

“Askari at Hitler’s Frontier:
Racial-Cultural Chauvinism and Colonial Systems in Germany
and the Territories of the Eastern Front, 1941-1945”

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Relations between the German Army and non-German populations (esp. Slavic) on the Eastern Front (1941-45) lacked the uniform scientific racism that might be expected to have emerged from Hitler's ideological programme. Rather than the rigidly racialized binary systems of savage and civil man that one might expect given both Hitler's writings and the nature of earlier German colonial projects, German collaboration with Slavic and other non-German peoples on the Eastern Front is best understood in looser pseudo-colonial terms. The idea of an abstract front against Bolshevik barbarism and the 'savage East'¹ at which the New Europe is defended is far more in line with the way collaborationists and German planners outside of Hitler himself (and perhaps his inner circle) conceptualized the Eastern Front. The Hitlerian vision of Slavdom as an indistinguishable mass is put into question by the behaviour of his subordinates and the acknowledgement of cultural pluralism among the Slavs. This is a trait which is denied to German Africans in the Second Reich, who are understood as blank slates for Germanization. While both the Eastern Front and German Africa should be understood as colonial spaces (the latter being inarguably so), these differences in German attitudes show their distinctness. The strict biological racial binaries of German Africa are far less mutable than the racial-cultural abstractions of the 'savage East' and the 'New Europe'.

The common tendency to view the abomination of genocide and human mistreatment that was the Third Reich as an unprecedented tumor on the European psyche is a regrettable one. While the scale of industrial genocide in the Reich is both quantitatively and qualitatively unlike any prior atrocity of the modern era, the cruelty exhibited in its militarily and civilly administered regions has deep roots. Colonial ideas find form in the treatment of these occupied territories, particularly those

¹ Stahel, David, ed. *Joining Hitler's Crusade: European Nations and the Invasion of the Soviet Union, 1941*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 158-159. doi:10.1017/9781108225281. <https://www-cambridge-org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/core/books/joining-hitlers-crusade/A0CF40C2C09100EEB0AB661C5E947B1A>

conquered on the Eastern Front. The behaviour of German administrators is undeniably informed by the concept of the East as a colonial space, one where the dominant German culture may contend with, and ultimately settle over, its inferiors.

The fact that the lands east of Germany (especially Poland) were viewed as a pseudo-colonial space by members of the Reich's military is hard to deny. A member of the Luftwaffe can be quoted as describing Russia as a land devoid of culture, thus necessitating a colonial task². Both Poland and Belorussia had their political and social structures completely dismantled and reconstructed for the purpose of bringing proper settlement to otherwise barbaric lands. Former German settlers from the African colonies were urged to aid in this so-called settlement of the east. Hitler is quite clear through his writings that he characterizes the Slavs as a racially homogenous and cultureless mass³, incapable of Germanization⁴. He goes as far as to say, with regard to the local Slavic populations of occupied territories, that "anyone who talks about cherishing the local inhabitants and civilising them, goes straight off into a concentration camp."⁵ One can certainly see this expressed in the notion of *Lebensraum*. The settlement of the east following a great war of extermination is clearly reminiscent of the Herero and Namaqua genocide, in which the population of Imperial Germany's colony of South-West Africa were slain by gunfire or driven into the unlivable desert⁶. These actions, though only a moderate degree more genocidal than the relocation attempts made by other colonial powers, was clearly the result of the white-supremacist policies of the Second Reich. Just as the Black Africans were understood to be incapable

² Zimmerer, Jürgen. 2005. "The Birth of the Ostland Out of the Spirit of Colonialism: A Postcolonial Perspective on the Nazi Policy of Conquest and Extermination." *Patterns of Prejudice* 39 (2): 197-219. 204. doi:10.1080/00313220500106311.

³ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. James Murphy (Camarillo, CA: Elite Minds, 2010), 323, accessed April 27, 2019, <http://www.greatwar.nl/books/meinkampf/meinkampf.pdf>.

⁴ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 322

⁵ Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944: Secret Conversations*, ed. H. R. Trevor-Roper, trans. Gerhard L. Weinberg (Enigma Books, 2013), 466.

