie's remarks showed the

persistent poverty of many LMS converts and its adverse impact on decisions regarding female schooling. It also revealed missionary biases, which did not perceive all converts as “truly” Christian.<sup>28</sup>

In the colonies, the vernacular languages were considered the most appropriate medium for spreading Biblical knowledge, and Protestant missions actively pursued the translation and publication of vernacular Christian literature. The medium of instruction in LMS girls’ schools was Malayalam or Tamil, and English was taught chiefly in the Nagercoil Boarding School. The texts taught in the schools were issued from the Madras Christian Vernacular Education Society and mostly included Nehemiah, the New Testament, a few chapters of Genesis, Luke, A compendium on Scriptural History called “Line Upon Line,” Curwen’s Hymns, and Watt’s Catechisms, in addition to books on geography, grammar, and arithmetic in Tamil or Malayalam.<sup>29</sup> The parents (mission employees) paid between one-quarter of a rupee and one rupee every month or accordingly, as their monthly salaries ranged from five to fifteen rupees.<sup>30</sup> It cost about three rupees per month to meet each girl’s expenses, which amounted to three pounds a year.<sup>31</sup> Some of the parents were too poor to pay anything, and their expenses were defrayed by the Mission.

Female pupils, to be trained as “better wives and mothers” were expected to use their vernacular education in spreading the Gospel. Girls were to be the recipients and conveyors of a particular knowledge, premised on Biblical tenets, circumscribed within the parameters of religiosity sought to be exhibited in familial and communal duties. Emphasizing upon the centrality of children as carriers of literacy and Christianity to families, missionaries argued

that all the children learn and hear is repeated to their friends, and that the “Old, old story” finds its way into many a dark ‘heathen’ home by means of these little ones. They thus become little evangelists to others, and we may rest assured that the Gospel messages told by these childish lips will not always fall on barren soil.<sup>32</sup>

Former pupils of the boarding schools were sometimes the only literate adult women in distant congregations. Their efforts to spread literacy and conduct Bible-reading classes in their neighborhoods were hailed by the LMS as a lasting influence of a boarding school education. In a way, these pupils were

part of a larger project of evangelization and Christianization through such efforts.

Unlike the growing number of day schools, which were meant to result in conversions to Christianity, the missionaries were hopeful of their boarding schools because of the close supervision exerted over pupils by them. But non-Christian children infrequently came forth to become Christians, and many also suffered premature deaths. Whenever pupils agreed to join the church, the LMS reported it joyously, as a sign of their work's progress. Such reports also appealed home supporters, who by the turn of the century were showing reduced interest in evangelical missions to India. In 1892, fifteen girls of the senior class at the Nagercoil Boarding School expressed their desire to become church members. "We had a little prayer meeting together, and each girl in turn then told me what had led her to take that step [...]" Annie Allan reported,

[...] the chief aim of the school is to bring these dear children to Christ. We want not only to educate and train them to be useful women, but we want them, when they leave us, to return to their own homes and villages to shine there for Jesus, and to work there for Him. To be permitted to take a share in such work is indeed an honour and a great privilege.<sup>33</sup>

Another way of appeasing mission supporters was through the reporting of what can be called "death-bed" conversions, as proof of the workings of Christianity in a covert manner. These instances were meant to convey the ways in which Christianity was permeating into the lives of indigenous children; a process of Christianization that affected any pupil who was educated in the mission schools. The children's apparent readiness to accept Christian precepts was highlighted.

Given below is one such narration. In 1855, a young orphan girl, named Helen Taylor, in Mrs. Abb's Parachaley boarding school, breathed her last. Her final conversation with the missionary who attended to her was recorded as follows:

[...] do you think you are a good girl or a sinner?

I am a sinner.

Where do sinners go to if they die in a sinful state?

They go to hell

Do you know what is meant by hell?

Great torment. [...]

[...] you are very ill; perhaps you will soon die: if so, do you think you will go to hell?

No answer.

[...] Do you pray that you go to Heaven?

Yes.<sup>34</sup>

Although such instances indicated the limits of their evangelical efforts, Helen's references to sin pointed towards the formative processes of a new religious morality among children emerging in mission boarding schools—one based on Christian tenets of right and wrong. In the face of dwindling conversions from boarding schools during the late nineteenth century, the focus intensified on making existent Christian pupils more pious and useful.

### Disciplining female bodies

Nineteenth-century evangelical missions subscribed to certain racial prejudices against colonial populations, and termed them “lazy” and “idle.” Indigenous children and adults were depicted as whiling away their time in “wasteful” activities, and not committing to their tasks with honesty and efficiency. These perceptions predominantly informed missionary approaches to education as well. In spite of the fact that untouchable females worked as agricultural laborers, they continued to be portrayed as indulging in “idleness” and suffering from “ignorance.”

“Being without education, moral training, or real knowledge of the world, many women spend much time in gossiping with their friends on the most frivolous and profitless topics- dress and ornaments which are their chief delight; their husbands and neighbours and scandal of the village, stories of devils, tigers and so forth.”<sup>35</sup>

In order to become “useful,” “heathen” women had to be instructed in those tasks, including exercise and games, that would impart health and hygiene, keeping their bodies agile and minds alert. Schooling became a major disciplinary technique to regulate the work and movement of colonized children. The missionary agenda was pushed aggressively, depicting local societies as lacking in appropriate moral traits:

[...] the habits of pilfering, falsehood, swearing, abusive language, and various other crimes to which most of the children are found addicted when they join the school, show the sad want of domestic discipline, and are sufficient indications of the imperative necessity of the taking the children entirely and training them to better habits, and to a useful employment of time.<sup>36</sup>

In this worldview, the boarding school was envisaged as a protective space, safeguarding girls from sexual temptations and dangerous liaisons and instructing them in appropriate moral conduct.

We have gained a greater insight into the character and habits of the Malayali converts. The women do not appear to be kept as secluded as among the Tamil people and they remain longer unmarried. This, in a country like India, leads to great evils.

It is difficult to know how to act in cases where young women have been led astray, but we feel that to let them alone without help is to allow them to go on from bad to worse [...] I mention this here as our kind subscribers will learn by it how great a blessing a boarding school is, and how essential it is to elevate the moral tone of these poor people who scarcely think that a sin which we should blush to speak of.<sup>37</sup>

The everyday life of pupils in the LMS boarding schools was thus set within a particular time-work disciplinary regime. Timetables were prepared, according to which the pupils organized their studies and work, a feature that the missionaries were proud to practice. The daily schedule in an LMS girls' boarding school will illustrate this further.

In the LMS station at Neyoor, pupils resided with the Matron in the school compound, usually taught by a male headmaster trained at the Nagercoil Seminary. The children slept together in one room with coconut fiber mats on the floor. "They rise at six," Mrs. Baylis wrote to her juvenile British readers, "when they sing a hymn, and the Matron prays with them. After washing and arranging their simple toilet, it is seven o'clock when the gong is struck, and they collect in the school room for their first lessons."<sup>38</sup> There were four classes a day for reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, studying the Old and New Testaments, Malayalam or Tamil grammar, elements of natural science, ancient history, histories of India and England, singing, and lace-making. Their dining patterns were also regulated. Each girl had a brass or earthen vessel for food.

“At eight o’clock, they have their first meal which consists of rice and mullaguthanni (pepper water, kind of liquid curry). From nine to twelve, they have lessons and then they have their mid-day meal which is canjee, or boiled rice [. . .]” she noted. After the midday meal, the children resumed their lessons from one to two o’clock. The younger ones were taught to spin cotton by the Matron until four o’clock, when school hours ended. From two to five o’clock, the elder girls assembled at the missionary couple’s bungalow verandah where they were taught embroidery by the European lady missionary, and some of them, lacework.<sup>39</sup> Adult women workers associated with the LMS lace industry also joined to learn and have their work inspected.

One notices that missionary writings do not provide adequate representation to the Christian ayahs or matrons who resided with the girls, and ensured that the timetables were meticulously followed. Contrary to the popular depiction that missionary women were involved in the nitty-gritty of the children’s lives, it was largely the ayahs who were responsible for carrying out the tasks of a teacher and “quasi-parent” while mediating between the British missionary woman and girls. LMS “missionary wives” could not devote their attention and energies around the clock but intended to exert a superior “influence” on the pupils by attending to the major tasks of providing instruction in English, sewing, and Scripture. They were often bogged down by the vagaries of their personal lives, involving frequent childbirth, illness, and deaths in the family, and their residence in the stations was interrupted by physically and mentally draining challenges.

