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Colonialism, Nazi Antisemitism and How Hate Became Racial



Public reading of the antisemitic newspaper Der Stürmer, Worms, Germany, 1935

Anti-Jewish sentiments and laws had a long history in Europe and in Germany. But in 1930s Europe racial antisemitism, the belief that Jews were a separate and inferior or dangerous race, was a relatively recent invention. Racial antisemitism, like the concept of race itself, was largely a product of the era in which it arose, the era of capitalism. It fully ripened during the period when industrial capitalist nations were colonizing and enslaving vast stretches of the world that lay beyond their shores. It was a byproduct of that colonization.

Background

There was nothing pre-ordained about modern capitalism arising in Europe. There was nothing special about the people of the region, that became Europe and gave rise to its economic and social development and scientific advances, any more than was the case regarding other human advances in other eras and regions, be they the invention of written language in Mesopotamia, gun powder in China, or the cultivation of corn in Meso-America.

In a world where Homo Sapiens migrated out of Africa into the various continents with different geographies and climates and so on, mainly isolated for thousands of years from one another, it would not be expected that social evolution would move evenly, in step, along the same lines everywhere.[1] In fact, unevenness is an essential feature of human development, as it is with all natural phenomena.

There was nothing special, in that sense, to dictate that Europe, and in particular, England, should become the first locus of modern industrial capitalism. And capitalism, like all economic/social systems before it, possesses its own set of characteristics. In industrial capitalism's case there are two factors that are most relevant to the point I wish to make here. One, it is competitive. Two it emerged, and could only have emerged, at a time and under circumstances when scientific-technical development had reached a certain threshold making possible the harnessing of sources of energy beyond that which could be produced by humans, animals, wind, fire, and an occasional river. Specifically, the development of steam power from the burning of wood and later, other sources of energy, such as coal and oil, for driving machines for production and transportation, developed in Europe first.[2]

Competition among different producers of goods in a common marketplace provided the impetus and necessity to expand and find ever more efficient means of production. The development of technology allowed for the scale of that production and marketing to increase rapidly and dramatically.

Colonial Ambitions

The fact that Europeans, beginning with the Spanish and Portuguese in the 1400s, had already explored, established outposts, and seized control of different regions of the world meant that when industrialized capitalism came along in the 1800s it had the pathways to expand its reach globally. In fact, the inroads made by these earlier colonial powers and the wealth that they extracted from the Americas, and the labor they stole from Africa, and

America accelerated the development of European industry, science, military weaponry and so on, which in turn, accelerated that global expansion.

By the end of the 1800s much of the non-European regions of the world were under the domination of one or another European nation.[3] The U.S. which had also jumped on to the industrial track and was, in the last half of that century, in the same league economically and politically with England, France and others, used its industrial development (greatly accelerated through the enormous wealth accumulated under slavery) to seize the land of the native population, including vast stretches under the control of Mexico, and gain control of large regions south of U.S. borders, as well as in other parts of the world. The growing pace of what would become a breakneck competition over colonial expansion was demonstrated in the mid-1800s by the seizure of California as a jumping off point for trade and expansion into Asia, especially China.

Among the colonizing nations there was a growing obsession with grabbing up territory to satisfy their industrial sectors' growing appetite for raw materials, markets, cheap labor, and the need for profitable investment of ever larger blocks of capital. Successful colonizers enjoyed increased wealth which could be used to reduce the poverty and discontent of their own exploited classes. In these colonizing countries parts of a growing middle class (essentially those sections of the population able to access a larger share of that expanding wealth), there was a growing clamor for colonies expressed in a rising attitude of nationalism, chauvinism, and an acceptance, if not embrace, of militarism.

By the latter 1800s England, France, Holland, Belgium, and the U.S., along with the older colonial powers of Spain and Portugal, had seized most all of Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America and the South Pacific Islands region. Germany consolidated into a single country after its successful war with France in 1871, and emerged as an industrial powerhouse, with similar needs and ambitions to these rival European powers. But it came up against the reality that it had come late to the game. Even Belgium and Holland with far smaller populations and industrial bases had grabbed proportionally more of the world's territory and population than Germany.