⁶ Zimmer, "The Birth of the Ostland", 210.

of culture and progress, suspended in a Hobbesian state of nature, so too must be the Slavs. There can be no ambiguity that Hitler saw both Black Africans and Slavs as non-humans that lack any cultural creative power and thus cannot internalize nor benefit from Germanization⁷. However, our understanding of both *Lebensraum* and the dimensions of Nazi colonialism as a whole must not be limited to the German Führer's personal rantings.

The first exception that must be taken to the Hitlerian vision of a purely Slav-identified horde, incapable of culture and thus variation, may be found in the writings of Otto Reche. Reche was a German anthropologist who may be seen as having inhabited the intellectual tradition of *Ostforschung*, or the study of lands east of Germany. In his correspondence with the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, Reche presents a policy of ethno-national division, through which the peoples of the USSR may be returned to ethnic communities which preceded the Tsardom of Moscow's reign⁸. The need for the establishment of an independent White Ruthenia and Ukraine is stressed by Reche. This proposed policy is of course a cynical one, intended to create opportunities for easier eradication of the "natives" inhabiting precious *lebensraum*⁹. However, this does not mean that such plan does not present important ideas. Reche identifies a multiplicity of races in the east, only bound in pan-Slavism by the imperial desires of the former Russian Tsardom. Rather than a crucial tool for the Nazi policymaking, Reche identifies Slavism as being a great obstacle to Germany and a source of peril and struggle¹⁰. The identification of the so-called natives by Reche as clear inferiors is indisputable. However, unlike Black Africans, these natives may be subdivided culturally. While Black Africans were certainly subdivided in the racial studies of the era, such divisions were purely

⁷ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 322.

⁸Burleigh, Michael. *Germany Turns Eastwards: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich*. London: Pan, 2002. 224-225.

⁹ Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, 225.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

biological and hardly suggestive of any source of national identity, however primitive.

The divisions proposed by Reche were not determined in biological terms, like the division of Black Africans into “Negros”, “Negritos”, and “Bushmen”¹¹ in contemporary anthropology, but rather the return to cultural-historical identification with ancient kingdoms¹². Though such kingdoms are still understood as signifying disparate races, these Slavic races have differences that manifest in culture, hence the need to subvert cultural pan-Slavism. Further, such a subversion is not presented by Reche as a deception or creation of false national identities but rather as a result of these races becoming conscious of their distinctness¹³. The creation of a plurality of east-Slavic states (though Finns and Estonians were not exempt from such planning¹⁴) through national self-realization flies strongly in the face of Hitler’s view of Slavs as racially homogenous. Reche’s theories, including ethnic pluralism, were accepted by the aforementioned Ministry as accurate, though his plan itself was viewed as far-fetched and unlikely to defeat Russian-led pan-Slavism in the occupied regions¹⁵.

The attitudes of individual soldiers towards Slavic collaborationists and allies of dubious Aryan-ness might be written off as purely the result of wartime acquaintance. However, the acceptance of Reche’s theories by the Ministry shows that the racial-cultural chauvinism of the Third Reich, which distinguished itself from the biological reductionism of the Second, the existed even in the upper echelons of the Eastern Front’s architects.

Racial-cultural chauvinism, a sentiment strong enough alone to justify the horrors of the German quest for *lebensraum*, became truly (and perhaps

¹¹ Huxley, T. H. "On the Geographical Distribution of the Chief Modifications of Mankind." *The Journal of the Ethnological Society of London (1869-1870)* 2, no. 4 (1870): 404. doi:10.2307/3014371.

¹² Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, 225

¹³ *Ibid*, 225

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 226.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 225-226.

counterintuitively) pervasive when paired with orientalist sentiments that were far from limited to the Reich. The abstract vision of a *front against savagery*, at which the Axis powers would keep the Eastern menace at bay, appears in the wartime sentiments of both Croats (a country most often considered Slavic) and of Hungarians (whose status as Aryans was always in doubt¹⁶).

