

SUPSI

Review of Wikipedia Articles

The review is meant to facilitate further improvement of Wikipedia articles. Suggestions about the quality of a Wikipedia articles can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Featured_article_criteria.

Please send your review in pdf and .doc format to Marta Pucciarelli: marta.pucciarelli@supsi.ch and Florence Devouard: Fdevouard@anthere.org

Name of the reviewer	Leonor Faber-Jonker
Affiliation	African Studies Centre, Leiden
Title of the article	Herero and Namaqua Genocide
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1. Quality of the Summary

Is the summary of the article a complete, thorough, and concise introduction to the topic? How do you think the summary could be improved? Which meaningful data are missing? Is there something that you find too much detailed for a general overview of the topic?

Missing:

An important element missing from the summary is that many, if not most, victims of the genocide died in concentration camps throughout the colony. Suggested alteration in the third paragraph: 'The *first phase* of the genocide was characterized by (...) forces. Once defeated, thousands of Herero and Nama were imprisoned in concentration camps, where the majority died of disease, abuse, and exhaustion.' (Gewald, Colonization, genocide and resurgence pp 167, 209, Olusoga, Namibia: genocide and the second reich).

Too detailed:

Too detailed for a general overview (third paragraph): 'Some sources also claim that the German colonial army systematically poisoned desert water wells' (more likely incidental, thin evidence).

Further suggestions for improvement:

Possibly better to change 'It is considered to have been the first genocide of the 20th century' in the first paragraph into 'It is considered as one of the first genocides of the 20th century' because the Whitaker report (fourth paragraph) speaks of 'one of the earliest attempts at genocide in the 20th century.'

The date 12 January in the second paragraph is best left out, since Samuel Maharero only intervened after the first attack. Suggested alteration: 'In January 1904...'

Since Herero leader Samuel Maharero is mentioned in this summary, maybe Nama captain Hendrik Witbooi should also be mentioned in the second paragraph: he was the leader of the Nama rebels.

Third paragraph ' (...) and *an estimated* 10,000 Nama died'.

Too many footnotes follow the statements 'It is considered to have been the first genocide of the 20th century' (first paragraph) and 'In total, between 24,000 and 100,000 and 10,000 Nama died (third paragraph) See '5. References'.

2. Structure and style of the article

Is the article properly presenting the topic for a general public? Does the article provide a complete and easy-to-navigate structure? Which paragraph would you add, unify or split into different parts? Please provide a list of suggestions. Is the article well written and understandable at a high school level?

Presentation of topic and structure:

Generally, the topic is well presented for a general public. The background of the genocide could be presented more clearly by adding an extra header referring to German colonial policy in German South-West Africa (a divide-and-rule policy based on protection treaties, characterized by disregard and abuse of Herero and Nama) preceding the revolts, following the first two paragraphs. ('The Herero (...) white settlement').

There is an inconsistency in the spelling of the plural of Herero, it is sometimes spelled as Hereros. I should always be spelled 'Herero' without the -s.

The paragraph 2.2 Medical experiments implies that this was an integral part of the genocide. However, while medical experimentation on living prisoners was rare (the evidence is thin), experimentation with dead body parts of the prisoners was rife. Renaming the paragraph would be a solution.

3.1 Recognition could be split into 3.1 Recognition and 3.2. Repatriation. The repatriation of Namibian skulls from Berlin to Namibia is in my view significant enough to merit its own header. The information should also be expanded (see 3. Content below).

Paragraphs:

Under 1. Background: add 1.1. German colonial policy
Unify 'Under German colonial rule ... resentment' and 'Over the next decade...South-West Africa' under 1. Background.

Under 1.1. Revolts: unify revised (see 'content') first sentence with 6th paragraph.

Under 2.1. Concentration camps: unify 'Many Herero ... malnutrition' with 'Food in the (...) nursing care.' and 'Shootings (...) were common'. Start a new paragraph from 'A 28 September 1905 article (etc.)'.