In 1879 a Bavarian Lutheran pastor, Friedrich Fabri wrote a book on the subject that garnered wide attention and triggered a national debate. The book, *Bedarf Deutschland der Koloniens?* (*Does Germany Need Colonies?*) argued that for Germany the acquisition of overseas colonies was a matter of life or death: "Should not the German nation, so seaworthy, so industrially and commercially minded . . . and possessing a rich and available supply of labor, all these to a greater extent than other modern culture-peoples,

should not this nation successfully pave a new path on the road of imperialism?" The sentiments expressed by Fabri were hardly his alone. During Germany's Second Reich, the urge to build its own colonial empire became an obsession among German politicians, military leaders, and academics and was a significant component of Germany's push to become a major military land and sea power: a prelude to the First World War. After World War I, in the wake of Germany's defeat, this urge to empire was the motor that drove militarism and fascism.

For instance, on November 19, 1938, after Germany had seized and absorbed Austria and occupied the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia, the Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels justified Germany's aggressive expansionism with this assertion, ". . . the nations of the world got busy partitioning the continents of Africa, South America, Asia, Australia. By the time we [Germany] had finished our domestic struggles and appeared united for the first time on the stage of the world, we found that the partitioning was complete."^[4]

When Germany entered the race for colonies in the latter 1800s it had limited options for where it could plant its flag. Germany made some limited inroads in Africa and the South Pacific.^[5] One of those was a place that had been largely bypassed by other nations. It was known then as South West Africa; today, Namibia.

Germany in South West Africa

Previous explorers and would-be colonizers had passed South West Africa by. Its geography and topography were not particularly alluring. Its coast was rugged and buffeted by frigid winds that swooped in off the south Atlantic Ocean. Inland from the coast, there were tens of thousands of square miles of dry, hot sand dunes, barren gravel or scrub brush planes and the dry mountains of the Namib desert. Beyond that, to the east, was another desert, the Kalahari. There were no known deposits of valuable resources. Limited animal husbandry was possible and sustained a relatively small native population. Farming was only sustainable in places where groundwater was found, and wells successfully dug.

But colonial fever was in full force in Europe when, in 1883, a young German named Heinrich Vogelsang, with some experience in colonial affairs and a knack for European colonial methods, arrived at the austere South West African coastal town of Lüderitz with a plan. Vogelsang traveled inland and arranged to meet with Joseph Fredericks the leader of one of the twelve clans of the Nama people. The Nama were one of the two major African populations in that region. In exchange for some rifles and a modest amount of

money, Vogelsang was able to secure an agreement that gave Germany “legal” access to a barren tract of land around the little port area of Lüderitz. It was the opening of a door to a process whose implications Fredericks could not have foreseen. In the following years, German colonists began moving in with the backing of the German government and military.

What the Germans found was a vast area occupied by two distinct native peoples, the Herrero, and the Nama (whom the Europeans called Hottentots). They were mainly pastoral people who made their living by riverbed farming and herding cattle. They were dark-skinned people but very different from each other in physical appearance, history and language. The adaptation of their cultures to their conditions was seen in their languages which had hundreds of words to describe the gradations of colors and the characteristics of their all-important cattle.

The German colonizers in South West Africa were much like colonizers in other parts of the world, hungry for land and wealth, confident in their technical and, especially military, superiority, contemptuous of the native peoples and frequently unscrupulous and harsh in their dealings with them.

Over several decades after the arrival of the German colonists, the native people of South West Africa were gradually driven from their lands, deprived of their means of livelihood, and forced to accept existence as slaves or cheap labor for the colonists. When the Herero and Nama people rose in resistance to defend their societies, their culture, and their sovereignty, they were met with brutality that became more extreme and pitiless as time went on.

Germany ruled over South West Africa from 1883 to 1918. Over the course of those 35 years, the Herero and Nama people fought fiercely against the displacement and destruction of their way of life and for their survival.

By 1904 the Herero people were enraged by arrogant and provocative actions by German colonists which included the theft of their land and cattle and humiliating treatment such as the unforgivable insult of having Herero bodies removed from their graves and sold to German “race scientists”—those making a career out of “discovering” the physiological basis for European superiority over their colonial subjects.[6] Rising tensions eventually gave way to war.

