

# INTRODUCTION



“**T**he whole thing has been a sad fiasco,” Sir Alfred Milner admitted to the Liberal politician Richard Haldane, in a confidential letter dated 8 December 1901. Milner was the British high commissioner, the most powerful civilian in South Africa. In recent weeks, he had devoted nearly all of his time and energy to a single goal—halting the masses of deaths in the concentration camps.<sup>1</sup> But he had just received the latest numbers from the second half of November, which indicated that the worst was not yet over.<sup>2</sup> With resignation, he wrote to his superior in England, colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain:

It was not till six weeks or two months ago that it dawned on me personally, (I cannot speak for others), that the enormous mortality was not merely incidental to the first formation of the camps and the sudden rush of thousands of people already sick and starving, but was going to continue. The fact that it continues, is no doubt a condemnation of the Camp system. The whole thing, I think now, has been a mistake.<sup>3</sup>

Milner’s acknowledgment that the camps were a mistake should not distract from the responsibility he shared for them. He had, after all, been among the proponents for interning civilians in mid-1900.<sup>4</sup> The camps had seemed like an effective means for ending the war in South Africa, which had dragged on far longer than anyone had foreseen, and was in the meantime being conducted as a guerrilla war by the Boers. But by the end of 1901, the internment of much of the population of the Boer republics—including Africans—in concentration camps had not yet ended the conflict, although the policy had cost tens of thousands of civilian lives. It was a mistake, a fiasco even, but Milner reasoned that

“it is easy to be wise after the event. The state of affairs that led to the formation of the camps was wholly novel and of unusual difficulty, and I believe no General in the world would not have felt compelled to deal with it in some drastic manner.”<sup>5</sup>

In fact, the situation was not quite as new as Milner suggested. Just five years before, the Spanish general Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau had found himself in a comparable situation. In Cuba, the Spanish military was confronted with an independence movement that adopted similar guerrilla tactics; the movement was difficult to conquer because of its broad support among the civilian population. Like the supreme commander in South Africa, Weyler responded “in drastic manner.” Beginning in February 1896, he drove nearly the entire rural population of the Caribbean island into guarded communities—“reconcentrating” the population, as the policy was called at the time. The conditions endured by the so-called *reconcentrados* in the towns and villages were catastrophic, and the masses of deaths earned Weyler the derisive title of “butcher” in the international press.

Cuba and South Africa were not the only sites around the turn of century where generals confronted stubborn resistance movements in a colonial war, finding themselves—in Milner’s words—“compelled” to respond with the drastic action of concentrating the civilian population in guarded camps or localities. In the Philippines, the American military introduced “concentration zones” in 1901, having failed to “pacify” the archipelago for the previous two years. And in German South-West Africa, a German “protection force” (*Schutztruppe*)<sup>6</sup> established concentration camps in the war against the Herero and Nama in 1904–05.

These cases of concentrating the population in a colonial territory around 1900 were associated with one another in the minds of contemporaries, and they shared several common characteristics. The concentration efforts were introduced as a means of ending stubborn resistance movements during colonial wars. The concentrated populations were malnourished for long periods of time, and epidemics broke out at the internment sites. Briefly put, in each of these cases concentration led to mass death. In all, well over 200,000 people lost their lives in the concentration camps and zones around the turn of the century.<sup>7</sup>

This fact alone makes the colonial concentration of populations in Cuba, the Philippines, South Africa, and South-West Africa a significant topic of study. In addition, the camps suggest answers to some of the central questions that have been raised by recent research on colonialism.<sup>8</sup> However, the phenomenon of colonial concentration camps and concentration zones has been relatively neglected to this point.<sup>9</sup> This is the gap that the following study seeks to fill.

## **Framing the Question**

The central question of this study is: What characterized the colonial concentration camps and concentration zones? It makes sense to sharpen this question by linking it to different scholarly approaches and debates that have shaped colonial historiography in the past several years. Four sets of issues are especially relevant to the investigation of colonial concentration policies.

### ***Motives of Colonial Expansion: From Civilization to Annihilation***

Scholars have repeatedly grappled with the fundamental character of colonial expansion. As Horst Gründer asks, was colonization mainly about “genocide, or forced modernization?”<sup>10</sup> Was European colonialism defined by mass violence? Can it be understood as a gigantic modernization project or “civilizing mission,”<sup>11</sup>—or was it primarily about economic exploitation?<sup>12</sup>

The aforementioned cases of concentrating civilians in camps raise similar questions. Were the camps sites of punishment and intentional murder? A natural consideration, given the tremendous mortality of the internees. Could the camps even be considered instruments of genocide, as has been argued in all four cases?<sup>13</sup> Were these paternalistic projects that sought to “uplift the savages”? Did the concentration camps function as sites of “education” for black African workers?<sup>14</sup> Were they experiments of social engineering that sought to turn internees into “useful” elements of colonial society? Or were they primarily a means of exploiting internee labor?

### ***Continuities between the Colonial and National Socialist Camps?***

Questions about the extermination function of the colonial project in general, and the camps in particular, are closely intertwined with the discussion of potential continuities with National Socialism. An intensive debate over the colonial roots of National Socialist crimes—spurred on by Jürgen Zimmerer, in particular—has percolated in the past several years, using Hannah Arendt’s *Origins of Totalitarianism* as a point of departure.<sup>15</sup> This debate has particularly influenced interpretations of the concentration camps in German South-West Africa, which numerous authors have identified as a forerunner of the later National Socialist camps.<sup>16</sup> But the Nazi camps have also provided a scholarly

<sup>10</sup>A SAD FIASCO: Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa, 1900–1908” by Jonas Kreienbaum. <https://berghahnbooks.com/title/KreienbaumSad>

reference point for the South African and Cuban examples.<sup>17</sup> Can the origins of the Nazi camps really be traced back to practices of colonial concentration at the turn of the century? Or are these different phenomena, merely bearing the same name?

### ***Colonial Policy between National Paths and Universal Imperial Practice***

Discussion about the connection between colonial violence and National Socialist crimes necessarily raises the question of special national paths (*Sonderwege*).<sup>18</sup> Because of specific characteristics of German colonialism, should we consider only the continuities “from Windhuk to Auschwitz”?<sup>19</sup> Or should we instead proceed from a common European, or universal, historical imperial experience, in which national differences play only a secondary role?<sup>20</sup> The question about specific national paths of colonization is relevant even beyond the continuity debate.<sup>21</sup> The extent of the differences between the camps of different colonial powers should certainly be discussed. Did the camps of each power embody a specific military culture?<sup>22</sup> Were the German camps in South-West Africa characterized by a tendency toward excessive violence (as Isabel Hull proposes) because—in contrast to the British system—there were no effective civilian or democratic controls that might have exerted a restraining influence on the military?<sup>23</sup> Should a line of distinction be drawn between the liberal democratic and authoritarian colonial powers?

### ***Colonial Concentration Camps as Flashpoints of Transnational History***

In response to scholars who emphasize national particularities of the (colonial) past, there is a growing trend toward transnational perspectives.<sup>24</sup> Transnational histories tease out not only common approaches among the various colonial nations but also mutual entanglements.<sup>25</sup> They focus on processes of exchange and the transfer of knowledge and culture. Numerous studies of the concentration camps in South Africa and South-West Africa presume that such a transfer of knowledge occurred. Great Britain is said to have learned from the Cuban example, and Germany, from the British. But this thesis has hardly been proven.<sup>26</sup> This study, therefore, seeks to investigate whether, and to what extent, the colonial powers observed and borrowed concentration practices from one another. Transimperial learning would, in any case, explain the noteworthy fact that within one decade “concentra-

tion camps” were constructed in four different regions of the world, and in different imperial spheres of influence. A final consideration is whether the camps can be understood as prime examples of transimperial interrelationships in the colonial world, as flashpoints of transnational history.

These four sets of issues in colonial historiography inform the central question of this study (about the particular characteristics of the colonial concentration camps) and lead to the following sub-questions: From the perspective of the colonial powers, what was the purpose of the camps? How did the camps function day to day? And, closely related to the first two questions: How should the masses of deaths in the concentration camps be explained? How were the colonial concentration systems related to one another and to other camp systems—especially to those of the National Socialists? The primary goal of this study is to answer these questions on the basis of empirical research. At the same time, these empirical investigations can provide a point of departure for further investigations within the four areas outlined above.