Under 2.1. Concentration camps: bring forward 'During the war (...) Herero and Namaqua people'. This should be the first sentence of the paragraph which now start with 'A 28 September 1905 article (etc.)' because it describes a general circumstance followed by two examples: an observation by Percival Griffith and by Fred Cornell.

2.2. Medical experiments needs to be revised. Suggested new header: 2.2. Medical experiments and scientific racism.

Under 3. Aftermath, add 3.2 Repatriation (a section discussing the return of Namibian skulls from Germany).

3. Aftermath: Start a new paragraph with 'In 1915, at the start World War I (etc.)'

Writing style:

The article is well written although some information is given twice. Under 1.1 Revolts, the fifth paragraph repeats the information given above: 'In 1903 the Herero learned of (...) reasons for the revolt.' This paragraph can be left out.

The article contains a lot of citations under 2. Genocide and 2.1 Concentration camps. Although the information given is correct, it seems to be included to 'prove' that the genocide was in fact a genocide. For a general article, it therefore contains quite a lot of detailed (graphic) information.

3. Content

Is the article comprehensive of major facts related to the topic? Is the article adequately placing the subject in context? What does it miss? Please provide a list of topics you think should be included in the article

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(suggestions must be related to bibliography). Do you find that some arguments are not meaningful or representative of the topic for a general public. What should be deleted? Please explain why.

1. Background

Add:

- First paragraph: the Nama were pastoralists and traders living to the South of the Herero (Olusoga & Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 22).
- The Germans managed to get a foothold in the area thanks to internal strife and rivalry. Under the first Reichskommissar they established themselves in the area by signing protection treaties with various local leaders. They used the Nama threat to coax Herero chiefs into signing treaties (Karlheinz Graudenz and Hanns-Michael Schindler, *Die deutschen Kolonien* (1988): 58/ Conrad, *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte*: 29).
- Herero soon found out protection treaties were worthless as Germans were unable and unwilling to stand up against Hendrik Witbooi and many Germans were violent and abusive. Rape of black women was common, a crime that the German authorities were reluctant to punish. These abuses were justified by the conviction shared by the majority of the German settlers (and soldiers) of belonging to a superior race (Benjamin Madley, 'Patterns of frontier genocide 1803-1910', *Journal of Genocide Research* 6 (2004) 183-184).
- It must be made clear that the Germans made a series of treaties with Herero and Nama, rather than one treaty with Kamaherero, Leutwein consciously used a divide and rule strategy. (Zimmerer and Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa*: 26).
- Herero had little choice but to sign the treaties because Herero society became fragmented and impoverished in the first decades of colonial rule. Political unity in Herero society unraveled after Samuel Maharero illegitimately took the place of his father, and Rinderpest reaching Namibia in 1896 dealt another heavy blow. Prof. dr. Jan-Bart Gewald argues that Herero society had lost its independence and 'became dependent on the good will of the colonial state for its very existence' (Gewald, *colonization, genocide and resurgence* 194, 199, 200-201).

Delete:

'Eventually the area was to be inhabited predominantly by German settlers and become African Germany'. Gives the impression that this actually happened rather than it being an ideal.

Under image: Nama king Hendrik Witbooi should be Nama *captain* Hendrik Witbooi.

1.1 Revolts

Add:

- (first lines): In January 1904 Herero finally revolted, initially only in Okahandja. (unify with 'The Herero judged... desperate surprise attack.'). The brutal response of the Germans ensured that the uprising spiraled into a full-scale war. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's holocaust* 129).
- Paragraph between 7th and 8th paragraph '(...) German missionaries' and 'Leutwein was (...)': Exaggerated reports of the initial attacks on white settlers provoked outright war fever in Germany (Madley, 'Patterns of frontier genocide 1803-1910', 185). The German press constructed an image of the Herero as a fearsome barbarian, a dangerous enemy that did not actually exist in reality (Olusoga, BBC documentary and Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 130). In the jingoistic atmosphere that developed, settlers did not have faith in Leutwein's attempt to solve matters through negotiation with Maharero and demanded military action. (Gewald, 'Colonization, genocide and resurgence', 205).)This prompted Kaiser Wilhelm to send in Lothar von Trotha).
- Von Trotha had forged a reputation for ruthlessness as a commander in German East Africa and had been in charge of a unit attacking Chinese villages in the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion in 1901 (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 138).

