

# Homeland Protection in the German Colonies!<sup>1</sup>

by  
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English translation with notes by Eric H. Metzgar, Ph.D.

Ever since I've been back from the tropics a dream keeps showing me again and again how much my thoughts are still in the beautiful South Seas. Then I see the wonderful carefully built houses crumbling between new wooden barracks and the proud people who once walked in near Grecian beauty clad in European rags. Then it's a bad dream.

Nor does it correspond to reality. People still hold their old ways sacred. But for how long?

In our fatherland now, thank God, people are often called to battle where venerable buildings or beautiful places of unspoilt nature are in danger of destruction; and associations like Dürerbund<sup>3</sup> and Heimatschutz<sup>4</sup> work vigorously against the addiction of thinking only of money when making decisions. You don't just save things, you also learn to make down-to-earth decisions. Even the almighty "traffic" had to give in here and there so that something valuable was preserved.<sup>5</sup>

So I would now like to draw attention to the areas that are still beautiful in their rich originality that do not require any significant sacrifices to maintain this condition and that are nevertheless endangered. I mean our German South Sea colonies in the

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<sup>1</sup> Reference source: Krämer-Bannow, Elisabeth (1913) "Heimatschutz in die Deutsche Kolonien!" ["Homeland Protection in the German Colonies!"] *Kunstwart und Kulturwart* [Art Guardian and Culture Guardian], Juliheft [July Issue], 26(4): 13-22. German periodical. Retrieved July 1, 2022 from [https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/sophnf\\_essay/400](https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/sophnf_essay/400).

<sup>2</sup> Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow, arguably the first female ethnographer of Micronesia and Melanesia, accompanied her husband Augustin Krämer as member of the German 1908-1910 Hamburg South Sea Expedition. Her role as expedition artist included not only drawing and painting but also researching the lives of the local women because they avoided talking to the male anthropologists. She developed her own method of field research which today is known as participant observation.

<sup>3</sup> The Dürerbund was an organization of writers and artists with a strong influence on the intellectual life of the German middle class beginning in 1902.

<sup>4</sup> Heimatschutz literally translated means "homeland protection." The Heimatschutz movement arose in Germany in the late 19th century in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, with a focus on nature and landscape conservation as well as the care of historic townscapes, cultural heritage and traditions, folklore and regional identity.

<sup>5</sup> The word "traffic" here suggests the building of roads and highways with an eye to saving historic sites that otherwise would be viewed as non cost-effective.

Bismarck Archipelago, and those island groups of the Caroline Islands with their brown peoples, scattered in the sea.<sup>6</sup>

First of all, they are threatened by the mass production of "ethnographic articles," which is supported more or less by all whites who come there. In fact, it impoverishes the country in terms of real customary everyday objects and jewelry. Nobody will say anything against the reasonable collecting of such things that can be easily restored; for example, mats, ornaments, and vessels. It would be nice if the government or the missions would encourage the natives to make the objects again that are sold with the same quality and thus preserve the local art, but all sorts of professional and commercial collectors are a work. I remember an American who, traveling on German ships, took everything that he could get hold of and carried away enormous quantities. In America he is said to have made a fortune with it and as thanks insulted the Germans. A heavy export tariff needs to be brought to bear to make it harder for similar robbers.

What do the natives get for their good things from the whites as compensation? In most cases it is shamefully low in value and very little suited to raising respect for strangers when it is discovered afterwards. A respect, incidentally, that has already been belittled enough by the low self-discipline of many,<sup>7</sup> of which the attacks against native girls and the alcoholism<sup>8</sup> in particular testify. They also do not promote the mass extermination of the birds of paradise, crowned pigeons and other birds in New Guinea etc.<sup>9</sup> But that leads to other areas.

On the whole there is an effort to protect and preserve our German protected areas. We Germans must also endeavor to keep those people accustomed to the tropics vigorous and thus workers in our colonies. It has long been proven that this is most surely done if people are left to live under their own living conditions as far as possible, provided they are not destructive. The morals born from the characteristics of the people and developed with them are in many cases on the decline. Various causes work together, I will try to explain one of the strongest in the following.

