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Storm over the Transvaal

(Pretoria, Protea Boekhuis, 2015, 416 pp. ISBN: 9781-48530-414-2)

TV Bulpin

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The old Transvaal of the 1880's was a varied and excitable land upon which the sun shed its rays each morning. The great gold rush to the Kaap Valley was in full swing. Each day seemed to see some fresh event or commotion, and Paul Kruger's South African Republic was steadily changing. New trails were being tramped into the wilderness; new towns and villages all echoing the sound of man and the restless activity of the gold diggers.

From all over the world, the influx of fortune-seekers came (Bulpin 2015:9).

Ná die slag van Majuba, die beëindiging van die die Eerste Anglo-Boereoorlog en die vredesonderhandelinge van Maart 1881, is daar inderdaad 'n nuwe hoofstuk in die geskiedenis van die *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR) ingelei. Protea Boekhuis se heruitgawe van T.V. Bulpin se *Storm over the Transvaal*, sestig jaar na die eerste uitgawe, is 'n welkome toevoeging tot 'n hedendaagse beskouing van die tydperk wat so kardinaal was in die vorming van die Suid-Afrika van vandag. Bulpin, wat in 1999 oorlede is, is ook die outeur van bekende werke soos *Islands in a Forgotten Sea*, *The Ivory Trail*, *Lost Trails of the Lowveld*, *Natal and the Zulu Country* en *The Hunter is Death* (almal deur Protea heruitgegee vanaf 2010). *Storm over the Transvaal* kan beskou word as 'n klassieke geskiedkundige werk. Alhoewel die term "geskiedkundige werk"

dikwels baie swaar akademiese konnotasies het, skryf Bulpin *Storm over the Transvaal* in 'n baie ligter, amper 'geselstrant' styl. Dit beteken egter nie dat die werk afgeskeep is nie.

Een vraag wat met die herpublisering van Bulpin se werk geopper kan word, is die relevansie vandag van 'n werk wat 60 jaar terug vir die eerste keer verskyn het. Die vraag kan moontlik binne twee kontekste beantwoord word. Ten eerste kan daar bespiegel word oor hoe *Storm over the Transvaal*, geskryf deur 'n Engelssprekende uit Natal, in 1955 ontvang is. Dit is natuurlik skaars sewe jaar na die Nasionale Party in Suid-Afrika aan bewind gekom het en die vooropstelling van Afrikaans en spesifiek dan Afrikaner-helde soos Paul Kruger het hoogty gevier. Bulpin skroom egter nie om kaalvuis beide die goeie en slegte van 'n breë groep lede van die 1880s en vorentoe uit te wys nie—van Paul Kruger en Piet Joubert, tot die Swazi-koning Mbadeni en van die eerste Mujaji reënkoninginne. Die publikasie kon dus dalk nie orals goed binne die dominerende politieke en sosiale tydgees ontvang gewees het nie. Presies hierdie blootlegging van historiese figure hou vir ons in die hede die relevansie van Bulpin se werk in. Klink die volgende dalk vandag bekend:

A contentious issue was the fact that many of the senior government officials were taking active part in business. Several of the big mining company had at least one government official on their boards (Bulpin 2015: 140).

Of dalk:

Another complaint concerned Johannesburg's water supply. The town had outgrown each successive water supply scheme so fast that about all the householders could expect was a coffee-coloured mixture of mud and liquid... (Bulpin 2015:197).

Wat van:

Kruger and his Volksraad had little real appreciation of this fundamental nature of a court. Kruger, particularly, had a genius for tripping up on his own laws like a man who stretches wires across a dark room to catch an intruder and then charges through himself without a light (Bulpin 2015:361).

Alhoewel *Storm over the Transvaal* dalk moeilik as 'n vinnige naslaanwerk kan gebruik word is die geskiedkundige bydrae van hierdie publikasie onontbeerlik. Dit kan gestel word dat Bulpin se werk in die hedendaagse historiese ruimte van uiterste belang is. Met *Storm over the Transvaal* word sonder skroom 'n gehele beeld gegee oor die moderne onstaansgeskiedenis van die noorde van Suid-Afrika gegee. Dit is uiters belangrik in tye waar

Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis van voor af misbruik word vir politieke en sosiale doeleindes.

Kaiser Wilhelm II's genocide: The Herero's versus the General and the settlers

(Cape Town, UCT Press, 2011, 288 pp., illustrations, index, bibliography. ISBN: 9781-91989-547-5)

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In search of the events within German South West Africa (GSWA) as the only German colony where settlement was actually attempted, this book shows that the slaughters which took place in colonial times were not due to the decisions taken by a rogue general but that he was merely fulfilling the aims and desires of Germany's pro-imperial agenda. In this book, Sarkin advocates that the Herero genocide is closely linked to Germany's late entry into the so called "scramble for Africa", which led a ruthless pursuit by colonial powers to acquire numerous colonies all over the world within a short period of time using any means available. Sarkin argues that the Herero Genocide was a campaign of racial extinction and a collective sentence by the German government against the Herero people.

Jeremy Sarkin is chairperson of the United Nation's working group on enforced or involuntary disappearances, and is at presently a distinguished visiting professor of Law at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York. He is also an Attorney of the High Court of South Africa and of the State of New York. With vast research experience this book marks Sarkin's second study on GSWA's genocide by the Germans. In *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the 21st Century: The Socio-Legal Context of Claims under International Law by the Herero against Germany for Genocide in Namibia, 1904-1908* Sarkin illustrated the theoretical and legal practicality of the Herero's claim as well as the political and legal significance of genocide reparations. According