## Case Selection and Methodology

In order to do justice to this catalog of questions, the intensive study of different sources for each case is essential. Because this would be impracticable for all four cases, my focus is on the British camps in South Africa and the German camps in former South-West Africa. This selection is informed by several factors. First, narrowing the scope of study to two settlement colonies in southern Africa avoids a transnational comparison and helps to minimize problems of contextualization.<sup>27</sup> Second, because the South African War was an international media event, the conflict is especially well suited to explore how other powers may have “copied” the institution of the concentration camp. Third, the war in German South-West Africa—which Zimmerer has called a “portent” for Auschwitz<sup>28</sup>—is a logical point of departure for a comparison with the National Socialist camps. Moreover, the South African War has frequently been interpreted as the first modern war and a harbinger of the world wars that followed. In their own propaganda, National Socialists construed the British concentration camps as setting a precedent for their own.<sup>29</sup> Fourth, compared with the United States or Spain around 1900, Great Britain and Germany were more influential colonial powers, beginning with the expanse of their colonial territory. Thus, I reference the Spanish-Cuban and American-Philippine cases only occasionally in my discussion of the two main examples.

<sup>27</sup>A SAD FIASCO: Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa, 1900–1908” by Jonas Kreienbaum. <https://berghahnbooks.com/title/KreienbaumSad>

Because the camps can be understood only within the specific situation of their respective colonial wars, I begin by exploring the context of the wars in South Africa and South-West Africa. A comparison of the camp systems follows.<sup>30</sup> From a functional perspective, I ask what end the colonial powers pursued with the concentration camps. Were the camps primarily instruments of punishment, murder, protection, exploitation, or education? Can they even be reduced to just one of these functions? From a phenomenological perspective, I investigate the characteristics of the different camps. Insofar as the sources allow, this includes a close description of the camps and their methods of operation. Following Wolfgang Sofsky, I examine the geography of the camps; the phenomena of work, violence, and death; as well as the social structures of the camps.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to Sofsky, my investigation of social relations is not limited to interactions between and among the camp personnel and internees, but it also includes “third parties” who played an important role in the colonial camps, such as missionaries and other clerics, diplomats, and the internees’ masters or employers. In order to understand the complex functions of the colonial camps, my focus is not on the isolation of a prototype but on specific characteristics and changes within the individual camps and camp systems. These changes have often been neglected in the study of colonial camps to this point. Finally, I seek to highlight discrepancies between the motives of the colonial powers, with respect to the camps, and how they actually functioned.

After these comparative observations, I discuss the possibility of transfer. Was the establishment of camps in the two colonies in southern Africa inspired by the example of other powers? Could the camps in German South-West Africa have been conceived without the precedent in the neighboring British colony? Did the colonial powers also draw upon the experiences of their own dominions? Or did similar structural challenges drive the formation of camps in the different colonial wars?

Considering the potential of transfer involves identifying the channels and stations through which the idea of concentration camps spread across state borders. Information about the South African camps sometimes came, for example, from the German civilian and military press, which especially drew from British media reports. German diplomats, military observers, and volunteers gathered information on site that did not necessarily make its way back to the mother country but instead crossed the border directly into the German colony. It is important to keep in mind that processes of adaptation often take on a life of their own. Pieces of a “foreign” import can be reworked and reassembled with domestic components, resulting in the creation of something new.<sup>32</sup> A camp that was “copied” need not resemble the original in every respect.

Finally, by comparing the colonial and National Socialist camps, I seek to contribute to the aforementioned discussion about the possible colonial roots of National Socialist crimes.

## Sources

The following study is based on a broad spectrum of primary and secondary sources. Comparative camp research has tended to neglect the colonial concentration zones and camps around 1900, so its relevance here is limited. Andrzej Kaminski (who wrote the first general history of concentration camps) and the authors of more recent publications on the subject dedicate only a few pages, or even sentences, to the colonial camps.<sup>33</sup> These works tend to consider the early colonial camps only insofar as they can be understood as the “origin” of later, especially National Socialist and Stalinist, camps.<sup>34</sup> The most thorough studies have been written by Joël Kotek and Pierre Rigoulot, and also Andrea Pitzer. The former devote more than forty pages to the colonial camps but still fail to draw a convincing portrait of the phenomenon. It completely ignores the camps for blacks in South Africa and concentration policies in the Philippines. The authors’ discussion of Cuba also fails to mention that not only the Spanish troops but also the Cuban Liberation Army played a role in the reconcentration of the civilian population.<sup>35</sup> Pitzer considers all of these examples of concentration, but she bases her remarks on a rather narrow sample of literature and includes a number of inaccuracies and factual errors.<sup>36</sup> Only recently has the scholarly deficit begun to be corrected with the first published articles that focus directly on the phenomenon of the colonial camps around 1900.<sup>37</sup> These comparatively framed investigations are the first attempts at establishing a transnational history of colonial concentration. To this point, however, no monograph on the topic has been written.<sup>38</sup>

This is the gap that my study seeks to fill. My work draws upon relevant scholarly literature on the camps in South Africa and South-West Africa, as well as both archival and published primary sources. The comparison with the National Socialist camps, and occasional references to Cuba and the Philippines, are based upon existing secondary literature.

A vast amount of scholarship has been published on the history of the Boer War—or better, the South African War.<sup>39</sup> Fred R. van Hartesveldt’s bibliography from the year 2000 lists more than 1,300 titles, and dozens more have appeared since.<sup>40</sup> These publications include a number of studies of the concentration camps, many of which were written in the

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immediate aftermath of the war or on the occasion of the conflict's centennial. To generalize broadly, a divide is evident between English- and Afrikaans-speaking authors.<sup>41</sup> If the latter have tended to emphasize the suffering of internees in "hell camps" and their miserable treatment by the British,<sup>42</sup> the former have often served as apologists for British policy.<sup>43</sup> Johannes Cornelius Otto's *Konsentrasiekampe*, written in the 1950s, can be included among these largely one-sided publications; it was long the only general history of the camps for Boer civilians.<sup>44</sup> There was no other comprehensive, scholarly portrait of the South African concentration camps until the publication of Elizabeth van Heyningen's *Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War* in 2013.<sup>45</sup> Other academic works have focused on more specialized areas. The most important of these remains Stephanus Burrige Spies's analysis of British measures against the Boer civilian population, including the camps.<sup>46</sup> There have also been studies of individual camps<sup>47</sup> and investigations of specialized topics like the camp schools,<sup>48</sup> mortality,<sup>49</sup> and medical care.<sup>50</sup> For years, the parallel existence of camps for "blacks" and "coloreds"<sup>51</sup> was completely overlooked, having no place in the historiography of a conflict that was long perceived as a "white man's war." Only in the 1970s and 1980s, as Spies and Peter Warwick published the first findings of their research, did the black camps begin to receive greater attention.<sup>52</sup> In 2012, the Anglo-Boer War Museum in Bloemfontein posthumously released Stowell Kessler's long unpublished dissertation.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, the black camps remain insufficiently studied. Historical overviews of the South African War<sup>54</sup> help to contextualize these studies, which are complemented by specialized works on the role of the black population in the war,<sup>55</sup> on Boer participation on both sides of the conflict,<sup>56</sup> and on British postwar policy.<sup>57</sup>

An array of firsthand accounts from the camps for whites—by Boer internees<sup>58</sup> as well as camp personnel—provide another helpful resource. The latter encompass a wide variety of perspectives and include accounts by the head of the Transvaal camp administration, Samuel John Thomson; by the Boer volunteer nurse Johanna van Warmelo-Brandt; and by a Dutch Reformed chaplain in the Bethulie camp.<sup>59</sup> Firsthand accounts provide insight into the perspective of camp inmates, beyond what can be gleaned from the official British reports. The writings of British philanthropist Emily Hobhouse played a particularly important role. After visiting different camps at the beginning of 1901, she opened the eyes of the British public to the camps' catastrophic conditions.<sup>60</sup> My study also draws upon the voluminous official publications of the British government known as "blue books." These include the report of the Fawcett commission, which, in response to Hobhouse's revelations, was



tasked by the War Office with visiting all of the Boer camps to gather information about their conditions.<sup>61</sup>

Archival material, finally, is essential to this study. The most important official document collections are in the National Archives in London, the South African National Archives in Pretoria, and the Free State Archives Repository in Bloemfontein. Among other documents, these collections contain thorough monthly reports by the individual camp superintendents, detailed inspection reports, and nearly complete statistics and camp registers. Some of these communications were reprinted in the blue books, but wherever possible, I cite directly from the archival holdings. Documentation is comparatively sparse only for the early phase of the camps for whites, before the military commanders atop the camp hierarchy were replaced by civilian superintendents in February/March 1901. These official documents are supplemented by the private papers of a few key figures: Commander-in-Chief Kitchener, High Commissioner Milner, and Colonial Secretary Chamberlain.