Widespread on the many scattered islands, often deep in the interior of little explored stretches of land, where hardly a single trader dares to go, there are mission stations. They belong to many societies and their ways and their work are different. Some came poor and humble, as the first Christians went into the world, others behind them with great means,<sup>10</sup> some bought up the land and founded their

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<sup>6</sup> Geographically, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Caroline Islands are located in the Western Pacific regions of Melanesia for the former and Micronesia for the latter.

<sup>7</sup> Ostensibly foreigners.

<sup>8</sup> Ostensibly alcoholism amongst foreigners.

<sup>9</sup> Presumably the "natives" have traditional customs for protecting the exotic birds that foreigners are killing in New Guinea.

<sup>10</sup> Financial resources.

own flourishing enterprises. But all gain influence in a short time over the peoples to whom they have invited themselves to be guests, and to use this influence on the pious or to the detriment of their hosts who are in their power.

Personally, I have had many friendly experiences with missionaries; and as far as I have had the opportunity to observe, I have found their conduct mild and beneficial such that I do not want to appear as an opponent of the mission in any way. Rather, I would like to set up the missionaries as a model for the other residents in some things. Even in the way in which they often know how to make their home and its surroundings comfortable with little means compared to the loveless austerity of most European dwellings in the South Seas. It would also be wrong to forget the services that German missionaries have earned for the German language among the natives, in these areas where "pidgin English" rages and is even carefully guarded by many Germans.<sup>11</sup> It is often touching the love with which the natives are attached to their teachers, but like all human beings, missionaries naturally have their faults. Some of them have acted with a certain arbitrariness and lust for power; perhaps strengthened by instructions from the mother house,<sup>12</sup> they have showed too little respect for the culture; rather, they have fought it outright calling it pagan and have induced people to make changes in their way of life that have not always been beneficial.

Few persons have gotten to know as many different areas, islands and peoples of our German South Sea colonies as I have. I have had the opportunity to visit the most remote ones on several independent trips with my husband,<sup>13</sup> and then as a member of two larger expeditions. There are bigger differences in house construction, equipment, clothing and way of life than we usually suspect, and I rarely discovered that what I found was not particularly adapted to the type of people and the country. The peoples there have inherited house and boat building skills from their forefathers, trained in it and in some places very much perfected it. Anyone who has ever seen the great men's houses of Yap and Palau, or the wonderful, beautiful buildings in some villages on New Mecklenburg's east coast,<sup>14</sup> such as in Hamba, Lessu, Fesoa or others, will no longer call the inhabitants uncultivated savages, who on the contrary will be full of admiration for their achievements. On the rainy west coast, the huts are lower, for greater protection, on the high, fog-shrouded and cold mountain villages in the interior of the island, the round roof is drawn like a beehive down to the ground, such that the entrances are small to collect as much heat as possible. And so everything adapts to the circumstances. If a number of whites wanted to get together and use nature's means

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<sup>11</sup> An asterisk appears here in the original German text with the following footnote: "Read about it in Friederici's treatise in the "Kolonialen Rundschau" of 1911."

<sup>12</sup> Presumably the leaders of the religious mission.

<sup>13</sup> Augustin Krämer.

<sup>14</sup> New Mecklenburg is now called New Ireland or Latangai and is part of the Bismarack Archipelago in Papua New Guinea.

to try to build similar buildings, they would probably fail miserably, as for example, the houses of white traders who do not have enough money to have the components sent from somewhere, resulting in the houses becoming amazingly poor looking and ugly. We cultured people have forgotten how to use the tools of nature.

The following descriptions may make this clearer.

There is the small island of Tumleo on the north coast of New Guinea, where I was received very kindly by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The pupils played lively and happily in the garden, but the young girls were dressed in ugly shirts made up of many thick patches that made these physically delicate but somewhat generous Papuans very disfigured. In view of the sisters' three sewing machines, I openly expressed my aesthetic and health concerns. I would be happy if the poor children were spared from the patchwork collections, which are certainly benevolent gifts from home.<sup>15</sup> Our German mission associations do some damage out of ignorance, despite their best intentions, by making the natives, who are almost always gifted with good taste, happy with garments that do not even remotely suit them. They are irrelevant and quite ugly. Is it necessary, then, that tasteless and unattractive looks be closely connected with Christian morality? If you want to give people something useful, then in my opinion it can only be a matter of sleek, unprocessed fabrics or warm blankets, which would then serve the elderly and the sick.

