White Rose Research Online

eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk
Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York

Deposited via The University of Leeds.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/123365/

Version: Accepted Version

Article:
Balogun, B (2018) Polish Lebensraum: the colonial ambition to expand on racial terms. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 41 (14). pp. 2561-2579. ISSN: 0141-9870

https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1392028

© 2017 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group. This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Ethnic and Racial Studies on 25 Oct 2017, available online: http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/01419870.2017.1392028. Uploaded in accordance with the publisher's self-archiving policy.

Reuse
Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

Takedown
If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
University of Sheffield
UNIVERSITY of York

Polish *Lebensraum*: the colonial ambition to expand on racial terms

Bolaji Balogun

School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Lebensraum – the space a state believes is required for its natural expansion – has a pivotal role in the global expansion projects. Whenever this concept is discussed, it is almost exclusively reduced to the Imperial Russia's domination of less-stately countries in Central and Eastern Europe; the British exploration and colonization of territories in Africa and Asia; the French settlements in parts of the Caribbean Islands and Africa; the German experimentation in South-West Africa, and the Dutch seaborne competing with the Spanish and Portuguese's expansionism. Study related to Poland's attempted acquisition of colonial territories outside Europe is rarely discussed. Drawing on the activities of the Polish Colonial Society, this article contends that the building blocks of colonization were not confined solely to European imperial powers. As colonization forged ahead in the twentieth century, Poland seemed to be the country where colonialism played a significant role in both national and transnational politics.

KEYWORDS: *Lebensraum*; European expansion; Polish colonial society; race; colonization; coloniality

Introduction

Colonization – a process of establishing foreign control over an indigenous population – has a significant role in the acquisition of space and wealth. Such acquisition of wealth that was primarily from African and Asian; Central and South American; and the Caribbean labourers served to increase the luxury and authority of powerful European nations (Du Bois 1915, 709; Williams 1944). Being the first European state to claim a new territory, on behalf of other European states, the colonizer acquires the rights to the land. These rights mean an exploitation of the colony's resources; forceful or voluntary conversion to Christianity; and extermination of native lives that seems to be fundamental to modernity and parts of "principal means of expansion" (Wolfe 2006, 392). At the heart of its operation, colonial projects utilized the idea of race and the management of those who are branded not quite human, not quite European and not quite Christian. This process is easily situated within coloniality as a power that emerged as a result of colonization (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243). It defines culture, labour, and knowledge production beyond colonial administrations and essentially facilitates the creation of 'Eurocentrification of World Capitalism' (Quijano 2000, 537). The implication, in the most part of the colonized world, is global coloniality – a power structure that is linked to the exploitation and violence that led to the specific control of labour, production and unequal distribution of wealth (Wallerstein 1974; Tlostanova 2012, 133).

Whenever the concept of colonization is discussed, it is often reduced to the European imperial powers domination of less-stately countries in Africa, Americas, Asia, the Caribbean Islands, and Central and Eastern Europe. Scholarship on Polish colonization tends to focus primarily on Poland as a colonized state (Kania 2009) and Poland as a colonizer only in relation to the

CONTACT Bolaji Balogun ssbb@leeds.ac.uk

Eastern Borderlands (Mick 2014, 127). Poland's attempted acquisition of colonial territories outside Europe, when the "Scramble for Africa" had already been completed, was only explored but not adequately pursued.

In 1918, a group of twenty-five Polish men saw colonization as the first step towards great power status, and established a colonial society called *Polska Bandera* (Polish Flag) in Poland. The purpose of the organization was mainly to reveal sea and maritime exploration as Poland's national interest. *Polska Bandera* quickly transformed into the League of Polish Navigation and then to Maritime and River League, later named the Union of Colonial Pioneers. The organization reached its pinnacle when it adopted its official name – Maritime and Colonial League in 1930 (Hunczak 1967). Marine exploration may have seemed attractive to many Polish people that supported the Colonial League, its main interest was "an act of migrationist colonialism reworked into the ideology of *Lebensraum*" (Young 2001, 2) – a commitment to overseas expansion; acquisition of overseas territories; and subsequently the possession of the territories' resources. Plantations ran collaboratively by the Polish Maritime and Colonial League and the Portuguese imperial administration in Angola set the stage for the Polish colonial society's attempted colonization in other parts of Africa.

By engaging the transnational history of Poland, especially during the interwar period, I argue that the building blocks of colonization were not confined solely to European imperial powers. Interwar Poland revealed a country that functioned as an archetype for the political-economic logic of race, as the country attempted to develop a labour control that would ensure that black Africans would work in similar ways as they did during slavery (Zimmerman 2010a, 151; 2010b, 4).

In what follows, I set out a broader overview of the Polish colonial society and the reasons for its omission within colonial discourses. I will explain the relationship of *lebensraum* to colonialism and again highlight the standard exclusion of the attempted Polish coloniality in *lebensraum* and demonstrate how this connects to the wider discussions on *lebensraum*. Following on from this discussion, I turn to Polish eugenics and colonial practices as parts of the colonial inheritance of racialized governance that manifest themselves in contemporary racisms.

The emergence of Polish colonial society

The Spanish and Portuguese's exploration of seas and unknown territories in the fifteenth century encouraged Britain, France, and Germany to colonize countries in Africa and the Caribbean Islands, predominantly through the exploitation of raw materials and new markets (Williams 1944, 51-84; Young 2001). The achievement of these imperial powers in "implanting of settlements on a distant territory" (Said 1993, 9) invigorated Poland's colonial ambition in the twentieth century.

