

Eugenics experiments by the colonial German Empire and their legacy



Image 1: photo of repatriation of a skull of a Herero or Nama eugenics experiment victim to Namibia. Source: BBC News Site (Accessed 15/01/2022)

Aims

- To explore the legacy of the Herero and Nama genocide medical experiments through the 20th century
- To look at Germany and Namibia's political uses of repatriation in the 21st century



Image 2: images of shark island death camp. Source: Wikipedia (Accessed 25/01/2022)

Background to genocide

- 1885- Namibia made a German colony
- rebellion 1904-6
- Namibian reasons for war:
 - reservations
 - Abuse of Africans by Germans
 - Refusal to punish German offenders
 - Desecration of African graves
- Germans wanted land and cheap labour

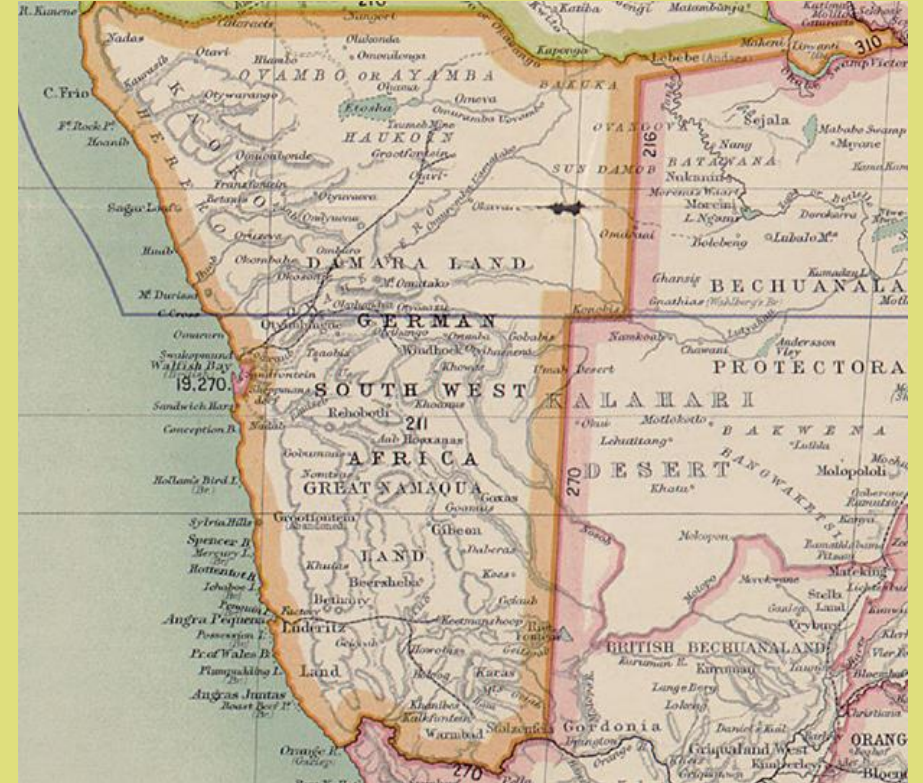


Image 3: German South West Africa.
Source: gsp.yale.edu (Accessed
25/01/2022)

The Genocide of the Herero and Nama

- “I shall annihilate the revolting tribes with rivers of blood and gold. Only after a complete uprooting will something emerge”- Lothar Von Trotha (Jones, 2011)
- Death marches
- Concentration camps
- First use of extermination camps
- Germans saw it as a race war



Image 4: Lothar von Trotha. Source: Wikipedia (Accessed 25/01/2022)

Eugenics experiments during the genocide

- Reasons: Social Darwinism and race laws
- Concentration camp victims main source
- Bodies wanted for anthropological research
- Experiments foundation for biology and social sciences in German universities
- Eugen Fischer



Image 5: Eugen Fischer.
Source: ahrp.org (Accessed
25/01/2022)

Legacy of the experiments

- Nazis
 - von Epp Freikorps
 - Goering
 - Mengele
 - Fischer's theory's and Mein Kampf
- Apartheid
 - German race laws influence



Image 6: liberation of Auschwitz inmates who were used in Mengele's experiments. Source: Wikipedia (Accessed 25/01/2022)

Repatriation and apology

- 2004- Germany acknowledges genocide
- First skulls repatriated 2011, process ongoing
- Skulls returned in public ceremony
- German refusal to pay reparations
- No official apology
- Skulls buried in SWAPO martyrs cemetery



Image 7: photo of repatriation of a skull of a Herero or Nama eugenics experiment victim to Namibia. Source: BBC News Site (Accessed 25/01/2022)

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Images

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