



<http://gdc.gale.com/archivesunbound/>

## EUROPEAN COLONIALISM IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY: GERMAN COLONIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: FROM COLONIALISM TO JAPANESE MANDATES, 1910-1929



German Colonial aspirations in Asia and the Pacific ended with the start of the First World War. Japanese Army forces seized German leased territories in China and the Japanese naval forces occupied the German Pacific colonies. The Treaty of Versailles legitimized Japan's aggression and the territories were officially mandated to the Japanese government. This collection comprises correspondence, studies and reports, cables, maps, and other kinds of documents related to U.S. consular activities. U.S. Consulates were listening posts reporting on the activities of the German colonial governments and later the Japanese mandate authorities, and the activities of the native peoples.

**Date Range:** 1910-1930

**Content:** 10,150 images

**Source Library:** National Archives (U.S.)

### **Detailed Description:**

*Source Note:* Record Group 59, Records of the U.S. State Department, Central Classified Files, Class 800, Germany, 1910-1929. Includes content only for German colonial possessions in Asia and the Pacific, including country codes: 62a, 62c, 62d, 62e, 62f, 62g, 62h, 62i, 62k, 62L, 62m

*N.B. Formerly part of National Archives microfilm publication M336, reels 156-165.*

Germany was a relative latecomer to the scramble for colonies across the globe. But a German colony in China was envisioned as a two-fold enterprise: to support a naval presence and that colonies were ideal to support the economy in the mother country. Densely populated China came into view as a potential market. Thinkers like Max Weber demanded an active colonial policy from the government. In particular the opening of China was made a high priority, because it was thought to be the most important non-European market in the world.

But a global policy (Weltpolitik) without global military influence appeared impracticable, so a navy was built. This fleet was supposed to give German interests emphasis during peace (gunboat diplomacy) and to protect the German trade routes and disturb hostile ones during war (cruiser war concept). A network of global naval bases was a key requirement for this intention.

Nevertheless, the acquisition of a harbor in China was from the start subjected to the idea of a model colony: all installations, the administration, the surrounding infrastructure, the utilization was to show the Chinese, the German nation and other colonial powers an effective colonial policy.

The primary German colony in China was Kiautschou Bay with the principal city being Kiautschou, The bay was seized by Germany in 1897, but after treaty negotiations, Germany leased it from the government of China. The colony existed from 1898 to 1915.

With the outbreak of World War I, in 1914, China canceled their lease with the German Empire, and the area was subsequently occupied by British and Japanese forces in 1915. At the end of the War, the Treaty of Versailles mandated the former colony to Japan, which infuriated the Chinese government. China signed a separate peace agreement with Germany in 1921, and with American mediation, the former colony was returned to China in 1922.

German New Guinea was the first part of the German colonial empire. It was a protectorate from 1884 until 1914 when it fell to Australian forces following the outbreak of the First World War. It consisted of the northeastern part of New Guinea and several nearby island groups. The mainland part of German New Guinea and the nearby islands of the Bismarck Archipelago are now part of Papua New Guinea.

The main part of German New Guinea was formed by Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, the northeastern part of New Guinea. The islands to the east of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, on annexation, were renamed the Bismarck Archipelago (formerly the New Britannia Archipelago) and the two largest islands renamed Neu-Pommern (or New Pomerania, today's New Britain) and Neu-Mecklenburg (New Ireland).

With the exception of German Samoa, the German islands in the Western Pacific formed the Imperial German Pacific Protectorates. These were administered as part of German New Guinea and they included the German Solomon Islands (Buka, Bougainville and several smaller islands), the Carolines, Palau, the Marianas (except for Guam), the Marshall Islands and Nauru.

This collection comprises correspondence, studies and reports, cables, maps, and other kinds of documents related to U.S. diplomatic and consular activities. U.S. diplomatic and consular facilities were listening posts reporting on the activities of the Dutch colonial government and the activities of the native peoples.

#### *Confidential U.S. State Department Central Files*

The U.S. State Department Central Files are the definitive source of American diplomatic reporting on political, military, social and economic developments throughout the world in

the Twentieth Century. Surpassing the scope of the State Department's Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series, the Central Files for a country, allows the researcher extensive coverage of all political, military social, and economic matters relating to that particular country and/or world event.

The State Department Central Files offer unique opportunities for undergraduate and graduate research with the publication of the materials. Each part of the Central Files Series contains a wide range of primary materials: special reports and observations on political and military affairs; studies and statistics on socioeconomic matters; interviews and minutes of meetings with U.S. and foreign government officials and leaders; legal and claims documentation; full texts of important letters and cables sent and received by U.S. diplomats and embassy personnel; reports, news clippings and their translations from journals and newspapers; and countless high-level/head of state government documents, including speeches, memoranda, official reports, aide memoires, and transcripts of political meetings and assemblies.