Scholarship on Poland's colonial ambition is often reduced to Polonization, a soft conversion of non-Poles to Polish ways of life, complex relationships with its ethnic minorities, and complications of the Eastern Borderlands. Whilst Polonization demonstrates an aspect of expansionism, Poland's attempt to colonize countries in Africa in the 1930s received limited theoretical attention in the literature. This is not just an oversight; it is a reflection of literature in the field over the past decade (Piotrowski 1989; Snochowska-Gonzalez 2012; Mayblin, Piekut, and Valentine 2016). The reason for this was because the concept of colonization, in Poland, is often reduced to Germanic and Russian imperial activities in Central and Eastern Europe, and then the Holocaust, the mass extermination of Jews and non-Jews by the Nazis, and the

Communist propaganda blaming the West for its connection with the Second World War genocides. These were, undoubtedly, crucial events that often portrayed Poland as a victimized territory. Nonetheless, these events overshadowed Poland's colonial interest outside Europe. Although the colonial ambition was already noticeable in the Polish nobility exploration of Africa in the mid-sixteenth century, the ambition was actively engaged in the 1930s.

Whilst acquisition of overseas territories and subsequently possession of the territories' resources were not originally conceived by the Polish government in the 1930s, the pioneers of the Colonial League (Polish Generals Gustaw Orlicz-Dreszer, Kazimierz Sosnkowsk and others) had to rely on the generosity of the Polish public that invested in the Fund for Colonial Action. The step towards the acquisition of colonies in Africa was further intensified by various Colonial League's activities in Poland and abroad.

First, this is evident in the establishment of monthly and quarterly publications *Morze* and *Polska Na Morzu* (Poland at Sea) and *Sprawy Morskie i Kolonialne* (Maritime Affairs and Colonial) dedicated to issues of maritime, colonization, migration and sea transportation. These among other publications, were used by the Colonial League for publication of its propaganda, programmes, scientific and literary information based on sea exploration and colonization.

Second, the successful establishment of the Polish colonial society with membership reaching 500,000 individuals and 1,200 units throughout Poland, including 1,000 school societies. In addition, "Friends of the Polish Sea" was established in Australia, Austria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany and the United States (Hunczak 1967).

Third, the purchase of the "Indian reserve land" in Brazil, acquisition of a number of plantations in Liberia, and pioneering trading activities carried out on the west coast of Africa were parts of the processes of establishing settlements outside Europe. This was evident in some unsuccessful trade agreements between Liberia and the Polish Colonial League in the 1930s, when plantations were leased to Polish farmers for a period of 50 years in order to exploit Liberia's natural resources. The initiative would eventually allow Poland to recruit several African soldiers.

It was not too long before the Colonial League "started a nationwide campaign to popularize the idea of Polish colonies" (Hunczak 1967, 649) and its main target was Africa following in the steps of the British, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese. Writing in one of the League's editions, Jan Debski, a former Polish Parliamentarian, sets out the Colonial League's demand:

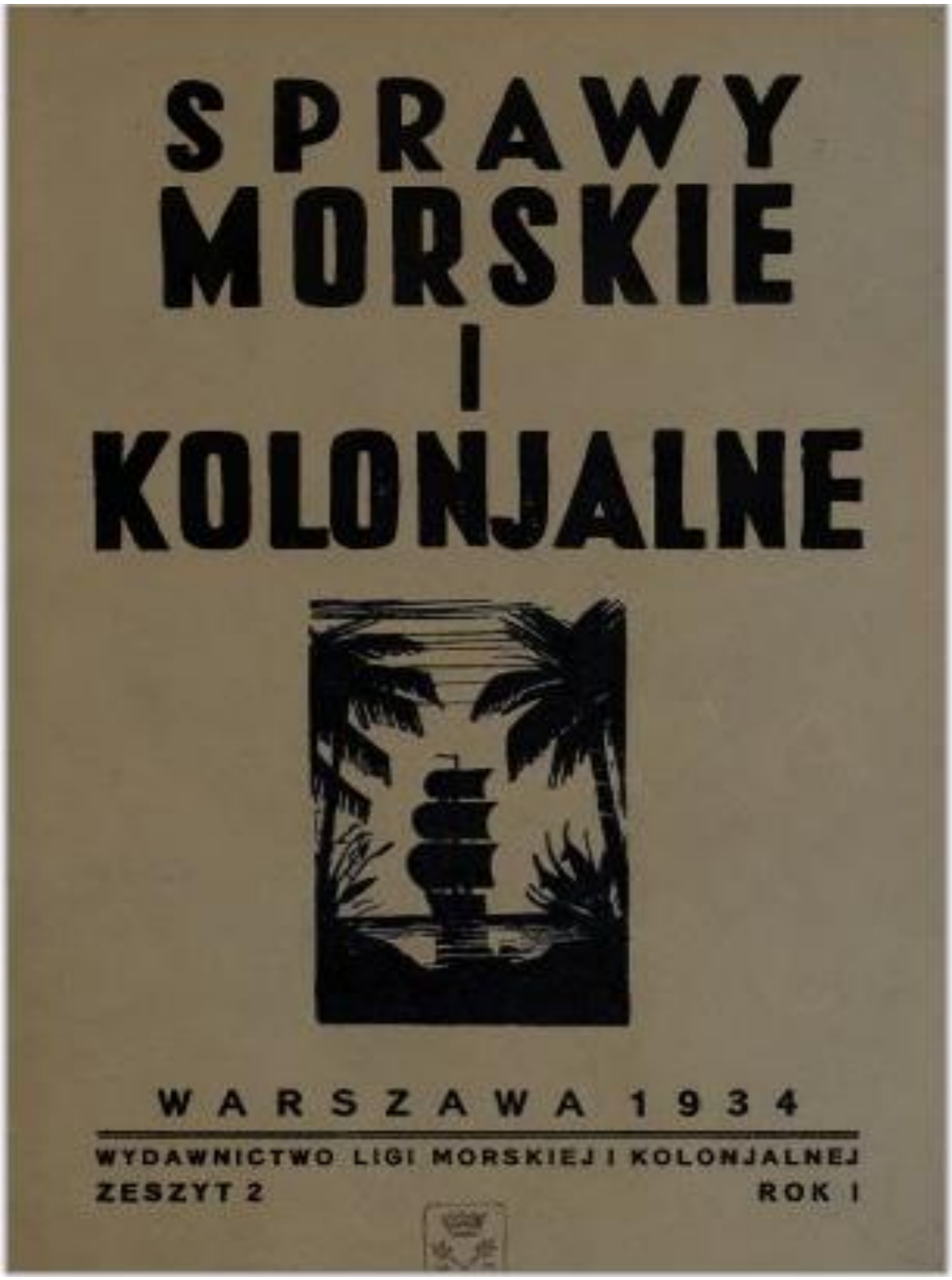
> We Poles, like the Italians, have the right to demand that export markets as well as areas for settlement be opened to us, so that we may obtain raw materials necessary to the national economy under conditions similar to those enjoyed by the colonial states (Debski 1938)