In spite of the anti-Slavic convictions of their German comrades, the Croatian collaborationists saw themselves as approaching not just the physical front, but also the cultural front from the West. In Croatia, like in all collaborationist states, a perceived need for action against Bolshevism was a primary reason for cooperating with the Reich¹⁷. However, Croatian attitudes emphasized a broader battle against Eastern-ness, both within and without¹⁸. Through collaboration and sacrifice, the Croats might purge themselves of their Slavic origins and association with Balkan backwardness, becoming part of a new Europe¹⁹. This was not just an attempt at reformation in racial terms, but a cultural struggle waged in brutal terms. Exhibits and public discourse placed emphasis on the Jew as a member of the “eastern horde”²⁰, sharing this category with Serbs and Roma. The rhetoric of ideologues in Croatia compared the war on the Eastern Front to the historical battles against Tatars and Ottomans moving westward. Creating a parallel between this historical struggle and the war against Bolshevism legitimized atrocities. This presented the war as fitting into a long-standing tradition of Croatia’s cultural identity being defined in opposition to the East. This aligns with Reche’s identification of the East as being composed of essentially separate but equally degraded races, united only in their racial inferiority and dangerousness rather than as an easily defined sub-species.

¹⁶ Eric Ehrenreich, *The Nazi Ancestral Proof: Genealogy, Racial Science, and the Final Solution* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Univ. Press, 2009), 10.

¹⁷ David Stahel, *Joining Hitler’s Crusade*, 158-159

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 172

Although lacking widespread acceptance, similar rhetoric was found in Slovakia during their period of assisting the European Axis. In response to lukewarm enthusiasm for a war against fellow Slavs, the general of the Slovak forces stressed that the war was not against Slavdom but rather a struggle for a new Europe²¹. This idea of a new Europe mirrors the rhetoric in Croatia. While this conflict was centered more in terms of opposition to Bolshevism and Judaism than to any particular sense of eastern-ness, this still serves to illustrate how the strictly biological component of warfare on the Eastern Front was weak enough to allow this to be believed. If the behaviour of fellow Germans corroborated the Hitlerian view of an indiscriminate war against the mass of Slavs, the Slovaks were clearly unconvinced.

Starting in 1941, Hungarian involvement on the Eastern Front was significant. Not only aiding in the invasion of the USSR as frontline forces, the Kingdom of Hungary's armies acted as occupying forces in the Ukraine. The nature of this occupation provides insight into the Hungarian vision of the Eastern peoples and a strong argument against biological-reductionist understandings of the Eastern Front. The exceeding brutality of the Hungarian forces, which are comparable to and may even exceed that of the Wehrmacht, suggest a view of the occupied territories as a colonial-esque *Wild East* in which one can act with relative impunity against a native population in need of bloody deterrence. A propensity towards looting and violence without restraint was shown by the Hungarians as they trained on anti-partisan warfare, using internal ghettos as battlegrounds²². A liaison to the German Foreign Office was concerned by this behaviour and suggested that Germany's fellow occupiers

²¹ David Stahel, *Joining Hitler's Crusade*, 130.

²²Krisztián Ungváry, "Hungarian Occupation Forces in the Ukraine 1941–1942: The Historiographical Context," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 20, no. 1 (2007): 19, doi:10.1080/13518040701205480.

are driven by “murder tourism.”²³ German officers complained that “in propaganda terms their undisciplined and completely arbitrary behavior towards the local population can only harm German interests. Looting, rape, and other breaches are the order of the day.”²⁴

As a result of material scarcity, information is limited regarding the Hungarian occupation of Slavic territories like the Ukraine.²⁵ However, reports include a complaint by the mayor of a Ukrainian town against Hungarian brutality. The occupiers are painted as doing little to stop partisans, being atrociously trigger-happy amongst the villagers, and burning allegedly partisan-aligned towns to the ground at the slightest provocation²⁶. The fact that these actions, reminiscent of the Wehrmacht, occurred without any of the racial-ideological indoctrination characteristic of Wehrmacht training suggests that Wehrmacht actions were strongly influenced by tendencies beyond formal ideology. A likely candidate for this is the tendency to view the East as a colonial space, thus the control of territory becomes an imperative. This is not necessarily the Hitlerian imperative of annihilating and enslaving the *untermenschen*, but instead may be closer kin to the cutthroat reprisals against so-called “rebel towns” following the Sepoy Mutiny of 1867²⁷. These reprisals did not need to be understood in terms of strict racial hatred. Many of the soldiers themselves were native to India (hardly a coherent identity at the time). We may assume that this inhumanity by an occupying power of similar regional background has parallels with Hungarian actions in the Ukraine. It would seem an underlying source of this atrocious behaviour is that

²³Krisztián Ungváry, "Hungarian Occupation Forces", 20.