Since the inception of boarding schools, girls were divided into different classes according to age, and a monitorial system was followed. Overall supervision was in the hands of the British missionary women who directed the ayah or matron as to what was to be done. These monitors were entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of the younger ones, and various cleaning and cooking chores were divided among them. Senior pupils also undertook responsibilities beyond their classrooms and engaged in spreading literacy and Bible instruction for adult females in the villages. Mrs. Whitehouse elaborates on this system prevalent in 1854:

The domestic duties of the school are principally carried on by the girls themselves. Ten of the senior girls are employed as monitors, each having the charge of five or six girls, whose clothes are put under their care with

girls, with a box to enable them to keep them safely. They are expected to see that they are clean and neat. These by turns help in the cooking department, and sweep and clean the school rooms, and carry water from the well.<sup>40</sup>

Poor, lower-caste children, Christian and non-Christian, residing in the boarding schools were trained to follow certain routines, providing a new orientation to ideas of what constituted “work” and “leisure.” However, this imposed on them a labor regime, which defined their schooling experiences as markedly different from that of upper-caste girls in the day schools. Among the upper-caste girls, it would have been impossible for the Mission to put them to work and not face the wrath of their communities.<sup>41</sup> By contrast, with no one to make immediate claims over orphans and destitute girl boarders, their labor was utilized by the missionaries to keep the school running. Work was considered an act of piety sought to be inculcated in them. Yet, one can discern the attitudes informing such an education for the poor. Children from untouchable castes, accustomed to similar tasks in their own settings, were naturally expected to undertake the same in the mission schools, couched in the language of a moral education. In reality, a boarding school education did not necessarily free them from the laborious tasks they would have otherwise done in their own households and communities. Putting boarders to work simply served an economical purpose for the Mission, owing to shortage of funds. Involuntarily or not, poor Christian and non-Christian pupils contributed to the upkeep of LMS boarding schools in the various stations. This was an educational experience which continued to stress “manual” labor while at the same time providing avenues for literary instruction.<sup>42</sup>

The situation vis-à-vis the amount of work had not changed much in 1902. Children did all the work connected with the Nagercoil Girls Orphanage attached to the boarding school. “They cook their own food and make their clothes,” wrote Miss Duthie, the supervisor, “the elder girls also take turns in going to market with the Matron, that this way they get an idea of the value of money. After they pass a certain standard, they have lessons for half the day only, the other half being employed in learning to make lace, under the second Matron [...]”<sup>43</sup> Older pupils were also taught lacework and embroidery, to enable them to earn on their own, even after they left school. They stitched their own clothes and, on special church occasions, also clothes for the poorest church members in the mission stations.<sup>44</sup>

In short, poor boarding school children also constituted a large pool of unpaid workers for the Protestant mission society. The LMS in Travancore was able to gain poor children's participation in their evangelical work, which would not have been possible vis-à-vis upper-caste pupils in the vernacular day schools, who were under parental supervision. Boys and girls formed Sunday-school associations and Scripture Unions, similar to those in England, and were often involved in activities such as Bible-reading in households, singing, tract distribution, and accompanying mission catechists in street-preaching.<sup>45</sup>

### Conflicts within local society

In colonial Travancore, evangelical work amongst untouchable-caste girls was also hindered by problems of early marriage, agrestic slavery, and religious customs. It was difficult to attract female children to the schools for a considerable period as most of them worked on the fields, owned by upper-caste Hindus and Syrian Christians. The solution was a kind of education, as Midgley notes, "presented as a good maternal upbringing enabling girls to take advantage of formal education, so that they can combine understanding with accomplishment, vivacity with modesty, and feeling for others with decorum."<sup>46</sup> However, the success of missionary pedagogy was dependent on ensuring the girls' longer-term residence, at least for four years. By the 1890s, the LMS girls' boarding schools stipulated that pupils should remain at school until they were sixteen or seventeen years of age.<sup>47</sup> A Christian education was intended to pave the way for the girls' transformation into "new creatures" who would,

after being here for four or five years, or in some cases longer, return to their homes, not only knowing more about books etc., than their fellow villagers but much refined in their manners and greatly improved in matters of thrift and tidiness and prepared to exercise quite an elevating influence on the women of the village and congregation to which they belong.<sup>48</sup>

From the early years of its work, the LMS, much to the displeasure of the Travancore administration and local elite, also became involved in matters of dispute regarding the rights of Christian converts from untouchable castes. Stepping outside their own prescribed domain of work, the earliest group of



married missionary workers also conflicted with dominant power groups, demanding that slave and lower-caste girls be allowed the freedom to attend schools. But education was viewed by the landlords as stoking dissent amongst laborers. Those who attempted to learn in the various mission schools in Travancore were brutally punished. Particularly slave women bore the brunt of the extreme injustices inflicted by orthodox dictums. They were flogged by their masters for attending church and Sunday schools.<sup>49</sup> Slave children, treated usually as the property of their mothers' masters, were put to work in the fields without any wages.<sup>50</sup> In spite of an official proclamation on the abolition of slavery in 1855, children from the Pulaya and Paraya castes continued to be bought and sold.<sup>51</sup>

The problem of bonded labor plagued missionary educational efforts. Poor girls were forcibly removed by slave-owners, who found missionary interventions unsettling. In 1830, Martha Mault wrote to the Foreign Secretary of the LMS stating this concern:

the owner feels himself under no obligation to provide for his slaves any longer than it is convenient to employ them; hence he calls them to work during seed time and harvest, and then dismisses them to gain for themselves a scanty and uncertain pittance in the best way they can, till the returning season.<sup>52</sup>

She wrote about a master who came to take back his slave girl. No amount of persuasion and offer of money by the missionaries could change his decision. The Maults' desperate attempts at preventing the girl from being forcibly taken, and their appeal to let the child receive a proper instruction, fell on deaf ears. "A girl in this school had become big enough to work in her master's field, he therefore came to make his claim on her," she reported,

I asked him if it would not be well for her to learn to read; whether he should not allow her to do so? He replied, it may be well for you to instruct her, as you will get a better place in heaven thereby; but it is enough for me if my bullocks and slaves do the work required in the fields.<sup>53</sup>

Such a feudal power hierarchy greatly interfered with the mission's educational program to forge Christians. Missionaries, unable to retain girls for a considerable period, devised measures to alleviate the condition of slave girls, so that they could remain in the school. In 1831, Martha mentioned to a friend at St. Neot's Huntingdonshire a strategy adopted to circumvent the matter:

About one-third of the girls in our schools are slaves; and as the children of slaves here are always the property of the mother's master, we have formed the resolution that each girl, by her own industry, shall purchase her freedom before she leaves the school.<sup>54</sup>

The incident brought to the fore the stronghold of orthodoxy on the lives of the untouchable poor who were treated as lesser human beings, but it also opened a nascent discourse about rights for girls, advocated by missionary women. Though guided by motives of proselytization, the LMS missionaries were the earliest to demand a democratization of knowledge for outcaste females, which threatened caste hegemony. Freedom had to be guaranteed to slave girls before they could pursue any form of education. Towards this end, workers such as Martha Mault, Johanna Mead, and their counterparts in other LMS stations of Travancore sought ways of helping them. They concluded that slave girls should be able to earn enough to buy their freedom from their masters. In the boarding schools, they sought to help the girls to do this by teaching them a skill with which they were most familiar: sewing. Slave girls were first taught to make lace in Nagercoil, introduced by Martha Mault, and embroidery in the Neyoor boarding school by Johanna Mead. A small portion of their earnings was kept aside to buy their freedom before they left the schools. Over the years, such a practice continued, and many pupils were taught the craft, which grew into a small profitable industry. In 1830, when the plan was first being put to the test, Martha Mault reported that eight slave girls had managed to gain their freedom with the savings from their lacework in the Nagercoil School. Referring to instruction in sewing, she wrote,

[T]hese classes consist of those who make lace, and those that learn plain needlework [...] not a few of these girls are *slaves*; and it is our wish that they should, if possible, obtain their freedom, while they are in the school, that, when they leave it, they may go *free* [...].<sup>55</sup>

### A site of authority: Missionary reforms in the schools

An erasure of "heathen" cultural pasts was central to evangelism. In the schools, an emphasis was placed on the transformative potential of education, as

evinced in the usage of the term “new creatures” mentioned previously. “Heathenism,” depicted as a state of being, was allegedly the cause of low civilizational progress and had to be done away with in order to gain “authentic” conversions. But how was this “authenticity” to be achieved? Missionary men and women occupied only one among many sites of authority for children in Travancore society. Caste prohibitions dominated social interactions, and the lives of Christian children were also determined by the same. But the LMS intended to gain a stronger influence over its church members, and constantly monitored their faith and behavior. Similarly, this was extended to the boarding schools, wherein the missionary woman attempted to wield supreme authority over the lives of pupils. Coercive measures were frequently employed to prevent the practice of certain cultural and religious customs considered “heathen,” most visible in the ways in which the deportment and marriage of boarding pupils was sought to be regulated. As previously mentioned, the LMS stipulated that no girl would be allowed to marry before sixteen or seventeen years of age, a result of their own anxiety about the efficacy of a mission education, if girls left the school too quickly. In order to disseminate the notion of a good “Christian home,” the LMS looked towards the educated youth of their congregations to marry and raise families, which would be worthy of emulation. A “mission of domesticity,” which the European women brought with an evangelical zeal, was to be extended into indigenous households and families via a boarding school educational network.<sup>56</sup> Missionaries, assuming the role of quasi-parents, negotiated with families to delay the marriages of their girl boarders, or arranged matches with those educated in their boys’ boarding schools. Often, these boarding-school-educated Christian couples, such as the local catechist and his wife, were the only literate ones in distant congregations.<sup>57</sup> They were expected to perform tasks akin to those of the European missionaries. In many cases, the catechist and his wife managed large congregations and a number of schools, with an occasional visit from the European overseers.<sup>58</sup> There could hardly be a better way to produce a virtuous Christian community in Travancore than to marry mission-educated men and women, who held similar values, to each other, with the stamp of missionary approval.

