

ABSTRACT

*The German South West Africa, now known as Namibia, has a history of atrocities and human rights abuses. The conquest of land by German colonial forces resulted in the Herero war of 1904-1908. This war has been labelled by historians as one of the first genocides of the twentieth century. The historiography of the war focusses mainly on the classification of the Herero war as a genocide, as well as on the contingencies between the Herero genocide and the Holocaust. By contrast, this research addresses another and so far, unexplored field of research in relation to the Herero genocide. It focuses on the representation of the Herero war and specifically on the portrayal of the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero in Dutch newspapers. Since newspapers were the first and only mass medium responsible for the image of the Herero war, the reporting in Dutch newspapers is a good indicator of how this event was presented to the Dutch population at the time. Three Dutch newspapers, the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, *Telegraaf* and *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, were analysed through a qualitative research method on the basis of the framing theories of Erving Goffman, Todd Gitlin and Russel Neuman. The newspaper analysis found that all three newspapers were not neutral in their writings on the Herero war and the atrocities, and mainly depended on German sources. The newspapers ideological-political backgrounds determined what was morally right and wrong, and what people should be made aware of, albeit in different ways. This research finds that *Het Volk* most accurately portrayed the atrocities through their rejection of the horrors in their reporting. In contrast, due to different factors, the *AD* and the *Telegraaf* legitimised the atrocities inflicted upon the Hereroes and therefore arguably did not describe accurate descriptions on the atrocities.*

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Introduction

'Ich, der große General der deutschen Soldaten, sende diesen Brief an das Volk der Herero. Die Hereros sind nicht mehr deutsche Untertanen. [...] Das Volk der Herero muß jedoch das Land verlassen. Wenn das Volk dies nicht tut, so werde ich es mit dem Groot Rohr dazu zwingen. Innerhalb der Deutschen Grenze wird jeder Herero mit oder ohne Gewehr, mit oder ohne Vieh erschossen, ich nehme keine Weiber und Kinder mehr auf, treibe sie zu ihrem Volke zurück oder lasse auf sie schießen. Dies sind meine Worte an das Volk der Herero. Der große General des mächtigen Kaisers.'

-Letter delivered by General Lothar Von Trotha, the head of the military administration in South-West Africa, in October 1904.²

This quote comes from a letter, delivered in 1904 during the Herero war, by the German general Lothar von Trotha to the Herero people in Damaraland, a former German colony in South West Africa.³ The order that he outlays in the letter is defined as Von Trotha's 'extermination order' and was one of the main reasons in causing the death of eighty percent of the Herero population between 1904-1908.⁴ This extermination order has been labelled by historians as one of the earliest genocidal commands of the twentieth century.⁵ Since the war was not fought on European grounds, newspapers were the first and only mass medium responsible for the representation of the Herero war. The reporting in newspapers is therefore a good indicator of how this event was presented to populations at the time.

The historiography regarding the Herero war touches on two major debates. The first debate focusses on the classification of the Herero war as a genocide in which two influential studies lay the foundation for the classification of the Herero war as a genocide.⁶ The historians Helmut Bley and Horst Dreschler played a dominant role in this research field. Dreschler was

² Bundesarchiv Berlin, Reichskolonialamt (RKA, R1001), Bd. 2089, S. 7 recto.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: a socio-political history of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Oxford 1999) 173.

⁵ Jürgen Zimmerer, *Colonial genocide: The Herero and Nama War (1904-8) German South West Africa and its significance* (New York 2008) 328.

⁶ Henning Melber, 'How to come to terms with the past: Revisiting the German colonial genocide in Namibia', *Africa spectrum* 40 (2005) 1, 139-148, 140.

the first historian to label the Herero war as a genocide in 1980 and even went on to claim that it was one of the first genocides of the twentieth century.⁷ Subsequently, this claim resulted in the listing of the Herero war as the first genocide of the twentieth century in the Whitaker report from the United Nations in 1985.⁸ In contrast, scholars such as Karla Poewe, Gerd Subdol and Brigitte Lau, argue that the Herero population should not be seen as victims of a genocide that was executed by the Germans.⁹ They argue that the usage of the term ‘extermination’ by Von Trotha had been misinterpreted and that the death rates of the Herero population was overstated. Brigitte Lau, the chief archivist of the national archives of Namibia, evidenced this argument by claiming that primary sources such as the *Blue Book* of 1919, were simply written as English pieces of war propaganda and can therefore not be used as a reliable source.¹⁰ The *Bluebook* was thus written for political reasons and Lau therefore argues that Drechsler’s research is ideologically biased because historical facts and statistics were distorted.¹¹

The second debate concentrates on the contingencies between the Herero genocide and the Holocaust. Recent historians such as Jürgen Zimmerer and Benjamin Medley claim a contingency between the Herero genocide and the Holocaust. They see the South West African colonial experience as an ‘outstanding event in a global history of the unleashing of violence’ and therefore claim a connection between the Herero war and the Holocaust.¹²

This research however distances itself from those major debates and addresses another, and so far, unexplored field of research in relation to the Herero genocide. In contrast, it focuses on the representation of the Herero genocide and specifically on the portrayal of the atrocities and the Herero in Dutch newspapers. Both of the debates do not pay attention to the role of newspapers in relation to the Herero genocide, certainly not from ‘neutral’ neighboring countries such as the Netherlands. Since newspapers were the first and only mass medium responsible for the image of the Herero war, the reporting in Dutch newspapers is a good

⁷ Horst Drechsler, *Let us die fighting: the struggle of the Herero and Nama against German imperialism 1884-1915* (London 1980) 154.

⁸ Melber, ‘How to come to terms with the past’, 140.

⁹ Brigitte Lau, ‘Uncertain Certainties: The Herero-German War of 1904’, *Mibagus* 2 (1989) 4-8.

¹⁰ *The Blue Book is a rare publication because it contains testimonies collected by British officers of forty-seven South-Africans, who describe the confrontation between the Herero and German colonist from their own experience.*

¹¹ Tilman Dederling, ‘The German-Herero war of 904: Revisionism of Genocide or imaginary historiography?’, *Journal of Southern African studies* 19 (1993) 1, 80-88.