²⁴Kay, Alex J., Jeff Rutherford, and David Stahel. *Nazi Policy on the Eastern Front, 1941: Total War, Genocide, and Radicalization*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014, 194.

²⁵ Krisztián Ungváry, "Hungarian Occupation Forces", 2.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 3.

²⁷ Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 180.

one views the territory you occupy as consisting of not just inferiors but of savage threat. The British soldiers who put down the mutiny would certainly have been primed to see India as part of the ‘savage East’. The Indian sepoy who helped crush the mutiny might very well have come from different regions and cultures than those they occupied and brutalized, perhaps having viewed their rebellious neighbours with the same contempt Hungary held for theirs.

With the Soviets at hand, whose boots would one day storm Berlin’s streets, German eastern policy was understandably wary of anything that could bolster pro-Russian sentiment. The notion of a nationalist anti-Bolshevik government being put in place after Stalin’s ousting was unequivocally rejected.²⁸ Despite this, the forces of the Eastern Front interacted closely with renegade Soviets willing to cooperate with those who had branded their country a racially dangerous mass. Germans who worked alongside them referred to them as “[their] Ivans.”²⁹ White Russian Émigrés were aided in disseminating anti-Soviet propaganda and, in doing so, the dream of a better Russia³⁰. Attempts were made by the Wehrmacht and the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories to further this by pushing propaganda intended to stir the desire for a nationalist government in occupied Russia. However, in keeping with the simplicity and extremity of Hitler’s aforementioned views, this was immediately refused when proposed to him.³¹ The division between Hitlerism and the mutable views of those who ran the Eastern Front is clear.

The Ukrainian Waffen SS division known as “1st Galician” is central to modern Ukrainian identity³² and to understanding the German psyche vis-à-vis Soviet

²⁸ David Stahel, *Joining Hitler’s Crusade*, 373.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 375.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 382.

³¹ *Ibid*, 385.

³² Khromeychuk, Olesya. 2012. "The Shaping of “Historical Truth”: Construction and Reconstruction of the Memory and Narrative of the Waffen SS “Galicia” Division." *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 54 (3-4): 443-467. doi:10.1080/00085006.2012.11092717. http://resolver.scholarsportal.info/resolve/00085006/v54i3-4/443_tsotcanotwsd.

auxiliaries. Even assuming cynical tactics on the part of top officials, the behaviour of German military attachés with the Galician provides a vision of how usual soldiers might have seen the Slavs among them.

Wolf-Dietrich Heike, a major in the Waffen SS, spent great amounts of time fighting and living alongside the Galician. His experiences and prejudices are well-documented in his memoirs, which give insight into the nuanced regard in which Germans held their Slavic allies. While he certainly details the valour and efficacy of the division³³, that is somewhat beyond the scope of this paper. It is easy for officers to praise soldiers who perform well, regardless of their opinions on race. What is important about Heike's writings is the detail with which he explains the Slavic personality, as well as its particular incarnation in the Ukrainian peoples. However, contrary to Hitler's idea of an immutable "racial soul"³⁴, Heike acknowledges the cultural-historical basis for Ukrainian behaviour. Heike gives an unflattering description of the Ukrainians as being "influenced by [their] wishful thinking"³⁵ and individualistic to their military detriment. He considers the Ukrainians to be over-emotional, like all Slavs, but also considers them "capable of deep love."³⁶ He praises them for being self-critical and hospitable and, despite referring to emotional behaviour as a trait of all Slavs, attributes both this and their better qualities to the Ukrainians' religiosity³⁷. Similarly, while he attributes to them a tendency to twist facts to avoid giving bad news, he considers this to be a product of their history of oppression rather than their race³⁸. Even moreso, he claims that most Germans are unaware of

³³Heike, Wolf-Dietrich. *The Ukrainian Division "Galicia," 1943-45: A Memoir*. Edited by Yury Boshyk. Introduction by John. A. Armstrong. Toronto: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1988. 10.