Delete:

- 'In 1903, some of the Nama tribes rose in revolt (...) January 1904'. The Herero attacks in Okahandja were isolated from Witbooi's attacks, in fact Witbooi and the Herero were still enemies at this point.
- In 1903 the Herero (...) revolt): already said elsewhere.
- 'The timing of the attack was carefully planned (...) in his colony' This wrongfully gives the impression of a coordinated, nationwide attack. Maharero only became involved after the initial attacks.
- 'Leutwein was forced to request (...) in Berlin.' Leutwein did not request an experienced officer himself. He was an advocate of a diplomatic rather than a military solution.

2. Genocide

Add:

- Beginning of the paragraph: By the time Von Trotha arrived in the colony in June, the vast majority of the Herero, some 50,000, had united under the leadership of Samuel Maharero. Together with tens of thousands of cattle they had congregated around the Waterberg plateau while the Herero leaders were considering their options. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 141).
- 5th paragraph: '(...) issued a warning to the Herero *which became known as the Vernichtungsbefehl* (Gewald, 'Colonization, genocide and resurgence, 206-207.) (since this is how almost all literature relevant to the topic refers to the order like this, it seems important to include).
- 6th paragraph: 'Benjamin Madley has argued that frustration on the part of the Germans played an important part in this course of action. The German troops suffered from disease and had to deal with an inhospitable terrain, lack of water, and an opponent who, when fighting did occur, used guerrilla tactics. (Madley, 'Patterns of frontier genocide', 185) Added to this was fear of the enemy, fueled by findings of dead mutilated soldiers on the battlefield. (Gerhardus Pool, *Die Herero-opstand 1904-1907*, 161, Faber-Jonker).
- 9th paragraph. Suggested alteration: replace 'Upon the arrival of the new orders at the end of 1904, prisoners were herded into concentration camps' with 'In December 1904 the Vernichtungsbefehl was lifted again, but this only meant the start of the last and most destructive phase of the genocide as prisoners were rounded up and put into concentration camps where they were used as slave labourers.' As mentioned above the majority of the victims lost their lives in the camps rather than on the battlefield. This should be emphasized.
- I miss a final paragraph on Nama involvement in the war: 'At Waterberg, some Nama had fought on the side of the Germans. Soon afterwards however, captain Hendrik Witbooi decided that war with the Germans was inevitable. He commenced hostilities in September 1904, attacking isolated farms and villages. (Cooper, 'Reparations for the Herero genocide', 114/ Olusoga and Erichsen, *Kaiser's Holocaust*, 176). What followed was a guerrilla war that continued for years, even after Witbooi was fatally wounded and died on 29 October 1905. (Zimmerer and Zeller, *Genocide in South-West Africa*, 147).

Delete:

- 'fewer than 1,000 reached Bechuanaland, where they were granted asylum' (4th paragraph) double information with final sentence of this paragraph.
- 'After the war (...) Battle of Beresonia' in the 6th paragraph. This information seems a bit obscure to include in an article for a general public. It is also information with an agenda, to demonstrate the preconceived nature of the genocide. This is subject of debate.
- Final sentence: '(...) or exploited as human guinea pigs in medical experiments'. See feedback under 2. Structure and style of the article.

2.1 Concentration camps

Alter: caption of second photo: I believe these are Nama rather than Herero prisoners of war.