The spark for an uprising came in July 1904. A group of armed Herero men arrived in the town of Okahandja to seek arbitration by a Herero leader for an inheritance dispute. The Germans misinterpreted their arrival as an act of hostility and responded by attacking the

arriving Herero men. Fed up with a long string of abuses, the Herero rose to retaliate. They defeated the Germans in several initial battles. This provoked an outcry in Germany. Kaiser Wilhelm was infuriated by the prospect of being bested by a people he regarded as “*unmensch*” – “in-humans,” or *Untermensch*, “sub-humans.” The Kaiser’s response to the Hereros’ resistance was meant to exact revenge and to demonstrate Germany’s military superiority for the native African people and the world at large.

This was the same Kaiser Wilhelm who, in July 1900, famously sent a group of German sailors to China in response to a rebellion there with the admonition that they take no prisoners and teach the Chinese to fear the Germans as much as the world had once feared the Huns. It was a public boast of brutishness that earned Germans the nickname “Huns” for years to come.[7] Now the Kaiser commissioned Lothar von Trotha to head a military campaign to crush the Herero rebellion and destroy their ability to resist.

Von Trotha assembled an army of six thousand troops, by far the largest body of armed men to operate in South West Africa up to that point. This army was outfitted with the most advanced weaponry from German factories.

The Herero leadership had refrained from following up their initial victories in battle with further attacks on the Germans as a gesture made in the spirit of disengagement in order to encourage negotiations. After their engagements with the Germans and fearing retaliation, the Herero withdrew from their scattered villages and concentrated their people in an area called Waterberg where they believed the valley surrounded by cliffs offered them a better place to defend themselves.

On August 11, 1904, von Trotha’s troops arrived at Waterberg. Rejecting offers to negotiate to settle the matter peacefully, Trotha ordered his troops to attack the Herero settlements that stretched out along valley. The Germans used artillery, grenades, and the most lethal weapon applied by Europeans in their colonial warfare, Maxim guns – machine guns.

In the assault, thousands of Herero elderly, women and children were slaughtered and wounded. The survivors retreated into the Omaheke Desert just west of the Kalihari where many more died from dehydration and starvation along with thousands of their cattle, the mainstay of the Herero economy and culture.

Von Trotha pressed the attack declaring that “Within the German borders,” (that is, those parts of South West Africa the Germans claimed as their own), “every Herero, with or without weapons . . . will be shot. I shall no longer shelter women and children.” Von Trotha ordered watering holes to be poisoned to ensure even greater carnage.[8]

German troops were sent to patrol the edge of the desert and were ordered to kill any among the Herero that attempted to escape the harsh desert conditions.

The battle of Waterberg and the repression that followed became a subject of great discussion inside Germany. The war against the Herero people was glorified in the German press. Photographs taken by German officers of African prisoners or servants being humiliated and brutalized were published and widely circulated as *postcards* with sarcastic captions.

German literature that degraded the native people while romanticizing the colonists had a poisonous effect on German society, even while it provoked revulsion and opposition from some quarters.

Camps

Von Trotha failed to annihilate the Herero people. But the measures against them continued. In warring against the Herero and later against the Nama people, the Germans set up special camps and forced much of the populations to live under armed guard.

The use of these concentration camps was not a new tactic in European colonial warfare. The Spanish employed them against a rebellious Cuban population before 1898. The British built camps in South Africa in the war to suppress the Boer population beginning in 1900. Those camps were meant to isolate the population from the rebel fighters. In South West Africa the Germans took it one step further and used those imprisoned in camps as forced labor thus creating even more deadly conditions.

The German colonists set up a special camp at a place called Shark Island near the town of Lüderitz. Those detained in this camp were subject to rape, beatings, starvation, and extreme weather conditions. They were denied medical care in the face of typhus outbreaks.

Of the 3500 people sent to Shark Island in 1905 only 193 survived by the time the camp closed in 1907. Among the 1200 Nama people sent to Shark Island, 460 women and 274 children perished. It was, in every respect, the first consciously created and administered death camp.

Overall, according to Germany's own official count, 45 percent of the more than 17,000 Herero and Nama people sent to German camps in South West Africa perished.^[9] By the time German colonial rule ended in South West Africa in 1918, 80 percent of the original native population had been exterminated.