³⁴ Robert Michael and Karin Doerr, *Nazi-Deutsch/Nazi German: An English Lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 327.

³⁵ Wolf-Dietrich Heike, *The Ukrainian Division*, 10.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 11.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 11.

³⁸ Wolf-Dietrich Heike, *The Ukrainian Division*, 11.

these differences and consider Ukrainians to be like themselves³⁹. While the division's policies prevented internally referring to these people as Ukrainians (and thus Slavs) but rather as Galicians (thus harkening back to Habsburg rule), it seems unlikely that this would be the view held by the average German towards the inhabitants of the unambiguously named Ukrainian SSR. Heike certainly recognizes them as Slavs, but does not hold them in contempt as such. His view accounts for a plurality of social factors which have shaped Ukraine and does not discount their differences as purely the product of ethnicity. Heike also notes that Russians are dissimilar, as less individualistic and more eastern⁴⁰. Heike thus enforces the notion of the war against the East, rather than against Slavdom, and the abstract socio-cultural division between barbarian and ally.

Heike could perhaps be brushed off as an unusually Ukrainophilic officer, not truly reflective of policymakers on the front. Even after acknowledging his particular affinity, however, it is telling that Heike's views were able to be formed in this manner, given his history as a career soldier from a military family and his extensive training and schooling in the Wehrmacht⁴¹. This is the kind of fondness which is hard to imagine truly forming in the racial binaries of the Second Reich, even with its less overt racial radicalism. East African Askari needed to be convinced of their right to shoot White soldiers in the opposing armies, because the dichotomy between Black and White was so enforced as to take perceived precedence over that between ally and enemy⁴². The notion of brotherhood-in-arms, at least between soldier and officer, seems dubious in a culture with such a widely recognized racial hierarchy. The idea of a morally common enemy to Black and White colonial Germans, even if there were geopolitical grounds for such a claim, seems impossible.

³⁹ Ibid, 11.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 10.

⁴¹ Ibid, vii.

⁴² Morlang, Thomas. *Askari Und Fitafita : "farbige" Söldner in Den Deutschen Kolonien*. Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2008; my translation. 92.

The Second and Third Reich had very much in common in terms of their colonial subjects. The ideological powers of the both times proposed a system in which entire peoples were no more than their racial category, their subspecies. Hitler's envisioned masses of Slavs and Blacks, biologically incapable of culture. In the case of the Second Reich this occurred in the dehumanizing black-white relationships in the colonies, as seen with their askari. Black Africans were blank slates for Germanization, or so it was thought, with no sense of cultural peoplehood. In the relationship between German and askari, racial category was the strongest determinant of behaviour. In the case of the Third Reich however, the course of action is affected by factors of history, like the difficult connotations of endorsing Pan-Slavism, as well as social constructs like the idea of the 'savage East' as an abstract and mutable thing. Racial category played a variable role, whose simplicity in theory is belied by a complex pseudo-colonial reality. This can be seen most clearly in contrast to the relationship between Black and White in the era of the African askari.

It is, quite frankly, unsurprising that not even the racial state of Nazi Germany could make its European citizens feel they had less in common with East Europeans than with Black Africans, a very low order of primates in their Social Darwinist opinions. However, the fact that a hybrid racial-cultural chauvinism, rather than race reductionism, is what is applied to the Eastern Front shows us that Nazi ideology can only partly account for the behaviours exhibited by the German forces. The treating of the Eastern Front as an inferior land of undeniably culture-having peoples whose relation to eastern savagery depended on many factors has far more in common with the structures of colonial India than with the extermination of Jews and Roma.