The wealth of source material allows much more detailed conclusions to be drawn about the South African Boer camps than about the other cases, especially the black camps in South Africa. No firsthand accounts of these camps exist, and official documentation is also sparse. All that remains are a few inspection reports, rudimentary statistics for the period between June 1901 and the end of 1902, and other scattered snippets of information. There are hardly any missionary sources, so important for South-West Africa, because the supervisors of the black camps actively sought to keep clerics away.

For many years, the war in German South-West Africa, like German colonialism overall, received only marginal scholarly attention. The first important monographs by Horst Drechsler and Helmut Bley were published in the 1960s, and they remain relevant today. The East German historian Drechsler was the first to argue that the battle against the Herero was conducted with “methods of genocide.”<sup>62</sup> This thesis provided the point of departure for an intensive scholarly debate that unfolded around the one-hundredth anniversary of the war in 2004. The discussion was influenced particularly by Jürgen Zimmerer, who declared the mass murder of the Herero a forerunner of National Socialist crimes, tracing a line of genocidal violence from “Windhuk to Auschwitz.”<sup>63</sup>

Several essays on the concentration camps in German South-West Africa were published within the context of this discussion about historical continuity. The role of extermination is central to this discussion, which has focused primarily on the camps on Shark Island and in Swakopmund, where the most people died.<sup>64</sup> Different authors have emphasized these camps’ resemblance to National Socialist concentration camps,<sup>65</sup>

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which seems to impede their impartial analysis of the camps in the German colony. Thus, Benjamin Madley identifies the camp on Shark Island as a “rough model for later Nazi *Vernichtungslager* . . . like Treblinka and Auschwitz”;<sup>66</sup> while David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen suggest that they have traced the invention of the “death camp” to southern Africa: “a military innovation that went on to become an emblem of the century and take more lives than the atom bomb.”<sup>67</sup> Other aspects of the camps—insofar as they are considered at all—are subsumed within the paradigm of extermination and their anticipation of the Nazi camps. The important issue of forced labor has been discussed primarily within the context of “annihilation through labor” (*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*), which does not do justice to the phenomenon.<sup>68</sup> Although there are some persuasive texts,<sup>69</sup> a general history of the camps in South-West Africa has yet to be written. A goal of this book is to draw a more complex portrait of these camps.

The aforementioned essays on the camps, and general historical depictions of the war in South-West Africa, provide a foundation for my analysis of the camps in colonial Namibia. I also draw upon the work of Gesine Krüger and Jan-Bart Gewald, who have investigated the effects of the war and the camps on the Herero,<sup>70</sup> as well as the books of Andreas Heinrich Bühler and Walter Nuhn on the Nama war.<sup>71</sup>

In addition, I consult various primary sources, most of which have already been utilized by other scholars, although not with a systematic focus on the concentration camps. In the course of my research, however, some important documents came to my attention that had not yet been considered in the scholarly discussion.

Official records of the German institutions provide the most important source base for the chapter sections on South-West Africa. There are many relevant documents in the files of the Imperial Colonial Office (*Reichskolonialamt*) in the Federal Archive in Berlin, as well as in the records of the colonial government and district (*Bezirk*) and division (*Distrikt*) offices in the National Archives of Namibia in Windhoek. But there are no regular reports, as there are about the white camps in South Africa. If such reports ever existed, they were destroyed with the rest of the colonial forces’ records during World War II. Only tiny leftovers of this collection remain in the Military Archive in Freiburg and the National Archives in Namibia. Thus, the files of the Rhenish Missionary Society, which was active in the former colony, assume special importance. Its missionaries repeatedly advocated for improving conditions in the camps. Their reports on the camps are now held in the Archives and Museum Foundation of the United Evangelical Mission in Wuppertal and in the Archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN). The missionary reports not only provide a broader perspective on the camps but also convey—unlike official texts—an impression of everyday experience. The personal papers and, in some cases, published memoirs of military and government officials stationed in South-West Africa round out the aforementioned holdings.

Unfortunately, sources written by the interned Herero and Nama hardly exist. It is, therefore, difficult to reconstruct their perspective. A few letters from internees can be found in the archive of the ELCRN. During World War I, South African occupation troops conducted some interviews with former camp inmates and other eyewitnesses, which were published in a blue book.<sup>72</sup> But the historical value of this collection, which was produced for propaganda purposes, is disputed.<sup>73</sup> Recent oral history projects have attempted to compensate for the lack of African sources. But interviews conducted today, multiple generations later, can hardly help to reconstruct the events of 1904 to 1908. They can only tell us something about how the war and the camps are remembered today.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the source base resembles that of the black camps in South Africa; references to operations and daily life in the camps must be pieced together from information scattered across many different holdings.

To address the question of potential models for the establishment of the concentration camps, I consult—in addition to the aforementioned sources—the military and daily press,<sup>75</sup> as well as the reports of German diplomats who were in South Africa during the Boer War.<sup>76</sup>

## Important Terms and Concepts

Some terms in this study require clarification, as they come freighted with various associations and connotations. This is especially true of “concentration camp.” Isabel Hull observes that the term today is immediately associated with the National Socialist camps, rendering it unusable for the colonial camps. As an alternative, she proposes “collection camp.”<sup>77</sup> The counterargument, however, is that the term “concentration camp” (or *Konzentrationslager*) arose from the colonial context. It was used to identify camps in both South Africa and South-West Africa, even as it coexisted with other local terms.<sup>78</sup> It was likewise adopted for the Philippine and Cuban cases, although in these instances the sites of concentration were not actually camps.

In German, *Lager* are generally understood to be sites of “temporary, improvised shelter for many people.”<sup>79</sup> The English “camp” has military origins and explicitly refers to shelter away from an urban en-

<sup>72</sup>“A SAD FIASCO: Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa, 1900–1908” by Jonas Kreienbaum. <https://berghahnbooks.com/title/KreienbaumSad>

vironment.<sup>80</sup> Because the Cuban and Philippine civilians were interned in villages and towns, in these cases it makes more sense to speak of concentration “centers” or “villages,” rather than “camps,” although the notion of concentration remains apt. The military motive was concentrating an otherwise scattered group in one location, in order to keep it under control as closely as possible. With this background in mind, I use the terms “concentration camp” and “concentration center” in the following chapters—but the words are not explicitly intended to suggest proximity to the National Socialist camps.

The concept of genocide, which plays a role in the cases presented in this book, is also highly charged. The “closely interwoven ethical, political, scholarly, and legal dimensions” of the term are especially problematic, freighting the term with too many demands that cannot be fulfilled all at once, thereby complicating an analytically useful definition.<sup>81</sup> The most influential definition comes from the UN Genocide Convention of 1948: “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”<sup>82</sup> The convention is often criticized, and rightfully so. On one hand, its definition of genocide is too narrow because it excludes some important victims, such as political and social groups. On the other hand, it is also too broad, incorporating cases that fall short of mass murder.<sup>83</sup> Other authors have recently invoked the “father” of the convention, Raphael Lemkin, to plead for a broader understanding of the term that could also include the destruction of a group’s cultural identity, even without mass murder.<sup>84</sup> A final criticism is that the perpetrators’ intent is a problematic criterion.<sup>85</sup> The result of these debates has been a flood of definitions and proposals, which has not exactly solved the problem. Thus, the heuristic value of the term for historical scholarship remains a subject of debate.<sup>86</sup>

For these reasons, I do not use genocide as an analytic concept in this study. The term appears here only if it is part of the secondary literature on the cases being discussed. There is, however, one point closely related to the genocide concept that cannot be ignored—the question of intentionality, with respect to the mass mortality in the colonial wars, and particularly in the camps. The criterion of intentionality in the Genocide Convention is controversial, but even critics concede the importance of the question of intent. Birthe Kundrus and Henning Strotbek argue that the genocide concept is no longer useful for scholars today. Even so, they suggest that although the outcome may be the same “if millions are systematically killed, or if these lives are treated as expendable—this does make a difference for scholarship that is concerned about reasons and underlying causes.”<sup>87</sup> Thus, this study does consider the extent to which the mass mortality in and around the camps was intentional, and

which parts might be attributed to logistical problems, disinterest, ignorance, etc. A differentiated view of how the camps' functions evolved over time must not be neglected in this context.

