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**Review:** Klaus-Dieter Gralow, *Post-adresse: Landmesser Voss, Ochsenwagen, DSW. Die Tagebücher der Gertrud Voss aus Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908–1919*, Grevesmühlen, Nordwest Media Verlag, 2017.

For all historians the discovery of historical sources for their particular research area is, without doubt, a cause of great excitement. This is also true for colonial history. While historians who deal with European history sometimes wonder why it should be necessary to publish material from highly subjective historical sources, those whose chosen field is overseas (in this case colonial) history, see things differently. After all, only a few historians working in Africa, Asia or Latin America have the opportunity to evaluate written sources on the colonial history of their particular countries in European archives.

Hence the appearance of texts, in this case written in German about German Southwest Africa, is to be welcomed – even if these texts are diaries, which mainly consist of subjective impressions and general accounts of landscapes and family life rather than politically relevant thoughts or descriptions of foreign people and cultures.

Klaus-Dieter Gralow, a museologist and archaeologist from West Pomerania – has set himself the task of publishing and commenting on such a historical text. For almost three decades he has been studying Southern Africa. While doing so, he stumbled upon two handwritten diaries kept by the Gertrud Voss, wife of the imperial land surveyor Hugo Voss (1875–1968), who lived

with her family in what is now Namibia from 1908 to 1919. After the genocidal war against the Herero and Nama, skilled workers like Voss were hired to measure the newly conquered lands for the German colony. For this task, workers were sought in Germany. Hugo Voss applied and became an imperial land surveyor in 1912. While carrying out his professional duties, he collected and photographed numerous zoological, ethnographical and archaeological objects and preparations. His extensive collection is now held by his descendants or to be found in museums in Hamburg, Dresden and Leipzig.

Following the end of the First World War, Voss, as an imperial official, was forced to leave Africa.

The diaries of Gertrud Voss, which were never intended for publication, document everyday life for the settlers in the colony. The family spent most of its time inside the ox cart, which plays a central role in the descriptions. More than one hundred historical photographs and drawings illustrate these well edited pages.

While the two diaries do not offer any new conclusions on Namibia's colonial history, they do provide an insight into day-to-day life in the colony and give some idea of the German settlers thinking during the period of direct German colonial rule.

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