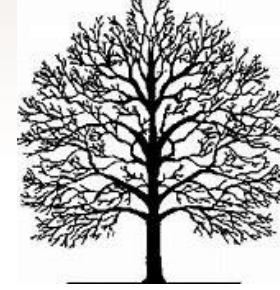


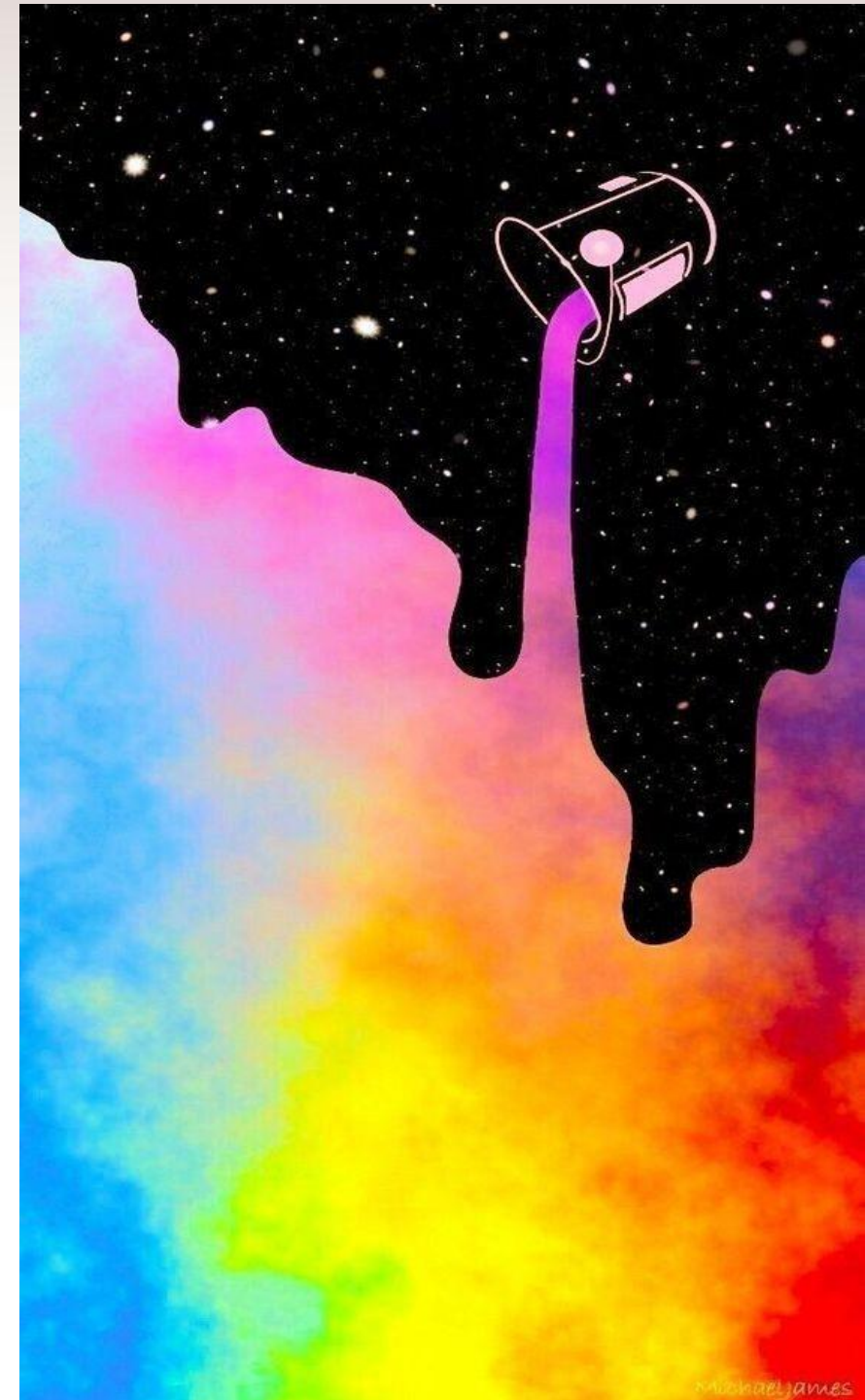
Grade 11 History



Pseudo – Scientific ideas about race

Part 3

**Practices of race and eugenics in
Namibia and South Africa**





■ *What was the impact of German colonisation of Namibia?*

- ❖ In 1884 at the Berlin Conference, Namibia was officially made a German colony, or protectorate. At this conference the leading nations of Europe at the time, divided Africa up between themselves with a map and a ruler. Germany's Governor at the time was Heinrich Goring, father of the notorious Nazi Hermann Goring.
- ❖ The German colonial power quickly made itself unpopular with the African population who had been living there, especially the Herero and Nama people. They implemented rules for cattle keeping, which was their main source of support or income. They were deprived of their nomadic freedoms. These rules disadvantaged the Africans and advantaged the Germans.
- ❖ The cattle epidemic (rinderpest) of the 1890's forced many of the local Africans into debt. When the debtors could not pay their debts, their cattle was confiscated. The original inhabitants, especially the Herero and Nama people, engaged in armed resistance against the colonisers for several years which became known as the Herero Uprising. It was led by Herero Supreme Chief Samuel Maharero.

What happened at Waterberg in 1904 ?

- The struggle between the indigenous groups and the Germans culminated in 1904 at Waterberg. The German army, led by General Lothar von Trotha, attacked from three sides. In the fourth direction was the Kalahari, where the Germans had poisoned the water.
- The clash between the two groups, which lasted several days, resulted in the death of thousands. Only about 15 000 of the approximately 80 000 Hereros remained. These are the figures usually quoted, originating from a census made by the Germans in 1911. But there is some uncertainty regarding the accuracy of the figures quoted.
- Some Hereros survived and fled into Botswana.

What were the results of the clash at Waterberg ?

- After such a large part of the population had been extinguished, and the survivors who were not captured had fled, the German colonial power had a shortages of labour for constructions of roads and railways and the mining of copper and diamonds.
- Many were lured back with promises of letters to guarantee the safety of those who returned to collection points which, to show the German's peaceful intentions were run by a Christian mission. But from here, the ones who returned were sent directly to the nearest concentration camp, under military escort.