In spite of all these negotiations, the problem of retaining girls in the school persisted. At the turn of the century, Mrs. Bach of the LMS Trivandrum

boarding school reported on the difficulties faced by lower-caste families regarding this matter. Her writing shows how strongly traditional caste norms of social respectability affected Shanar and Pulaya converts as well. "In this country, it is supposed to be almost impossible for the honour of an unmarried girl to be preserved," Mrs. Bach observed,

partly because women are considered so weak, partly because in the lower castes, they cannot be carefully protected, and on this account, a girl is a great anxiety to her parents until she is safely married and under the protection of her husband. There are a number of girls whose parents would gladly take them away from school tomorrow and marry them to the first men of their own position in life.<sup>59</sup>

Mrs. Bach's observations conveyed a sense of sympathy with the anxieties of church members marrying off their daughters early. Yet she believed that missionaries upheld the best interests of the girl pupils, in contrast to parents. Martha Maul's letter captures this sentiment.

Elenora Muscutt, left the schools three months ago to assist in a school in another missionary station. She has for nearly two years shown a very thoughtful mind and paid great attention, not only to her lessons and duties in the school, but on all occasions of a religious nature [. . .] Her cause is an interesting and encouraging one; for it will be in the recollection of some that the poor girl was rescued from the hands of her wretched father when he was about to force her into a 'premature alliance' that would have ruined her for life.<sup>60</sup>

Another instance of missionary intervention in the girls' lives is reported by Mrs. Bach, in which she successfully convinced a groom to delay his marriage, to enable the girl to complete her education.

The other day, the mother of one of my girls came to me saying that she had received an offer for her daughter, aged nearly sixteen, & would I let her accept it? The man was a Christian of good character. 'Men' she said plaintively, expressing a desire common to the masculine heart all the world over, seemingly, 'want either beauty or money & my girl has neither; if I let this chance go she will never get another & then what will become of her?' I felt the force of this statement and yet did not want to break my rule so pleaded myself with the impatient youth to wait longer, which he, to my relief, promised to do.<sup>61</sup>

On the question of cultural customs associated with marriage such as dowry, female missionaries aggressively pushed their agenda to stop certain practices they termed abhorrent and “primitive.” More than the institution of dowry itself certain indigenous habits such as betel-chewing and the boring of girls’ ears were considered unacceptable practices for good Christians. In 1894, a voluntary association amongst girl pupils called “Daughters of the Court” in the Nagercoil Boarding School, modeled on LMS schools in Australia, was formed. “The two rules they promise to follow are, to speak evil of no one, and to try and do some kind act every day [...]” Annie Allan reported;

when the girls joined, I got them to give me a promise that they would never chew betel (a habit common in the country even among women whom I regret to say) and also that they would do all in their power to discourage the ugly custom of boring girls’ ears. This is done when the children are but a few months old. At first only a small hole is bored; but this is gradually increased by heavy ornaments made usually of lead. The idea is that the ears should be loaded with jewels when a girl is married as part of the marriage dowry. Seven of the Boarding school’s girls have lately with the consent of their parents had their ears put right. This is easily done and causes but little pain.<sup>62</sup>

Undeniably, the adoption of Christianity also meant the adoption of a new vocabulary, sartorial forms, material objects, and norms of morality. In Travancore, girl boarders were expected to shoulder the responsibility of portraying the “superior” elements of Christian faith by making an example of their lives. It cannot be properly assessed how the girls perceived the efforts of the missionaries to impart a “useful” instruction due to a paucity of sources. Since their responses are rarely found in the records, it is difficult to know to what extent they were satisfied being in the boarding school. One extract clearly reveals what it meant for the girls to be in the boarding schools and enjoy the comforts of clothing and food. However, the missionaries viewed this with disapproval as they suspected the genuineness of their students with regard to receiving instruction in the scriptures and other subjects. Mrs. Wilkinson writes in her report on the Female Boarding school at Santhapooram,

We desire, however, that the people should allow the children to enter the school to obtain knowledge, not food. When I have asked a child what message will you send to your kind supporters, the reply has often been,

“Please tell them I thank them for the food they provide for me”. Emma Tattersfield said, “please tell them I am much obliged for their kindness and though I shall never see them on earth, I pray God [...] may meet them in heaven.”<sup>63</sup>

Female education among lower castes in Travancore influenced struggles for civil rights, intermeshed with conflicts over existing norms of respectability. These were prominent, as Kent argues, in the sphere of material culture, such as in the case of clothing.<sup>64</sup> Contrary to missionary desires, lower-caste converts such as the Shanars predominantly aspired to adopt norms of respectability followed by upper castes, a proof of the lingering hold of those traditional networks of control. The violent conflicts surrounding the adoption of the breast-cloth by Shanar women is indicative of such aspirations, emanating from new forms of community and individual identity-building processes.<sup>65</sup>

## Conclusion

When the LMS missionaries contemplated setting up schools in the districts of south Travancore, they had to face prejudices surrounding the education of women. As secluded spaces, boarding schools became an evangelizing agency among young girls in Travancore aimed at a transformation of their individual selves through various disciplinary controls during their years in school. The schools witnessed the entry of untouchable-caste girls, hitherto excluded from schooling and deliberations in the public sphere. The missionaries hoped the children would, as a result of their education, look towards Christianity and aid the mission stations. An extract from the report of the Nagercoil School captures these intentions.

We do not of course presume to say that because the girls have joined the Church, or are candidates for membership, therefore they are the children of God, but we do say because of their intelligence, and from having been so long in the School, they were able to speak to us in such a way [...] to train them to think and act for themselves according to sound maxims of morality, and especially the precepts of God’s word, that so they might become better daughters, better wives, better mothers, and better neighbours than others who have not enjoyed similar privileges, it is our special object to train them up in the fear of God.<sup>66</sup>

By attempting to keep them away from other sites of traditional control such as landlords, the boarding schools operated at two levels. For children of converts, the school became a site of reinforcement of their Christian values, in accordance with what the LMS desired. For those who did not convert and were beyond the reach of the school, education was a Christianizing force. Boarding school girls became part of this larger evangelical network to reach out to children and women across Travancore, by imparting literacy and displaying Christian piety. The implications of a mission education were thus not limited to schoolgoing pupils or Christians alone.

A mission education for young girls also provoked a nascent discourse on the rights of the poor. Their proselytization-oriented agenda was constantly checkmated by caste fissures in local society. This was manifested in the incongruence between missionary and local social aspirations. Nevertheless, Protestant missionary efforts to educate the young and old, men and women, rattled the caste orthodoxy, and opened up avenues for the democratization of knowledge. Struggles for civil rights in subsequent decades employed the new resources provided by education-related skills. Education had become, by the twentieth century, an invaluable asset towards the constitution of a new self.

## Notes

- 1 The author is a Transnational Research Group PhD fellow, Max Weber Stiftung. She would like to thank Prof. Janaki Nair, Suchismita Chattopadhyay, Gayatri Nair, Cyril Brandt, and Aditya Verma for comments and suggestions on earlier draft versions. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS, London, and United Theological College Seminary, Bangalore. All errors are entirely the author's own.
- 2 Travancore and Cochin joined British-controlled Malabar (which was to the north) to form the present-day state of Kerala in 1956. Long before the arrival of Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth century, the region witnessed the entry of Catholic traders, priests, and soldiers during the Portuguese and Dutch incursions from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Martha Mead (maiden name) was not related to the other prominent LMS missionary in Travancore, Charles Mead.
- 3 There is vast literature on missionaries in colonial lands. For a brief overview on female missions, see Elizabeth Prevost, 'Assessing Women, Gender, and Empire in

- Britain's Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missionary Movement,' *History Compass* 7, (2009): 765–799. Important research includes Fiona Bowie, Deborah Kirkwood and Shirley Ardener (ed.), *Women and Missions: Past and Present. Anthropological and Historical Perceptions* (Providence: Berg, 1993); Clare Midgley, *Feminism and Empire: Women Activists in Imperial Britain, 1790–1865* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007); Mary Taylor Huber and Nancy C. Lutkehaus (ed.), *Gendered Missions: Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); see also Patricia Grimshaw and Andrew May (ed.), *Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Exchange* (Brighton/Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2010). On colonial India, see Maina Chawla Singh, *Gender, Religion, and the 'heathen' Lands': American Missionary Women in South Asia 1860s–1940s* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000); James Elisha Taneti, *Caste, Gender, and Christianity in Colonial India: Telugu Women in Mission* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Eliza F. Kent, *Converting Women: Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- 4 The term 'Shanars' is no longer used and the community legally changed the name to Nadar in 1921. I use 'Shanars' to refer to its usage during the nineteenth and early twentieth century.
  - 5 Rules of 'distance pollution' were observed in Travancore, to mark the physical distance between castes. The touch and sight of lower castes, particularly the slaves, was considered degrading and 'impure'.
  - 6 Frank K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).
  - 7 See also for the similarly ambiguous roles of Quaker wives in nineteenth century Australia, Eva Bischoff, 'Being at Home,' in this volume, 210.
  - 8 Kumari Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden: Western Women and South Asia during British Rule* (New York: Routledge 1995), 21–51.
  - 9 Jane Haggis, 'White Women and Colonialism: Towards a Non-Recuperative History,' in *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Clare Midgley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 48.
  - 10 Kumari Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1–27.
  - 11 Rhonda Semple, *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism, and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2003).
  - 12 The British East India Company, and later the colonial British administration, considered the practice of 'widow-burning' or 'sati' as the root-cause of the degraded status of Indian women. Their attempts at legal intervention, prompted by middle-class social reformers and administrators, triggered immense debate



during the nineteenth century. But colonial south India did not witness ‘sati’ as a pressing problem so much as the existence of bonded labour and agrestic slavery. For a persuasive analysis of debates on ‘sati’ and colonial and missionary justifications for intervention, see Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