¹² Jürgen Zimmerer, *Rassenkrieg und Völkermord* (2005) 48.

indicator of how this event was presented and framed to its population at the time, by a supposedly 'neutral' country such as the Netherlands.

Research question and context

Considering the term ‘genocide’ only came into motion in 1944, as discussed in the introduction, this research will refer to the event as the ‘Herero war’ instead of the ‘Herero genocide’. The following research question will be examined: *How did Dutch newspapers represent the Herero war and the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero between 1904 and 1906?*

In order to answer this research question, the following sub questions will be examined: *How are the atrocities legitimized or rejected in the newspapers? What kind of vocabulary did they use for describing the atrocities and the Herero?* The focus will be on reports published by the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, the *Telegraaf* and *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*.

In order to increase our understanding of the discussion of the research questions, the international position of the Netherlands at the beginning of the twentieth century will be briefly explained. A policy of neutrality was implemented between 1839 and 1940.¹³ This strict neutral policy was highlighted in April 1905 by Queen Wilhelmina.¹⁴ The policy was adopted for several reasons. The Netherlands was a small imperialist power with stable political and economic ties to foreign countries such as their neighboring countries Germany and Britain.¹⁵ The importance of international trade between these countries was fundamental to the Dutch economy, hence a neutral stance was essential. Dutch representation on the war should therefore display a more neutral standpoint when assessing the foreign relationship between their neighbouring countries. This is of significance because both Britain and Germany were involved in the area of South Africa, and arguably primary sources from these countries are not neutral.

However, this neutrality can be contested for several reasons. Firstly, the Netherlands was economically dependent on Germany and benefitted from Germany’s economic growth.¹⁶ A

¹³ Cornelis Wels, *Aloofness and neutrality. Studies on Dutch foreign relations and policy-making institutions* (Utrecht 1982), 17.

¹⁴ Cornelis Smit, *Bescheiden betreffende de buitenlandse politiek Nederland 1848-1919* (Den Haag 1958) 465.

¹⁵ Joris Voorhoeve, *Peace profits and principles, a study of Dutch foreign policy* (Leiden 1985) 50.

¹⁶ André Beening, *Onder de vleugels van de adelaar. De Duitse buitenlandse politiek ten aanzien van Nederland in de periode 1890-1914* (Amsterdam 1994) 238-239.

pro-German attitude was subsequently obtained to maintain the good relationship between the two countries.¹⁷ Another significant reason for contestation were the geopolitical interests of the Netherlands in the South African area. For example, the tensions between the Dutch and British for colonial dominance in South Africa had resulted in the Second Anglo Boer war in 1902.¹⁸ In this conflict the British destroyed houses of the Dutch Boers and put them in early concentration camps. During this war, 25.000 Boers died in these camps.¹⁹ According to the British historian Timothy Stapleton these early concentration camps were later copied by the Germans in the third phase of the Herero war.²⁰ The colonial relationship with Great Britain was therefore damaged due to the Boer war, resulting in negative opinions towards the British.²¹ The Dutch premier Abraham Kuyper changed his view on Great Britain and Germany as a result of the Boer wars in which his traditional appreciation of Great Britain faded and became increasingly favourable towards Germany.²² The newspaper analysis, later in this research, will further discuss whether this favour towards Germany is reflected in the reports written on the Herero war. Despite an outwardly neutral standpoint, as will be further elaborated on in this research, Dutch newspapers were never completely neutral.

¹⁷ Beening, *Onder de vleugels van de adelaar*, 238.

¹⁸ Timothy Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa* (2017) 12.

¹⁹ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 17.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ Vincent Kruitenbrouwer, Vincent, *A war of words: Dutch pro-Boer propaganda and the South African war 1899-1902*, (Amsterdam 2010) 236.

²² Beening, 'Onder de vleugels van de adelaar', 238.

Methodology

This chapter examines and lays out the decisions made on how many and which news reports and newspapers were analyzed. Furthermore, the research strategy will shed light as to how this research has been structured.

Qualitative research method

The term 'Herero' resulted in 1.883 newspaper reports in the digital archive of *Delpher* between 1904 and 1908. In order to narrow down the scope of this research, a conscious choice has been made for the selection of three different newspapers. The following newspapers will be analysed; a socialistic newspaper (*Het volk*), a right leaning civilian-liberal newspaper (*AD*), and a newspaper that claimed to be 'neutral' without being attached to a political-ideology (*Telegraaf*). In addition, a choice is made to further narrow down the scope of research by focusing on the years 1904 and 1905. Previous research demonstrates that in these years the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero were at their worst. This will further be elaborated on in chapter one.

In answering the research question, a qualitative research method is implemented wherein a total of 227 newspaper reports on the coverage of the Herero war between 1904 and 1906 will be analysed. The newspaper analysis covers 145 reports published by the *AD*, 51 reports by the *Telegraaf*, and 31 reports by *Het Volk*. It is evident that the analysis of the news reports is imbalanced due to the fact that the *AD* published a lot more than *Het Volk*. Therefore, it will be difficult to fairly compare the reports of the different newspapers. This should thus be taken into account when interpreting the outcome.

In order to answer the research question, each newspaper will be analysed individually in which the two sub questions are considered. In answering the sub questions, the theories mentioned in the theoretical framework will be used in order to find the types of frames that were implemented by the newspapers. Furthermore the influence of the factors such as the ideology, the political background of a newspaper, the identity of journalists and external influences such as politicians and the elite will be analysed.

The first sub question will be examined while searching for reports in which atrocities were criticized or praised. In addition, the second question will be analysed while looking at the selection of words which described the Herero and the atrocities. This will point towards the opinion of indigenous people and colonial atrocities. Furthermore, a conclusion will be drawn from each newspaper.

Structure

In answering the research question, the first chapter will examine the context of the Herero war using secondary and primary sources such as *The Union of South Africa's Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* and the re-edited version of the *Bluebook* by Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald.²³ The chapter will be divided into three sub chapters looking at the different phases of the Herero war. It is essential to understand the different phases of the war in order to further our understanding of the representations of the war in the newspapers. The causes of the beginning of the revolts and the atrocities will be discussed.

