

# Guide to the Richard Christian Thurnwald Papers

MS 494



Preliminary Inventory by John Espy

June 1980

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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**CALL NUMBER:** MS 494

**CREATOR:** Thurnwald, Richard, 1869-1954

**TITLE:** Richard Christian Thurnwald papers

**DATES:** 1895-1936

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2 linear feet (5 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, writings, printed material and miscellanea relating to Thurnwald's foreign expeditions, teaching positions, and literary works.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0494>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0494>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Stephen W. Reed, 1961.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

Richard Christian Thurnwald Papers (MS 494). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

German sociologist; born in Berlin; studied anthropology and sociology in Vienna and Berlin Universities; field expeditions to the Solomon Islands and Micronesia (1906-1909 and 1932), New Guinea (1912-1915) and East Africa (1930); professor from 1924 at the University of Berlin; 1925 founded and edited *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie*; author of numerous books and articles.

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## Scope and Contents

The Thurnwald Collection extends from 1895 to 1936, with the bulk of the material covering the years from 1931 to 1933. Dr. Richard Christian Thurnwald, anthropologist and sociologist, (LLD) was born in Vienna on September 18, 1869. He received his education at the Universities of Vienna and Berlin.

Thurnwald was an outstanding scholar in his field, as the rather numerous memberships offered him by the various institutes and societies and the professorships at different universities illustrates. From 1905 to 1915 he was a member of the staff of the Berlin Museum of Ethnology; from 1919 to 1923 Professor at Halle University (now East Germany); 1923-1931 a professor at the University of Berlin; and from 1931-1932 he was visiting professor at the Yale University (where he gave lectures on "Primitive Culture in the Pacific Area"). He was editor of "Sociologus", Hon. fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain; member of the Academy of Natural Research in Halle (Kaiserlich Deutsche Akademie für Naturforscher) 1932; member of the British Institute of Philosophy, member of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, London; member of the Institute for Sociological Research (1946); member of the Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften (1947); Co-editor of "Archiv für Anthropologie und Zeitschrift für vergleichende Wissenschaften"; Editor of "Völker und Sprachen" (1948); Editor of "Sociologus" (new series) and in 1951 he became a professor at the Freie Universität of Berlin.

In connection with his studies and work as an anthropologist and sociologist he joined several expeditions and returned with valuable information in the fields of sociology and geography. In 1906-1909 he embarked upon his first expedition to the Solomon Islands. In 1913, he joined the "Kaiserin Augustafluss - Expedition" in New Guinea, "which had been sent out by the "Reichskolonialamt" in connection with the Museum for Ethnology in Berlin and the "Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft". This expedition ended abruptly with the outbreak of World War I. From 1930 to 1931 Thurnwald went to East Africa, and in 1933 he revisited the Solomon Islands.

As a result of his expeditions and his research he published the following, "Forschungen in den Solomoninseln", 1912; "Ethnologische Studien an Südseevölkern", 1913; "Banaro Society", 1916; "Primitive Psychology", 1922; "Die Menschliche Gesellschaft", 1931-1935, "Economics in Primitive Communities", 1932; "Black and White in East Africa", 1935; "Koloniale Gestaltungen", 1938; "Lehrbuch für Völkerkunde", 1939; "Early Man's Precarious Control over Nature", 1948-1950; "Awakening of the Human Mind", 1948, "Social Dynamics", 1950; "Aufstieg des Menschen, Zwischen Vernunft and Wahn", 1950; and "Des Menschegeistes Erwachen, Wachsen und Irren", 1951.

For the years 1909-1910 and 1921-1923 the collection contains correspondence between Thurnwald and the "Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft" and the "Koloniale Rundschau", as well as colonial magazines

which published articles by Thurnwald written after his expeditions to the Southseas. During the period 1924-1928 there is correspondence between Thurnwald and local cultural organizations in areas outside Germany in preparation for a series of public lectures.

In the years 1931-1932, following his expedition to East Africa Thurnwald corresponded with the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures in London and with persons from the Tanganyika Territory, i.e. the Secretary for Native Affairs, Mr. P. E. Mitchell and the chief clerk at the P. C.'S office, Mr. H. M. T. Kayamba.