Kazimierz Jezioranski (1936), an advocate of Polish expansionism, shared a similar view that Poland needed to take advantage of the development of its maritime exploration, which would provide much needed access to resources from the colonized territories in Africa. He argued that having colonies was important to the economy and welfare of the Europeans. In a typical agrarian argument, control and transportation of raw materials from colonized territories in Africa became essential (1936, 15). In another publication by the Colonial League, Kazimierz Sosnkowski (1938) declared that Poland is fighting in the international space for free access to overseas colonies and direct participation in the production and exploitation of raw materials. He strongly demanded colonies for Poland.

At this stage, the call for colonies was beginning to penetrate Ignacy Moscicki's government agenda with the possibility of lobbying the League of Nations to consider Poland's report on the acquisition of colonies. Although the Polish colonial society had expressed special interest in colonizing Togo and Cameroon (Hunczak 1967; 2016, 41), they also hoped to obtain some of the former German colonies in Africa for the following reason:

> … since Poland constituted 9 percent of the entire territory of the former German Empire and the Polish population made up 7 percent of the entire population of the Empire, Poland, as a successor state, was entitled to the same proportion of the pre-World War I German colonies (Hunczak 1967, 651)

Figure 1. Cover of *Sea and Colonies* magazine edited by Jan Debski in the 1930s. Source: Jagiellonian Digital Library.



The above commentaries carry a considerable weight, yet they have never been pursued within colonial discourses simply because Poland is often depicted as a victim of Russo-German imperial gaze that led to the Holocaust.

Lebensraum – the space a state believes is required for its natural expansion

The above historical overview is easily situated within the concept of *lebensraum* – the territory a state believes is needed for its natural development. Whilst the Polish colonial society's attempted acquisition of political control of another state is similar to the exploitation of the state economically, the ambition has never been discussed as part of the European elimination of an inferior culture for the acquisition of *lebensraum*. The concept of *lebensraum* as a well-thought ideology was developed by Friedrich Ratzel in 1869 (Weikart 2003). For Ratzel, there is no difference between the struggle for space and human struggle for existence and expansion. Since space is required for human existence, the extermination of an inferior race would create the much-required space for the superior race (Weikart 2003, 278). *Lebensraum* requires three key elements: *migration* – "the behavioral consequence of the need to expand on Lebensraum"; *colonization* – "the effective occupation and exploration of new space by a species"; and *agrarianism* – the notion that "successful people were those with effective and stable agricultural systems" (Smith 1980, 54). A society without dominant agrarian sensibilities, Ratzel claimed, lacks the required culture for its survival; hence, *lebensraum* requires a strong distinction between a superior and inferior culture.

This process of bio-power is often explored through German Darwinism, which suggests that practices of race science could improve morality in a state (Weikart 2003, 274), and consequently a superior race would be separated from an inferior one. At the top of the racial hierarchy would be the Aryan race (Haas 2008). It was an ideology that soon became a reality in the South-West Africa and the colonial Togo, where the Germans considered the native Herero and Namaqua and Toveers to be inferior race. In order to preserve the *Volk* back in Germany, racial extermination of the native Herero and Namaqua peoples of German South-West Africa (Madley 2005) and the anthropological examination of heads and feet of Toveer-soldiers by German anthropologists in Berlin became imperative (Zimmerman 2001). Scientific examination of chests of Herero and Namaqua peoples at the Pathological Institute in Berlin, and Eugen Fischer's examination of the Basters, the mixed-race offspring of Dutch men and Namaqua women confirmed the German Darwinistic interest in racial segregation and hierarchy (Haas 2008). Although systematic separation was important to German Darwinists, racial hierarchy was crucial to Fischer, as he recommended that Africans, Half-Europeans and Half-Africans should be considered inferior to White-Europeans. For Fischer, people of black background could only be protected for European labour, and should be exterminated when they are no longer needed (Weikart 2003, 274).

The advancement of modern science and technology that led to the systematic genetic modernization, in the large parts of the industrial societies in the 1920s and 1930s, played a major part in the processes of racialization (Flitner 2003, 176; Bauman 2009, 277). This suggests that geopolitical activities in Europe were no longer sufficient for totalitarian control of a state, a process of human management, manipulation, and exclusion was required through race science. The regional superpowers – Germany and Russia – were at the forefront of this system of governmentality, which became visible in the Polish politics in 1940. In the same year, Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Propaganda Minister, declared *lebensraum* as the ultimate reason for Nazi Germany's invasion of other countries and the elimination of the undesirables (Deak, Gross, and

Judt 2000). As regards, *Lebensraum* became part of the Nazi Germany's commitment to the German population when Hitler suggested that "securing of a people's Lebensraum and thus of its own agricultural class" was part of the National Socialist Party's manifesto (as quoted in Smith 1980, 62). Hitler linked *lebensraum* – the living space – he thought the German people needed in the east with the extermination of the Jewish population. In his view, both *lebensraum* and the extermination of the Jews formed a single ambition (Mosse 1978, 204). Creating a perfect state was an essential part of the Nazi nation building, therefore, the separation of *Herrenvolk* (superior race) from *Untermenschen* (inferior race) was a key task for Nazi Germany, which eventually paved the way for "the Nuremberg racial laws forbidding marriage and sexual relations between Germans and "unfit" groups (Jews, Sinti, Roma, and Africans)" (Haas 2008, 334).