Chapter two, three and four will analyse each of the selected newspapers, in answering the sub questions. This will be done by firstly describing the context of a newspaper in which the political background and the position within the Dutch newspaper landscape is pointed out. Secondly the theories of Goffman, Gittlin and Neuman will be used to display the types of frames used by the newspapers. Lastly, comparisons and similarities will be made between the representation of the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero in each newspaper.

²³ Jeremy Silvester, Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found. German Colonial Rule in Namibia. An Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden 2003).

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this research will be based on several theories of Erving Goffman, Todd Gitlin and Russel Neuman. The implementation of these theories will deepen the newspaper analysis in order to answer the main and sub questions. The influential theory of Goffman will further our understanding of how frames work and the theories of Gitlin and Neuman will increase our comprehension of the process of framing in newspapers and the different types of frames they use. Firstly, the main theories will be discussed where a clear definition of framing is presented, which will display the process of framing and its subjectivity.

Social Framing theory

Fundamental to the study of frames is Goffman's Framing Theory. This theory will provide the foundation to answering the research question. Goffman points out that everything that happens in life is interpreted in order to understand it. This interpretation is what Goffman calls a frame. He makes a distinction between primary and secondary frames.²⁴ Secondary frames however are not included in the research and therefore will not be further discussed. According to Goffman the primary frames are based on the ordinary experiences of people wherein division is made between *natural frameworks* and *social frameworks*. Natural frameworks are related to the interpretation of non-humane things such as cars and animals whereby the interpretation of these things cannot be influenced by actors such as journalist, politicians and stakeholders. In contrast, the social framework is related to the social interaction between people in which actors are able to influence the outcome of a frame event.²⁵ As a result, an event can be averted, modified or blocked causing different interpretations. Furthermore, Goffman argues that a frame can also be influenced by many factors such as ideology, economy and politics.²⁶ The research will be conducted through the lens of the social framework.

²⁴ Erving Goffman, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience* (Cambridge 1974) 21-22.

²⁵ Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, 23.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 24.

Process of social framing in newspapers

Todd Gitlin was one of the first sociologists to connect social framing to the news. According to Gitlin, media frames are a process of selection, exclusion and emphasise. Newspapers systematically analyse information in order to relay the most important information and further convey them to their audience.²⁷

The process of framing in newspapers is influenced by three factors. The influence of the journalist, the political colour of a newspaper, and external influences such as politicians, the elite, and stakeholders.²⁸ In this framing process, the journalist is also influenced by their sources and the associated frames. Framing is an imperative concept when looking at newspapers and their content. As the reader goes through the newspaper from message to message, one wonders how the editors manage to deliver a 'neutral' image of an event.²⁹ Frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements, and suggest remedies.³⁰ Therefore, news frames are never neutral definitions of an event. This research will determine how the process of framing influenced the three newspapers in writing about the Herero war and the atrocities.

5 types of social frames

According to Russel Neuman, social frames can be divided into five types. Firstly, the *morality frame* that appeals to the moral beliefs of people and persuades them to think differently. According to Warna Oosterbaan, news is often the outcome of a process that is morally conducted in which it determines what is right or wrong and what people should be made aware of.³¹ Secondly, the *human-interest frame* responds to the emotions of people. Thirdly, the *conflict frame* that assumes a conflict between institutions or people. Fourthly, the *responsibility frame* that appeals to the responsibility of individuals or a government. Finally, the *economic effect frame* that responds to the consequences of a problem to a government or individual.³²

²⁷ Todd Gitlin, *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left* (1980) 7-8.

²⁸ Dietram Scheufele, 'Framing as a theory of media affects', *Journal of communication* 49 (1999) 1, 103-122, 114-118.

²⁹ Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, 28.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, 29.

³¹ Warna Oosterbaan, H. Wansink, *De krant moet kiezen: de toekomst van de kwaliteitsjournalistiek* (2008).

³² Russel Neumann, et al., *Common knowledge: News and the construction of political meaning* (1992) 54-75.

For this research, it is essential to detect the type of frame in the analysis the reports in order to answer the research question. Therefore, this research does not simply aim to illustrate the specific content of the Herero war in news reports, but intends to explore and define the role of newspapers (through the framing process) in order to understand the representation of the Herero war in the Netherlands.

Chapter 1

The Herero war

After the scramble of Africa in 1884, Germany seized her overseas colonies whereby South West Africa became one of the most important German colonial possessions.³³ The German South West Africa, now known as Namibia, has a history of atrocities and human rights abuses. The conquest of land by German colonial forces resulted in the Herero war of 1904-1908.

The first phase of the Herero War

On January 12 1904, the Herero revolt against German colonial rule began under the guidance of the Herero leader Samuel Maherero. The *Deutsch Südwestafrikanische Zeitung* posted in 1901 the following paragraph: ‘*The land, of course must be transferred from the hands of the natives to those of the whites, [...] this is the object of colonization in the territory. The land shall be settled by whites. So, the natives must give way and either become servants of the whites or withdraw*’.³⁴ The seizing of the Herero land was one of the main causes that led to the Herero uprising in 1904. The Herero economy was built around cattle and as a result of the exploitation of the land by German colonists, the Herero were unable to make a living for themselves.³⁵ This resulted in the declaration of war against Germany, led by Maherero in 1904.³⁶ The Herero population only sought out German men, sparing Boers, British men as well as woman and children.³⁷ This reality contrasted significantly to how the German propaganda portrayed the actions of the Herero population, namely as savages who needed to be educated.³⁸

General Leutwein was in charge of the first phase of the war. Leutwein had a close relationship with Mahero and therefore hoped to end the revolt through negotiations.³⁹

³³ Woodruff Smith, *The German Colonial Empire* (2012) ix.

³⁴ Cited from Madley, *Patterns of frontier genocide 1803-1910*, 182.

³⁵ Jan Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: a socio-political history of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Oxford 1999) 173.

³⁶ Drechsler, *Let us die fighting*, 143.

³⁷ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 15.