Undergirding these policies was the idea gaining currency that successful societies needed space to expand, and "superior cultures," such as those in Europe and North America

would continue to displace “inferior” ones. In the United States this concept was called “Manifest Destiny.” In Germany, a similar doctrine emerged. It was called Lebensraum. Lebensraum would later become a cornerstone of Germany’s expansionist ambitions under Nazi rule.

“Racial boundaries”

Doctrines to justify the ruthless seizure of land and wealth developed along with the practice itself. They came in the form of distorted descriptions of the native people and theories that those in the countries being colonized were not only culturally but also *racially inferior* to their European overlords.

Furthermore, as contact between Europeans and peoples of other areas of the world increased along with miscegenation, so too did the doctrine that colonized people represented a “racial threat” to Europeans themselves, requiring “racial boundaries.”

In Germany intermarriage between Africans and Europeans was described in some quarters as *rassenschande*, or “racial shame,” and laws were passed to forbid the practice in the colony. Proposals for similar measures for the home country were debated in the Reichstag in those years and these public discussions injected racist ideas and terminology into the public sphere.^[10]

In search of racial evidence

Herero and Nama people had suffered devastating losses as a result of colonial violence and the survivors were dying in concentration camps when a young German academic, Eugen Fischer arrived in Southwest Africa in 1908. Fischer came with a purpose in mind, to find proof that “inferior races”, of the colonized, represented a danger to a “superior” or “more advanced” race of the colonizer.

Fischer chose a community that called themselves Bastards, descendants of families with European fathers and African mothers, to verify his theories. The Bastards were originally from South Africa. Forced to leave their homeland, a large group from that community settled in the South West African town of Rehoboth located on a high plateau between the Namib and Kalahari deserts. There the Bastards lived mainly from herding cattle, sheep, and goats.

When Fischer showed up at Rehoboth and announced his intention to study the community, there were many who refused to be subjects of examinations or to the intrusive measurements of their bodies he intended to make. Nevertheless, he conducted a study of sorts among 310 children. His goal was to gather data on physical characteristics,

like eye and hair color, and measurements of intelligence. He then claimed he would compare these data to draw his conclusions.

Not so coincidentally, Fischer's conclusions matched his assumptions. He wrote, "Without exception, every European people that has absorbed the blood of the inferior races – and that Negro Hottentots, and many others are inferior is something that only dreamers can deny – have paid for this absorption of inferior elements by intellectual and cultural decline".[11]

This was ignorant claptrap masquerading as science. But it was sweet music to the ears of those looking for a justification for their prejudice, for their efforts at domination and extermination and their laws outlawing intermarriage. Fischer and his team conducted a series of medical experiments on Herero and Namaqua imprisoned in Shark Island concentration camp, including the measurement of skulls, the removal of body parts for anatomical study, and the sterilization of women.[12]

Fischer published his findings in a study called *Die Rehobother Bastards in 1913*. The book had a big impact in Germany. Fischer, and others like him, rode a wave of success by providing scientific-sounding verbiage to previously held biases. The study established Fischer's reputation, and his *market value*.

In 1921 Fischer, along with several other racial scientists and eugenicists, co-authored a textbook, *Human Heredity and Racial Hygiene* which became a widely used study in the 1920s. It was published in English in Britain and the United States. Fischer established strong ties with advocates of what was at that time a robust eugenics movement in the United States. Fischer's ideas and writing influenced Hitler and his book *Mein Kampf* written in 1923. After 1933, Fischer's book was cited as the "scientific basis" for Nazi eugenic sterilization programs. In that same year Fischer wrote a paper condemning "racial mixing" between "Jews" and "Germans" as harmful to the "German race." He advocated for laws to prevent it. His work would influence the Nuremberg racial laws of 1935.

Fischer was a leader of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Genetics and Eugenics. In the 1930s that institute taught anthropology to Nazi SS doctors. Among the students of the Institute was Josef Mengele the infamous doctor who practiced a sadistic form of medical butchery at Auschwitz.