I now introduce the reader to the stormy islands of the Ralik-Ratak group, also called the Marshall Islands,<sup>16</sup> which are surrounded by rough seas. Only very few houses of the old construction can be found in remote parts. A ceiling, carefully tied together from its rods, rests on four strong, free-standing posts with crossbeams on them, which gives access to the attic and bedroom through a manhole. The airy lower space between the stakes was for the family's pleasant stay on hot days, and mats were hung up for protection in rough weather. The painter Choris, Chamisso's companion, depicted life in such houses in an old-fashioned but vivid way, and Chamisso himself described the beautiful, gentle people.<sup>17</sup> Where have they gone, the strong, richly tattooed men in grass smocks and the graceful female figures in their becoming mat clothing? There comes a row of giggling, chattering girls in cloth-rich calico dresses, their hair held back with ugly, brightly colored celluloid combs. Their dresses, for reasons of chastity, close tightly to the neck and wrists and encourage the formation of perspiration which then easily gives off a bad smell. But the men look even worse. Shirts, trousers, jackets and hats of European style, which after a short period of use make a shabby, beggar-like impression.

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<sup>15</sup> From Germany.

<sup>16</sup> Geographically, the Marshall Islands are part of Micronesia in the Western Pacific.

<sup>17</sup> Louis Choris and Adelbert von Chamisso were members of the 1815-1818 Kotzebue Expedition which visited the Marshall Islands.

We are now on a very controversial subject: the clothing of the natives, which so many whites outside and at home see as a desirable advance.<sup>18</sup>

The understanding of a natural way of life is growing more and more in the countries of the ancient world. Anyone who has ever enjoyed the well-being of daylight and fresh air must regret that our climate, customs and other reasons do not allow lighter clothing so that the culturally weakened body can strengthen and heal in the air and sun. In the tropics we are forbidden to bare ourselves; our thin, pale skin cannot with few exceptions withstand the blazing sun. But God gave the children of hot countries a strong, dark, glorious skin that lies softly over the bones and muscles, devoid of all ugly hairs and wrinkles, if one excludes the old and the sick. From long personal experience the impression of disgusting or even shameless nudity disappears after a short period of getting used to it, the darkness and greater thickness of the skin in itself almost looks like the wearing clothes, and when tattooing is added (and the lighter peoples tattoo themselves very much so), this impression is reinforced. Is it now a good thing to take away from these happy nature children not only their well-being, yes, their health? And also their impartiality, because we, who come from completely different circumstances, are initially alienated from the freedom of clothing appropriate to the South?<sup>19</sup>

Many missionaries may basically also enjoy the dexterous unclothed natural people there and have long since realized that it is best to leave them that way, but they do not dare to show it in action because one clings to the outdated views in the mother countries<sup>20</sup> that the greatest possible concealment is a sign of morality, culture and progress. Clarification and then a change in the system would be very desirable. Another fact speaks against the cloth clothes of the natives: the dependency into which they go because they cannot renew the clothes given to them.

Similarly with the houses. There on the beach are the huts of the Marshallese described above: the Boston Mission frowned upon the open dwellings as obnoxious and taught the people to build stalls from imported boards, with doors and solid walls, in which the calico clothes and other achievements of our culture are in place hanging around in picturesque disorder. If one suddenly steps quickly into such a dwelling, one can experience how a woman, who has exposed herself because of the great heat, anxiously throws her clothes on; impartiality is lost. In addition, the increased perspiration under clothing promotes colds as well as the spread of transmitted diseases, the germs of which can no longer be destroyed by the sun, as was previously the case on the naked body. This is not a theoretical assumption, the facts testify to it.

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<sup>18</sup>The phrase "a desirable advance" here presumably means an improvement in the social-cultural development of the "natives."