- 13 From the early 1820s onwards, mission chapels and schools were attacked and burned down by upper-caste forces, angered by the spread of missionary work among the Shanars. Converts were coerced to perform the same labour services in spite of conversion, women were denied the right to wear the breast cloth, and their children were prevented from attending schools. The LMS repeatedly petitioned the Dewans of Travancore and the colonial administration in Madras to address their grievances. See John Cox, *Travancore: Its Present Ruin Shown and the Remedy Sought* (Nagercoil: LMS Press, 1857)
- 14 The help extended to the protestant missions by British Residents such as Col. Munro was favorable to many lower castes, who expected the missionaries to provide some relief. Charles Mead was appointed a Civil and District judge in April 1818, triggering a spate of conversions.
- 15 Jane Haggis, ‘Ironies of Emancipation: Changing Configurations of “Women’s Work” in the “Mission of Sisterhood” to Indian Women’, *Feminist Review* 65, (2000), 108–126.
- 16 See for the roles of white women in the development of colonial education in India more generally Jana Tschurennev, ‘Women and Education Reform in Colonial India,’ in this volume.
- 17 Janaki Nair, ‘Uncovering the Zenana: Visions of Indian Womanhood in Englishwomen’s writings, 1813–1940’, *Journal of Women’s History* History, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1990, 8–34.
- 18 Barbara Ramusack, ‘Cultural Missionaries, Maternal Imperialists and Feminist Allies: British Women Activists in India, 1865–1945’, in *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*, ed. Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 119–136. For the shifts in women’s work, transforming notions of ‘good mothers and wives’ to ‘professional paid workers’, see Jane Haggis, ‘Ironies of Emancipation: Changing Configurations of “Women’s Work” in the “Mission of Sisterhood” to Indian Women’, *Feminist Review* 65, (2000), 108–126. For an excellent collection of essays that elaborate on the unequal social power between women and men in evangelical missions, see Mary Taylor Huber and Nancy Lutkehaus (ed.), *Gendered Missions: Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

- 19 Johanna Horst arrived in Nagercoil with her husband, Rev. Charles Mead. Together, they established the boarding schools for boys and girls. In 1827 the LMS divided the work into the eastern (Nagercoil) and western (Neyoor) divisions. The Meads undertook work at the Neyoor station, while the Maults remained in Nagercoil.
- 20 The spellings used in the article correspond to those used by missionaries during the period under consideration.
- 21 Letter from Mrs. Mault, Nagercoil, dated October 6, 1820 in *The Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* (henceforth *EMMC*), (London, 1820), 531.
- 22 An *ayah* refers to a nursemaid or nanny employed by Europeans in colonial territories. They were also called Matrons.
- 23 See for similar strategies in New Zealand Elizabeth Dillenburg, 'Domestic Servant Debates,' in this volume, 192.
- 24 Report from Mrs. Duthie, Nagercoil, *Annual Report of the Directors of LMS*, (London, 1886), 126.
- 25 Charles Mead offered one panam for every slave boy and one-and-a-half panam for every slave girl, to teachers who brought them to school.
- 26 Mrs. Annie Allan, *Report of Parachaley Girls Boarding School*, Council for World Missions (henceforth CWM)/LMS/Travancore/Reports/Box 5/1893.
- 27 A.L. Allan, CWM/LMS/Travancore/Reports/Box 5/18991.
- 28 A.L. Allan, CWM/LMS/Travancore/Reports/Box 5/18991.
- 29 Report from Neyoor, *First Annual Report of the LMS Travancore District Committee*, 1858, 36.
- 30 Report about the Girls Boarding School at Parachaley, *Report of the LMS Directors*, (London, 1892), 153.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 153.
- 32 Mrs. Annie Allan, *The Girls Boarding School: Nagercoil*, CWM/LMS/Travancore/Reports/1892–1895/Box 5.
- 33 Mrs. Annie Allan, Report of Parachaley Girls Boarding School 1893, CWM/South India/Travancore/Reports/1892–1895/Box 5.
- 34 Extract from Rev. John Abbs, Parachaley, *EMMC*, New Series Vol. 33, 1855, 556.
- 35 Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore* (London: W.H. Allen, 1883), 208.
- 36 Mrs. Mault, 'Female schools at Nagercoil in South Travancore', *EMMC*, New Series, Vol. 15, (London, 1837), 199.
- 37 Report from Quilon, *Annual Report of the LMS Travancore District Committee*, 1868.
- 38 Mrs. Baylis, 'A Day in a Boarding School in Travancore-Neyoor', *Juvenile Missionary Magazine and Annual* 31 (1874): 190.

- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Letter from Mrs. Whitehouse, CWM/India/Odds/1854.
- 41 See also the discussion in Jana Tschurennev, 'Women and Education Reform in Colonial India,' in this volume, 245.
- 42 Similar emphasis on physical labour in boarding schools by pupils is also visible in CMS institutions in Palestine. Nancy L. Stockdale, *Colonial Encounters among English and Palestinian Women, 1800–1948* (Gainesville, PA: University Press of Florida, 2007).
- 43 Ms. B.J. Duthie, 'Report of the Nagercoil Girls Boarding School', CWM/South India/Travancore/Reports/1902.
- 44 Ms. Beatrice Duthie, CWM/Travancore/Reports/Box 9/1909.
- 45 A.L. Allan, *Report of the Nagercoil Mission*, CWM/LMS/South India/Travancore/Reports/1894/Box 5.
- 46 Clare Midgley, *Feminism and Empire* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007), 35.
- 47 Mrs. Bach, *Girls Boarding School, Trevandrum*, CWM/LMS/South India/Travancore/Reports/1891.
- 48 A.L. Allan, *Report of Nagercoil Mission*, CWM/LMS/South India/Travancore/Reports/1892/Box 5.
- 49 Mr. Hewitt, *Report of the Trevandrum Mission Station* CWM/Travancore/Reports/Box 5/1895.
- 50 P. Sanal Mohan, *Modernity of Slavery: Struggles Against Caste Inequality in Colonial Kerala* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015), 76–82.
- 51 Ibid., 74.
- 52 'Letter from Mrs. Mault to the Foreign Secretary of the LMS, Nagercoil, 1830', *EMMC*, New Series, Vol. 9, (1830), 540.
- 53 'Letter from Mrs. Mault to the Foreign Secretary of the LMS, Nagercoil, 1830', *EMMC*, New Series, Vol. 9, (1830), 542.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Dana L. Robert, 'The "Christian Home" as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice,' in Dana L. Robert, ed., *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Grand Rapids: Eerdsman, 2008), 134–165.
- 57 I.H. Hacker, *Report of the Neyoor Mission District*, CWM/Travancore/Reports/Box 8/1903.
- 58 Mrs. Hacker records her distress in not being able to attend to the Neyoor girls' boarding school daily, as she lived ten miles away from it, in the mission bungalow. See I.H. Hacker, *Report of the Neyoor Mission District*, CWM/LMS/Travancore/Reports/Box 8/1906.

- 59 Letter from Mrs. Bach: Girls Boarding School, Trevandrum, *The Report of the Directors to the One Hundred-and Fifth Meeting of the Missionary Society, Usually Called the London Missionary Society*, 1900.
- 60 Letter from Mrs. Mault, Nagercoil on September 1843, *EMMC*, 1844 Vol XXII, 645.
- 61 Mrs. Bach, *Report of the LMS Boarding School*, CWM/LMS/Travancore/ Reports/1899.
- 62 Mrs. A.L. Allan, 'Girls Boarding School Nagercoil', CWM/LMS/Travancore/ Reports/1894.
- 63 Report from Santhapooram, *LMS Travancore District Committee*, 1862.
- 64 Eliza F. Kent, 'Books and Bodices: Material Culture and Protestant Missions in Colonial South India', in *Messages: Materiality, Textuality, Missions*, ed. Gareth Griffiths and Jamie S. Scott (St. Martin's: Macmillan 2005), 67–87.
- 65 Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nadars of Tamilnad: The Political Culture of a Community in Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), R. N. Yesudas, *People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom* (Ernakulam: Kerala Historical Society, 1975); see also Eliza F. Kent, *Converting Women: Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- 66 Report of the Girls Boarding School, Nagercoil, *LMS Travancore District Committee*, 1859.