Racial divisions in Europe

By the time Fischer came along in the early 1900s, so-called "scientific racism" had already found its way into the European academic and intellectual circles. One of the

pioneers of this concept was a Frenchman by the name of Joseph Arthur de Gobineau. In the 1850s Gobineau wrote a book entitled *An Essay on the Inequality of Races*. In it he argued that *race created culture*. He argued that white people were superior to non-white people and were the only humans capable of intelligent thought. His writings translated into English also found a supportive audience among pro-slavery Americans.

Gobineau developed these racial theories in the aftermath of the revolutionary movement that swept Europe in 1848. The revolution raised demands for democratic reforms and more radical views that threatened the power of Europe's monarchies. He despised the revolution and those who were its proponents, the rising middle class and working class rebels.

At the time, European aristocracy was on the defensive and losing ground to the up and coming bourgeoisie and the rising demand for democratic forms of rule in place of hereditary ones. A fan of the aristocracy, to which he claimed his own roots, Gobineau fashioned a defense against this tide of change by arguing that the aristocratic classes were the best suited to running society because they were racially superior to the "common" people. Gobineau further theorized that the aristocracy owed this superiority to the fact that they engaged in less interbreeding with "inferior races." Thus, Gobineau promoted the view that there were racial divisions within the European or "white race" and claimed that "Aryans", a term taken from Hindu legend, were that superior element. Gobineau took the colonialist concept of the racial inferiority of people outside Europe, to groups *inside* Europe.

Gobineau's ideas evolved at a time when Karl Marx, responding to the same revolutionary upheavals, was forging views that became known as "scientific socialism." Marx was inspired by the radical democratic demands of the time, and he embraced them while advocating a more thoroughgoing revolutionary change. Marx put emphasis on *what the working people of all nations had in common and envisioned the potential of a society without exploiters or overseers*. Gobineau, a steadfast defender of the old monarchical order, made no effort to deny that he represented the interests of the "overseers," but he based his defense of the aristocracy, not on some claim that they were chosen by God, but on the assertion that they were chosen to rule by their genetics!

Gobineau insisted that all the great civilizations were founded and led by "Aryans." He wrote:

"In the ten civilizations no Negro race is seen as an initiator. Only when it is mixed with some other, can it even be initiated into a civilization. Similarly, no spontaneous

civilization is to be found among the yellow races; and when the Aryan blood is exhausted stagnation supervenes.”

Though he was not per se an antisemite, Gobineau’s theories about race were seized on by Europe’s antisemites and adapted and spread by people who would later go on to form political movements around racial dogma, such as the Nazis.

The Kaiser’s friend

Houston Steward Chamberlain was a British-born intellectual who, like Gobineau, was taken by the Hindu legend of a superior race of light-skinned people called Aryans. As a young man Chamberlain became enthralled with Germany where he found a community of like-minded racially conscious people whose hero was the German composer, Richard Wagner. Acolytes of Wagner considered the composer a genius whose music embodied the mystical quality of the superior Germanic being – the Teutons, the purist of the “Aryans” whose greatness had been demonstrated historically and would in the future rise to further heights.

Chamberlain became good friends with Wagner’s widow Cosima, a proponent of the Wagnerian mythology and he eventually married Wagner’s daughter Eva von Bülow-Wagner. He remained the rest of his life in Germany where he made a career of writings embodying his historical and racial thinking.

Chamberlain adopted and promoted a Euro-centric worldview. He saw the economic, scientific, and technical advances of 19th-century Europe as the product of European racial superiority – especially of that select group among them, the so-called “Aryans.” Extrapolating from his historical moment, Chamberlain went on to analyze all human history, past, present, and future, based on this obscenely narrow framework.

In his most famous work, *The Foundations of Nineteenth Century* (*Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*) published in 1899, Chamberlain claimed that every great thought, creative art, or human invention was the product of the “Aryans” and them alone. *The Foundations* was Chamberlain’s crowning “intellectual achievement” for which he was hailed in racial/nationalist circles. The methodology in this book amounted to taking the prejudices of his day and applying them retroactively to history. In doing this in a “scholarly fashion” he lent a “respectable” academic veneer to an otherwise gutter ignorance.

Foundations made Chamberlain a celebrity in Germany. His book gained adherents among teachers in certain parts of the country, and *Foundations* was made required

reading in some German high schools (Gymnasium) and also found a following on German university campuses.