A few words about the concept of labor are also in order. Particularly for the camps in South-West Africa, the involuntary nature of work must be emphasized. Scholars have frequently referred to both "forced" and "slave" labor.<sup>88</sup> Because the internees were not the property of the people for whom they had to work, I favor the term "forced labor."<sup>89</sup> There was, however, a certain connection to slave labor. The colonial powers had legitimized the seizure of African land in the late nineteenth century "as a humanitarian crusade against slavery and the slave trade," thereby officially excluding slave labor as a legitimate component of the colonial economy.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, there remained a great need for (cheap) labor. Because Africans were only rarely willing to work voluntarily as wage earners in the colonial economy, the colonial powers experimented with different forms of forced and migrant labor—which, from the perspective of those involved, hardly differed from older forms of slavery.<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, it is difficult to draw a clear line of division between free and unfree labor. Michael Mann has noted that "a person in dependent labor relations may have more room to negotiate the output, scope, and hours of his labor than a free industrial worker," raising questions about the analytical usefulness of a binary opposition between free and unfree labor.<sup>92</sup> It is, therefore, important to identify the specific elements of compulsion and free will that distinguished the labor of the concentrated populations.

## **Historical Precedents and the "Invention" of the Concentration Camp in Cuba**

Spanish general Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau is usually identified as the "inventor" of the concentration camp in the relevant historical literature.<sup>93</sup> He was appointed captain general of Cuba on 18 January 1896, so that he could stop the war of independence that had broken out there one year earlier. His mission was to keep the island, a Spanish colony since the early sixteenth century, in the hands of the motherland. Only days after his arrival on the large Antilles island, Weyler gave his first "concentration order" on 16 February 1896. The rural population was to resettle in the closest town or the closest village occupied by Spanish troops, within eight days. By the end of May 1897, he had successively expanded the policy of reconcentration across the entire island.

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These measures primarily pursued a military goal. They sought to deprive Cuban guerrilla fighters of their basis for waging war, the support of the civilian population. The same motive was decisive for British concentration policy in South Africa and for American strategy in the Philippines, as we will see in the pages ahead. As Weyler himself explained:

The orders I dictated regarding the concentration of peasants . . . were imposed . . . by the necessities of war. They were designed to deprive the enemy of all kinds of services provided by peasants, sometimes voluntarily[,] other times by threats and violence. These services were extremely important to the insurgents. They included cultivating crops and caring for livestock to feed [the insurgents]; acting as local guides; supplying intelligence to direct their operations; and serving as spies to reveal [our plans].<sup>94</sup>

Without this support, Weyler hoped, the Cuban troops would not be able to keep up their resistance. Once the land was cleared of civilians, and all shelter and food resources eliminated according to the dictates of “scorched earth” policy, hunger and disease would grind down the opponent. The Cuban freedom fighters would have to give in or fight openly<sup>95</sup>—exactly what they had successfully avoided to this point. Knowing that they would be unable to conquer the better armed and numerically superior Spanish forces, Máximo Gómez, chief commander of the revolutionary troops, had turned to guerrilla warfare: “Cuban forces would avoid the Spanish except under very controlled circumstances and attack instead the economic resources of the island: crops, structures, and civilians.”<sup>96</sup> According to this calculus, if the Cuban economy—particularly the lucrative sugar industry in the west—were destroyed, Spain would lose interest in the “Pearl of the Antilles,” and the path to independence would be clear.<sup>97</sup>

Because of Weyler’s reconcentration orders, but also because many civilians fled the wake of devastation left by the Cuban guerrillas,<sup>98</sup> the number of people in the cities multiplied in 1896–97. In the end, more than 400,000 *reconcentrados* lived in more than eighty reconcentration centers.<sup>99</sup> For their sustenance, Weyler encouraged the creation of *zonas de cultivo*—small, supervised zones for agricultural cultivation close to towns and cities, where internees would work the land in order to feed themselves. “The assumption was that Cuba’s fertile soil would allow for a first harvest within two months,” Andreas Stucki summarizes.<sup>100</sup> Then provisions for the *reconcentrados* would no longer be drawn from military supplies, which, in any case, were intended only for families with no relation to the rebels.<sup>101</sup>

It soon became evident that the cultivation zones were insufficient for feeding the internees. The local administrations responsible for sus-

taining the *reconcentrados* lacked resources. And Weyler himself was not interested in solving these problems.<sup>102</sup> There was not enough food or shelter in the overcrowded internment centers. Hygiene was catastrophic, and disease spread quickly.<sup>103</sup> The inevitable consequence was mass mortality, the dimensions of which are still debated by scholars today. John Lawrence Tone, who has written the most detailed empirical study to date, places the number of deaths at 155,000 to 170,000. This corresponds to about one-third of the more than 400,000 internees, and just under one-tenth of the entire Cuban population, which was estimated at 1.7 million before the war.<sup>104</sup>

The success of the reconcentration policy is likewise debated. There is strong evidence that controlling the civilians paid off militarily, contributing decisively to Weyler's success in pushing back the Cuban guerrilla fighters to the eastern side of the island in 1897. But the concentration policies simultaneously incited international outrage and bolstered the US administration's arguments for one of the first "humanitarian interventions" in history.<sup>105</sup> The new liberal government in Madrid called Weyler back to Spain in October 1897, responding in part to American pressure. After the explosion of a US warship in the harbor of Havana, the United States declared war on Spain in April 1898 and occupied Cuba within a few weeks. In this respect, reconcentration paradoxically assumed a key role in the Spanish loss of Cuba.<sup>106</sup>

After the end of the Spanish-American War, the United States took control of the Philippines and other Spanish possessions, thereby "inheriting" the conflict with the Philippine independence movement that soon developed into guerrilla war.<sup>107</sup> In this war, the American military adopted the same concentration measures—at least in some of the most contested provinces of the archipelago<sup>108</sup>—that it had supposedly fought to end in Cuba. US commanders, too, sought primarily to separate guerrilla fighters and civilians, in order to cut off the former from their support network and to prevent them from posing as peaceful peasants when American troops approached. The parallel destruction of all food reserves in the contested territories was supposed to render any further operations by the "rebels" impossible. Concentration zones were also supposed to protect those Filipinos who did not want to help the guerrilla fighters, or who were prepared to support the Americans.<sup>109</sup> As we will see, this aspect of concentration also played a role in the British Boer camps. The zones soon figured prominently in the American civilizing mission, too. Michael Adas has depicted plans to "Americanize" the Filipinos by introducing "the colonizers' institutions, material culture, and ways of life."<sup>110</sup> Sites of concentration were also to serve as "camps of instruction and sanitation," as formulated by Senator For-

"A SAD FIASCO: Colonial Concentration Camps in Southern Africa, 1900–1908" by Jonas Kreienbaum. <https://berghahnbooks.com/title/KreienbaumSad>

aker of Ohio.<sup>111</sup> The British Boer camps had an assimilating function as well.

Even so, the situation for those who were concentrated in designated zones within wholly overcrowded towns and localities was as precarious as in Cuba. The number of residents in Batangas City climbed from 3,000 to 33,000. Food shortages were widespread, and sanitary conditions were dire. Sickneses like malaria, measles, dysentery, and finally, cholera spread through the concentration zones. Internee mortality climbed rapidly, even if—presumably because of the short duration of the concentration measures—the deaths did not reach Cuban proportions.<sup>112</sup>

Despite the American press's fierce criticism of Weyler's reconcentration measures in Cuba,<sup>113</sup> the US military repeatedly oriented itself toward the Spanish example. After implementing "reconcentration policy" on the island of Cebu at the end of 1901, one officer proudly reported that he was known as the "Weyler" of his district.<sup>114</sup> Journalists, too, frequently drew a connection to the concentration policies in Cuba and British South Africa:

With what astonishment do we read that a general of our army in the far-off Philippines has actually aped Weyler and Kitchener? Here in this country where we have held our heads so high and so prized the encomiums showered upon us for our ministrations to a suffering humanity, we have actually come to do a thing we went to war to banish.<sup>115</sup>

These quotations seem to underscore the familiar depiction of Weyler as the "inventor" of the concentration camp. But this label is problematic for two reasons. For one, the Cuban (and Philippine) reconcentration centers were existing villages and towns, not actual camps. And the term *campos de reconcentración*, which is frequently used by scholars today, does not seem to appear in Spanish communications of that time. But one cannot deny the semantic coincidence of US Senators using the terms "reconcentration camps" and "reconcentrado camps" to speak of concentration zones in the Philippines in 1902.<sup>116</sup> The Senators' language likely reflected a mixture of "concentration camp," which was associated with South Africa and received worldwide attention through the press in 1901, and the Spanish labels *reconcentración* and *reconcentrado*.