All this remains essential in our understanding of the conceptualization of *lebensraum*, and served as a guiding principle for Polish *lebensraum* – the exploration of Liberia's sea, land, villages and examination of native lives – would only result in the subjugation of African lives to cater for the welfare of the metropole. Whilst victimization remains crucial in the understanding of the mode of operations of colonial states, in the next sections, I suggest a reading of Polish eugenics and colonial practices as parts of the colonial inheritance of racialized governance that manifest themselves in contemporary racisms (Sayyid 2004; Hesse 2004a).

Polish eugenics

The historicity of eugenics, similar to the discourses on *lebensraum*, is often reduced to the German Darwinism, Russian biological taxonomy and the British Eugenics' "race crossing" project (Bland and Hall 2010, 219). Contrarily, the building blocks of eugenics were not confined solely to Britain, Germany and Russia. As the practices forged ahead in the twentieth century, Poland seemed to be the country where race science played a significant role in the national politics. Following its alliance with Western Europe, Poland constituted itself as a modern state, and its eugenics programme was part of the historicity of eugenics activities through social and medical issues, degeneration and sterilization in both Western Europe and Central Eastern Europe (CEE) (Hoffmann 1922). This led to the questioning and problematization of eugenics activities in Poland:

> We are beginning to know something of Russian eugenics, but what of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Slavic eastern Europe – Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Ukraine? As a Catholic Slavic country, Poland should be an especially intriguing test case... (Adams 1990, 225)

The First World War's significant role in shaping the activities of the key supporters of eugenics led to the establishment of the Polish Society for the Struggle against Race Degeneration (later *Eugenika Polska*) (Anonymous 1935). In addition, the support for Fascism and Nazi Germany's Sterilization Laws in 1933, the Citizenship and Marriage Laws in 1935, the Euthanasia Programme (Action T4) and the Final Solution of the Jewish Question received some interests in Poland and CEE, and accounted for an "orientation towards German racial hygiene" (Turda and Weindling 2007, 9).

Through the replication of the German and Soviet race science, *Eugenika Polska* (Polish Eugenics) embodied modern patterns of homogenization, systematic management of the population, and racial distinction within the Polish state. This had both practical and scholarly aims "to warn people of supposedly superior strains that they should not mate with their genetic inferiors". It was a fear of "mongrelization," that may result in the production of inferior stocks

(Hacker 2003, 35). Whilst Poland was going through the processes of establishing a new Communist order, practices of Polish Eugenics Society, in the 1940s, demonstrated a systematic elimination of the undesirables and racialization of foreign elements within the state. According to Gawin (2011, 5), Zofia Daszynska-Golinska, an economist, Apolinary Garlicki, a historian, and Tomasz Janiszewski, a physician, first conceived the notion of Polish eugenics. The trio shared the notion that the physical welfare of individuals and the biogenetic unity of the Polish state would determine the survival of the nation. It is a notion that typified patterns of bio-political terms, which resonates with Nazi Germany's racial logics.

A systematic elimination by the state, determining who must live and who must die, is the stage where racialization intervenes in the operations of the state (Foucault 2003). *Eugenika Polska* was state oriented and sponsored by the state. The elimination of people who held different values to the state was at the centre of its practices as part of processes of expansion. In order to identify these people, the Polish government employed many local clerks, in 1920s, to enforce and promote its eugenics thinking. For instance, the Polish eugenics project – "Military Anthropological Photograph" – was sponsored by the state and carried out by Polish anthropologists. Their aims included racial examination of Polish soldiers based on their physical appearance in order to build a prosperous state through the promotion of a system of state sterilization (Gawin 2007, 177).

Similar to German Darwinism and Russian biological taxonomy, *Eugenika Polska* advanced the critical selective breeding for the creation of productive Polish workers that could contribute to the state economy and abled Polish soldiers that could defend the sovereignty of the state (Gawin 2007). The ideology encouraged Polish employers to introduce IQ and psychological tests when recruiting new staff. This system of selection and categorization, *Eugenika Polska* claimed, would improve the standard of work within the private and public sectors, and would create a society that would be free of imperfect, unproductive, and unwanted individuals. Although it has been argued that *Eugenika Polska* "was class-rather than race-oriented" (Gawin 2007, 177), its system of bio-politics had patterns of racialization that encouraged anti-Semitism against the Jews, and the racialization of Roma and Tatars.

This is evident in the actions of leaders of *Eugenika Polska*, Tomasz Janiszewski and Leon Wernic, directing hate speeches towards the disabled, and the underclass. The Polish nationalists and advocates of eugenics describing the Jews as an alien race, often called for their removal from Poland (Gawin 2011, 3). A good example was Stefan Dabrowski, a Polish Parliamentarian between 1922 and 1935, recommending practices of negative eugenics as a scientific process of reducing the number of children, extreme individualism, and state totalitarianism. He suggested that Polish eugenics legislation should mirror German practices and legislation on eugenics. Dabrowski and other leading advocates of eugenics were influenced by Germany's *lebensraum*, not only because of Poland's proximity to Germany, but also because leading Polish biologists were influenced by German-speaking Universities in Berlin, Berne, Freiburg, Vienna and Zurich, and had ties to the German system of population management (Gawin 2011, 10).

Although eugenics, in most European states, was originally used for the prevention of hereditary sick offspring, this science of improving a population soon translated into individual's usefulness to the society and attempts to improve a race by eliminating people who were thought to be unproductive. The concept was based on individual's usefulness, ability to work, and the notion that unproductive people had to be eliminated was simply linked to racial logics that saw millions of neurological Jews being exterminated by the Nazis. The purpose was to prevent certain Jewish

heritable characteristics and ensuring that Aryan race is rid of such characteristics (Mosse 1978, 215-217).

Colonial practices

Colonial practices, as parts of processes of colonialism, were based on exploration of space and expropriation of land with cheap labour as its aim. Because of the strong desire for cheap labour, the colonizer sets out a forceful labour which ensures that the indigenous workers work harder than those in the European metropole (Pels 1997, 173). Poland's attempted colonization in Liberia was not different. The country's engagement with coloniality parallels an acquisition of territories, which comes with a privilege that allows the imperial powers to go to any land where the opportunity presents itself and behave as they wish. This would include occupying the territory, acquiring its control, and subsequently exploiting its resources. On the other hand, the colonized, predominantly, coloured man is confined to those parts of the world where life is historically, economically, and politically difficult. It is all part of the processes of keeping the Negro in his place, which would prevent him from taking control of things (Du Bois 1915, 712). In the process, the histories of colonization, racism and migration become closely entangled (Rex 1983).