³⁸ Drechsler, *Let us die fighting*, 144-147.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

However, this policy was not supported by the Kaiser.⁴⁰ The war turned out to be more exhausting and expensive than expected wherefore the revolt needed to be suppressed quickly. Plans for the extermination of the Herero were established with the installation of general Lothar Von Trotha as the new commander in chief in South West Africa. Kaiser Wilhelm II ordered Von Trotha to put an end to the Herero rebellions and gave him permission to ‘suppress the revolt by all means required.’⁴¹ This permission of the Kaiser gave Von Trotha a free hand to use violent practices to suppress the Herero revolt.

The second phase of the Herero War

On June 11, 1904, the second phase started with the positioning of Von Trotha in South West Africa, wherein the implementation of his new policy, planned by the Kaiser commenced. It must be noted that Von Trotha operated in the interest of the German colonial operation in South West Africa with the permission of both his political and military superiors. The famous battle at ‘*Waterberg*’ took place in which the troops of Von Trotha conquered the Herero. Two months after the battle, the extermination order of Von Trotha was issued. This order became the official policy in the colony wherein no distinction was made between combatants and non-combatants. Woman and children were killed and no prisoners were ought to be taken.⁴² General Leutwein however disagreed with the extermination policy of Von Trotha. Primarily because he considered such a move as a grave mistake from an economic point of view. He claimed that the Herero were needed as cattle breeders as well as laborers for the German colony.⁴³

In a report of *The natives of South-Africa and their treatment by Germany*, eye witnesses recounted the brutal and horrifying practices of Von Trotha. They described how prisoners were immediately killed or hanged, water holes were poisoned and Herero woman and children were burned in their huts or chased out of their villages into the arid Omaheke desert.⁴⁴ One of the key factors that caused the escalation of the revolt signifying towards a war of extermination is that Von Trotha saw the conflict as a ‘race war’.⁴⁵ His extermination

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

⁴¹ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 16.

⁴² Casper Erichsen, *The Angel of death has descended violently among them, concentration camps and prisoners-of-war in Namibia, 1904-08* (2005) 10-11.

⁴³ Cited from Timothy Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 17.

⁴⁴ Union of South Africa, *Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany*, 67.

⁴⁵ Jürgen Zimmerer, ‘The race war in German South-West Africa (1904-1908) and its significance for a global history of genocide’, *GHI Bulletin* 37 (2005) 51-57.

order displayed a willingness to use indiscriminate and massive force without limits against the Herero.⁴⁶ Von Trotha believed that brutal violence and extermination of the Herero was the only option to put an end to the conflict.⁴⁷ This ideology of a ‘race war’ was deeply rooted in the racial tradition of social Darwinism. This theory of evolution uses natural selection as a way to justify certain political, social, or economic views. In the context of Herero, the objective of social Darwinism is to proclaim natural selection/ ‘survival of the fittest’ (primacy of white people) to justify the extermination of the Herero people.⁴⁸

After the implementation of Von Trotha’s order, the German government and society either praised his executions or considered it equanimity.⁴⁹ Before the outbreak of the war, the aim was to create a German white settler colony in which the Herero would be used for labour.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, due to the extermination order of Von Trotha, eighty percent of the Herero population died which was considered as economically unprofitable.⁵¹

The third phase of the Herero War

At the end of 1904, the Herero war became a subject of discussions in Germany. The Social Democrats demanded for the removal of Von Trotha as a result of the increase of critical publications in the press regarding the extermination order of Von Trotha. Letters from German colonists and soldiers who wrote about the atrocities to their family were published in the newspapers. Consequently, Kaiser Wilhelm II became concerned about the international reputation of Germany and ordered the withdrawal of Von Trotha and his extermination order. As previously mentioned, most of this criticism came from Britain. Criticism towards Germany centered mainly around the disapproval of Germany as a liable and adequate colonize.⁵² The inhumane policy of Von Trotha however, resulted in the increase of disapproval in newspaper reports.⁵³

Economic factors played a significant role in the withdrawal of Von Trotha and his extermination order. The Kaiser requested a different policy in which the Herero would be

⁴⁶ Zimmerer, ‘Colonial genocide’, 328.

⁴⁷ Ibidem.

⁴⁸ Mohamed Adhikari, ‘Streams of blood and streams of money: new perspectives on the annihilation of the Herero and Nama peoples of Namibia 1904-1908’, *Kronos* 34 (Western Cape 2008) 1, 305.

⁴⁹ Ibidem 305.

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 18.

⁵² Gewald, ‘*Herero Heroes*’, 286.

⁵³ See chapter three.

treated more humanely so they would stay alive.⁵⁴ Despite the withdrawal of the extermination order by Kaiser Wilhelm II, the inhumane actions against the Herero continued in concentration camps. The Herero who had survived the horrible atrocities were imprisoned into concentration camps where they died in large numbers due to inhumane circumstances.⁵⁵ Herero woman were physically abused and others were tortured or beheaded while their skulls were being used for racial experiments.⁵⁶ In 1907, 7600 Herero had died in the German concentration camps.⁵⁷ According to the British historian Timothy Stapleton this implementation of concentration camps was copied from the Britts who had already been using concentration camps in their colonies.⁵⁸ During the South African war, 25.000 Boers had died in these camps.⁵⁹ According to British historian Marrion Wallace, the Herero massacre was arguably one of the most violent oppressions in the history of Africa. Statistics show that between 60.000 Herero and 100.000 Nama people were killed during the massacres.⁶⁰ Consequently, the United Nations declared in 1985, the attempt to annihilate the Herero population, to be one of the earliest genocides of the twentieth century.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Erichsen, *The angel of death has descended violently among them*, 1-2.

⁵⁵ Ibidem.

⁵⁶ Madley, 'Patterns of frontier genocide', 188-189.

⁵⁷ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 17.

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ Marion Wallace, *The History of Namibia. From the Beginning to 1990* (New York 2011) 177-178.

⁶¹ Stapleton, *A History of Genocide in Africa*, 20-21.