A second problem is that "invention" does not correspond to the situation in Cuba, since efforts to combat guerrillas by instituting controls over the population were not new. The Spanish military had already used the concentration of local rural populations as a counter-guerrilla measure in previous wars of independence in Cuba, the Ten Years' War



(1868–1878) and the Guerra Chiquita (1879–1880), and it had also experimented with similar methods in the Philippines. Beginning in the late 1860s, there was even discussion about the use of reconcentration among military theorists, so it is not surprising that Weyler adopted this tactic in 1896.<sup>117</sup>

Comparable attempts to foil the operations of guerrilla fighters, by deporting the civilian population and thereby removing their base of support, can also be found in other regimes and in earlier eras. During the American Civil War, General Thomas Ewing evacuated nearly all of the residents of four Missouri counties and then laid waste to the land. After a bloody attack on Lawrence, Kansas, Confederate guerrillas had retreated into neighboring Missouri. Ewing saw the resettlement of around 20,000 civilians as the only way to “neutralize” the guerrilla fighters known as bushwhackers.<sup>118</sup> Reservation policy in the wars against Native Americans is another example of military control over a population, and it was explicitly cited by American officers in the Philippines as a precedent for concentration policy.<sup>119</sup> And in the 1840s, Russia separated Murid guerrillas from the civilian population of the Caucasus with a *cordon sanitaire* of military outposts.<sup>120</sup>

Alongside the military control of civilians in guerrilla warfare, additional precedents for the concentration camps can be found before 1900. Andreas Gestrich points to three different traditions that can be traced from the premodern era to the camps of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The revolutionary wars around the turn of the nineteenth century introduced “a strategy of isolating prisoners of war in camps away from the towns, under strict supervision.” Camp construction was increasingly oriented toward the model of prisons, and architectural elements of these camps eventually found their way into the design of the later concentration camps. Gestrich points to the segregation of immigrants, which began during the plague epidemics of the fourteenth century, as a second contributing tradition. During epidemics, migrants were placed under quarantine in special lazarettos to protect the native population from infection. One example of this was an unguarded and unfenced tent camp for the “poor Palatines” (emigrants from the Palatinate region, in present-day Germany) that was erected near London in 1710. A third tradition is the institution of the workhouse, where since the eighteenth century “beggars, vagrants, and gypsies” were put to work in order to be molded into useful members of society.<sup>121</sup>

The following pages explore how these precedents developed into the first concentration camps, and especially what distinguished these camps, at the beginning of the twentieth century.

## Notes

1. Alfred Milner to Richard Haldane (8 December 1901), Bodleian Library Oxford (BLO), Milner Papers (MP), D.2.1, 185, pp. 287–92.
2. Alfred Milner to Hamilton Goold-Adams (4 December 1901), BLO, MP, D.1.3, 173, pp. 245–48.
3. Alfred Milner to Joseph Chamberlain (7 December 1901), BLO, MP, D.1.2, 171, pp. 48–54.
4. See Stephanus Burrige Spies, *Methods of Barbarism? Roberts and Kitchener and Civilians in the Boer Republics, January 1900–May 1902* (Johannesburg, 2001), 159–60.
5. Milner to Chamberlain (7 December 1901), BLO, MP, D.1.2, 171, pp. 48–54.
6. A number of terms in this book appear in quotation marks even when they are not a direct quotation. The quotation marks highlight euphemisms such as “pacify” or “protection force,” or the description of a territory that is “cleansed” of people. They also identify terms—like “rebellion”—that clearly reflect the colonizers’ perspective, or terms such as “native,” which have pejorative, often racist, connotations.
7. The numbers of deaths in the different cases will be examined more closely in the chapters to come.
8. See the next section in this chapter, “Framing the Question.”
9. See the section in this chapter on “Sources.”
10. Horst Gründer, “Genozid oder Zwangsmodernisierung?—Der moderne Kolonialismus in universalgeschichtlicher Perspektive,” in *Genozid und Moderne*, ed. Mihran Dabag and Kristin Platt (Opladen, 1998), vol. 1, 135–51. See also Boris Barth, *Genozid: Völkermord im 20. Jahrhundert: Geschichte—Theorien—Kontroversen* (Munich, 2006), 134–35; and Mihran Dabag, Horst Gründer, and Uwe-K. Ketelsen, “Einleitung,” in *Kolonialismus: Kolonialdiskurs und Genozid*, ed. Mihran Dabag, Horst Gründer, and Uwe-K. Ketelsen (Munich, 2004), 7–18.
11. See Jürgen Osterhammel, “‘The Great Work of Uplifting Mankind’: Zivilisierungsmission und Moderne,” in *Zivilisierungsmissionen: Imperiale Weltverbesserung seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Boris Barth and Jürgen Osterhammel (Konstanz, 2005), 363–425; and Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, 1997).
12. For the German colonial empire, see Harmut Pogge von Strandmann, “The Purpose of German Colonialism, or the Long Shadow of Bismarck’s Colonial Policy,” in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York, 2011), 193–214. Theodor Leutwein himself asserted that the “main purpose of all colonization is . . . a business. The colonizing race . . . looks after its own advantage.” See Theodor Leutwein, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (Windhoek, 1997), 451.
13. See, for example, Nick Deocampo, “Imperialist Fictions: The Filipino in the Imperialist Imaginary,” in *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream 1899–1999*, ed. Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia (New York, 2002), 225–36; and Jürgen Zimmerer, “Krieg, KZ und Völkermord in Südwestafrika: Der erste deutsche Genozid,” in *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika: Der Kolonialkrieg (1904–1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen*, ed. Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (Berlin, 2003), 45–63. The latter essay collection has been translated into English as *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War (1904–1908) in Namibia and its Aftermath* (Monmouth, 2008). See also Andreas Stucki, “Streitpunkt Lager: Zwangsumsiedlung an der imperialen Peripherie,” in *Welt der Lager: Zur “Erfolgsgeschichte” einer Institution*, ed. Bettina Greiner and

- Alan Kramer (Hamburg, 2013), 71; and Elizabeth van Heyningen, *The Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War: A Social History* (Johannesburg, 2013), 3–4.
14. Sebastian Conrad, “‘Eingeborenenpolitik’ in Kolonie und Metropole: ‘Erziehung zur Arbeit’ in Ostafrika und Ostwestfalen,” in *Das Kaiserreich transnational. Deutschland und die Welt 1871–1914*, ed. Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel (Göttingen, 2004), 107.
  15. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951). Jürgen Zimmerer’s contributions to the discussion are collected in *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz? Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust* (Berlin, 2011). See also A. Dirk Moses, “Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History,” in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York, 2008), 3–54. For a critique of the continuity thesis, see Birthe Kundrus, “Grenzen der Gleichsetzung: Kolonialverbrechen und Vernichtungspolitik,” *iz3w* 275 (2004): 30–33; Birthe Kundrus, “Von den Herero zum Holocaust? Einige Bemerkungen zur aktuellen Debatte,” *Mittelweg* 36, 14, no. 4 (2005): 82–92; and Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski, “Hannah Arendt’s Ghosts: Reflections on the Disputable Path from Windhoek to Auschwitz,” *Central European History* 42, no. 2 (2009): 279–300.
  16. See, for example, Joachim Zeller, “‘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, no. 3 (2001): 242. This view has recently been espoused with particular vehemence in David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust: Germany’s Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism* (London, 2010), especially 360–61.
  17. For Cuba, see Andreas Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung: Die kubanischen Unabhängigkeitskriege 1868–1898* (Hamburg, 2012), 4. For South Africa, see Liz Stanley, *Mourning Becomes. . . : Post/Memory and Commemoration of the Concentration Camps of the South African War 1899–1902* (Manchester, 2006), 87; and Frans-johan Pretorius, “The White Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War: A Debate Without End,” *Historia* 55, no. 2 (2010): 41. Moreover, Aidan Forth has recently associated the different camp systems in the British Empire—especially in South Africa—with the Soviet Gulag. See “Britain’s Archipelago of Camps: Labor and Detention in a Liberal Empire, 1871–1903,” *Kritika*, 16, no. 3 (2015).
  18. See, for example, Henning Melber, “Ein deutscher Sonderweg? Einleitende Bemerkungen zum Umgang mit dem Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” in *Genozid und Gedenken: Namibisch-deutsche Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Henning Melber (Frankfurt, 2005), 13–21. and Andreas Eckert, “Namibia—ein deutscher Sonderweg in Afrika? Anmerkungen zur internationalen Diskussion,” in Zimmerer and Zeller, *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 226–36.
  19. Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz*.
  20. See, for example, Gerwarth and Malinowski, “Hannah Arendt’s Ghosts”; and George Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa* (Chicago, 2007), 19 and 69–70.
  21. Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, for example, has recently described the goal of German colonial efforts as exploitation, in contrast to France’s civilizing mission. See Strandmann, “The Purpose of German Colonialism.”
  22. Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, 2005), 91–196.
  23. *Ibid.*, 182–96.
  24. For transnational, or global, approaches to historical scholarship, see Sebastian Conrad and Andreas Eckert, “Globalgeschichte, Globalisierung, multiple Modernen: Zur