<sup>19</sup> The "South" meaning the South Sea Islands. Pacific Islanders were and still are commonly referred to as South Sea Islanders even though some Polynesian islands (e.g. Hawaii) as well as most of the Micronesian islands (i.e. Marianas, Carolines and Marshalls) are located north of the Equator.

<sup>20</sup> The foreigners living in the German colonies in the Pacific were from many different countries.

The picture on Kusae<sup>21</sup> is also similar, having been evangelized by the same American society for a long time. Except for the youngest children, everything is clothed and the original house shapes have given way to motley, characterless huts. The Kusai people should have magnificent high houses, now this architecture is lost. The Kusai women were famous for their colorful, beautiful, extremely laborious weaving, the main effect of which was the countless knots of the dyed warp threads. Now these mats, the people's earlier clothes, are no longer made. The women weave hat bands or belts that are sold on the ships, aniline dyes replacing the old natural dyes. With great difficulty and with great promises I succeeded in reviving the endangered exercise of art in some women, but it will soon be forgotten. It would be welcomed if we could find use and thus sales for the precious beautiful Tol<sup>22</sup> mats. In Ponape<sup>23</sup> it is not much different. People rush to the churches in clothes, headscarves and hats, the once highly developed weaving industry has ceased, the wonderful old houses are becoming rare, you can see real monsters of imitated European houses everywhere. Here, too, it becomes apparent that one does not change the intellectual property<sup>24</sup> of a people with impunity. For the most part, people have belittled their own inherited customs, and what they did not learn from whites has been viewed as bad, pagan, or wild. Some valuable traditions and some venerable customs have perished with real abuses without the innovators even considering it necessary to properly familiarize themselves with them or even to pass them on to posterity. There has been a great improvement in this during today's mission but it is always arbitrary when the teachers forbid their pupils to do all sorts of things that are none of their business.

In Truk,<sup>25</sup> that large, centrally located Caroline Island, I was told at the time that the missionaries (from the Boston Mission, now replaced by Germans) denied the converts their rich jewelry as something pagan because it was made of all kinds of shell stones and coconut pearls. And then the people would have to buy fabrics and clothes from the mission, using their ethnographical things as negotiated items. I could not check to what extent this is true, but at any rate I occasionally came across preprinted delivery notes for clothes, hats and Bibles from colored<sup>26</sup> missionaries on these islands, and the ship we came on carried large stocks of goods from America for the missionary, who suggested that there was a lot of business going on.

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<sup>21</sup> Kusae is now called Kosrae in Kosrae State, Federated States of Micronesia.

<sup>22</sup> Probably a reference to Tol Island in Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia.

<sup>23</sup> Ponape is now called Pohnpei in Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia.

<sup>24</sup> The term "intellectual property" began to be used in the 19th century, though it was not until the late 20th century that intellectual property became commonplace in the majority of the world's legal systems.

<sup>25</sup> Truk is now called Chuuk or Chuuk Lagoon in Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia.

<sup>26</sup> Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow uses the racial terms "brown peoples" and "colored" interchangeably. She doesn't make any distinction between them with regard to Micronesians or Melanesians, the two major indigenous groups which inhabited the German colonies described in this article.

Now, however, the faulty nature of such an act emerges on Truk in that the Trukese, who being casual and not very clean, also pays homage to the copious use of turmeric powder. The whole body, especially the face, is powdered with it, or the powder is mixed with coconut oil and applied as a paste. The clothes gradually take up more and more of the noble yellow next to the abundant dirt. I saw an old-fashioned festival on the island of Bela,<sup>27</sup> whose people had reverted to the old customs, and I was amazed at the favorable change. The arrangement of the jewelry in detail may seem strange enough to us: the tiaras, hair combs, multiple chains around the neck, arm and leg, the coconut rings protruding profusely from the enlarged ear holes, and large white shell discs; but it is adapted to their individuality and dresses them well. The men's dances were splendid, sometimes solemnly serious, then again wild and ravishing. How bent the supple, veiled bodies came with sure strength and speed and to their own singing they danced for almost an hour with rising fire. And at the same time the young, still childish girl figures, who with downcast eyes move their arms and feet with great delicacy in order to perform the frigate bird or butterfly dance! The powdered skin of the upper body gleams golden, the beautifully woven mat around the hips bends with every step of the little feet, the delicate faces are not disfigured by any exotic painting, necklaces and arm rings clink softly, and the white feathers on the headdress sway — it is a lovely picture of grace that is not so easily forgotten.

