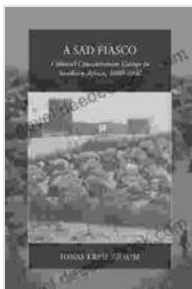


Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa: The Dark History of the Boer War and Genocide

The Boer War, fought between the British Empire and the Boer republics of South Africa from 1899 to 1902, witnessed one of the darkest chapters in colonial history: the establishment of concentration camps. These camps, intended to control and suppress Boer civilians, became symbols of suffering, disease, and death.



A Sad Fiasco: Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa, 1900–1908 (War and Genocide Book

29) by Jonas Kreienbaum

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 6027 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 445 pages



Origins of the Boer War

The Boer War had its roots in the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa in the 1880s. The influx of European settlers (Uitlanders) into the Boer territories created tensions between the British and the Boers. The

Boers, who feared the loss of their independence, became increasingly hostile towards the British.

The Policy of Concentration

In response to the growing Boer resistance, British General Lord Kitchener implemented a scorched-earth policy, destroying Boer farms and crops and forcing civilians into concentration camps. The stated aim was to cut off support for the Boer commandos, but the camps became infamous sites of misery and death.

Conditions in the Camps

The conditions in the camps were appalling. Overcrowded, unsanitary, and lacking in adequate food and medical care, they were breeding grounds for disease. Epidemics of measles, typhoid, and dysentery ravaged the camps, leading to a devastating loss of life.

Women and Children Suffer Most

Women and children were particularly vulnerable in the camps. Many of the men were held as prisoners of war, leaving women to fend for themselves and their families. They struggled to maintain hygiene and care for their sick children in the harsh conditions.

The Death Toll

The exact number of deaths in the concentration camps is unknown, but estimates range from 26,000 to 40,000. Over half of the victims were children under the age of six.

Legacy of the Camps

The concentration camps established during the Boer War serve as a grim reminder of the horrors of colonial rule. They exposed the brutality and inhumanity that can result from racial prejudice and political oppression.

The legacy of the camps continues to resonate in South Africa today. They became symbols of the suffering endured by the Afrikaner people and contributed to the rise of Afrikaner nationalism.

International Condemnation

The conditions in the concentration camps drew international condemnation. Newspapers and politicians in Britain and other countries denounced the camps as a violation of human rights.

The Emily Hobhouse Report

Emily Hobhouse, a British journalist and social activist, visited the camps in 1900 and published a damning report on their conditions. Her report exposed the widespread suffering and the lack of adequate medical care.

The Camps as Genocide

Many historians argue that the concentration camps established during the Boer War constitute genocide. The deliberate infliction of conditions that resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians meets the criteria for genocide as defined by the United Nations.

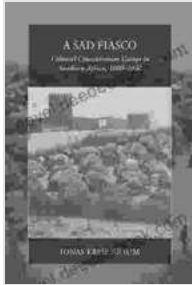
The colonial concentration camps in Southern Africa during the Boer War were a dark chapter in history. The suffering and death they inflicted on Boer civilians, especially women and children, remains a shameful legacy of British imperialism.

The camps serve as a warning about the dangers of racial prejudice, political oppression, and the horrors that can result when human rights are disregarded.

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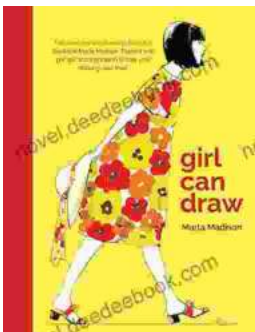
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