- Geschichtsschreibung der modernen Welt," in *Globalgeschichte: Theorien, Ansätze, Themen*, ed. Sebastian Conrad, Andreas Eckert, and Ulrike Freitag (Frankfurt, 2007), 7–49; Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, 2016); Albert Wirz, "Für eine transnationale Geschichte," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27, no. 3 (2001): 489–98; and Kiran Klaus Patel, "Transnationale Geschichte: Ein neues Paradigma?," *Connections*, 2 February 2005.
25. See, for example, Ulrike Lindner, "German Colonialism and the British Neighbor in Africa Before 1914: Self-Definitions, Lines of Demarcation, and Cooperation," in Langbehn and Salama, *German Colonialism*, 254–72; and the proposal for a new research agenda in colonial studies in Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper (Berkeley, 1997), 1–56.
  26. For South Africa, see Andrzej J. Kaminski, *Konzentrationslager 1896 bis heute: Geschichte, Funktion, Typologie* (Munich, 1990), 35; and Joël Kotek and Pierre Rigoulot, *Das Jahrhundert der Lager: Gefangenschaft, Zwangsarbeit, Vernichtung* (Berlin, 2001), 61 and 80. For South-West Africa, see Casper W. Erichsen, "*The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them*": *Concentration Camps and Prisoners-of-War in Namibia, 1904–1908* (Leiden, 2005), 1; Benjamin Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by Nazis in Eastern Europe," *European History Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2005): 446; and Dominik J. Schaller, "Kolonialkrieg, Völkermord und Zwangsarbeit in 'Deutsch-Südwestafrika,'" in *Enteignet—Vertrieben—Ermordet: Beiträge zur Genozidforschung*, ed. Dominik J. Schaller et al. (Zurich, 2004), 175. A positive exception in this regard is the recent collection *Welt der Lager*, which focuses solidly on the "transnational learning and transfer processes" that contributed to the spread of the institution of the camp. See Alan Kramer, "Einleitung," in Greiner and Kramer, *Welt der Lager*, 11.
  27. On problems of comparison and contextualization, see Ludolf Herbst, *Komplexität und Chaos: Grundrisse einer Theorie der Geschichte* (Munich, 2004), 76–99.
  28. Zimmerer, "Krieg, KZ und Völkermord," 63.
  29. See Paul Moore, "'And What Concentration Camps Those Were!': Foreign Concentration Camps in Nazi Propaganda, 1933–9," *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 3 (2010): 649–74.
  30. On comparative theory, see Hartmut Kaelble, *Der historische Vergleich: Eine Einführung zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 1999), 76–99.
  31. Wolfgang Sofsky, *Die Ordnung des Terrors: Das Konzentrationslager* (Frankfurt, 2004).
  32. See Christiane Eisenberg, "Kulturtransfer als historischer Prozess: Ein Beitrag zur Komparatistik," in *Vergleich und Transfer: Komparatistik in den Sozial-, Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, ed. Hartmut Kaelble and Jürgen Schriewer (Frankfurt, 2003), 399–417. For a more critical position on the concept of transfer, see also Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung: Der Ansatz der Histoire croisée und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 4 (2002): 607–36.
  33. Kaminski, *Konzentrationslager*, 34–39; Wolfgang Wippermann, *Konzentrationslager: Geschichte, Nachgeschichte, Gedenken* (Berlin, 1999), 23–24; Hermann Scharnagl, *Kurze Geschichte der Konzentrationslager* (Wiesbaden, 2004), 23–41; and Dan Stone, *Concentration Camps: A Short History* (Oxford, 2017), 11–22.
  34. See, for example, Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 378.
  35. In addition, there are a number of factual errors. Kotek and Rigoulot, *Das Jahrhundert der Lager*, 45–86.

36. Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night: A Global History of Concentration Camps* (New York, 2017).
37. Iain Smith and Andreas Stucki, "The Colonial Development of Concentration Camps (1868–1902)," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 3 (2011): 417–37; Jonathan Hyslop, "The Invention of the Concentration Camp: Cuba, Southern Africa and the Philippines, 1896–1907," *South African Historical Journal* 63, no. 2 (2011): 251–76; and Sybille Scheipers, "The Use of Camps in Colonial Warfare," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 43, no. 4 (2015): 678–98.
38. Marouf Hasian, a professor of communications, has recently published a comparative monograph that examines contemporary discourses on colonial camps. However, his work lacks a thorough base in archival sources and specialized literature, and his depiction of events in the colonies is often inaccurate. Marouf Hasian, Jr., *Restorative Justice: Humanitarian Rhetorics, and Public Memories of Colonial Camp Cultures* (Basingstoke, 2014).
39. The names "Boer War" and "Anglo-Boer War," which are common in older scholarship, imply that the war involved only the English and Boer segments of the South African population, thereby reinforcing the myth of the "white man's war." Because this was not the case—the war was just as consequential for the black population—newer histories increasingly favor the more inclusive label "South African War." See Peter Warwick, *Black People in the South African War 1899–1902* (Cambridge, 1983), 4.
40. Fred R. van Hartesveldt, *The Boer War: Historiography and Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, 2000).
41. See Fransjohan Pretorius, "The White Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War," 34–49.
42. Ewald Steenkamp, *Helkampe* (Johannesburg, 1941). Johannes C. Otto, *Die Konsentrasiekampe* (Pretoria, 2005) is also part of this group.
43. Napier Devitt, *The Concentration Camps in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, 1941); and Arthur C. Martin, *The Concentration Camps, 1900–1902: Facts, Figures and Fables* (Cape Town, 1957).
44. Otto, *Die Konsentrasiekampe*. See also Elizabeth van Heyningen, "Costly Mythologies: The Concentration Camps of the South African War in Afrikaner Historiography," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 34, no. 2 (2008): 510–11.
45. Elizabeth van Heyningen, *The Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War*. Most recently, see Aidan Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism: Britain's Empire of Camps, 1876–1903* (Berkeley, 2017).
46. Spies, *Methods of Barbarism*.
47. These include Elizabeth van Heyningen, "Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp," *Natalia* 40 (2010): 62–76; and Johan M. Wassermann, *The Eshoue Concentration and Surrendered Burghers Camp during the Anglo-Boer War* (Congella, 1999).
48. Eliza Riedi, "Teaching Empire: British and Dominions Women Teachers in the South African War Concentration Camps," *English Historical Review* 120, no. 489 (2005): 1316–47; and Paul Zietsman, "The Concentration Camp Schools—Beacons of Light in the Darkness," in *Scorched Earth*, ed. Fransjohan Pretorius (Cape Town, 2001), 86–109.
49. Daniel Low-Beer, Matthew Smallman-Raynor, and Andrew Cliff, "Disease and Death in the South African War: Changing Disease Patterns from Soldiers to Refugees," *Social History of Medicine* 17, no. 2 (2004): 223–45; and Elizabeth van Heyningen, "A Tool for Modernisation? The Boer Concentration Camps of the South African War, 1900–1902," *South African Journal of Science* 106, no. 5/6 (2010): 58–67.
50. Elizabeth van Heyningen, "Women and Disease: The Clash of Medical Cultures in the Concentration Camps of the South African War," in *Writing a Wider War: Re-*