It is also lovely to see the Trukese at the loom. Excellent results are achieved with limited resources; all the attention is required to untangle the adhesive threads and bring them into the right order. The yellow and black patterned mats are the most beautiful clothes of these women, and should be their only one!

For many reasons it is difficult to get used to the races that have already been influenced. But now there are primitive people on the small, remote coral islands and on some larger islets, who until now have resisted the so-called culture offered by the whites with tenacious persistence. They need to be protected and strengthened in their own way. First there is the enigmatic rulers of the island of Yap, whom the surrounding island peoples serve and pay tribute to from as far away as Truk. The Yapese are still undeterred in their strict customs and rites. The mighty hexagonal men's houses tower high on their stone shipyards — the row of mighty, barely-hewn jungle trunks that support the roof and are adorned with elaborate, lavish coconut sennit ties, as if placed by gigantic hands. Hunding's hut in our old Germanic saga doesn't seem much different.<sup>28</sup> The clean, stone-paved, shady village paths, on the side of which small watercourses ripple, to which the fenced-in, tree-decorated farmsteads border on the right and left, are ideal, and stay cool in the hot sunshine and soaking rain showers. Here on the stones your feet stay clean, while

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<sup>27</sup> Probably a typographical error as there was no island in Chuuk Lagoon spelled "Bela" in the early 1900s when Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow was there. The island she is undoubtedly referring to is Wela, now called Weno, one of the main islands in Chuuk Lagoon.

<sup>28</sup> Hunding's hut appears in Richard Wagner's music drama "Ring des Nibelungen" which is based on Norse and Germanic sagas.

the treeless, unpaved street of the European Quarter turns into a quagmire when it rains.

And the men, with their characteristic strong limbs and their strong somewhat faun-like faces, walk freely and beautifully as if to a party, their heads adorned with flowers, their richly tattooed bodies uncovered except for some raffia around the hips, like young men of antiquity! How miserable, on the other hand, appear the Chamorro, a mixed Spanish-speaking people who have a settlement on Yap,<sup>29</sup> in their loosely hanging suits. The Yapese in their large, fluffy leaf-skirts and beautiful upper bodies so slim and straight are rarely seen; they work hard in the field and flee from the white men from whom they are strictly guarded. The large, millstone-like stone money that has been set up in front of the houses was formerly transported at the risk of life and limb on rafts from the Palau Islands, about a hundred miles<sup>30</sup> away, where the Yapese had broken it from the rock cliffs and worked it on the spot.

That brings me to the last and most beautiful in the series of descriptions, to the Palau Islands,<sup>31</sup> which are particularly dear and familiar to me through repeated visits. Nature has given the archipelago a singular charm, but the most delightful effect are the wild, uninhabited woodlands, which unfortunately are decreasing. The bush is meager with the poor soil and narrow, and like most tropical forests, extremely moist. The dry grassy areas that alternate with it offer wonderful views of the torn mountainous island world, but your heart opens when you enter the villages shaded by venerable fruit trees; long-term care of the soil has created wonders here. Free, grassy areas with young offspring join the splendid groups of giant trees, and the alternating images, colors and shapes are so rich that the most experienced garden artist could not create anything more beautiful. The wide, stone-paved streets, the staircases and stone terraces with their dark background are admirable. The dainty houses made of beams and wickerwork show great delicacy in the work, as the Palau people in general carry out everything precisely and neatly. The neat wooden household items, the red lacquered boats adorned with shell inlays tell of this. The greatest admiration, however, is for the clubhouses, covered over and over with painted carvings, which lie individually or in twos and threes on raised stone pavements. Even the choice of places usually shows great taste, and the pictorial representation of legends and events that cover the inner girders and outer gables betray an artistic feeling. With the simplest means, everything is expressed that the individual figures or groups should tell us. The animals are beautifully reproduced, and how atmospheric the more than naive pictures of landscapes and plants sometimes appear! Everything is carved and

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<sup>29</sup> The Chamorros are the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands. During the Spanish Colonial Era, the Chamorro population was greatly reduced by the introduction of European diseases and as well Spanish genocidal policies. As a result, the Chamorro language became subordinate to Spanish.