Throughout Europe, but especially in Germany, ideas about Aryan superiority most often came paired with antisemitism. Chamberlain argued that Jews represented a *racial* group that stood in *antithesis* to the Aryan. For Chamberlain the “Jew” was a representative of all the bestial inferiority racist Europeans ascribed to non-European peoples, be they Black or Asian. Chamberlain even contended that Jews were the founders of Chinese civilization which in Chamberlain’s view explained the Chinese’ “total absence of all culture!”^[13]

There was genocidal logic to Chamberlain’s scholarship. In *The Foundations* Jews are said to be race apart, genetically disposed to evil and that an inevitable showdown was coming between the civilization of the noble Aryan on one side and the inferior Jew, Black and Asian, and so on, on the other.

Chamberlain’s German nationalism

Chamberlain lived at a time when national rivalries were intensifying, and these would eventually lead to war. Chamberlain also cast that rivalry in racial terms, championing Germany as the great Aryan protagonist in a world-historic struggle between good and evil.

Chamberlain considered the German monarchy the bedrock of German society. He referred to Kaiser Wilhelm as an “Aryan soldier-king” who embraced the “struggle against the corroding poison of Jewry.” He advocated aggressive German militarism and an expansion of German sea power as a means to world dominance. This brought him favor in the eyes of the Prussian monarch and an invitation to visit the Kaiser. On Chamberlain’s visit with Kaiser Wilhelm in November 1901 he was met with an elaborate reception. Thereafter the two became friends and carried on a mutual correspondence through which shared their common loathing for Jews and non-European peoples.

When world war erupted in 1914 Chamberlain extolled the German war effort. Germany’s defeat in 1918 devastated Chamberlain and may have negatively affected his health. After the war Chamberlain embraced the theory promoted by militarists, monarchists, and rising fascists that Germany had not lost the war but were betrayed by the liberals, Social Democrats and Jews.

Chamberlain was nearing his 70s and confined to a wheelchair when Hitler emerged in 1923 as German ultra-nationalism’s most prominent opponent of the Weimar Republic. Chamberlain joined the Nazi Party and wrote for its paper the *Völkischer Beobachter*. In a letter to Hitler he wrote, “That Germany, in the hour of her greatest need brings forth a

Hitler—that is proof of her vitality . . . that the magnificent Ludendorff openly supports you and your movement: What wonderful confirmation! I can now go untroubled to sleep . . . May God protect you!”[14]

A 1925 article in *Völkischer Beobachter* referred to Chamberlain’s *Foundations* as the “gospel of the Nazi movement.” Chamberlain died in 1927 before Hitler came to power. But there is no doubt that Chamberlain’s life’s work contributed to the ideological foundation for what was to become Nazi Germany.

Germany loses its colonies

When the war in Europe began in 1914 military forces from South Africa allied with the British invaded South West Africa and seized control of Germany’s colony without much difficulty. The Germans offered little resistance as they intended to seize back the colony once they were victorious in Europe. That never happened.

In 1917, as the British anticipated victory in the war, a British major was assigned the task of writing up a report on German atrocities committed in their South West African colony. It included testimony of those who survived the genocidal horror of those years. The report was one of the most thorough records ever compiled of European brutality against a colonized people. Much of what it spoke to was known to the British and others, but not publicly revealed while it was happening. Now in the wake of the world war, these atrocities were made public to justify the seizure of Germany’s African colonies by the victorious parties. Under the Versailles Treaty South West Africa was declared a Class C mandate and placed under the control of the Union of South Africa and the British.

Munich

As Germany’s western front collapsed in the Fall of 1918 sailors and soldiers marched in the forefront of a revolution that forced Kaiser Wilhelm’s abdication and brought the declaration of a new German republic.

Other soldiers and veterans were organized by the old military guard into Freikorps units to crush the revolution. Freikorps units began operations in Berlin in January 1919 and detachments were sent to other regions such as industrial Ruhr and Munich.