Chapter 2

Algemeen Handelsblad

The *AD* was a nationally distributed liberal newspaper founded in 1828 and arguably one of the oldest and most influential newspapers in the Netherlands.⁶² The number of subscribers increased around 1900 due to technological improvements as well as the abolishment of the ‘*dagbladzegel*’ in 1869.⁶³ As a result, the production process expanded from 6.000 subscribers to 12.000 in 1901.⁶⁴ The circulation from 1904 onwards is not available but it was by far the largest in comparison to the other newspapers. It was known to be a right leaning civilian-liberal newspaper that was an important source of information for civil Dutch liberals.⁶⁵ In comparison to *Het Volk* and the *Telegraaf*, the press organ published the largest amount on the Herero between 1904 and 1906, making it a central source for analysis.

It is important to note that the *AD* did not have correspondents in the South West of Africa wherefore the press was dependent on information from foreign agencies. Information regarding the Herero war was therefore largely copied from German agencies. The *AD* obtained most of their information from the German newspapers ‘*Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*, which were both German liberal newspapers.

Different frames can be found in this newspaper, when analysing the framing process of the Herero war. In the first phase of the war, the frames of *conflict* and *responsibility* were dominant in the *AD*. The readers were regularly informed about the escalating conflict between the Herero and the German colonists wherein the Herero were held responsible for the outbreak of war.⁶⁶ The *AD* framed the Herero as the ‘enemy far from home’ in which a white supremacist sentiment characterized the tone and influenced the process of framing. For example, the Herero leader Samuel Mahero was framed as an alcoholic in an article by the *AD*.⁶⁷ Besides this, no negative connotations could be found in describing the Herero.

⁶² Archive Algemeen handelsblad 1832-1959, ARCH01779, Nederlands instituut voor beeld en geluid (Amsterdam).

⁶³ Maarten Schneider, *De Nederlandse krant 1618-1978. Van ‘nieuwstydighe’ tot dagblad* (Baarn 1979) 190-191.

⁶⁴ Willem Visser, *De papieren spiegel: honderd -vijf-en-twintig-jaar Algemeen handelsblad 1828-1953* (Amsterdam 1953) 287.

⁶⁵ Jaco Schouwenaar, *Tussen Beurs en Binnenhof: J.W. van den Biesen en de politieke journalistiek van het Handelsblad (1828-1845)* (Amsterdam 1999) 13.

⁶⁶ ‘De opstand der Hereros’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 12 January 1904.

⁶⁷ ‘Buitenlandsche Kroniek’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, Amsterdam, 16 February 1904.

In the second phase of the war the reports shifted their focus towards the economic consequences of the war and the Anglo-German relations.⁶⁸ The *economic-effect frame* was implemented to display how the Herero war was turning into an extremely expensive war for Germany wherefore more money and military forces were needed.⁶⁹ Factual German information such as the supplies, the positioning, the battles, the use of weapons and the number of deaths dominated the reports on the war.⁷⁰

Furthermore, the focus shifted from the military actions to the Anglo-German relations. The *AD* paid close attention to the development of the relationship but remained neutral and did not chose a side.⁷¹ Reports with headlines such as ‘*Tusschen Duitschland en Engeland*’, were published in which the *AD* mentioned that the British saw the Herero who fled to the English territory as political refugees who needed help.⁷² The neutrality of the *AD* regarding the Anglo-German tensions can be explained with the ‘neutral policy’ of the Netherlands. This neutrality was in contrast to English newspapers, who openly criticized German colonialism. Newspapers such as the *London Daily news* and the *Leeds Mercury* largely described and disapproved the atrocities happening to the Herero.⁷³ Here the political role of frames played a decisive role in which these English newspapers aimed to achieve a political advantage due to their geo-political interest in the South West of Africa.

During the third phase of the war the focus in the reports shifted towards the withdrawal of general Leutwein and the positioning of Von Trotha. Strikingly the atrocities and Von Trotha’s extermination order were rarely mentioned. No open criticism towards German atrocities can be found and the description of the atrocities was poorly covered. The actions of Von Trotha were questioned rather than disapproved.⁷⁴ The *AD* published only two reports wherein the atrocities occurring to the Herero were described in letters from eye witnesses.⁷⁵ The following phrase is written by an anonymous German soldier to his family;

De Herero stam is bijna uitgeroeid. Wat nog niet dood is zal gauw ten gronde gaan. De Herero’s hebben 50 tot 60 waterputten gegraven, zonder water te vinden. Deze putten liggen thans vol dieren, die van

⁶⁸ ‘Buitenlandsch Overzicht’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 18 Oktober 1904.

⁶⁹ ‘Buitenlandsch Overzicht’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 19 April 1904.

⁷⁰ ‘Duitschland. Koloniale zaken’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21 March 1904.

⁷¹ ‘Buitenlandsch overzicht’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 18 October 1904.

⁷² ‘Tusschen Duitschland en Engeland’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 1 November 1905.

⁷³ ‘How Germans Colonise’, *Leeds Mercury*, 23 March 1904.

⁷⁴ ‘Buitenlandsche Kroniek’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 19 August 1905.

⁷⁵ ‘Buitenlandsche Kroniek’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 31 December 1904.

dorst omkwamen. Gevangenen worden niet meer gemaakt. Elke mannelijke Herero wordt dood geschoten. Wij schieten over de vrouwen en kinderen heen, om hen op de vlucht te jagen. Spannen zij echter mee tegen ons, dan wordt ook raak geschoten.⁷⁶

In this letter the German soldier describes the horrible atrocities that were happening against the Herero. No further response however was given to this letter by the newspaper. According to the report, the *AD* only selected pieces that were in their view ‘important’.⁷⁷ By selecting, emphasizing and excluding certain information, the *AD* had the power to frame the atrocities as actions that were necessary in order to suppress the Herero.

The liberal political influence, the German influence and the neutral policy of the Netherlands all influenced the framings process. The focus was predominantly on the German economic consequences of the war and the Anglo-German relationship, in place of the extermination policy of Von Trotha and the atrocities. Furthermore, despite the lack of demeaning names, the Herero were framed as the enemy of Germany. Bringing ‘civilization’ to the Herero was seen as the reason that justified colonial atrocities to explain the absence of moral judgement. Subsequently, it can be argued that the *AD* legitimised the atrocities and framed the Herero as the German enemy far from home. It can further be concluded that the *AD* did not write objectively about the Herero war. The newspaper made use of *conflict frames*, *responsibility frames* and *economic-effect frames* to write about the war.