# Index

- Abagioli, Pietro 46–7
- abductions, of children of Aboriginal descent 218–20, 226
- Abenteuer in Uhehe* 92
- Aboriginal peoples (*see also* indigenous peoples)
- abduction of children 17, 218–20, 226
  - civilizing mission 221
  - genocide of 221
  - guerrilla warfare of 214
  - sexual exploitation of women and children 224
  - women 215
  - women and girls as apprentices and/or servants 17
- activism
- ascetic 255
  - feminist 18, 255
  - of settler wives 217–18
  - trans-regional women's 258
  - of women in the U.S. 119
  - women's reform activism 242, 243, 248, 250, 258
- Adams, Alfons 93, 96
- Adichie, Chimanda Ngozi 102
- Africa (*see also* South Africa; Southern Rhodesia)
- African homosexual behavior 154
  - Eritrea 35, 36
  - Ethiopia 40
  - German colonial army in 1–2 (*see also* German East Africa; German Southwest Africa (GSWA))
  - Libya 36
  - Somalia 35, 36
  - Tanzania 90
- African men, and European women 88, 103, 180–6
- Africans, as children 95
- agency
- of European men during colonization 103
  - of Indian women 249–55
  - of women and non-Europeans 103
- Aguinaldo, Emilio 117
- Ahmed, Sara 211
- Alexander I 62
- Allan, Annie 275, 277, 287
- American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) 244, 249
- Amery, Leo S. 184
- anti-Chinese sentiment, New Zealand 192–3
- anti-Semitism 32, 40, 47, 50, 175n.72, 175n.81
- apprentices, Aboriginal women and girls 17
- Arthur, George 215
- Arya Mahila Samaj* (AMS) 250
- “Asian menace” 192–3
- assimilation
- forced of children of Aboriginal descent 226
  - Italian assimilationist policy 49
- Association for the Amelioration of the Maori Race 194, 195
- Australia
- abduction of Aboriginal children 17, 218–20, 226
  - convicts assigned as (unfree) servants to settlers 215–16, 217
  - and New Zealand 189
  - and servants and apprentices 17
  - South Australia (SA) 211, 220–5
  - Van Diemen's Land (VDL) 211, 213–18
- Balandier, George 90
- Balce, Nerissa 133
- Barker, Mary Anne 187
- Barnardo, Stuart 183, 200n.19
- Bartlett, Roger 62
- Batson, Matthew A. 124, 145n.28
- Bayly, Christopher 3
- Beale, Frances 11

- Becker, Johann Michael 69–71  
 Bell, Andrew 244  
 Ben-Ghiat, Ruth 49  
 Bennett, Frederick Augustus 195  
 Biller, Carl 70, 83n.38  
*Birth of the Modern World, The 3*  
 Bischoff, Eva viii, 11, 17 (*see also* chapter 8)  
 black men, and white girls/women 88, 103, 180–6  
 “black peril” 180–6, 188  
*Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia, 1902–1935* 181  
 “Black War” 1826–1832 215, 232n.47  
 boarding schools, Travancore 272, 273–8, 279–82, 287–9  
 Bombay Education Society (BES) 244, 245–6  
*bonifica* (reclamation) 49  
 Boyce, James 219  
 brahminical feminism 255–8  
 brahminical patriarchy 255  
 Britain  
   British subjecthood and British nationality 35  
   citizenship 35  
   and Cyprus 38  
   national identity of 209  
   racial superiority of 183, 197  
   and social reform 241  
 British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) 243–4, 246, 248  
 British Empire (*see also* Australia; India; New Zealand; South Africa; Southern Rhodesia)  
   British colonial identity 183, 186  
   infrastructure for education 244  
   male same-sex activities 150–1, 167–8  
   and New Zealand 189  
   servant crisis 179  
 Brockmeyer, Bettina viii, 15 (*see also* chapter 4)  
 Bühler, Tanja 99  
 Bülow, Franz Joseph von 152–3  
 Burbank, Jane 68, 70  
 Burdurođlu, Zeynep 42–3  
 Byrd, Jody 211  
 Callaway, Helen 5  
*Cape as I Found It, The* 186–7  
 Cape Colony 88  
 Capuzzo, Ester 36  
 Caraianni, Paraschevi 47  
 caring power 212, 218, 227, 257  
*Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* 13  
 Carpenter, Mary 249, 254  
 caste system 249, 251, 255, 256, 269–70, 272–3, 275, 281, 284  
 Catherine II 61–2  
 Chapman, Priscilla 247  
 Charter of the Colonies of Foreigners in the Empire 1857 66  
 Chatterjee, Partha 33  
 Chattopadhyaya, Kamaladevi 257  
 Chinese immigration, to New Zealand 192–3, 205n.70  
 Christianization 277, 289  
 Church Missionary Society (CMS) 271  
 Cilinghieri, Maria 46  
 citizenship  
   British 35  
   for Dodecanesians 39  
   French 35  
   German 166–7  
   Italian 35–7, 39, 49, 57n.62  
   law 34–6  
   and mixed marriages 34–5, 36, 44  
   and patriarchy 49  
 civil rights, and female education 288 (*see also* rights)  
 civilization  
   challenging myths of the British as bearers of 198  
   and domesticity 191  
   of indigenous peoples 17  
   markers of 191  
 civilizing mission  
   of Aboriginal peoples 221  
   and education 244–5  
   failure of the colonial project as 98  
   of imperialism 191  
   in India 241  
   New Zealand 190–6  
   and women 18, 210  
 class (*see also* caste system; estate membership)  
   and education 243, 244–5, 248, 249, 251, 255, 269–70  
   and mixed marriages 31–2, 34, 88

- and the sexual-normative order 103  
in South Africa 185
- coercion, and sexual contact between white  
and indigenous men 159–61
- Collins-Breyfogle, Kristin 78
- Colonial Memories* 187
- colonialism  
colonial discourse on female education  
in India 18  
colonial dividend 169  
colonial gaze 49  
colonial grammar of difference 18  
colonial households 136  
colonial intimacy 94, 98  
colonial knowledge 90, 103  
colonial masculinity 1–2, 9, 16, 151, 158,  
164–5, 169  
colonial order 88, 111n.73  
colonial policy 18, 210  
colonial self-fashioning of Mary  
Denison 134–41  
colonial sexual order 89  
colonial sovereignty 33  
colonial spaces 125, 136  
colonial war as a practice of  
masculinization 119  
colonization in the Russian Empire 59  
(*see also* Russian Empire)  
degrading and destructive effects of  
British 188  
and domestic servants 16–17  
failure of the colonial project as a  
civilizing project 98  
gender roles in 87, 125, 142  
gendered colonial space 125  
immorality of colonists 98, 182, 188,  
198n.1  
as political domination 37  
precariousness of colonial power 197–8  
and racism 87, 126  
role of women in 18, 136, 226–7  
settler colonialism. *See* settler  
colonialism  
systematic colonization 222
- color bar 98
- color line 97
- Combahee River Collective 11
- Commission on Assaults on Women 1912  
180–6, 187
- Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian  
Empire* 60, 79n.2
- Cooke, Mary Ann 246, 247, 248–9, 258, 259
- Costa, Vittoria 44
- Cotton, Louisa 218
- Cudia, Salvatore 47
- culture(s)  
cultural diversity in the Russian Empire  
68  
cultural theory 9  
different cultural values 196  
homes as cultural contact zones 223–4  
settler homes as a site of cultural  
genocide 218–20, 226
- Cyprus 38
- dall’Asta, Giulietta 48
- “Danger of a Single Story, The” 102
- Daughters of the American Revolution 119
- Davis, Kathy 10
- debt, colonist in the Russian Empire 74–5,  
77–8
- Decision of the State Council on Colonists’  
Movement to Other Estates 65
- denationalization, and mixed marriages 31
- Denison Thomas, Mary  
in the Philippines 120–7  
photographic portraits of 134–41  
photographs of 127–34, 142  
self-positioning of 15, 19, 134–41  
travelling to the Philippines 115–16
- development, as governance 18
- Die weiße Herrin von Deutsch-Ost* 92
- difference, grammars of 14, 18
- Dillenburg, Elizabeth viii, 11–12, 16–17, 18  
(*see also* chapter 7)
- discipline, education as a technique of  
278–82
- Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the  
Prison* 185–6
- discrimination  
and oppression 10  
structural 11
- dissimilation, ideology of 87
- Dodecanese  
Italian assimilationist policy in 49  
Italian fascist sovereignty 38–41  
mixed marriages in 14, 31–3, 39–41, 50  
sovereignty and property transfers 44–5