Add:

Dysentery, *scurvy*, and lung diseases were common. Scurvy was a very common disease in the camps. (Erichsen, 'The angel of death...', 50.)

Delete:

- First paragraph: 'The British government (...) in 1918' This is not relevant information for this paragraph.
- Second paragraph: 'Estimates of (...) 74%' These estimates are really vague and impossible to make for camps generally: at Shark Island the vast majority died, but in other camps the living conditions were better.
- 9th paragraph: 'Trotha was (...) native diseases', this does not refer to the concentration camps: they were established after Von Trotha had left the country.

2.2. Medical experiments

Alter:

- title, see 2. Structure and style of the article.
- 4th paragraph: replace 'The last (...) in 2014' by 'More human remains were repatriated to Namibia in 2013 and 2014.'
- 'An estimated 300 skulls' to 'hundreds of skulls'. The source for 300 is a newspaper, and it seems quite random. I believe the estimate is on the low side.

Add:

- In 1913, Eugen Fischer's 'Die Rehobother Bastards und das Bastardierungsproblem beim Menschen' legitimated in science what was already 'widely construed to be common knowledge': the existence of the Wikipedia Primary School: Providing on Wikipedia the information necessary to complete the cycle of primary education in the languages used by the different education systems. Document updated 10 October 2015.

moral, cultural, and physical hierarchy in races'. (Krautwurst, 'The joy of looking', 178) In this study he set out to demonstrate the dangers of miscegenation using the Namibian Rehobother Basters, a people of Afrikaner/Khoisan descent as an example. (maybe the reference to Eugen Fischer should be left out altogether).

- On at least one occasion in 1903 Lieutenant Zürn, stationed in Okahandja, ordered his men to dig up Herero skulls, probably as 'an easy source of additional income'. There was a worldwide trade in human remains at the time and anthropological collectors would have been eager to buy such skulls. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 127-128/ Faber-Jonker 34) In 1905, Ludwig Conrard, a German trader and confidential of Samuel Maharero, would name the 'desecration of the graves in Okahandja' as 'one of the main reasons why the Herero had risen up'. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 128). Zürn brought home an Herero skull, which he donated two years later to anthropologist Felix von Luschan. He also provided the latter with contacts in German South-West Africa to help him 'secure a larger collection of Herero skulls for scientific investigation'. (Zimmerman, *Adventures in the skin trade*, 174).

- On the request of anthropological collectors in Germany, medical doctors in the concentration camps embarked on a more systematic collecting. (Zimmerman, *Adventures in the skin trade*, 175-176). Unify with 'An estimated 300 skulls..'

- On request of anthropologist and anatomist Paul Bartels preserved heads of Nama and Herero prisoners were also sent from the concentration camps to Pathological Institute in Berlin. Bartels and his doctoral students used the heads for race research, comparing their facial tissue and muscular structure with that of 'whites'. (Schnalke, "Normale" Wissenschaft' in Stoecker, Schnalke, Winkelmann 171)

Delete:

- 1st paragraph: 'Eugen Fischer (...) test subjects'. This is incorrect!

- 3th paragraph 'for burial'. They were not buried, but are kept in storage facilities of the Independence Memorial Museum.

2.3 Number of victims

I'm surprised by numbers mentioned in the first sentence (25,000 Herero remaining in GSWA in 1905) because the 1911 census recorded only 15,130 Herero remaining in the colony.

Add:

- Of the estimated 80,000 Herero who lived in German South-West Africa before the war, only 15,130 were recorded in the 1911 census. (Cooper, 'Reparations for the Herero genocide, 114).

- The Nama population went down from an estimated 20,000 before the war, to an estimated 13,000 after the war. Of the estimated 2,400 Nama who had been imprisoned in concentration camps, only 248 remained alive in 1909. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 229).

3. Aftermath

Add:

- First paragraph: 'With the closure of the camps *in January 1908*, all surviving Herero (etc.)' (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 230).