⁷⁶ Buitenlandsche Kroniek’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 31 December 1904.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*.

Chapter 3

The Telegraaf

In the early twentieth century, the *Telegraaf* occupied a special position within the Dutch newspaper landscape.⁷⁸ The newspaper claimed to be ‘neutral’ without being attached to a political-ideology.⁷⁹ The independence of the *Telegraaf* differed from the ‘pillarization’ and national newspapers, who were linked to a political ideology.⁸⁰ This independency was established in 1902 under article twenty-nine. The article stated that the newspaper would not carry the principles of a political or religious organisation.⁸¹ The newspaper was praised for its outstanding economical and financial coverage and therefore was acknowledged as a high-quality newspaper.⁸² From 1905 onwards, the *Telegraaf* was the biggest newspaper in the Netherlands. Before World War I, the *Telegraaf* held a pro-German attitude with regards to its coverage on foreign news. The German L. Grapperhaus played a significant role in representing the pro-German position while working for the *Telegraaf*.⁸³ Besides from Grapperhaus, several other journalists at the *Telegraaf*, such as J.M. Goedemans, were also in favour of Germany.⁸⁴

The *Telegraaf* obtained most of its information from the German newspapers *Frankfurter Zeitung*, *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*. The latter was an extremely national racist-antisemitic newspaper that openly propagated the German ‘superior’ race. The press organ often argued that inferior people needed to be removed in order to create more living space for Germany.⁸⁵ As already mentioned, the theory of social Darwinism influenced the course of the Herero war and therefore the newspapers as well. For example, reports were labeling the Germans as a ‘noble race’ who fears no danger.⁸⁶

⁷⁸ Huub Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland: 1850-200 beroep, cultuur en organisatie* (Amsterdam 2014) 101.

⁷⁹ Mariette Wolf, *Het Geheim van de Telegraaf. Geschiedenis van een krant* (2009) 90-91.

⁸⁰ *Pillarization refers to a process in which society becomes more divided in pillars.*

⁸¹ Hendrik Scheffer, Henry Tindal, *Een ongewoon heer met ongewone besognes* (Bussum 1976) 320.

⁸² Wolf, *‘Het Geheim van de Telegraaf’* (2009) 35.

⁸³ Paul Stoop, *Niederländische Presse unter Druck* (München 1987) 22.

⁸⁴ Stoop, *Niederländische Presse unter Druck*, 22.

⁸⁵ Klaus Werner Schmidt, *Deutsche Zeitungen des 17. Bis 20. Jahr hunderts* (2017) 383.

⁸⁶ ‘Van Duitsch-Z-W.Afrika’, *De Telegraaf*, 15 October 1904.

The first report regarding the Herero can be found in the *Telegraaf* on 14 January 1904. Just as the *AD*, the reports in the *Telegraaf* predominantly provided its readers with factual German information such as the supplies, the positioning, the battles, the use of weapons and the number of deaths. The frames of *conflict*, *responsibility* and *economic-effect* predominated the reports in the first phase of the war. Reports about the establishment of fundraising campaigns, to support the German colonists in the South West of Africa, were published.⁸⁷ The readers were regularly informed about the escalating conflict between the Herero and the German colonists wherein the Herero were held responsible for the outbreak of war. However, the *Telegraaf* was the first newspaper to publish one of the real reasons that triggered the revolts. The information came from the source *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which wrote that it was due to the depths and treatment of the Herero at the hands of the Germans, that the revolt against the German colonists had started.⁸⁸ The same article also wrote about the abuses to which the ‘*kaffers*’ were subjected but did not describe them.⁸⁹

The Herero was framed as the enemy of Germany in the *Telegraaf*. However, the *Telegraaf* even went further in framing the Herero while using degrading words like ‘brutal blackhead’ and ‘*kaffer*’ to refer to the Herero.⁹⁰ The *Telegraaf* published reports in which the Herero were described in detail with headlines such as ‘*De Wreedheid der Herero’s*’.⁹¹ In this report a story of the Herero was presented in which the Herero cut off the ears and eyes of their prisoners and slit their throats. Another article displays how Herero men were burning down farms, killing woman, children and servants.⁹² These reports framed the Herero as brutal killers that did not only fight the Germans but also murdered innocent people. The *human-interest frame* played on the emotions of people while putting the Herero into an extremely damaging light shaping negative associations regarding the Herero. The frame also created a one-sided perspective on the war in which the German atrocities against the Herero were completely ignored.

The German journalist L. Grapperhaus, who worked for the *Telegraaf* during the timeframe of the war, may have played an influential role in the portrayal of this one-sided perspective on the Herero. Letters written by Grapperhaus show his German propaganda work

⁸⁷ ‘Gemengde mededeelingen’, *De Telegraaf*, 22 February 1904.

⁸⁸ ‘Buitenland overzicht’, *De Telegraaf*, 26 January 1904.

⁸⁹ *Kaffer was seen as a swear word in the South of Africa and stands for ‘infidel’ or blasphemer.*

⁹⁰ ‘Buitenland overzicht’, *De Telegraaf*, 26 January 1904.

⁹¹ ‘Gemengde mededeelingen’. *De Telegraaf* Amsterdam, 28 mei 1904.

⁹² ‘Uit Duitsch Zuid-West-Afrika’, *De Telegraaf*, 27 mei 1905.

while working for the *Telegraaf* from 1904 until 1907.⁹³ According to Grapperhaus, the *Telegraaf* was able to play a significant role in influencing Dutch opinion in favor of Germany.⁹⁴ This displays the influence of journalists and German politicians on the reports published in the *Telegraaf*.

Furthermore, the *Telegraaf* was uncritical of German actions, highlighting its close association with Germany and legitimizing colonial atrocities because of the influence of Social Darwinism. Although sixty reports can be found on the Herero war, surprisingly not a single report was published describing the atrocities that were being inflicted onto the Herero and the extermination policy of von Trotha was ignored.⁹⁵ Instead, atrocities inflicted by the Herero on the Germans were judgmentally described and negative connotations were used to describe the Herero. Bringing 'civilization' to the Herero was seen as the reason that justified colonial atrocities. Therefore it can be argued that the *Telegraaf* legitimised the atrocities and framed the Herero as 'brutal animals'.