<sup>30</sup> The distance from Yap to Palau is nearly 300 miles not 100 miles.

<sup>31</sup> Now the Republic of Palau, which forms the western chain of the Caroline Islands in Micronesia.

painted with earth colors. These clubhouses have a well-aired wooden floor and offer the most pleasant, coolest stay imaginable in the great sweltering heat.

Almost every such men's house has a bathing pond that the men use several times a day. If you go a little further, you usually come to a taro field, each village of which has a number. This is the realm of women. This sea of lush green taro leaves spreads out, with the water in silver pearls remaining on the waxy surface. All stages of growth are represented in small fields, where age-old rules apply to their division and planting. Ornamental plants adorn the raised dams, the banks form small peaks and peninsulas, on which palm trees and deciduous trees rise in beautiful groups and make a wonderful garden picture out of this work place.

A row of brown beauties come gracefully swaying, strolling in their silky, rustling, waving bast skirts. Some carry enormous bundles of leaves crammed into loose baskets on their heads, with which they fertilize the field, others have taro seedlings that they want to plant. In a hidden place, the clean skirts are exchanged for old used ones; and now they go into the green splendor, which seems so alluring to the eye but is in reality a deep swamp. With pointed feet, they stab the mud, where the women clear away the entire brown layer with their hands in order to spread the fresh fertilizer down. It's hard work in the hot taro field. It happens that women go demurely before sunrise in the morning and only return home after noon with their taro bulbs, yet this work is their pride and joy. The whole field is surrounded by running water, larger and smaller bathing places ensure that the mud is cleaned off and the women leave their fields as clean as when they came, in their light-colored dresses. Would they in long cloth dresses still do the work that supplies the whole country with good healthy food? Once they have accepted clothes they cannot take them off without looking indecent. They cannot go into the dark tannic mud with their calico clothes, and so the field work would soon have to suffer. What that means, the obstruction of a source of food, everyone can figure out for themselves!

The funeral customs are beautiful. People festively decorate and care for their dead, wrap them in woven mats, sing about honor and mourn for a day, and finally lower them into the ground in front of the house so that they keep the dead relatives close while the bushes are colorful and blooming grow up next to the stone burial mounds. How, on the other hand, must we give up our dead to an ugly bought coffin, and bury them in strange, far-away, cemetery soil!

Bright sun lies on the dry exposed coral reef and spreads dazzlingly in dirty yellowness, apparently deserted by all animal life. But pools of seawater remain on the reef and increase towards the sea. There the men and boys of the village gather: armed with nets, containers and fish spears, their supple, bronze, sun-accustomed bodies hurry to the uneven, slippery ground, the sharp points<sup>32</sup> to be avoided on the soles of their leathery feet. Here one of the boys has discovered a moray eel with its head stuck too far out of its hole, and the large, poisonous eel is already writhing on

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<sup>32</sup> Exposed reef corallites made of calcium carbonate can be very sharp and dangerous.

the little hunter's fish spear. Crabs, sea cucumbers, smaller fish are taken along on the way, but everything strives as quickly as possible to the edge of the reef, where the corals suddenly fall off into the deep blue sea. Here is a tumult of fish: the big needlefish and silver mullets shoot wildly around each other; the people run, jump and hunt in the knee-deep, moving water, spying and hitting the prey with great certainty and speed. If a European wanted to do the same he would quickly become aware of his inability to deal with these sons of nature. Such skills must be practiced from youth, and then keep the body agile and well-formed into old age. Would all white teachers take care that the children also have time to learn their native arts, which are of so great value to them in later life! In Truk I saw brown pupils who could not even bring a boat safely to the beach.