- Nama were kept imprisoned longer, because they were considered both inferior labourers and a threat. The survivors of Shark Island concentration camp were kept imprisoned until 1912. (Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 234-235).

- The Reiterdenkmal was finally removed from its plinth in December 2013. (Ed., 'Reiterdenkmal disappears overnight', *Namibian Sun* (26 December 2013)). The Independence Memorial Museum and a new statue commemorating both the genocide and Namibian independence were put in its place. Ed., 'Genocide victims get statue', *Namibian Sun* (16 September 2013).

- I miss a paragraph on the Blue Book, now mentioned under 2.1. Concentration camps. Suggested addition: 'Immediately after taking over the territory, the British government commissioned a detailed report of the colonial crimes committed in German South-West Africa, the so called Blue Book. In 1928, after Namibia had become a South African mandate, it was banned and destroyed in the interest of white unity. (Gewald and Silvester, *Words cannot be found*, 2003).

Delete:

- 'From that time (...) registration number'. This is not the case, prisoners from the concentration camps who were put to work as slave labourers wore such metal tags during the war.

3.1. Recognition

Add:

- Third paragraph: 'All legal cases were finally dismissed in 2007. (Cooper, 'Reparations for the Herero genocide, 115).
- Final paragraph: In September 2011 20 skulls from the collection of Charité University Hospital were returned to Namibia. Another repatriation of Namibian human remains from Germany followed in 2013.

3.2. Media

Add:

The South African artist William Kentridge (on Wikipedia) made the installation 'Black Box/ Chambre Noir' (2005) about the Herero and Namaqua genocide.

3.3. Continuity between the Herero Genocide and the Holocaust

Add:

- Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski have pointed out that the First World War is absent in the continuity thesis. They argue that the Nazi war of annihilation constituted a break rather than a continuation of the colonial tradition because it was preceded by a war in which new dimensions of destruction were reached, followed by experiences of defeat, revolution, and civil war. (Gerwarth and Malinowski, 'Der Holocaust als "Kolonialer Genozid"?', 439.

Delete:

- Third paragraph: 'Eugen Fischer was not the only person who took part in both genocides'. This is incorrect. He did not commit any atrocities in German South-West Africa.

4. International and local dimension

Is the article neutral (it presents general and acknowledged views fairly and without bias)? Is the article representative of the international dimension and consolidated research about the topic? If applicable, does the article feature examples from all over the world (no localisms)? Please draft a list of what is missing with related references.

See also 2. Structure and style of the article. The article is slightly biased. Only very recently the Germans have acknowledged that what happened in German South-West Africa was in fact a genocide, the article, probably made before this official acknowledgement, seems to have an underlying agenda of wanting to prove that it was a genocide. This is evident in the number of detailed (graphic) quotations under 2. Genocide and 2.1. Concentration camps.

The article under 2. Genocide also suggests that the genocide was preconceived. However, this is subject of debate. It will be more balanced when the following information is deleted in this paragraph:

- 'After the war (...) Battle of Beresonia' in the 6th paragraph. This information seems a bit obscure to include in an article for a general public. It is also information with an agenda, to demonstrate the preconceived nature of the genocide. This is subject of debate.

And the following added:

- 6th paragraph: 'Benjamin Madley has argued that frustration on the part of the Germans played an important part in this course of action. The German troops suffered from disease and had to deal with an inhospitable terrain, lack of water, and an opponent who, when fighting did occur, used guerrilla tactics. (Madley, 'Patterns of frontier genocide', 185) Added to this was fear of the enemy, fueled by findings of dead mutilated soldiers on the battlefield. (Gerhardus Pool, Die Herero-opstand 1904-1907, 161, Faber-Jonker).