In conclusion, the *Telegraaf* was not 'neutral' in writing about the Herero war, despite the fact that it proclaimed to be. The newspaper used frames like *conflict*, *responsibility*, *economic-effect* and the *human-interest* to write about the war.

⁹³ Stoop, *Niederländische Presse unter Druck*, 22.

⁹⁴ L. Grapperhaus aan de Gezant te 's Gravenhage Von Schlözer, 14 maart 1905, C. Smit (red.), *Bescheiden betreffende de Buitenlandse Politiek van Nederland*, derde serie, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, deel 128 ('s-Gravenhage 1968) 97.

⁹⁵ 'Uit Duitsch Zuid-West Afrika', *De Telegraaf*, 12 September 1904.

Chapter 4

Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij

Het Volk was a nationally distributed socialistic newspaper. The history of the newspaper was founded by the *Sociaal Democratische Arbeiders Partij* (SDAP) in 1900 and was therefore connected to the political party.⁹⁶ *Het Volk* was used as a propaganda tool for the SDAP whereby members of the political party influenced the newspaper. Therefore, the socialistic aspiration of peace was propagated and international events were often viewed exclusively from a socialist point of view. Capitalism and militarism were seen as the real culprits of war and the view that peace could only be established within the hands of social democracy was dominant. This political influence distinguishes *Het Volk* from the other two newspapers who were both not connected to a specific political party.

Het Volk, similar to the other examined newspapers, did not have correspondents in the South West of Africa wherefore the press was dependent on information from foreign agencies. A central source of information in reporting about the Herero war was the German socialist newspaper *Vörrwarts*, who was the central organ of the SDP.⁹⁷

At the beginning of the war, the reports mainly described the Herero war from a German perspective. The majority of the analysed reports consisted of short press releases containing factual information and brief comments, wherein the newspapers provided limited detailed and accurate information on the representation of the Herero war and the atrocities. However, with the implementation of Von Trotha's extermination order, it becomes clear that reports evolved increasingly critical towards his policy.⁹⁸ The positioning of Von Trotha was subsequently an individual event that changed the reporting on the war. The two frames that dominated these reports were the *morality frame* and the *human-interest frame*. Von Trotha was framed as a brutal German general and described as a 'Herero-executioner'.⁹⁹ In addition, the newspaper framed the Herero into a less negative light in contrast to the *AD* and the

⁹⁶ Schneider, 'De Nederlandsche krant 1618-1979', 243.

⁹⁷ Raymond Dominick, 'Democracy or socialism? A case study of "Vörrwarts" in the 1890s', *Central European History* 10 (1977) 4, 286-311, 287.

⁹⁸ 'Berichten', *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 3 August 1905.

⁹⁹ 'Berichten', *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 3 August 1905.

Telegraaf. Reports with a positive attitude towards the Herero were published, in which the Herero were described as ‘civilised people’ instead of ‘brutal animals’.¹⁰⁰

Het Volk described the German atrocities in detail in reports with headlines such as ‘*Koloniale gruwelen*’. In this article, letters from German officers to their parents were published. The article points out that several German newspapers had published these letters wherein the atrocities were described as follow: ‘*Eenvoudig moet al het zwart vleesch dat voor den loop van de Duitse geweren komt, doodgeschoten worden.*’¹⁰¹ In another article the following letters from German soldiers were published: ‘*De Hererostam is zo ongeveer al uitgeroeid; wat nog niet kapot is gaat toch ten gronde, want alle waterbronnen zijn door ons bezet.*’¹⁰² In this sentence the word extermination is used as a synonym for the atrocities. It also refers to the occupancy of water holes which describe how apart from shooting, the Herero people were being murdered by preventing them from getting access to water.

Another letter from a unanimous German soldier writes: ‘*Wee hen als ze in onze handen vallen, noch vrouw noch knaap wordt gespaard. Overste Däumling maakte 75 gevangenen, heeft ze echter allemaal neergeschoten. Het kind in ’t moederlijk mocht niet gespaard worden.*’¹⁰³ This letter was copied from the socialistic German newspaper ‘*Vörrwarts*’ and describes the atrocities as mass murder in which innocent people such as woman and children were shot. These descriptions of the atrocities are more closely related to the reality described in the first chapter. Especially because these eyewitness accounts come from German soldiers who fought in the war. One of the reports of *Het Volk* also mentioned that it was no surprise that Von Trotha prevented his soldiers from writing about these atrocities in their letters to home, because they displayed the brutal truth.¹⁰⁴ Socialistic German newspaper were publishing these letters in order to bring public awareness to the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero through the *Human-interest frame*. Furthermore, the *morality frame* was implemented to persuade people to think differently about the Herero war and the atrocities. The selected news here is the outcome of a process that is conducted to morality in which the newspaper determines that these atrocities were morally wrong and should be stopped.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Buitenland’ *Het volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 11 October 1904.

¹⁰¹ ‘Berichten’, *Het volk : Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 23 november 1904.

¹⁰² ‘Buitenland’, *Het volk : Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 18 Augustus 1905.

¹⁰³ ‘Buitenland’, *Het volk : Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 18 Augustus 1905.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Berichten’, *Het volk : Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 23 november 1904.