I could tell a lot more about the life of the Palau people. They show themselves in everything as a spiritually developed, active people on a high cultural level, which is adapted to their country and climate. If these people cover their bodies more sparingly than others, that shows best that clothing need not be a yardstick for culture. I repeat my request to the mission there, especially to the newly arrived sisters, not to want to change anything. A request that I made to them personally at the time. One of the Palau missionaries who was a Capuchin monk once told me that he only took the food offered to him by the natives from Palauan carved bowls, not from imported porcelain plates; and that he encouraged them to keep their style and custom. Such an attitude should not be isolated! What a wonderful task for the mission to keep up the old national customs for the benefit and piety of those entrusted with care, because only in this way can they develop strong and full of life.

It would even be good for the whites to acquire some of the natives' way of life, in building houses, horticulture, food, etc. Our compatriots in the South Sea regions live unnecessarily expensive in their austere, supposedly practical tropical dwellings, which could also be pretty for the same money. The complete uprooting of the existing vegetation is probably done because of the risk of mosquitoes or malaria, but for my part I have not been able to notice any disadvantage having lived for a long time in the shady villages of the colored people.

Between the deadly boring plantations of the immigrant whites, narrow strips of natural tree growth, as found with colored people, would be very desirable to look at and have also been shown to be of practical use. Artists and ethnographers who are able to get used to the environment should have the opportunity to participate practically in the development of our colonies and the creation of white settlements. They would certainly soon provide advice and show how one can build cheaply, expediently and beautifully at the same, and how life can be arranged richer and more dignified than is usually the case now. The painter Vogel, who occasionally got to know the situation during the Hamburg expedition to the South Seas,<sup>33</sup> made, among other things, noteworthy suggestions for improving the tasteless clothing of

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<sup>33</sup> The Hamburg South Sea Expedition took place in 1908-1910. Georg Thilenius, director of the Hamburg Museum of Ethnology, coordinated the scientific expedition.

colored servants. ("A research trip in the Bismarck archipelago" by Hans Vogel.) Photographs that I saw from other German colonies show, possibly even more clearly, how much the clothing of the dark servants is in need of improvement. I would like to turn to everyone who can make good suggestions here with a request. If one wants to clothe one's colored servants, and this will be desirable in most cases, one should also take the trouble to do so in a tasteful manner that is adapted to their nature, as happened, for example, with the Tamils and Singalese in Ceylon. The air should never be shut off too much, and trousers should almost always be avoided with the possible exception of those with a Chinese cut.

But these are questions that could probably be solved in a far better way if more qualified persons than I wanted to turn their attention to them. I turn for advice to those of you who, like me, have deeply regretted the decline in native life.

These peoples perish through the ruthless introduction of our foreign culture and barbarism. The government would like to find fixed norms that serve as guidelines for all officials so that not every newcomer can overturn the measures of his predecessor! The government official should learn to understand his wards, support their old rights and customs where they are good, and even defend them with low intensity against unauthorized interference from other places. The mission, however, would like to find its highest and most beautiful task in spreading the spirit of pure Christianity in the souls of its fosterlings, which are plagued by belief in demons of all kinds, in all silence and patience, and not to fight any existing brutality against animals and humans, but to impress upon them the external characteristics of our Christian culture. With this, conceit, hypocrisy and those other mistakes are raised all too easily, which speak to the complaints that colored peoples have about missionaries.

Most dark races are gentle, frugal, and patient when they are not irritable or incited by war. If the missionaries are completely successful in preserving the peoples individual look and character or able to lead them back to it (and no one else is given the opportunity to do so as they are), then they will have done another great and beneficial work in addition to their own mission. The colonial officials will yet lay themselves an enduring monument if they also apply homeland protection to the colonies.<sup>34</sup> Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow

To cite this article (English translation):

Krämer-Bannow, Elisabeth (2022) "Homeland Protection in the German Colonies!" (Eric Metzgar, Trans.). *Art Guardian and Culture Guardian*, 26(4): 13-22. Advance online publication. (Original work published 1913)

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<sup>34</sup> Presumably Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow is implying here that the ideals espoused by the Heimatschutz movement — the preservation of nature and landscape as well as the care of historic townscapes, cultural heritage and traditions, folklore and regional identity — should be applied to the German colonies in the Pacific.