Under 3.3. Continuity between the Herero Genocide and the Holocaust only arguments supporting the continuity thesis are given. The paragraph would be improved by including the following information:

- Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski have pointed out that the First World War is absent in the continuity thesis. They argue that the Nazi war of annihilation constituted a break rather than a continuation of the colonial tradition because it was preceded by a war in which new dimensions of destruction were reached, followed by experiences of defeat, revolution, and civil war. (Gerwarth and Malinowski, 'Der Holocaust als "Kolonialer Genozid"?', 439.

5. References (essential to allow the articles to be improved)

Is the list of publications comprehensive and updated? Does it list the fundamental monographs and papers? Please provide primary/generic and secondary/original resources which need to be included and suggest the list of publications which should be removed.

Under 8. Further reading/ 9. External links add:

<http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2013/11/18/these-skulls-are-not-enough-the-repatriation-of-namibian-human-remains-from-berlin-to-windhoek-in-2011/>

Add:

Conrad, Sebastian, *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte* (München: C. H. Beck, 2008).

Cooper, Allan D., 'Reparations for the Herero genocide: defining the limits of international litigation', *African Affairs* 106:422 (2006) 113-126.

Erichsen, Casper W., *"The angel of death has descended violently among them". Concentration camps and prisoners-of-war in Namibia, 1904-1908* (Leiden: African Studies Centre Research Report 79, 2005).

Faber-Jonker, Leonor, "More than just an object'. A material analysis of the return and retention of Namibian skulls from Germany', Research master thesis, University of Utrecht (21 August 2015).

Förster, Larissa, Dag Henrichsen and Michael Bollig, *Namibia – Deutschland. Eine geteilte Geschichte. Widerstand – Gewalt – Erinnerung* (Köln: Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum für Völkerkunde/ Wolftratshausen: Edition Minerva, 2004).

Gerwarth, Robert and Stephan Malinowski, 'Der Holocaust als "kolonialer Genozid"? Europäische Kolonialgewalt und nationalsozialistischer Vernichtungskrieg', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 33:3 (2007) 439-466.

Gewald, Jan-Bart and Jeremy Silvester, *Words cannot be found. German colonial rule in Namibia. An annotated reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

Krautwurst, Udo, 'The joy of looking: early German anthropology, photography and audience formation' in: Anette Hoffmann (ed.), *What we see. Reconsidering an anthropometrical collection from Southern Africa: images, voices, and versioning* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2009) 148-181.

Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1908).

Madley, Benjamin, 'Patterns of frontier genocide 1803-1910', *Journal of Genocide Research* 6:2 (2004) 167-192.

Olusoga, David and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust. Germany's forgotten genocide and the colonial roots of Nazism* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010).

Pool, Gerardus, *Die Herero-opstand 1904-1907* (Cape Town: Hollandsch Afrikaansche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1979).

Stoecker, Holger, Thomas Schnalke and Andreas Winkelmann (ed.), *Sammeln, erforschen, zurückgeben? Menschliche Gebeine aus der Kolonialzeit in akademischen und musealen Sammlungen* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2013)

Zeller, Joachim, "Wie Vieh wurden hunderte zu Tode getrieben und wie Vieh begraben". Fotodokumente aus dem deutschen Konzentrationslager in Swakopmund/ Namibia 1904-1908', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 49:3 (2001) 226-243.

Zimmerer, Jürgen and Joachim Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa. The colonial war of 1904-1908 and its aftermath* (Monmouth: Merlin Press, 2008).

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Zimmerer, Jürgen, 'Annihilation in Africa: the "race war" in German Southwest Africa (1904-1908) and its significance for a global history of genocide', *GHI Bulletin* 37 (2005) 51-57.

Remove:

References: 5, 7, 10-13, 18, 23, 24, 27, 38, 39, 44, 45, 49, 50, 51, 55, 83.

Bibliography:

- Clark, Christopher, *Iron Kingdom* (2006). Book discusses Prussia between 1600-1947, less relevant.
- Bridgman, 'The revolt of the Hereros' (1981) dated.
- Remove 1x: Hull, *Absolute destruction* (2006), included twice.