Furthermore, the following report displays how the German national-liberal newspaper, *Kölnische Zeitung*, was criticised for legitimating the German atrocities:

Men ziet hoe spoedig het dunne vernis van beschaving en menselijkheid verdwijnt onder het zengende vuur der kapitalistische roofzucht. Omdat de ongelukkigen Herero's zich niet wilden onderwerpen aan de verkapte slavernij, waarin de gekoloniseerde rassen thans worden gehouden, zonder tenminste een heldhaftige poging te doen om zich te bevrijden, moeten zij zich door het beschaafde Deutsche volk worden behandeld met een beestachtigheid, waarvoor men zich ten tijde van het oude Rome zou hebben geschaamd. Zóó sterk is reeds de verwording der burgerlijk moraal voortgeschreden, dat een invloedrijk blad in een land als Deutschland zich op een beschavingsniveau van vele eeuwen geleden kan stellen, zonder zich voorgoed onmogelijk te maken. Indien zoiets kan neergeschreven worden door een redacteur, die ver van het oorlogsterrein kalm voor zijn schrijftafel zit, dan vraagt men zich met ontzetting af, hoe dan de officieren en soldaten moeten handelen die ter plaatsen zijn en in het volle gevoel van hun macht, hun wraak en andere lusten ongestoord kunnen botvieren.¹⁰⁵

In this report the German population is negatively framed wherein moral judgements are made. This selected news is the outcome of a process that is conducted to morality in which the newspaper determines what is right or wrong and what people should be made aware of. Therefore, it can be concluded that *Het Volk* was the only newspaper to reject the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero and described the atrocities in detail while implementing the *morality frame* and the *human-interest frame*.

¹⁰⁵ 'Buitenland', *Het volk : Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 20 august 1904.

Conclusion

This research has analysed how the Herero war and atrocities inflicted upon the Herero were represented in three distinct newspapers: *Algemeen handelsblad*, *Telegraaf* and *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*. In answering the research question, a qualitative research method was implemented wherein a total of 227 newspaper reports on the coverage of the Herero war between 1904 and 1906 were analysed. Since newspapers were the first and only mass medium responsible for the image of the Herero war, the reporting in Dutch newspapers is a good indicator of how this event was presented to the Dutch population at the time. Therefore, this newspaper analysis addresses another and so far unexplored field of research in relation to the Herero war.

The majority of the analysed reports consisted of short press releases containing factual information and brief comments, wherein the newspapers provided limited detailed and inaccurate information on the representation of the Herero war and the atrocities. When comparing these reports with chapter one, it can be concluded that the reality of the atrocities did not always correspond to the news reports published by the examined newspapers.

The analysis of each newspaper was conducted through the application of the theories of Goffman, Neuman and Gittlin. The research focused on how each newspaper used different types of frames and how they were influenced by different factors such as their relationship with Germany, the political colour of the newspaper, the editor's preferences and sources and the theory of social Darwinism. The influence of these factors determined the representation of the Herero war and the atrocities. The findings will shortly be summarized in the following paragraph.

The first conclusion that can be drawn is that the selection of news came mainly from German sources. The Dutch newspapers treated the course of the Herero war largely as a German matter in which the Herero were secondary to the narrative. This was due to the dependency of the Dutch press on information from foreign agencies. The examined newspapers did not have correspondents in the South West of Africa, as a result most of the information regarding the Herero war were copied from German newspaper sources indicating that the Dutch reports

were significantly biased. The *AD* selected news mainly from German liberal newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*. The *Telegraaf* generally from German liberal newspapers and populist-right newspapers such as the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*. *Het Volk* chose from the German socialist newspaper the *Vörmwarts*, which was the central organ of the SDP.

This German influence is best displayed in the newspaper reports of the *Telegraaf*. The reports framed the Herero as a brutal enemy of the Germans wherein racist language displayed the early 20th century thought towards indigenous people. Little sympathy towards the Herero can be found and no effort was made to describe the atrocities. This one-sided German perspective influenced the negative associations towards the Herero. The German correspondent L. Grapperhaus, who worked for the *Telegraaf* from 1904 to 1907, might have influenced this pro-German influence in the coverage of the Herero war.

Secondly, it can be concluded that the political-economical-ideological background of a newspaper influenced the framing process of events. The socialistic newspaper *Het Volk* framed the Herero war and atrocities differently to the *AD* and the *Telegraaf*. *Het Volk* was connected to the political party SDAP of which politicians were able to influence the framings process. The ideas of peace, equality and freedom were crucial in this process. The Herero war was therefore viewed from a socialistic and moral point of view.

In contrast to this, the reports in the civilian-liberal *AD* and the *Telegraaf* were characterised by capitalism wherefore economic interests predominated the reports of the newspapers. This is reflected in their coverage of the Herero war wherein the *economic effect frame* was used. The focus was mainly on the economic consequences for Germany rather than on the atrocities conducted by Germany. The atrocities were rarely mentioned in the *AD* and the *Telegraaf* and the extermination order of Von Trotha was even completely ignored in the *Telegraaf*. Instead, atrocities inflicted upon the German colonist by the Herero were described wherein the Herero were framed as brutal killers who did not only fight the Germans, but also murdered innocent German woman and children.

Furthermore, the theory of Social Darwinism played a significant role in the representation of the atrocities. The *Telegraaf* and the *AD* framed the Herero as alcoholic, brutal and underdeveloped. Bringing civilisation to the Herero was seen as the reason that justified and

legitimised the German atrocities implemented on the Herero. This ideology was fuelled by German sources such as the extremely national racist-antisemitic newspaper *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, who openly propagated the superiority of the German people and encouraged the removal of inferior people like the Herero, in order to create living space for the Germans.

In contrast, *Het Volk* was the only newspaper that rejected the atrocities inflicted upon the Herero and therefore implemented the *morality frame* and the *human-interest frame*. The newspaper framed the Herero less negatively in contrast to the other examined newspapers. Reports with a positive attitude towards the Herero were published, in which the Herero were described as civilised people. *Het Volk* was the only newspaper to describe the atrocities in detail in order to persuade its readers to think differently about the atrocities in the South West of Africa. Although the newspaper mainly used German sources, it presented a less subjective perspective on the war wherein the reports matched the reality more closely.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that all three newspapers were not neutral in their writings on the Herero war and mainly depended on German sources. The newspapers ideological-political backgrounds determined what was morally right and wrong, and what people should be made aware of, albeit in different ways. This research finds that *Het Volk* most accurately portrayed the atrocities through their rejection of the horrors in their reporting. In contrast, due to different factors, the *AD* and the *Telegraaf* legitimised the atrocities inflicted upon the Hereroes and therefore arguably did not describe accurate descriptions on the atrocities. Further research is however needed into other Dutch newspapers to evidence whether the conclusions of this study are similar to other socialistic and civilian-liberal newspapers.

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