- domestic servants. *See* servants
- domestic spaces, and imperial rule 209–10
- domestic sphere  
     education as a tool to reform 248  
     and identity 190–1
- domesticity  
     and civilization 191  
     issues of 179, 180
- domination, colonialism as political 37
- Drenth, Annemieke van 212
- Dube, John Langalibalele 188
- economic recession, and the “black peril”  
     181
- education  
     of abducted Aboriginal children 219–20  
     Christian education 274–8  
     and the civilizing mission 244–5  
     and class 243, 244–5, 248, 249, 251, 255, 269–70  
     and colonial policy 18  
     colonial/imperial role of women in 18, 19  
     as a disciplinary technique 278–82  
     and employment 179  
     female in India 18, 242, 243–7, 251, 258, 275–6, 288  
     general elementary education in India 250  
     for indigenous females in Travancore 269, 270  
     the kindergarten 253–5  
     moral education 246–7, 279  
     and poverty 275–6, 281  
     and social emancipation 251  
     and social mobility 244–5  
     Travancore boarding schools 272, 273–8, 279–82, 287–9  
     vernacular 276
- Edward, Frank 101
- emancipation, of women 251, 253
- empire(s) (*see also* individual countries (i.e. British Empire))  
     continental empires 8  
     European 2  
     and gender 3, 7, 15–16
- employment  
     of African servants 180–6  
     and literacy 179
- Epprecht, Marc 154
- Eritrea 35, 36
- estate membership, Russian Empire 65, 67, 68, 74, 77
- Ethiopia 40
- eugenicism 48
- exoticization, in pictures of Filipino children 130, 133
- exploitation  
     domestic service of 196  
     of indigenous labor 157  
     sexual 188, 216–17, 224, 270
- Falk, Kurt 154–5
- family, “private realm” of 272
- Farrar, Cynthia 249, 259
- feminism  
     Brahminical 255–8  
     feminist activism 18, 255  
     Imperial feminism 247–9  
     middle-class British 271  
     white middle-class 11
- Filipinos, stereotypes of 118–19, 126
- Ford, Lisa 211
- Foucault, Michel 185–6
- Fox, George 213
- France, subjecthood and citizenship 35
- Franklin, Jane 214, 217, 219–20
- Fröbel, Friedrich 253
- Fry, Elizabeth 217
- Fürstenberg, Friedrich von 162
- gaze  
     of African servants 186  
     colonial 49
- gender  
     colonial gender roles 87, 125, 142  
     and empire 3, 7, 15–16  
     gender equality of Quakers 212–13  
     gender norms 141–2  
     gender relations in settler colonies 16–18  
     gender roles and male servants 185  
     gendered bodies and imperial sovereignty 31–3  
     gendered practices and globalization 3  
     gendered practices of soldiers 1–2  
     gendered self-expression 136–7  
     and imperial formations 5, 10–13



- and Italian citizenship 49  
 and mixed marriages 36, 37  
 and the Spanish-American/Philippine-American wars 118  
 stereotypes 118  
 and (trans-)imperial research 10
- genocide  
 of Aboriginal peoples in Tasmania 221  
 cultural 218–20, 226  
 in German Southwest Africa 2
- German East Africa  
 forbidden love 89  
 a hanging in 90–1  
 mixed marriages 88  
 sexual-normative order in 97–8, 102, 103
- German Southwest Africa (GSWA) 149  
 colonial peculiarities in judging male same-sex conduct 150, 161–4  
 conception of masculinity 151  
 expulsion from under Section 175 162, 165, 167  
 genocide in 2  
 homosexuality in 16  
 and masculinity 158  
 and mixed marriages 166  
 Section 175 trials 149, 150, 152, 154–8, 162–4, 165, 167  
 Section 176, German Penal Code 163–4  
 sexual contact between white and indigenous men 159–61, 165, 166–7  
 sexual-normative order in 166  
 white male same-sex conduct in 154–5, 158–9, 164–9
- German Women for Empire* 87, 151
- Germany (*see also* German East Africa; German Southwest Africa (GSWA)); Kaiserreich  
 citizenship 166–7  
 colonial-revisionist culture of 92  
 German colonial army 1–2  
 German colonists in the Northern Black Sea Steppe 59, 62  
 German New Guinea 165  
 homosexuality in Imperial Germany 150  
 mixed marriages in German colonies 88, 150, 157, 158, 166
- global hegemony, of European empires 2  
 globalization, technical and economic 3  
 going native 87, 88, 103, 104n.5, 167  
 Gorman, Daniel 35  
 Gouda, Frances 12  
 governance  
 British colonial in India 241  
 development as 18  
 Russian Empire 64–72
- grammars of difference 14, 18  
 “Great Divergence” 2
- Greece  
 cession of the Dodecanese to 39 (*see also* Dodecanese)  
 Kos 42  
 mixed marriages 14  
 Rhodes 44, 45
- Greek-Turkish War 1919–1922 38, 42
- Guardianship Office for New Russian Foreign Settlers 62–3, 68–70, 72, 73, 75–6
- Haan, Francisca de 212  
 Hack, John Barton 220  
 Haebich, Anna 219  
 Haggis, Jane 271  
 Hall, Catherine 6, 38  
 Harrison Case 181  
 Hayter, Kezia Elizabeth 217–18
- heathenism 285
- Hehe people 90, 93, 94, 100
- heterosexuality, and colonial hegemonic masculinity 151
- Hicks, Beatrice 187
- Hierl, Leopold 97–8
- High Caste Hindu Woman, The* 252, 255, 256
- Hindoo Female Education* 247
- Hindu Widows’ Home Association 257
- Hiroa, Te Rangi 195
- Hirschfeld, Magnus 155
- history, imperial 6, 7–8
- Hofbauer, Severin 93, 98
- Hoganson, Kristin 118
- Holland, Patricia 141
- home(s)  
 and British national identity 209  
 as a contested contact zone 197  
 as cultural contact zones 223–4  
 of indigenous elites in India 241–2  
 as a location of colonial biopower 17, 219

- notion of home life 184  
 Quaker family homes 212–13, 220–1, 226, 227  
 settler homes as a place of social exchange and negotiations 223–4, 227  
 settler homes as a site of cultural genocide 218–20, 226  
 settler homes as a socio-political space 211  
 settler homes as a unit of socio-ecological transformation 222–3  
 settler homes as part of the colonial penal system 215–18, 226  
 settler homes as the site of colonial benevolence 225  
*Homosexualität bei den Eingeborenen in Südwest-Afrika* 154  
 homosexuality  
   African homosexual behavior 154  
   in German Southwest Africa 16  
   in Imperial Germany 150  
 Hyam, Ronald 158, 168  
 identity(ies)  
   British colonial 183, 186  
   British national 209  
   destruction of Indigenous 210–11, 226  
   and the domestic sphere 190–1  
   imperial identity formation 15  
   and mixed marriages 31  
   of New Zealand 189, 190  
 Iliffe, John 99  
 illiteracy, India 275, 276–7 (*see also* literacy)  
 immigration, Chinese to New Zealand 192–3, 205n.70  
 immorality, of colonists 98, 182, 188, 198n.1  
*Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* 6  
 imperialism  
   civilizing mission of 191  
   domestic foundations of imperial sovereignty 49–50  
   gendered bodies as boundaries of imperial sovereignty 31–3  
   gendered imperial practices 10  
   Imperial formations 8–13  
   imperial history 6, 7–8  
   imperial identity formation 15  
   imperial rule and domestic spaces 209–10  
   imperial sovereignty 31–3, 49–50  
   imperial strategies 6  
   imperial studies 4  
   New Imperialism 87  
   role of women in 18, 210  
 India  
   boarding schools 272, 273–8, 279–82, 287–9  
   British colonial governance in 241  
   caste system 249, 251, 255, 256, 269–70, 272–3, 275, 281, 284  
   female education in 18, 242, 243–7, 251, 258, 269, 270, 275–6, 288  
   general education in 250  
   homes of indigenous elites in 241–2  
   Indian Education Commission 250  
   Indian women's agency 249–55  
   Indian Women's University 257  
   literacy 275, 276–7, 285  
   plight of widows in 255  
   rights of the poor 272, 289  
   role of European missionary women 19  
   slavery 274, 283–4  
   social reform in 241–2, 243–7  
   *suttee* 246, 255, 290n.12  
   Travancore 269 (*see also* boarding schools)  
   women's movement 242, 257  
 indigenous peoples (*see also* Aboriginal peoples)  
   destruction of Indigenous identities 210–11, 226  
   elimination of indigeneity 17  
   exploitation of indigenous labor 157  
   Hehe people 90, 93, 94, 100  
   impact of settler colonialism on 221  
   Maori people 189–96  
   same-sex conduct of 154  
   violence, intimidation, and coercion of indigenous workers 149–50  
 information, speed of travel of 3  
 Instruction for the Internal Order and the Management over the New Russian Foreign Colonies 65, 66  
 intersectional studies, social structures in 12