In addition, access to these records will stimulate new insights into the evolution of American foreign policy toward both allies and adversaries and into shaping of the policies of these countries toward the U.S. as well. Of even greater importance for the study of individual countries, is the comprehensive manner in which the Central Files illuminate a country's internal affairs. There are thousands of pages arranged topically and chronologically on crucial subjects: political parties, unrest and revolution, human rights, government administration, fiscal and monetary issues, labor, housing, police and crime, public health and works, national defense, military equipment and supplies, foreign policy-making, wars and alliances, education, religion, culture, trade, industry, and natural resources. On these subjects and more, the Central Files offer authoritative, in-depth, and timely documentation and analysis that cannot be matched.

#### *State Department Central File Classification System*

Under the decimal classification system adopted by the State Department in 1910, Class 8 indicates Internal Affairs of States. The country numbers assigned to the Netherlands colonial possessions include: 856d: Netherlands East Indies (Netherland India); 856e: Java and Madura; 856f: Sumatra; 856g: Borneo; 856h: Celebes; 856i: Other Netherlands Islands.

The documents reproduced in this collection refer to the internal affairs of the Netherlands' southeast Asian possessions. A decimal point is used after the first three digits (class number and country number), followed by a number that represents a specific topic and or subtopic. This number, in turn, may be followed by a slant mark (/). The numbers that follow the slant mark are assigned to individual documents as they are accumulated on a specific subject. For example, a decimal file number taken from a document reproduced in this collection is 856d.6363/10. The four-digit number 6363 signifies that the subtopic is petroleum, and the number following the slant mark indicates that this is the 10th document received on this subtopic. The documents under one subject classification are generally in chronological order, coinciding with the document number assigned (which follows the slant

mark). There are instances, however, when a document file number was not assigned until a date considerably later than the one on which the document was received.

This is a listing of the State department's Central Classification Class 8 topics and subtopics with applicable decimal number ranges:

**KIAUCHAU (Kiautschou)**

**(Shandong Province, China)**

(Country code 62a)

862a.00 - 862a.911

Political affairs; government; the governor; proposed restriction on opium; public works; harbors; military affairs; salutes; the census; financial conditions; land; business concessions; shipbuilding trades; iron mines; building construction; newspapers.

**GERMAN PACIFIC COLONIES AND DEPENDENCIES**

(Country code 62c)

862c.01 - 862c.6377

Government; lands; phosphate deposits and workings in Nauru and Ocean Island.

**GERMAN NEW GUINEA**

(Country code 62d)

862d.00 - 862d.6363

Political affairs; government; regulations governing residence, trade, and travel; technical instruction for the natives; labor disturbances; legal tender currency and tokens; lands and properties; patent legislation; business concessions; agriculture; coconut plantations; timber regulations; mining laws; copper mining; petroleum.

**BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO; SOLOMON ISLANDS; MARSHALL ISLANDS; CAROLINE ISLANDS**

(Country codes 62f; 62g; 62h;62i)

862f.48 - 862i. 01/175

Earthquake in New Pomerania; political affairs on the Solomon Islands; Japanese occupation of the Marshall Islands; Caroline Islands: government.

862i.01/176 - 862i.9243

Caroline Islands: government; regulations governing entry and residence of aliens in Japanese mandated islands in the North Pacific Ocean; taxation on the Island of Yap; cables; cable rates; wireless telegraph; meteorology.

**PELEW (PALAU) ISLANDS; MARIANNE ISLANDS; SAMOA**

(Country codes 62k; 62L; 62m)

862k.48 - 862L.48/5

Relief of Chinese laborers on Anguar Islands; Japanese military government in Marianne Islands; food shortage on Ladrone (Marianne) Islands.

862m.00 - 862m.001/6

German Samoa: political affairs; the Governor and Administrator of Western Samoa.

Government:

862m.01/0-77

862m. 012 - 862m.017

Citizenship; maps; civil service.

862m. 03 - 862m.918

Legislative branch of government; an address by the Administrator of Western Samoa; the judicial system; laws; commercial law; the constabulary force; regulations governing residence, trade, and travel, firearms, liquor, and drugs; public health; population statistics; harbors; race problems; religion; marriage; education; observance of Memorial Day; earthquake; influenza epidemic; trade conditions; Chinese, laborers; insurance; life insurance; financial affairs; taxation; the monetary system; lands; immigration; the Samoan Agricultural Show and Fair; pests affecting plant life; copra; meat products; mineral deposits and industries; fluorspar; wireless telegraph; automobile law; harbor dues; newspaper.