What is being advocated by the Polish colonial society is the power to establish a form of settler colonialism especially in Liberia, as experimented by Germany in South-West Africa and colonial Togo. Such bio-power would de-populate the inhabitants of the colonized territories through the establishment of superiority over the colonies. The process would require the possibility of military involvement and typically employ racist language as its tool, as demonstrated by the British, French, Dutch, German, Spanish and Portuguese. Annexation of resources which would include the sale and use of slaves, trade in cotton and oil, and taxes on colonial subjects would be at the heart of the Polish Colonial League. Essentially, what the Polish colonial society tried to achieve was a rework of New South ideology that would extract the raw materials and "native" labour force, which would pave the way for unequal trade networks and markets (Zimmerman 2010a, 132-133).

Timothy Mitchell (2000, 100) recommends a useful way of reading Polish colonial attempt as a "political gaze", with coloniality at its heart. More than that, the author has argued, it is based on "a distance, a space of separation, a relationship of curiosity, that made it possible to see something as "a case" a self-contained object whose "problems" could be measured, analysed and addressed by a form of knowledge that appears to stand outside the object and grasp it in its entirety". Comaroff (1998, 341) describes the process as a work-in-progress, an intention, a phantasm-to-be-made-real, but never fully actualized. This implies that the idea to colonize another state, in Abrams' (1988, 75) view, is "an ideological project", "an imaginative construction", "the distinctive collective *mis*representation of capitalist societies". Consequently, the Polish expansionism could be seen as "an 'enterprise' just like a factory" (Comaroff 1998, 322-324). Stoler (1995) takes issue with such process of articulation of modes of production, and unequal transaction between the colonizer and the colonized. In her view, colonies are workshops of the modern states where the manufacture of economic desire, the raw materials and agricultural produce that can be bought and sold; and the construction of non-Europeans as the "Other" are produced. In order for the projects to be effective, implementation of regulations with a spirit of legality at the centre of its operation is crucial. It creates an opportunity for a language of legality that criminalizes the "native" cultural practices that are considered uncivilized, primitive, and run counter to European modernity. The legal and

administrative mechanisms, whose functioning is rationally close to the performance of a machine (Webber 1968, 1394), derived from collaboration of various institutions to create a smooth transition for, and to protect projects of European expansion (Stoler 1985).

Since an administrative system is required in the *management*, *regulation* and *conduction* of the affairs of the colony, the colonizer is entangled in several paradoxes that include the transformation of non-European peoples to "civilized peoples". This leads Fanon (1986) to interrogate the Eurocentric concept of the universal "Man" in *Black Skin, White Masks*. As regards, to be a Man is to be in the position of power and to speak and reason for the Less-Man. The implication is that the Black Man is not-yet Man, although a Man, he is only a Black Man. In European social and political contexts, the colonized cannot be "Man" because "his customs and the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and imposed itself on him" (83). The consequence of this position is ontological because the colonized is viewed as a Man who is not capable of reasoning for himself and not able to run his own affairs. For Fanon, the significance of the Black Man's position is racial as well as cultural because it is based on the mode of representation that indicates who is allowed to speak and who is not, who speaks for whom and on what terms.

Homi Bhabha (1994, 341) situates such interpretation within "the framing of the white man as universal, normative…" Such normalization, Bhambra (2014) emphasizes, exposes colonial structures that is embedded with exclusion and hierarchy in the name of universalism. Reading the concept of a universal "Man" through Fanon, Comaroff (1998, 329) notes that it is an attempt to deal with heterogeneity by naturalizing ethnic difference and promoting racial inequality. Since the colonized is not yet a "Man", black man as a "native" is never seen as a citizen, he is always a subject or citizen in the making. In Goldberg's (2002, 106) words, the "inferior could never qualify for citizenship". Even in the postcolonial era and following his migration and settlement in Europe, the black man, as part of postcolonial ethnic minorities, is often situated at the edge of the world-economy, and his presence interposes the hierarchical division of the world into Europeanness and non-Europeanness (Hesse and Sayyid 2008).

Evaluating the perception of black Man in Poland is a challenge raised by Maciej Zabek (2009, 68-70). He argues that the distinction between "Whites" and "Blacks" is entrenched in a Polish culture that perceives black Man through the prism of "race" rather than "citizen", and uses dark-skin colour as the basis for the ethnic identity of all black people. The most important example is the term *murzyn* (Negro), used as reference to all coloured people irrespective of their ethnicity or nationality, rendering blackness to a representation of exploitation based on racial logics that uphold a colour-line distinction. This implies that the "Other" is seen and labelled in ways that have been shaped by another culture, and consider the extent in which the ways of thinking are informed by stereotypes that describe black Man as foreign in a permanent way. To be foreign is to be a stranger, coloured Man as a stranger, in Poland, may evoke distaste, desire to avoid him, but could also encourage some forms of fascination (72).

All of this cannot be reduced to their political and colonial forms, but demonstrates the responsibilities of colonial states as racial states because the "racial states emerged materially out of, as they were elaborated in response to, the "challenges" of colonial rule" (Goldberg 2002, 108). As regards, Poland's colonial projects would require a deeply structural position that produces an effect of racially shaped societies, groups and situations by placing restrictions, privileges and exclusions on the mode of production. In practical terms, the implication is significantly racial. Hence, if the British, French, Dutch, German, Spanish and Portuguese's

colonial legacies could be provocatively described as a *racist world order,* Poland's colonial project, although only envisioned, is not far-fetched of similar description because the conditions created by the European imperial powers gave rise to the manoeuvring of the less powerful European states.