- intersectionality 10–11, 242–3
- intimacy  
 colonial 94, 98  
 regulation of 6, 13, 16–17
- Italy  
 assimilationist policy of 49  
 citizenship 35–7, 39, 49, 57n.62  
 in the Dodecanese 14, 31–3, 38–41,  
 44–5, 49, 50  
 and Ethiopia 40  
 mixed marriages 14, 31–3, 39–41, 50  
 racial hierarchy 41
- Jayawardena, Kumari 271
- Jewish people, anti-Semitism 32, 40, 47, 50,  
 175n.72, 175n.81
- just retribution 31
- Kaiser, Katja 88
- Kaiserreich* 155, 165–6 (*see also* Germany)
- Kannan, Divya ix, 17, 18, 19 (*see also*  
 chapter 10)
- Kennedy, Dane 181
- Kent, Eliza F. 288
- kidnappings, of children of Aboriginal  
 descent 17, 218–20, 226
- kindergartens 253–5
- kinship networks, Quakers 212
- Klein, Regina 69
- knowledge, colonial 90, 103
- “Kodak Girl” 121–2
- Kohere, Reweti 194
- Koponen, Juhani 90, 103
- Kos 42
- Kosambi, Meera 253
- Kranz, Herbert 92, 96–7
- labor  
 bonded labor in India 283  
 convicts assigned as (unfree) servants  
 to settlers 215–16, 217  
 domestic servants. *See* servants  
 exploitation of indigenous labor 157  
 of orphans and destitute girl boarders  
 281–2
- Ladies’ Committee 214, 217–18
- Lamarck, Jean-Baptiste 48
- Lancaster, Joseph 244
- land tenure, Russian Empire 66–7
- Lateran Treaty 1929 46
- law(s)  
 anti-Semitic racial laws 32, 40, 47, 50  
 Chinese Immigrants Amendment Act  
 1907 193  
 and citizenship 34–6  
 colonist marriage in the Russian Empire  
 59–61, 72–7  
 dealing with male same-sex practices 16  
 German penal code 153  
 German Penal Code: Section 175 149,  
 150, 154–8, 162–4, 165, 167  
 German Penal Code: Section 176 163–4  
 Immigration Restriction Act 1908 193  
 indigenous law 153  
 legal grounds for colonists: Russian  
 Empire 63–7  
 marriage regulations 13  
 and mixed marriages 37  
 Russian imperial 65, 68
- Lerp, Dörte ix (*see also* Introduction)
- Levine, Philippa 6, 88
- Libya 36
- Liebert, Eduard von 93
- Lindner, Ulrike ix, 37 (*see also*  
 Introduction)
- literacy (*see also* illiteracy)  
 and employment 179  
 India 285
- Lohr, Eric 64
- London Missionary Society (LMS) 19, 269,  
 271, 272, 273–4, 277, 282–3
- Lyman, Ihor 62
- “Lyndhurst Outrage” 181
- MacMillan, Margaret 5
- Maggi, Antonio 42–3
- Mahrenholtz-Bülów, Bertha von 253–4
- male same-sex conduct  
 British Empire 150–1, 167–8  
 colonial peculiarities in judging 150,  
 161–4  
 in German Southwest Africa 154–5,  
 158–61, 164–9  
 historical source material 152–3  
 Section 175 trials 149, 150, 152, 154–8,  
 162–4, 165  
 South Africa 151, 167–8  
 Southern Rhodesia 151, 167–8

- Malitska, Julia ix, 13–14 (*see also* chapter 3)
- Manelle, Jacob 188
- Maori people 189–96
- marriage(s)
- marriage regime concept 60
  - missionaries interventions in 285–7
  - mixed marriages. *See* mixed marriages
  - Northern Black Sea Steppe 59–61, 78–9
  - regulation of 13–14
  - Russian Empire 14, 63–4, 66, 67–77
- masculinity(ies)
- colonial 1–2, 9, 16, 151, 158, 164–5, 169
  - colonial war as a practice of
    - masculinization 119
  - and heterosexuality 151
  - and patriarchy 151
- maternalism, of missionary women 273
- Mather, Robert 213–14
- Mault, Charles 269, 273
- Mault, Martha 269, 273, 283–4, 286
- May, Joseph and Hannah 211, 220–5, 226
- McClintock, Anne 6
- McCulloch, Jock 181
- McEwan, Cheryl 97
- McGranahan, Carole 8
- McKinley, President 117
- Mead, Charles 273
- Mead, Johanna 273, 284
- Midgley, Clare 6, 242, 246, 282
- missionaries
- conflicts within local society 282–4
  - evangelical missionary discourse 246–7
  - intervention in the girls' lives 285–6
  - and morality 98
  - unmarried females as educators 248–9
  - women 19, 269, 270–1, 273
- mixed marriages
- and citizenship 34–5, 36, 44
  - and class 31–2, 34, 88
  - and denationalization 31
  - and gender 36, 37
  - in German colonies 88, 150, 157, 158, 166
  - and identity 31
  - involving European wives 88
  - between Italians and Dodecanesians 14, 31–3, 39–41, 50
  - and legislation 37
  - moral unions and racial hygiene 45–9
  - prenuptial reports 41, 45–7, 48, 50
  - and property transfers 44–5
  - and religion 31–2
  - term 51n.7
  - as a trans-imperial concern 33–8
- mixed-race children 187, 202n.40
- Mkwawa, Mutwa 89, 90–1, 93, 95, 99, 100–2
- Mkwawa. Shujaa wa Mashujaa* 100
- Molesworth Committee 1837 216
- moral education 246–7, 279
- moral harm, suffered by Maori girls 195
- moral life, and mixed marriages 45–9
- moral threat, going native as 87
- morality, and missionaries 98 (*see also* immorality)
- Morlang, Thomas 99
- Morton, James 160, 161
- Mote and the Beam, The* 188
- Mpangile 15, 89, 91, 93, 94–7, 99, 100–2, 103
- Mukti (salvation) Mission 257
- Nagata, Apirana 195
- Nargiso, Michele 46
- Natal Native Ministers' Conference 1911 187–8
- National Association for Supplying Medical Aid to the Women of India (1885) 251
- National Education Society (NES) 243–4
- Neo-Lamarckian racism 48, 50
- Neumeier, Anna Catharina 69–71
- New Imperialism 87
- New Woman 121–2, 137
- New Zealand
- British New Zealanders as the “best British” 189–90
  - Chinese immigration to 192–3, 205n.70
  - the civilizing mission/Maori girls as domestic servants 190–6
  - identity 189, 190
  - Maoris as “better blacks” 190
  - population of 189–90
  - racial ideologies 189–90
  - and the servant crisis 17, 179–80, 190–6
- Niche, Johann 69
- Niedermeier, Silvan x, 15, 19 (*see also* chapter 5)

- Nigmann, Ernst 90  
*90 Tage im Zelt* 93  
 non-Europeans, agency of 103  
 Northern Black Sea Steppe  
   colonist females 73–4, 77  
   colonization of 77, 80n.9  
   German colonists in 59, 62  
   marriage in 59–61, 78–9  
*Notes on New Zealand* 193
- objectification, of the children of the  
   colonized 133
- Onselen, Charles van 180–1
- oppression, and discrimination 10
- “Other”  
   inclusion and exclusion of the colonial  
     197  
   racial within the home 194
- paedophilia 97–8, 149, 163
- Papapanaioti, Maria 46
- paternalism, towards the children of the  
   colonized 132, 133, 142
- patriarchy  
   brahminical 255  
   and citizenship 49  
   “hierarchical paternalism” of the family  
     210  
   Hindu 252, 256  
   and masculinity 151  
   and native female education 246  
   patriarchal autonomy of male settlers  
     158  
   in settler homes 216, 217
- Peabody, Elizabeth 253
- Philippine-American War 15, 115,  
   116–20
- Philippines  
   American colonialists in 115–16  
   American women in 122, 124 (*see also*  
     Denison Thomas, Mary)  
   racism and the American colonial  
     mission 126  
   stereotypes of Filipinos 118–19, 126
- Phillips, Lionel 185
- photography  
   the discourse of women’s 120–7  
   of everyday experiences in the colonial  
     Philippines 115–16  
   as an instrument of self-fashioning  
     138–40
- Phule, Savitribai 249
- Pini, Virgilio 44
- Pitt, William 191
- Pizzo, David 99
- Plaatje, Sol 188
- policy(ies)  
   colonial 210  
   colonial education policy 18  
   population policies 157
- politics, colonial 37, 157
- Pomare, Maui 195
- Pomare, Miria 196, 206n.87
- population policies 157
- poverty, and education 275–6, 281
- power  
   caring power 212, 218, 227, 257  
   colonial biopower 17, 219  
   precariousness of colonial 197–8
- power relations  
   and mixed marriages 34  
   and sexual contact between white and  
     indigenous men 159–61, 168  
   social power of African servants 186
- prenuptial reports 41, 45–7, 48, 50
- “Pride of Race, The” 196
- Prince, Magdalene  
   and colonial gender relations 15  
   and the colonial sexual order 89  
   her story and the official view 91–7  
   and Mpangile 94–7  
   a Tanzanian perspective 100–2  
   today’s perspectives 99
- Prince, Tom 90, 95, 97–8, 99
- propaganda, colonial 87
- property transfers, and sovereignty 44–5
- prostitution  
   and convict women 216  
   and domestic service 187, 195
- Pyke, Vincent 193
- Quakers  
   family homes of 212–13, 220–1, 226, 227  
   gender equality of 212–13  
   kinship networks 212  
   South Australian Quaker community  
     221–2  
   women 211, 227