- thinking Gender, Race, and Identity in the South African War, 1899–1902*, ed. Greg Cuthbertson, Albert Grundlingh, and Mary-Lynn Suttie (Athens, 2002), 186–212; and Bruce Fetter and Stowell Kessler, “Scars From a Childhood Disease: Measles in the Concentration Camps During the Boer War,” *Social Science History* 20, no. 4 (1996): 593–611.
51. The labels “black” and “colored” reflect the common practice in scholarly literature to distinguish the Bantu-speaking “blacks” from the “coloreds,” who often spoke Afrikaans or English, and whose ancestors came not only from Africa but also Europe or Asia. These population groups still use the historically-freighted terms to identify themselves today. In this study, I use the terms as a neutral descriptive. See Christoph Marx, *Südafrika: Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Stuttgart, 2012), 9; and Christopher C. Saunders, *Historical Dictionary of South Africa* (London, 2000), 43–44.
  52. Spies, *Methods of Barbarism*, especially 247–52 and 288–91; Warwick, *Black People*, 145–62.
  53. Stowell V. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902* (Bloemfontein, 2012). Kessler completed the dissertation, “The Black Concentration Camps of the South African War,” at the University of Cape Town in 2003.
  54. Rayne Kruger, *Goodbye Dolly Gray: The Story of the Boer War* (Alberton, 2008); Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, 1982); Bill Nasson, *The South African War 1899–1902* (London, 1999) and the significantly expanded new edition, *The War for South Africa: The Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902* (Cape Town, 2010); and Martin Bossenbroek, *The Boer War* (New York, 2018).
  55. Warwick, *Black People*; and Bill Nasson, *Abraham Esau’s War: A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899–1902* (Cambridge, 1991).
  56. Albert Grundlingh, *The Dynamics of Treason: Boer Collaboration in the South African War of 1899–1902* (Pretoria, 2006).
  57. Donald Denoon, *A Grand Illusion: The Failure of Imperial Policy in the Transvaal Colony during the Period of Reconstruction 1900–1905* (London, 1973).
  58. Emily Hobhouse, *War without Glamour: or, Women’s War Experiences Written by Themselves 1899–1902* (Hill Cliffe, 2007) is one collection of such accounts.
  59. Samuel John Thomson, *The Transvaal Burgher Camps* (Allahabad, 1904); Johanna Brandt, *The War Diary of Johanna Brandt* (Pretoria, 2007); and August Daniel Lückhoff, *Woman’s Endurance* (Cape Town, 1904).
  60. Especially Emily Hobhouse, *Report of a Visit to the Camps of Women and Children in the Cape and Orange River Colonies* (London, 1901) and also *The Brunt of the War and Where it Fell* (London, 1902).
  61. Cd. 893, *Report on the Concentration Camps in South Africa by the Committee of Ladies Appointed by the Secretary of State for War* (London, 1902).
  62. Horst Drechsler, *Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft: Der Kampf der Herero und Nama gegen den deutschen Imperialismus (1884–1915)* (Berlin, 1984), 20; Helmut Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1894–1914* (Hamburg, 1968). Both works have been translated into English. See Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting: The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism, 1884–1915* (London, 1980); and Helmut Bley, *South-West Africa under German Rule, 1894–1914* (Evanston, 1971).
  63. Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz*. On the continuity debate, see note 15.
  64. Casper W. Erichsen, “Zwangsarbeit im Konzentrationslager auf der Haifischinsel,” in Zimmerer and Zeller, *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 80–85; Joachim Zeller, “‘Ombepera i koza—Die Kälte tötet mich’: Zur Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers in Swakopmund (1904–1908),” in Zimmerer and Zeller, *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 64–79; and Zeller, “‘Wie Vieh.’” The role of extermination in the camps is also discussed in Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 70–90; Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kai-*

- ser's *Holocaust*, 162–71 and 207–30; and Jonas Kreienbaum, “‘Vernichtungslager’ in Deutsch-Südwestafrika? Zur Funktion der Konzentrationslager im Herero- und Namakrieg (1904–1908),” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 58, no. 12 (2010): 1014–26. Recent additions to the discussion include Matthias Häußler, “Zwischen Vernichtung und Pardon: Die Konzentrationslager in ‘Deutsch-Südwestafrika’ (1904–1908),” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 61, no. 7/8 (2013): 601–20; and Jürgen Zimmerer, “Lager und Genozid: Die Konzentrationslager in Südwestafrika zwischen Windhuk und Auschwitz,” in *Lager vor Auschwitz: Gewalt und Integration im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Christoph Jahr and Jens Thiel (Berlin, 2013), 54–67.
65. For example: Zeller, “‘Wie Vieh,’” 242; Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 10 and 360–61.
  66. Madley, “From Africa to Auschwitz,” 446.
  67. Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 10. I discuss the problematic nature of such statements thoroughly in Chapter 5, “Comparative Reflections on Colonial and National Socialist Camps.”
  68. See, for example, Kotek and Rigoulot, *Das Jahrhundert der Lager*, 80; Scharnagl, *Kurze Geschichte der Konzentrationslager*, 39–40; and Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 215 and 361.
  69. Especially Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 70–90.
  70. Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia 1890–1923* (Oxford, 1999); and Gesine Krüger, *Kriegsbewältigung und Geschichtsbewusstheit: Realität, Deutung und Verarbeitung des deutschen Kolonialkriegs in Namibia 1904 bis 1907* (Göttingen, 1999).
  71. Andreas Heinrich Bühler, *Der Namaaufstand gegen die deutsche Kolonialherrschaft in Namibia von 1904–1913* (Frankfurt, 2003); and Walter Nuhn, *Feind überall: Der Große Nama-Aufstand (Hottentottenaufstand) 1904–1908 in Deutsch-Südwestafrika (Namibia): Der erste Partisanenkrieg in der Geschichte der deutschen Armee* (Bonn, 2000). Nuhn's study is linguistically problematic because it adopts the terms of the colonizers without reflection, but empirically it holds up well.
  72. Union of South Africa, *Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany* (London, 1918). The book was reprinted in an annotated edition. Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, eds., *Words Cannot be Found: German Colonial Rule in Namibia: An Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden, 2003).
  73. For a critical view of the blue book, see Andreas Eckl, “S'ist ein übles Land hier”: *Zur Historiographie eines umstrittenen Kolonialkrieges: Tagebuchaufzeichnungen aus dem Herero-Krieg in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1904 von Georg Hillebrecht und Franz Ritter von Epp* (Cologne, 2005), 17–23. For a positive assessment of its value as a source, see Erichsen, “*The Angel of Death*,” 94–101.
  74. Casper W. Erichsen, ed., “*What the Elders Used to Say*”: *Namibian Perspectives on the Last Decade of German Colonial Rule* (Windhoek, 2008). It is striking that the interviewees confuse Trotha and Hitler on multiple occasions. There are no insights about the camps in Annemarie Heywood, Brigitte Lau, and Raimund Ohly, eds., *Warriors, Leaders, Sages, and Outcasts in the Namibian Past: Narratives Collected from Herero Sources for the Michael Scott Oral Records Project (MSORP) 1985–6* (Windhoek, 1992), or in Andreas Kukuri, *Herero-Texte* (Berlin, 1983).
  75. Steffen Bender's dissertation, which examines perceptions in the German press of the “white” camps in the South African War, is a valuable resource in this respect. See Steffen Bender, *Der Burenkrieg und die deutschsprachige Presse: Wahrnehmungen und Deutungen zwischen Bureneuphorie und Anglophobie 1899–1902* (Paderborn, 2009), 101–20.
  76. The latter can be found in the Political Archive of the Foreign Office in Berlin.
  77. Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 73.

