



Volume 4: Forging an Empire: Bismarckian Germany, 1866-1890  
Aims of the German Colonial Society (December 19, 1887)

To further the aims of German colonization, a broad range of colonial societies sprang up in the 1880s. As this section (§ 2) of its founding statutes indicates, the German Colonial Society aimed to provide a focal point for these diverse currents. The Society was formed in 1887 from the fusion of the German Colonial Association and the Society for German Colonization; by 1890 it had about 17,000 members organized in 186 local associations. The society's objectives were to direct Germany's "national effort" toward colonization in a coordinated way and to resolve open questions about the goals and methods of German settlement abroad. In both cases the subtext is clear: unity of purpose had so far eluded even the most enthusiastic supporters of colonies.

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The German Colonial Society has the following aims:

1. To turn the national effort towards German colonization and to spread awareness of its necessity to ever wider social circles;
2. to promote the practical resolution of colonial questions;
3. to encourage and support German-national colonizing projects;
4. to work towards a suitable solution of questions related to German emigration;
5. to maintain and strengthen the economic and intellectual connection of Germans abroad with the Fatherland;
6. to provide a focal point for all movements acting separately throughout our Fatherland but pursuing these same goals.

Source: "Satzungen der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft" ["Bylaws of the German Colonial Society"], in Zentrales Staatsarchiv I [Central State Archive I], Potsdam (now Bundesarchiv Berlin [Federal Archive, Berlin]), Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft [German Colonial Society], no. 255, Bl. 90.

Original German text reprinted in Edgar Hartwig, "Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (DKG) 1887-1936" ["German Colonial Society 1887-1936"] in *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte 1789-1945. Die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland* [Lexicon of Party History 1789-1945. Middle- and Lower-Class Parties and Associations in Germany], ed. Dieter Fricke et al., 4 vols., vol. 1. Leipzig, 1983-1986, pp. 724-48, here 726.

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