- racism  
 and the American colonial mission 126  
 British racial superiority 183, 197  
 and colonialism 87, 126  
 Italian racial hierarchy 41  
 Neo-Lamarckian form of 48, 50  
 race relations in South Africa 182  
 racial classifications 13  
 racial hygiene and mixed marriages  
 48–9  
 racial ideologies in New Zealand  
 189–90  
 racial prejudices of evangelical missions  
 278–9  
 racial purity 17, 187  
 racial segregation 13  
 racial transgression 184  
 radicalization of 3
- Rafael, Vicente 122, 142
- Rahmi, Mustafa 44
- Rahmi, Zeinab 44
- Ramabai, Pandita 242, 250–3, 254–9
- Ramabai Association 252
- Rappas, Alexis x, 13–14 (*see also* chapter 2)
- Rechenberg, Governor 166, 167
- Redmayne, Alison 101
- regulation  
 of intimacy 6, 13, 16–17  
 of marriages 13–14  
 of sexuality 3, 13, 36, 37–8, 150
- religion, and mixed marriages 31–2
- Religious Society of Friends. *See* Quakers
- Remnev, Anatolyi 73
- research  
 comparative settler colonial studies 16  
 suggestions for further research 20–1
- resistance, to domestic service 198
- Rhodes 44, 45
- rights  
 customary in multicultural societies  
 53n.27  
 of Dodecanesians 39  
 and female education in India 288  
 of German colonists in the Russian  
 Empire 63, 64, 67  
 of the poor in India 272, 289  
 between rulers and ruled 33–4, 35–6
- Rodogno, Davide 39
- Roosevelt, Theodore 118–19
- Rowse, Tim 211
- Rudno-Rudzinski, Maximilian von 149,  
 160, 161, 162, 163–4
- Russell, Penny 216
- Russian Empire  
 colonist debt in 74–5, 77–8  
 cultural diversity 68  
 estate membership 65, 67, 68, 74, 77  
 European immigration into 62–3  
 female colonists in 73–4, 77  
 governance 64–7, 67–72  
 land tenure 66–7  
 laws 65, 68  
 legal grounds for colonists 63–7  
 marriage 14, 63–4, 66, 67–77  
 Northern Black Sea Steppe 59–61, 74,  
 77, 78–9, 80n.9  
 rights of German colonists in 63, 64, 67  
 serfdom 61–2  
 social mobility 65, 67, 74
- Saada, Emmanuelle 48
- Sametes, Dimitris 163
- Samoa 88
- Samson, Pedro 126
- Sánchez-Eppler, Karen 191
- Schmidt, Heike 94, 153
- Scott, Joan 12
- Section 175, German Penal Code 149, 150,  
 154–8, 162–4, 165, 167
- Section 176, German Penal Code 163–4
- Select Committee on Aborigines (British  
 Settlements) of the House of  
 Commons (1835–1837) 221
- serfdom, Russian Empire 61–2
- servants  
 Chinese 193  
 and colonial societies 16–17  
 convicts assigned as (unfree) servants  
 to settlers 215–16, 217  
 “houseboy system” in South Africa  
 183–5  
 Maori girls as domestic servants 190–6  
 and prostitution 187, 195  
 resistance to domestic service 198  
 risks to 195  
 shortage of 179–80, 191, 197  
 “white peril” - African girls as domestic  
 servants 186–9

- settler colonialism  
   and gender relations 16–18  
   impact on indigenous peoples 221  
   patriarchy in settler homes 216, 217  
   role of settler wives 226–7  
   settler colonial theory 210–11  
   settler homes as a place of social  
     exchange and negotiations 223–4,  
     227  
   settler homes as a site of cultural  
     genocide 218–20, 226  
   settler homes as a socio-political space  
     211  
   settler homes as a unit of socio-  
     ecological transformation 222–3  
   settler homes as part of the colonial  
     penal system 215–18, 226  
   settler homes as the site of colonial  
     benevolence 225
- Severin, Jan x, 16 (*see also* chapter 6)
- sexual abuse 155–8
- sexual contact between white and  
   indigenous men in German  
   Southwest Africa 159–61, 165, 166–7
- sexual contact between white men in  
   German Southwest Africa 154–5,  
   158–9, 164–9
- sexual exploitation  
   of Aboriginal women and children 224  
   of black women by white men 188  
   and caste 270  
   of convict women 216–17
- sexual order, colonial 89
- sexuality  
   male same-sex desire 150, 153, 166, 168  
     (*see also* male same-sex conduct)  
   regulation of 3, 13, 36, 37–8, 150  
   of unmarried black women 186  
   white male colonial 169
- sexual-normative order  
   in German East Africa 97–8, 102, 103  
   in German Southwest Africa (GSWA)  
     166
- Sinha, Mrinalini 9
- “Sisterhood is Powerful” 11
- slavery, India 274, 283–4
- Smith, Alison 60, 74, 77
- social boundaries, between the colonizers  
   and the colonized 138–40
- social emancipation, and education 251
- social mobility  
   and education 244–5  
   Russian Empire 65, 67, 74
- social power, of African servants 186
- social reform  
   British approach to 241  
   in India 241–2, 243–7
- socio-political spaces, settler homes as 211
- Somalia 35, 36
- South Africa (*see also* German Southwest  
   Africa (GSWA); Southern  
   Rhodesia)  
   “black peril”/Commission on Assaults  
     on Women 1912 180–6  
   Cape Colony 88  
   class in 185  
   and domestic servants 17  
   “houseboy system” 183–5  
   male same-sex activities 151, 167–8  
   population composition of 182  
   and the servant crisis 180  
   South African War (1899–1902) 181–2,  
     189, 197  
   “white peril”- African girls as domestic  
     servants 186–9
- South African Native National Congress  
   (SANNC) 188–9, 198
- South Australia (SA) 211, 220–5
- Southern Rhodesia, male same-sex  
   activities 151, 167–8
- sovereignty  
   colonial 33  
   imperial 31–3, 49–50  
   and property transfers 44–5
- spaces  
   gendered colonial space 125  
   shared and colonial intimacy 98
- Spanish-American War 117, 118
- Sri Lanka 271
- Stavrianachi, Giorgio 48
- stereotypes  
   of Filipinos 118–19, 126  
   gender 118
- Stoler, Ann Laura 6, 8, 13, 89, 209
- Stout, Anna 191–2, 194, 195, 196
- Stout, Robert 192
- strenuous life, doctrine of 118–19
- Strobel, Susan 124

- suttee* 246, 255, 290n.12  
 Swanton, W.E. 193
- Taft, William Howard 117  
 Tanzania 90  
 Third World Women's Alliance 11  
 Thomas, Jerome Beers 115, 124  
 Thompson, Elizabeth 50  
 Thomson, Joseph 94  
 Tingitana-Shamte, Seko 100  
 Travancore 269 (*see also* boarding schools)  
 Treaty of Lausanne 1923 38  
 Treaty of Paris 1898 117  
 "Triple Jeopardy. Racism, Imperialism, Sexism" 11  
 Trustees Committee for Foreign Settlers in the Southern Region of Russia 63  
 Truth, Sojourner 11  
 Tschurenev, Jana x-xi, 11, 18-19 (*see also* chapter 9)  
 Tsirpanles, Zacharias 31-2  
 Turkey, and the Dodecanese 38  
 Tyrrell, Ian 243
- United States  
   empire of 4  
   Philippine-American War 15, 115, 116-20  
   and the Philippines 115-16, 122, 124, 126 (*see also* Denison Thomas, Mary)  
 universalism 11  
 unnatural fornication 149, 152, 159 (*see also* Section 175)
- van Alten, Victor 160, 165  
 Van Diemen's Land (VDL) 211, 213-18  
 violence  
   and coercion of indigenous workers 149-50  
   sexual against men 163  
   and sexual contact between white and indigenous men 159-61, 168-9  
   sexual violence against women 169
- Wakefield, Edward Gibbon 221  
 Walker, George W. and Sarah B. 211, 213-18, 219-20, 226, 227
- Walther, Daniel 167  
 Ward, William 246  
 war(s)  
   "Black War" 1826-1832 215, 232n.47  
   colonial wars 15, 119  
   Greek-Turkish War 1919-1922 38, 42  
   with Herero and Nama 1904-1908 156, 157  
   Philippine-American War 15, 115, 116-20  
   South African War (1899-1902) 181-2, 189, 197  
   Spanish-American War 117, 118  
 Welch, E.A. 191  
 Werth, Paul W. 70, 79  
 West, Nancy Martha 122  
 "white peril" 186-9  
 white prestige, and African servants 187  
 white superiority 95, 118  
 Wildenthal, Lora 87, 88, 93, 151-2, 158  
 Willard, Francis 252  
*Witches of Suburbia: Domestic service on the Witwatersrand, 1890-1914, The* 180, 181  
 Wolfe, Patrick 210-11  
 Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) 252-3, 254  
 women  
   Aborigine 215  
   activism of 119, 217-18, 242, 243, 248, 250, 258  
   African girls as domestic servants 186-9  
   agency of 103, 249-55  
   and civilizing mission 18, 210  
   disciplining female bodies 278-82  
   Dodecanesian 50  
   education of Indian 18, 242, 243-7, 251, 258, 269, 270, 275-6, 288  
   emancipation of 251, 253  
   female colonists in the Russian Empire 73-4, 77  
   female convicts 214, 216  
   gendered self-positioning of white Western women 15, 19, 134-41  
   missionaries 19, 269, 270-1, 273  
   New Woman 121-2, 137  
   plight of widows in India 255  
   poor in India 272



- professional opportunities for 254–5, 256
- promiscuity of white women 98
- Quaker 211, 227
- reforming of Indian 241–2
- role of in colonialism 18, 136, 226–7
- role of in imperialism 18, 210
- sexual exploitation of 188, 216–17, 224, 270
- sexual violence against 169
- sexuality of unmarried black women 186
- and the Spanish-American/Philippine-American wars 119–20
- suffragists 120
- universal womanhood 11
- white and black men 88, 103, 180–6
- women's movement in India 242, 257
- Women's League of the German Colonial Society 87, 102
- World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union 243
- Young Maori Party 194, 195, 198, 206n.76
- Zelewski, Emil von 90
- Zenana mission 273