The greater part of Thurnwald's correspondence in the years 1931-1933 and 1936 is with his manager Dr. W. E. Mühlmann, the publishing firm of C. L. Hirschfeld and the contributors of Thurnwald's magazine, the "ZVS" (Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie" - "Periodical for Social Psychology and Sociology") a bilingual magazine.

The remainder of the collection has been arranged by type, and as far as these papers and documents are dated, they too, have been placed in chronological order. Most of the material is interesting from the sociological; psycho-sociological, ethnological and anthropological point of view, rather than the historical. There are some reports on Thurnwald's expedition to the Southseas and courses he gave during the years 1920-1931 at the Universities of Halle and Berlin. Thurnwald listed and explained items concerning the customs and modes of life of the inhabitants of the Southseas for inclusion in two German encyclopaedias (*Brockhaus*, and *Ullstein Lexikon*)

The essays by Thurnwald on the significance of colonies for Germany, especially after the First World War, are politically interesting.

The Richard C. Thurnwald Papers were donated to Yale University Library by Stephen W. Reed.

## Collection Contents

### Inventory, 1895-1936

2' (5 boxes)

Correspondence		
b. 1	1909-1910, 1921-1932 July A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1909-1910, 1921-1932 July
b. 2, f. 25-41	1932 August-1933 Apr, 1936 A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1932 August-1933 Apr, 1936
b. 2, f. 42	Letterbook A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1929-1931
b. 2	Correspondence and papers re: case of Major Hermann Detzner	1918, 1928-1932
Writings		
b. 3, f. 44-53	Lectures on social psychology, psychology, ethnology, and primitive art, delivered at the Universities of Halle and Berlin: manuscripts, some typescripts, one mimeograph	1920-1931
	Articles for encyclopedia: typescripts, alphabetical	undated
b. 3, f. 54-55	<i>Brockhaus</i>	
b. 3, f. 56-59	<i>Ullstein Lexicon</i> : islands, ethnology, history; psychology and sociology	
Other writings		
b. 4, f. 60-61	South Seas expeditions: preparatory notes, reports: manuscripts, typescripts	1910, 1915, undated
b. 4, f. 62	Articles on German colonial policy	1920-1922, undated
b. 4, f. 63-64	<i>Economics in Primitive Communities</i> : diagrams with related typescripts, proofs English	1932
b. 4, f. 65	"Social Changes in East Africa": manuscript English A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	undated
b. 4, f. 66	Führerschaft and Siebung als Soziologisches Problem: typed abstract	undated

## Writings (continued)

b. 4, f. 67-69	Papers re: <i>Sociologus</i> (earlier <i>Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie</i> ): manuscripts, typescripts, proofs, printed matter, correspondence	[1925-1932?]
Printed matter		
b. 4, f. 70-71	German colonial magazines, including one with an article by Thurnwald A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1910, 1918, 1928-1932
b. 4, f. 72	Reports of organizations A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1931-1932, undated
b. 4, f. 73-75	Clippings A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1901-1910, 1921-1932
b. 4, f. 76	Miscellaneous A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	1923, 1931, undated
Miscellaneous papers and memorabilia		
b. 4, f. 77	Miscellaneous manuscripts and notes A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	undated
b. 5	Appointments diary	1932
b. 5, f. 78	Address book, headed "Afrika" A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at <a href="mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu">beinecke.library@yale.edu</a> to request access to the digital copy.	undated
b. 5	Calling cards and addresses	undated
b. 5	Legal documents	1895-1931, undated
b. 5	Yale University student registration slips for anthropology courses	[1931-1932]
b. 5	Photographs	undated
b. 5	E.L. Kirkpatrick and Evelyn G. Tough, "Extent of Association of Some Principal, Elements of Farm Family Living": typescript	undated
b. 5	Honorary degree	1932

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Anthropology -- Research  
Archaeology  
Excavations (Archaeology)  
Psychology  
Sociology -- Study and teaching

### **Geographic Names**

Africa  
Asia  
Europe  
Germany

### **Names**

Thurnwald, Richard, 1869-1954

### **Corporate Body**

Yale University -- Faculty