Exteriorizing those who are not quite Polish and not quite Christian

All observations offered thus far have focused on colonization and its consequences. In this section, I turn to an account of race-construction as historical and contemporary processes developed by the Polish political structures to establish divisions within contemporary Poland. The operations of the modern state tend to focus primarily on the state's projects and practices, social conditions and institutions, and enforcement of rules and regulations that include state-sponsored inclusion and exclusion culture. As regards, the modern state is conceived as racially constructed territory. This implies that the modern state is only less racial than the Third Reich, Apartheid South Africa or Segregated America because the conditions of the latter gave rise to the operationalization of the former (Goldberg 2002, 7). This is made possible by the changeability of race and racism that move and transform from the grass-root arrangements to national contexts to regional specificity as historic legacies of the Enlightenment and the European expansion (Mosse 1978, 1-16; Hesse 2004b, 22).

Whilst theory of exclusion has taken different processes of investigation such as Isaac's (2004, 2006) Classical racism; Cesaire (1955), Fanon (1986), Blauner (1972) and Hall's (1980) colonial dimensions of race and racism; Balibar (1991) and Bauman's (1989) Eurocentric tradition; Stoler's (1995) racial selves; Dikotter's (1998) Race Culture; Gilroy's (2000) ideology of sameness; and Hesse's (2004a) "*contaminant* of modernity", David Goldberg (2002) is concerned about the role of the modern state in racial dynamics and the limiting of racial states to extreme cases such as the Third Reich, Apartheid South Africa and Segregated America. Reading contemporary racisms in this way shifts attention away from other states that are also racial in their policies and practices that tend to reproduce conditions of a racist exclusion.

The complexity of this account of the state is neither the same as the Base and Superstructure of the civil society (Marx 1977) nor is it about the autonomous power of the state (Mann 1984). It is mainly about the modern state's arrangements, historical legacies, and obsession with demographic mobility, the reproduction of national identity, and the protection of "national thing" through the vocalization of race (Goldberg 2002; 2006; 2009, 1271). This implies that the concept of race is an integral part of the development and organization of the modern state and many of the state's projects are consciously informed by race. This is empowered by the European "Renaissance", the European "Reformation" and the European "overseas discoveries" (Hesse 2007, 647). In addition, the transatlantic slavery, the Virginal Racial Law, the Nazi Nuremberg Law and more recently, the migration and citizenship policies are fashioned in many ways that show the modern state as the main institution that includes and excludes on racial terms.

Race, in this regard, in partial homage to Michel Foucault, is a technology of human division by the state. Through the articulation of its homogeneity, the state denies its heterogeneity and organizes its society hierarchically in many ways that include racist exclusion. A good example is the construction of Polish people as White, Polish and Catholic and many people who do not fit such description are systematically excluded from the same definition. The logic was empowered by the establishment of the modern Polish state, in the twentieth century, which gave rise to

racial projects that conceived the state as the territory for mainly settled Polish people asserting their histories, cultures and traditions. This racial arrangement was achieved in two different ways – the creation of Polish homogeneity as a denial of its heterogeneous past, and contemporary Polish state bureaucratic immigration policies.

First, following the Polish independence, the Eastern Borderlands became a territory of geopolitical tension, especially during the Volynia Massacres (1943 – 1944). Whilst the eastern territories were lost, Poland moved westwards where the western and northern regions were incorporated into Poland as the Recovered Territories. Polish people living in the former Polish territories in the eastern countries were repatriated to interior Poland and the Recovered Territories in parallel with German repatriations in the same area (Mayblin, Piekut, and Valentine 2016, 66). Consequently, the borderlands were never considered to be ethnically Polish due to their non-Polish population as evident in the discrimination and marginalization of the people who are often described as "culturally inferior, incapable of state building and in need of someone who would lead them towards European civilisation, progress and modernity" (Mick 2014, 128). Following the horrors and challenges of the Second World War, the Polish state embarked on a plan to create a state for mainly Polish people, which was aided by the Nazis' elimination of the Jewish population. In addition, the religion of the Tatars, Islam in particular, runs contrary to Polish homogeneity and national identity (Zamoyski 1993). Tatars' link to Polishness becomes problematic when their religious identity is emphasized, hence, the exclusion of the Tatar population. Accordingly, assimilation became essential in the socio-cultural norms of contemporary Poland, strengthened by the homogenization of the Polish national identity as a collective memory (Copsey 2008).

Second, the racialization of non-white people perceived as "third country national" through asylum and immigration controls is designed to divide people along racial lines. This serves as an indication of a population that is unequal, and the demonstration of the state's post-communist racial and ethnic hostility, establishing its self-professed European superiority through an assertion that presumes Europeans to be White and Christian. These are attempts from the modern Polish state to reinforce and maintain its homogeneous identity based on the presumption that the state is never heterogeneous. It is simply a repression of heterogeneity as racial arrangement that contradicts the historicity of the early Polish state that was never homogeneous. After all, it was a system of heterogeneity that earned the *Rzeczpospolita* (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) a recognition, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the most serene republic that protected many Catholics, Protestants, Lutherans, and a large population of Jews and Muslim Tatars.

Taken together, the creation of an artificial homogeneous Polish state through the racial configuration of the internal and external, and exclusion of the "Other" demonstrates the state's fascination with racial differentiation and how the internal is racially demarcated. This is symbolized by the state's over-emphasizing control over those within and outside the state. By doing so, the state decides who is allowed within and outside its borders through constitutions, border controls, bureaucracy and governmental technologies such as categorizations (Klaus 2017, 525). The reason for this may be related to the state's attempt to maintain its discipline, power and privilege and at the same time expressing the fear that its century-long independence could be destabilized by the 'unruly' populations. According to Falguni Sheth (2009, 39), these populations are identified as "enemies, evil others, and those who are 'fundamentally not one of us'". In Klaus' (2017) assessment, the populations are mainly immigrants. However, given the

main objective of the Polish state is essentially to control, in the process, it decides who must live and who must die. Such distinction leads to the separation of groups within a population and the categorization of a certain group as superior and others as inferior. This is the point where contemporary racisms interfere with the operation of the state, with an assumption that the elimination of an inferior population is something that will make life healthier, purer and subsequently better.