- In total about 17 000 people- men, women and children, were imprisoned. According to official German sources, 45 percent of them died as a result of their treatment in these camps. Hard work in a hot climate combined with lack of food and water made those who did not die from exhaustion, susceptible to typhus, cholera and other diseases.

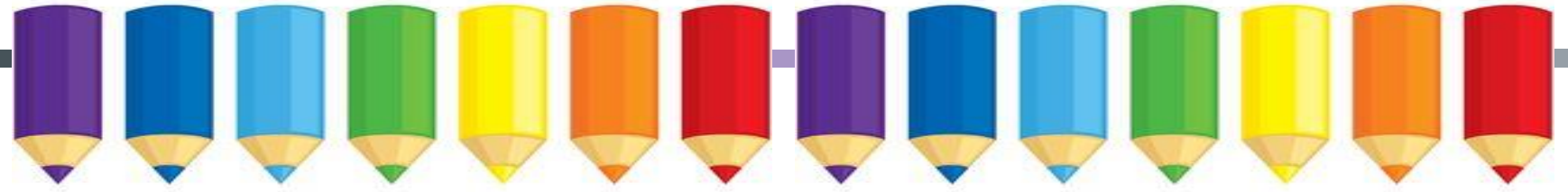
How were concentration camps used by the Germans in South West Africa?

- *The term concentration camps was used in the German parliament in 1904, when camps had been established in German South West Africa. In the camps Racial biologist Eugen Fischer collected support for this theories about the dangers of racial mixture, which later impressed Adolf Hitler:*
 - *Fischer conducted experiments on persons of mixed origin – the typical cases were children with a African mother and a German colonialist father, sometimes result of rape.*
 - *The purpose of these experiments was to prove the inferiority of these so called ‘half-breeds’ or ‘bastards’.*
 - *In the year 1906, there were reports that 778 autopsies performed for the so called race – biological research.*
 - *Measuring skulls was a common method, and female prisoners were forced to scrape the skulls clean with pieces of broken glass before the examination.*

- *Fischer wrote a book ‘The Rehoboth Bastards and the Bastardisation Problem in Humans’ were he accounted for (gave reasons for) his investigations. Later, he wrote “The Principles of Human Heredity and Race Hygiene” with Erwin Baur and Fritz Lenz, which was first published in 1921. This book:*

-
- Became a standard work within Race Biology, and was read by Hitler while he was imprisoned. In Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* several references to the book may be seen:
 - Influenced one of Fischer's students, Hendrik Verwoerd, who later became Prime Minister in South Africa. He was the person who was responsible for implementation of the racial policy of apartheid.
 - Was used in the teaching of selected Nazi doctors. One of them was Josef Mengele, who was responsible for the experiments conducted in Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II.
 - When Hitler came to power in 1933, Fischer was appointed Chancellor of the Berlin University for Race Biology, the world's first state institution in Uppsala, Sweden in 1922, and Eugen Fischer visited Sweden in 1924 to lecture and study the work of the institute.

