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The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism

By David Olusoga, Casper W. Erichsen



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On 12 May 1883, the German flag was raised on the coast of South-West Africa, modern Namibia - the beginnings of Germany's African Empire. As colonial forces moved in, their ruthless punitive raids became an open war of extermination. Thousands of the indigenous people were killed or driven out into the desert to die. By 1905, the survivors were interned in concentration camps, and systematically starved and worked to death. Years later, the people and ideas that drove the ethnic cleansing of German South West Africa would influence the formation of the Nazi party. "The Kaiser's Holocaust" uncovers extraordinary links between the two regimes: their ideologies, personnel, even symbols and uniform. The Herero and Nama genocide was deliberately concealed for almost a century. Today, as the graves of the victims are uncovered, its re-emergence challenges the belief that Nazism was an aberration in European history. "The Kaiser's Holocaust" passionately narrates this harrowing story and explores one of the defining episodes of the twentieth century from a new angle. Moving, powerful and unforgettable, it is a story that needs to be told.



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About the Author

David Olusoga is an Anglo-Nigerian historian and producer. Working across radio and television, his programmes have explored the themes of colonialism, slavery and scientific racism. He has travelled extensively in Africa, and has been drawn to Namibia and its troubled history since the middle 2000s. He currently works as a producer for the BBC. Born in Denmark, Casper W. Erichsen has lived in Africa for the last 14 years. He obtained both his Degrees in History at the University of Namibia, devoting much of his scholarship to the genocide of the Herero and Nama peoples. He is currently the Director of a Namibian NGO dealing with HIV and AIDS.

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