Concluding remarks

In essence, the genealogy of the modern state is closely related to the history of racial formation. Poland's attempted colonization is easily understood through New South ideology that considered black Africans as people who could only implement hard labour such as land cultivation and assume inferior economic and political positions, as attributed to the African-Americans in the New South. Such project would lead to the prioritization of European lives over Africans' with economic and racial implications. However, the effect of this attempted colonization is often overlooked, hence its limited appearance in postcolonial theoretical discourses that recognize colonial legacies in contemporary narratives of *enslavement, colonialism,* and *genocide*.

The construction, labelling and manipulation of ethnic minorities are essential parts of Polish governance as the state stands for its civilized values, morality and importantly a superior Catholic identity, which is the driving force for stately domination. All this may appear as accidental categorization of peoples, but it is part of the state's policies that prioritized Polish people over the "Other". In its policies, the Polish state sought to interiorize, Christianize and civilize diverse groups of Jews, Muslims and people from borderlands living within the state. Although categorizing these groups may seem vital for state formation and to ensure loyalty, religious conversion, and assimilation into Polish ways of life, the processes of this categorization involved the construction of a wide range of markers that include race, religion, lifestyles and languages.

This article has attempted to problematize the above issues anew by arguing that the notion of colonization can no longer be reduced to European imperial powers, but also extended to the less powerful European states. Although the details of Poland's colonial ambition may seem superficial to include the country in the same colonial rank as the British, the French, and the German, nevertheless, the ambitions and actions of the Polish colonial society, as this article has aimed to highlight, revealed the colonial inheritance of racialized governance and postcolonial conditions that manifest themselves in contemporary racisms. The legacies of such actions are easily reduced to a system of governmentality, legality, materiality, and civility that had produced Herero and Namaqua *genocide* in Africa and cultural confrontations in the Caribbean Islands.

Acknowledgements

A version of this article was presented at the Department of European Studies, University of Economics, Krakow, Poland. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the staff and students during my residency. Also, I would like to thank Ian Law, Salman Sayyid, Paul Bagguley, Konrad Pedziwiatr, Lisa Long, Jan Brzozowski, Claudia Paraschivescu, Remi Joseph-Salisbury, and the three anonymous reviewers for their comments on the first versions of this article.

Funding

This article is part of PhD research funded by The Leverhulme Trust (SAS-2017-046) and supported by the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds.

ORCID

Bolaji Balogun https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7476-1708

References

Abrams, P. 1988. "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State (1977)." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1 (1): 58-89.

Adams, M.B. 1990. "Towards a Comparative History of Eugenics." In *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil and Russia*, edited by M. B. Adams, 217-231. New York: Oxford University Press.

Anonymous. 1935. "Eugenics in Poland." *Eugenical News* 19: 9-10.

Balibar, E. 1991. *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. London & New York: Verso.

Banton, M. 1967. *Race Relations*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Bauman, Z. 1989. *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Bauman, Z. 2009. "Modernity, Racism, Extermination." In *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. 2nd ed, edited by L. Back and J. Solomos, 277-293. London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H. K. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bhambra, G. K. 2014. "Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues." *Postcolonial Studies* 17(2): 115-121. doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2014.966414

Bland, L., and L. Hall. 2010. "Eugenics in Britain: The View from the Metropole." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics,* edited by A. Bashford and P. Levine, 213-227. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blauner, R. 1972. *Racial Oppression in America*. New York: Harper and Row.

Cesaire, A. 1955. *Discourse on Colonialism*. US: Monthly Review Press.

Comaroff, J. L. 1998. "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions." *Social Identities* 4 (3): 321-361. doi.org/10.1080/13504639851663

Copsey, N. 2008. "Remembrance of things past: The lingering impact of history on contemporary Polish–Ukrainian relations." *Europe-Asia Studies* 60 (4): 531-560. doi.org/10.1080/09668130801999847

Deak, I., J. Gross, and T. Judt, eds. 2000. *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Debski, J. 1938. "Walka o Kolonje", *Morze*. http://dlibra.umcs.lublin.pl/Content/27175/czas2595_1938_4.pdf

Dikotter, F. 1998. "Race Culture: Recent Perspectives on the History of Eugenics." *The American Historical Review* 103 (2): 467-478. doi.org/10.1086/ahr/103.2.467

Du Bois, W.E.B. 1915. "The African Roots of War." *The Atlantic Monthly* 115: 707-714.

Fanon, F. 1986. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press.

Flitner, M. 2003. "Genetic geographies. A historical comparison of agrarian modernization and eugenic thought Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States." *Geoforum* 34: 175-185.

Foucault, M. 2003. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France*. London: Penguin.

Gawin, M. 2007. "Progressivism and Eugenics Thinking in Poland, 1905-1935." In *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southern Europe,* edited by M. Turda and P. J. Weindling, 167-180. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Gawin, M. 2011. "Early Twentieth-Century Eugenics in Europe's Peripheries: The Polish Perspective." *East Central Europe* 38: 1-15. 10.1163/187633011X574347

Gilmartin, M. 2009. "Colonialism/Imperialism." In *Key Concepts in Political Geography,* edited by C. Gallaher, C.T. Dahlman, M. Gilmartin, A. Mountz, and P. Shirlow, 115-123. London: SAGE Publications.

Gilroy, P. 2000. *Against Race*, Cambridge. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Goldberg, D. T. 2002. *The Racial State*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Goldberg, D. T. 2006. "Racial Europeanization." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29 (2): 331-364. doi.org/10.1080/01419870500465611

Goldberg, D. T. 2009. "Racial comparisons, relational racisms: some thoughts on method." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32 (2): 1271-1282. doi.org/10.1080/01419870902999233

Haas, F. 2008. "German science and black racism- the roots of the Nazi holocaust." *FASEB Journal* 22 (2): 332-337. http://www.fasebj.org/content/22/2/332

Hacker, A. 2003. *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. New York: Scribner

Hall, S. 1980. "Race, Articulation and Societies Structured in Dominance." In *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*, edited by UNESCO, 305-345. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Hesse, B. 2004a. "Discourse on institutional racism, the genealogy of a concept." In *Institutional Racism in Higher Education* edited by I. Law, D. Phillips and L. Turney, 131-147. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Press.