78. Such as “refugee camp” and “burgher camp” in South Africa, and *Gefangenenkraal* in South-West Africa.
79. “Lager,” in *Brockhaus Wahrig*, vol. 4 (Wiesbaden, 1982), 381. On the definition and evolution of the term “Lager” in German encyclopedias, see Christoph Jahr, “Diese Concentrationen sollten die Pflanzstätten für den militärischen Geist des Heeres bilden. . .’: Fragmente einer Begriffsgeschichte des Lagers,” in Jahr and Thiel, *Lager vor Auschwitz*, 20–37.
80. See the entry for “camp” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. 5 (London, 1926), 120–21.
81. Birthe Kundrus and Henning Strotbek, “Genozid’: Grenzen und Möglichkeiten eines Forschungsbegriffs—ein Literaturbericht,” *Neue Politische Literatur* 51, no. 2/3 (2006): 400.
82. United Nations, “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” 9 December 1948. See also Alfred Grosser, *Ermordung der Menschheit: Der Genozid im Gedächtnis der Völker* (Munich, 1990), 52–53.
83. Barth, *Genozid*, 12–28; and Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton, 2003), 9.
84. Adam Jones has called this a “return to Lemkin.” See Adam Jones, “Editor’s Preface: The Present and Future of Genocide Studies,” in *New Directions in Genocide Research*, ed. Adam Jones (London, 2012), xix–xxvii, especially xx; and Moses, “Empire, Colony, Genocide.”
85. Barth, *Genozid*, 19–20; Kundrus and Strotbek, “Genozid,” 406–7; Dominik J. Schaller, “Genozidforschung: Begriffe und Debatten: Einleitung,” in Schaller et al., *Enteignet—Vertrieben—Ermordet*, 14.
86. For some of the most important, new definitions see: Helen Fein, “Definition and Discontent: Labelling, Detecting, and Explaining Genocide in the Twentieth Century,” in *Genozid in der modernen Geschichte*, ed. Stig Förster and Gerhard Hirschfeld (Münster, 1999), 11–21; and Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, “Genozid—ein historischer Überblick,” in Dabag and Platt, *Genozid und Moderne*, 294–308.
87. Kundrus and Strotbek, “Genozid,” 421.
88. On slaves and slave labor, see Brigitte Lau, “Uncertain Certainties,” in *History and Historiography: 4 Essays in Reprint*, ed. Annemarie Heywood (Windhoek, 1995), 39–52; and Kotek and Rigoulot, *Das Jahrhundert der Lager*, 79. On forced labor, see Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 70–90; and Erichsen, “Zwangsarbeit im Konzentrationslager auf der Haifischinsel.”
89. This distinction can also be found in the files of the German administration in South-West Africa. See Etappenkommando to the District Office Windhuk (9 April 1906), National Archives of Namibia (NAN), Bezirksamt Windhuk (BWI) 407 E.V.8. spec. vol. 4. On the terminology of forced and slave labor in the National Socialist camps, see Marc Buggeln, *Arbeit und Gewalt: Das Außenlagersystem des KZ Neuengamme* (Göttingen, 2009), 218–25; and Kaminski, *Konzentrationslager*, 70–72. For an abbreviated English translation of Buggeln’s work, see *Slave Labor in Nazi Concentration Camps* (Oxford, 2014).
90. Andreas Eckert, “Der langsame Tod der Sklaverei: Unfreie Arbeit und Kolonialismus in Afrika im späten 19. und im 20. Jahrhundert,” in *Sklaverei und Zwangsarbeit zwischen Akzeptanz und Widerstand*, ed. Elisabeth Hermann-Otto (Hildesheim, 2011), 311. Although the Europeans officially rejected slavery, they took no decisive action against it. In practice, the colonizers tolerated many forms of slavery because they feared that economic production would otherwise collapse.
91. *Ibid.*; Andreas Eckert, “Europa, Sklavenhandel und koloniale Zwangsarbeit: Einleitende Bemerkungen,” *Journal of Modern European History* 7, no. 1 (2009): 26–35; Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the New Slaveries in Africa, 1884–1926* (New York, 2005); and Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters: Planta-*



- tion Labor and Agriculture in Zanzibar and Coastal Kenya, 1890–1925* (New Haven, 1980).
92. Michael Mann, “Die Mär von der freien Lohnarbeit: Menschenhandel und erzwungene Arbeit in der Neuzeit: Ein einleitender Essay,” *Comparativ* 13, no. 4 (2003): 17–22.
  93. Kaminski, *Konzentrationslager*, 34. Wippermann speaks of “Weyler’s ‘invention,’” while Scharnagl refers to the “Spanish original” and the first organized concentration that took place in Cuba in 1896. See Wippermann, *Konzentrationslager*, 23; and Scharnagl, *Kurze Geschichte der Konzentrationslager*, 24 and 29.
  94. Quoted in John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895–1898* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 203–4.
  95. Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 202–3.
  96. Tone, *War and Genocide*, 57.
  97. *Ibid.*, 58.
  98. *Ibid.*, 60–61.
  99. Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 7.
  100. *Ibid.*, 158.
  101. *Ibid.*, 156. Because *reconcentrados* with family ties to insurgents were also excluded from the cultivation zones, Tone describes the Spanish policy as a “death sentence for a portion of refugees.” See Tone, *War and Genocide*, 207.
  102. Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 153–55 and 206–12.
  103. *Ibid.*, 271–345.
  104. Tone, *War and Genocide*, 209–24.
  105. Davide Rodogno has recently published a history of an even earlier case—European interventions in the Ottoman Empire after 1815. See Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815–1914* (Princeton, 2012).
  106. Tone, *War and Genocide*, 209; and Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 240–50. On the reasons for the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, see Sebastian Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire: 1898–1923* (Oxford, 1997), 21–33.
  107. On the Philippine-American War, see Brian M. Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899–1902* (Lawrence, 2000); Stuart Creighton Miller, “Benevolent Assimilation”: *The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1903* (New Haven, 1984); and Schumacher, “‘Niederbrennen, plündern und töten sollt ihr’: Der Kolonialkrieg der USA auf den Philippinen (1899–1913),” in *Kolonialkriege: Militärische Gewalt im Zeichen des Imperialismus*, ed. Thoraf Klein and Frank Schumacher (Hamburg, 2006), 109–44.
  108. The islands of Marinduque, Cebu, and Samar, as well as different regions on the main island of Luzon, including the provinces of Batangas and Laguna.
  109. On the military aims of concentration, see Andrew J. Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860–1941* (Washington DC, 1998), 119–35; Brian M. Linn, *The US Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899–1902* (Chapel Hill, 1989); John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898–1902* (Westport, 1973); and Reynaldo C. Iletto, “The Philippine-American War: Friendship and Forgetting,” in Shaw and Francia, *Vestiges of War*, 3–21.
  110. Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America’s Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, 2006), 165–66. On American plans for social engineering in the Philippines, see also Glenn A. May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Execution and Impact of American Colonial Policy, 1900–1913* (Westport, 1980).
  111. “Bacon and Hoar,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 21 May 1902. See also Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, especially 260 and 263.

112. Conditions and mortality in the concentration zones have hardly been studied. The first works in this field examine the province of Batangas, where Brigadier General J. Franklin Bell led the largest concentration effort between January and April 1902. In the four months of concentration, around 9,000 of the 300,000 internees perished. On Batangas, see Glenn A. May, "The 'Zones' of Batangas," *Philippine Studies* 29, no. 1 (1981): 89–103; *The Battle for Batangas: A Philippine Province at War* (New Haven, 1991); and "Was the Philippine-American War a 'Total War'?", in *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences, 1871–1914*, ed. Manfred F. Boemeke, Roger Chickering, and Stig Förster (Cambridge, 1999), 437–57.
113. See Joseph E. Wisan, *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press (1895–1898)* (New York, 1934).
114. "'Butcher' Weyler is being Outdone by the Americans," *Atlanta Constitution*, 26 December 1901.
115. *Literary Digest* 24 (1902): 4, quoted in Miller, "Benevolent Assimilation," 209. On American efforts to learn from the more experienced colonial powers, see Frank Schumacher, "Lessons of Empire: The United States, the Quest for Colonial Expertise and the British Example, 1898–1917," in *From Enmity to Friendship: Anglo-American Relations in the 19th and 20th Century*, ed. Ursula Lehmkuhl and Gustav Schmidt (Augsburg, 2005), 71–98; and Frank Schumacher, "Kulturtransfer und Empire: Britisches Vorbild und US-amerikanische Kolonialherrschaft auf den Philippinen im frühen 20. Jahrhundert," in *Kolonialgeschichten: Regionale Perspektiven auf ein globales Phänomen*, ed. Claudia Kraft, Alf Lüdtke, and Jürgen Martuschkat (Frankfurt, 2010), 306–27.
116. See Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 13–15, and "Aufbruch ins Zeitalter der Lager? Zwangsumsiedlung und Deportation in der spanischen Antiguerrilla auf Kuba, 1868–98," *Mittelweg* 36 20, no. 4 (2011): 28–31.
117. Stucki, "Aufbruch," *Mittelweg* 36, 22–25; "Die spanische Antiguerrilla-Kriegführung auf Kuba 1868–1898: Radikalisierung—Entgrenzung—Genozid?" *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 56, no. 2 (2008): 123–38; and *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung*, 117–26. See also Tone, *War and Genocide*, 195–96.
118. Charles R. Mink, "General Orders, No. 11: The Forced Evacuation of Civilians during the Civil War," *Military Affairs* 34, no. 4 (1970): 132–37.
119. Tone, *War and Genocide*, 195. See also Andrew J. Birtle, "The US Army's Pacification of Marinduque, Philippine Islands, April 1900–April 1901," *The Journal of Military History* 61, no. 2 (1997): 271.
120. Ian F. W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents since 1750* (London, 2001), 36.
121. Andreas Gestrich, "Konzentrationslager: Voraussetzungen und Vorläufer vor der Moderne," in Greiner and Kramer, *Welt der Lager*, 43–61. On the nexus between workhouses and the National Socialist concentration camps, see Jane Caplan, "Political Detention and the Origin of the Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany, 1933–1935/6," in *Nazism, War and Genocide: Essays in Honour of Jeremy Noakes*, ed. Neil Gregor (Exeter, 2005), 22–41.