The largest Bavarian Freikorps unit to march into Munich on May 1, 1919, was a 700 strong force under the command of General Franz Xavier Ritter von Epp a veteran of the German war against the South West African people.[15]

Marching with von Epp were World War I veterans who would become key members of the soon-to-be-formed NSDAP or Nazi party. They included Gregor Strasser, the commanding officer in a World War I unit that included Heinrich Himmler. Strasser, who

rose to be an important Nazi leader and propagandist, recruited the future propaganda leader Joseph Goebbels into the party. Gerhard Wagner future leader of the Nazi adult euthanasia program and Walther Itze, who rose to become the Nazi Reich Leader of University Teachers were also in von Epp's Freikorps unit.

Other veterans of the South West Africa genocide among Freikorps leaders were General, Ludwig Maercker and Hermann Ehrhardt. Ehrhardt's Freikorps, known for its violent antisemitism, wore white swastikas on their helmets.

Herman Goering, a World War I pilot who came to Munich in the years after the war and joined the Nazi cause, also had a direct connection to Germany's African colonialism. His father Heinrich was a leading German colonial official in the years when Germany was establishing its rule in the South West African colony.[16]

The coming together of veterans of German colonialism in Munich following the defeat of the Munich Revolution in 1919, contributed to the city's transformation into a breeding ground for racial supremacy and (Völkisch) ultranationalism and antisemitism.

The fact that important leaders of the Munich revolution of November 1918 and subsequent socialist-oriented governments were led by people with Jewish roots, Eisner, Toller, Landauer and Mühsam, became a topic for furious agitation through which the fascists propagated their racial hatred and conspiratorial fantasies. It was the pole of attraction around which von Epps, Gregor Strasser, Gerhard Wagner, Herman Goering, Julius Streicher, Herman Hess, Heinrich Himmler, and of course, the World War I veteran, Adolf Hitler, among others, joined to form the core of the Nazi movement.

The early Nazis saw the Freikorps as a model for an armed force that would empower their movement to seize institutional power they sought to implement their social and political program. Ernst Röhm an aide-de-camp to Freikorps leader Ritter von Epp and veteran of the first world war and an early member of the Nazi Party, took the lead in forming a Nazi militia formally known as the Sturmabteilung ("Assault Division") or SA for short. When the new militia sought a standard attire for its ranks, Epps and Röhm found one that matched the need and the limited budget of the new movement in the surplus uniforms shirts left over from the Schutztruppe, Germany's defunct South West African colonial army. The color of the Schutztruppe uniforms inspired the popular name for this Nazi armed force, the *Brown Shirts*.

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Uzonna Anele Talk Africana *Eugen Fischer: The German Doctor Who Conducted Human Experiments on Herero and Namaqua People in Namibia from 1904-1908* April 27, 2023

Notes.

[1] By social evolution this author does not mean to imply some fixed pattern of development. One marker of evolution is the development of science and technology as applied to production. Technological development influences but does not determine the relations of production or social relations more broadly.

[2] Steam power was utilized in a very limited way in the time of the Greek Athenian civilization but was restricted in its use and was never developed as a source of energy for production.

[3] By 1899 the colonial possessions of England and France alone mounted to 11 million square miles of territory and more than 360 million people, more than 20 percent of the world's population at that time.

[4] Rothstein, Andrew *The Munich Conspiracy* Lawrence and Wishart Ltd, 1958 pg. 47

[5] By the turn of the century German had established colonial presence in Africa in Cameroon, Togoland, German South West Africa, and German East Africa, and in the South Pacific in German New Guinea and German Samoa.

[6] Madley, Benjamin *From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe*. Sage Journals, Vol. 35 Issue 3 July 2005 pg. 445

[7] Kaiser Wilhelm coined the phrase "yellow peril," referring to the Chinese.

[8] Hochschild, Adam *King Leopold's Ghost* Mariner Books, 2020 pg. 282

[9] Madley, pg. 450

[10] Madley, pg. 439

[11] Madley, pg. 453

[12] Uzonna Anele “Talk Africa” *Eugen Fischer the German Doctor Who Conducted Human Experiments on Herero and Namaqua People in Nimibia from 1904 – 1908*. April27, 2023

[13] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston_Steward_Chamberlain

¹⁴ Nazi Germany Source book 2.12

¹⁵ Olusoga, David and Erichsen, Casper *The Kaiser’s Holocaust, Germany’s Forgotten Genocide* Faber and Faber, 2010 pg. 284

¹⁶ Madley, pg. 451

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