Hesse, B. 2004b. "Im/plausible deniability: racism's conceptual double bind." *Social Identities* 10 (1): 9-29. doi.org/10.1080/1350463042000190976

Hesse, B. 2007. "Racialized modernity: An analytics of white mythologies." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (4): 643-663. doi.org/10.1080/01419870701356064

Hesse, B. and S. Sayyid. 2008 *The Paradoxes of Racism*. London: Pluto Press.

Hoffmann, G. 1922. "Eugenics in the Central Empires since 1914." *Social Hygiene* 7: 285-296.

Hunczak, T. 1967. "Polish Colonial Ambitions in the Inter-War Period." *Slavic Review* 26 (4): 648-656. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2492615

Hunczak, T. 2016. *My Memoirs: Life's Journey Through WWII and Various Historical Events of the 21st Century*. Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books.

Isaac, B. 2004. *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Isaac, B. 2006 "Proto-Racism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity." *World Archaeology* 38 (1): 32-47. doi.org/10.1080/00438240500509819

Jezioranski, K. 1936. "Gdynia a Kolonje", *Morze*. http://www.naszbaltyk.com/wszystkie-kategorie/morze-kalendarium/1949-71-polityka-morska-gdynia-a-kolonje.html

Kania, M. 2009. "'Here comes the rest': A sociological perspective on postcolonial rethinking of the 'second world'." *Postcolonial Europe* http://www.postcolonial-europe.eu/en/attitudes/85-here-comes-the-rest-a-sociological-perspective-on-postcolonial-rethinkingof-the-second-world-the-case-of-poland

Klaus, W. 2017. "Security First—New Right-Wing Government in Poland and Its Policy Towards Immigrants and Refugees." *Surveillance & Society* 15(3/4): 523-528.

Madley, B. 2005. "From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by Nazis in Eastern Europe." *European History Quarterly* 35 (3): 429-464.

Maldonado-Torres, N. 2007. "ON THE COLONIALITY OF BEING: Contributions to the Development of a Concept." *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3): 240-270. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162548

Mann, M. 1984. "The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanisms and results." *European Journal of Sociology* 25 (2): 185-213.

Marx, K. 1977. *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Mayblin, L., A. Piekut, and G. Valentine. 2016. "'Other' Posts in 'Other' Places: Poland through a Postcolonial Lens?" *Sociology* 50(1): 60-79. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0038038514556796

Mick, C. 2014 "Colonialism in the Polish Eastern Borderlands 1919–1939." In *The Shadow of Colonialism on Europe's Modern Past,* edited by R. Healy and E. dal Lago, 126-141. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mitchell, T. 2000. *Rules of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mosse, G. L. 1978. *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism*. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

Pels, P. 1997. "The Anthropology of Colonialism: Culture, History, and the Emergence of Western Governmentality." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26: 163-183. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2952519

Piotrowski, T. 1989. *Poland's Holocaust: Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic, 1918-1947*. London: McFarland & Company.

Quijano, A. 2000. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America." *Nepantla*: *Views from South* 1(3): 533- 580. http://muse.jhu.edu/article/23906

Rex, J. 1983. *Race Relations in Sociological Theory*. London: Routledge & K. Paul.

Said, E. 1993. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Random House.

Sayyid, S. 2004. "Slippery people: the immigrant imaginary and the grammar of colours." In *Institutional Racism in Higher Education* edited by I. Law, D. Phillips and L. Turney, 149-160. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Press.

Sheth, F. A. 2009. *Toward a Political Philosophy of Race*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Smith, W. D. 1980. "Friedrich Ratzel and the Origins of Lebensraum." *German Studies Review* 3 (1): 51-68. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1429483

Snochowska-Gonzalez, C. 2012. "Post-colonial Poland — On an Unavoidable Misuse." *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 26 (4): 708-723. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0888325412448473

Sosnkowski, K. 1938. "Colonial Days." *Morze*. http://dlibra.umcs.lublin.pl/Content/27175/czas2595_1938_4.pdf

Stoler, A. L. 1985. "Perceptions of Protest: Defining the Dangerous in Colonial Sumatra." *American Ethnologist* 12 (4): 642-658.

Stoler, A. L. 1995. *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tlostanova, M. 2012. "Postsocialist ≠ postcolonial? On post-Soviet imaginary and global Coloniality." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 48 (2): 130-142. doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2012.658244

Turda, M., and P. J. Weindling. 2007. "Eugenics, Race and Nation in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940: A Historiograhic Overview". In *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southern Europe,* edited by M. Turda and P. J. Weindling, 1-20. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Wallerstein, I. 1974. "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16 (4): 387-415. http://www.jstor.org/stable/178015

Webber, M. 1968. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology. Vol. II.* Edited by G. Roth and C. Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weikart, R. 2003. "Progress through Racial Extermination: Social Darwinism, Eugenics, and Pacifism in Germany, 1860-1918." *German Studies Review* 26 (2): 273-294. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1433326

Williams, E. 1944. *Capitalism and Slavery*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Wolfe, P. 2006. "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (4): 387-409. doi.org/10.1080/14623520601056240

Young, R. 2001. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Zabek, M. 2009. "Africans in Poland." *International Journal of Sociology* 39 (3): 69-78. http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/IJS0020-7659390304

Zamoyski, A. 1993. *The Polish way: A thousand-year history of the Poles and their culture*. New York: Hippocrene.

Zielinski, S. 1933. *Maly Slownik Pionierow Polskich Kolonialnych i Morskich*. Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Ligi Morskiej i Kolonjalnej

Zimmerman, A. 2001. *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zimmerman, A. 2010a. *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Zimmerman, A. 2010b. "Three Logics of Race: Theory and Exception in the Transnational History of Empire." *New Global Studies* 4: 1-9. doi.org/10.2202/1940-0004.1105