While the askaris of German Africa and of the Eastern Front share a role as colonial auxiliaries and both were shaped by the perception of inferiority, the ways they interacted with German culture varied greatly. The most popular colonial narrative in

the Interwar period is that of the “loyal askari.”⁴³ Germany desired to see itself in the inhabitants of its colonies and see their burgeoning nationalism painted on the globe. To see the depraved African transformed into a noble imperial soldier was a demonstration of German cultural virility and racial power⁴⁴. The heralded successes of the *Schutztruppe* domestic forces under Paul Von Lettow-Vorbeck greatly popularized these ideas.⁴⁵ This was not pride in the performance of their subjects but in the skill with which they had been civilized. The black African was a blank slate for Germanization. This is not the case with the Slavs. The acknowledgement of culture amongst the Slavs means an acknowledgement of a national character that cannot simply be overwritten. Hitler’s writings emphasize that Germanization is hopeless at best, and a risk to racial purity at worst.⁴⁶ Even if his views are to be somewhat discounted, as we have already shown discrepancies between them and actual policy, the rhetoric surrounding participation by non-Germans on the Eastern Front always focused on the directing of forces outwards against Bolshevism rather than inwardly towards a civilizing influence. Some propaganda among collaborators depicted a “New Europe” that they will be encultured by, such depictions hardly promised a real change in standing vis-à-vis their cultural way of life but rather their being rid of Jews and internal enemies. In the myth of the loyal askari, colonial subjects are ennobled by their proximity to imperial whiteness. The Germany-allied Slav has a common enemy, perhaps even a common cause, but no common sense of peoplehood with the Reich. This is not purely due to having a less direct relationship than that between Germany and her colonies. Black Africa, devoid of culture, was reigned over racially by the white

⁴³ Lewerenz, Susann, “Loyal Askari” and “Black Rapist”—Two Images in the German Discourse on National Identity and Their Impact on the Lives of Black People in Germany, 1918–45”, Perraudin, Michael, Jürgen Zimmerer, and Katy Heady. *German Colonialism and National Identity*. Routledge, 2011. 174-175.

⁴⁴ Susann Lewerenz, “Loyal Askari” and “Black Rapist”, Michael Perraudin, Jürgen Zimmerer, and Katy Heady, *German Colonialism and National Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 177.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 175.

⁴⁶ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 322.

power of the German Empire. This racial supremacy allowed the remaking of the subject in Germany's image, or so it was thought. It is clear, however, that there was the perception of both racial and cultural savagery East of the Reich. As well, the *volkisch* movement tied culture to blood in terms far stronger than the broad racial categories of the Second Reich, and thus defense of German-ness meant restriction of their culture to their ethnicity.⁴⁷ This can be seen in the abuse of colonial askari from the Great War who presented themselves as legitimate war veterans in Interwar Germany.⁴⁸ These same restrictions were applied to the collaborationist regimes and volunteers of the East. There was no desire nor need to bring racially questionable allies from this pseudo-colonial space towards a Germanness into which their own cultures might seep.

The borders of Earth's 'dark places' are never clear - whether just coloured blots marking "Negroid" and "Mongoloid" on an ethnographic map or areas of storied warfare, home to an alien enemy at Europe's gate. The relationship between those who perceive themselves as civilized and the racial inferiors which swarm around them is complex and different in every instance. In the case of Imperial Germany, the colonial relationship was characterized by the broad dominance of the white man and his culture, imprinting themselves upon the land and its people. In the case of its Nazi successor, the transformation of the colonial relationship is simultaneously one of turning inwards and forcing attention outwards. The defense of German culture from influences to the East, whose presence in the New Europe could not be allowed to influence Germanness and its purity, turned the previously Germanizing mission of the Second Reich into a very defensive project focused on pushing back against the 'savage East'. It is not the desire to change the peoples conquered that fuelled the German ideological relationship with Slavic collaborators, but rather the desire to keep a front

⁴⁷ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 322-323.

⁴⁸ Susann Lewerenz, "Loyal Askari" and "Black Rapist", Michael Perraudin, Jürgen Zimmerer, and Katy Heady, *German Colonialism and National Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 178.

pushing, both militarily and in spirit, against the savagery they feared. The role of askari, whether the German's Black warriors on the East African plains in 1916 or that of "[their] Ivans"⁴⁹ on the Eastern Front in 1944, illustrate the evolving nature of colonial and racial thought in the German mind, especially under the strain of warfare where domestic principles are tested by military necessities. The pseudo-colonial relationship between German forces and non-German collaborators in the East during the Second World War is one shaped by racial-cultural chauvinism and struggle along an abstract front of civilization, which cannot be perfectly aligned with Nazi party ideology or with the lines of battle.

⁴⁹ David Stahel, *Joining Hitler's Crusade*, 375.

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