ACTIVITY 7:



Source A : An extract taken from an article entitled Nazi forefathers ravaged Africa, published in *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, a Swedish daily newspaper, 21 August 2004.

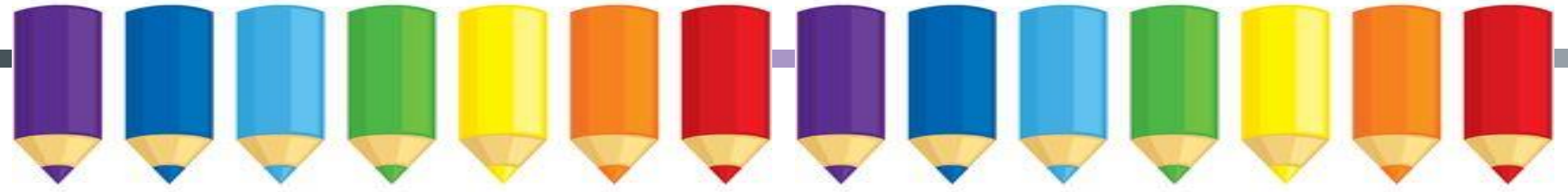
Now that this issue is in focus in Germany, the discussion is especially concerning whether the German State should apologise for this genocide. But the Government position, delivered by Joschka Fischer, Minister of Foreign Affairs, while visiting Namibia in October 2003, has been not to give an “entschadigungrelevante Entschuldigung” (claims-relevant apology), probably because this would be very expensive.

But the other day (August 15th) when Heidemarie Wiczorek-Suel, Minister of Development, visited Namibia, she surprised thousands of listeners, including Herero Chief Riruako, who refrained from holding the speech he had prepared. She said regarding the 1904 events:

‘The atrocities committed at the time would have been termed genocide today. We Germans accept our historic and moral responsibility and guilt...With the words of The Lord’s Prayer I asked you to forgive us our trespasses.’

A few days later the German Ambassador to Namibia, Wolfgang Massing, said that there were no plans to even discuss the claims for reparations. He also stated that he, after this apology, expects the Hereros to withdraw the civil lawsuit being pursued in a New York court.

ACTIVITY 7:



Study Source A and answer the questions that follow.

1. Refer to Source A.
 - a) Define the concept genocide in your own words.
 - b) What 'genocide' is being referred to in Source A?
 - c) Explain whether you agree with the author of the article, that what happened to the Hereros in 1904, can be termed a genocide.
 - d) Has Germany acknowledged the 'genocide' that took place in Namibia? Quote evidence from the source to support your answer.
 - e) The German Ambassador to Namibia, Wolfgang Massing, said that there were 'no plans to even discuss the claims for reparations'. In your own words define the term 'reparations.'
2. Using the source as well as your own knowledge, write a paragraph of about 10 lines (about 100 words) in which you describe whether or not you think Germany should pay reparations to the people of Namibia to compensate for the genocide that occurred in 1904.

Practices of race and Eugenics in South Africa:

How did pseudo-scientific racial theories influence policies In South Africa ?

- Although segregation had been part of South Africa since the European colonisers arrived in the 17th century, it was only in 1950, with the introduction of the Population Registration Act, that the state attempted to classify the entire population into fixed groups based on the false notion of race. Scientifically, there is no such thing as separate "races", but pseudo-scientific racial theories of the time were adopted by the National Party government whose policies were based racial grounds.



-
- ***What role did Hendrik Verwoerd play in the formulation of South Africa's racial policy ?***
 - *These views found their way to South Africa through Hendrik Verwoerd, who became Prime Minister of South Africa in 1958. He was a scholar and lecturer who eventually entered politics. He studied in Germany in 1926 and 1927. While in Germany he came into contact with and was influenced by two well known eugenicists, Binding and Hoche, at Leipzig University. As cabinet, and later prime minister, his racial views were transformed into various discriminatory laws. His views appeared to have been influenced by his study in genetics in the following ways:*
 - *According to Verwoerd, his policies of segregation and separate development were a way of protecting and caring for 'the Native in the land of the Afrikaner'.*
 - *He believed the system gave the "Natives" an opportunity to develop separately and differently, according to their specific needs. Verwoerd rejected any attempts at equality between the races.*

-
- In 1923, Carl Bingham of the USA added to Verwoerd's concerns regarding racial mixing. Bingham, also influenced by pseudo-scientific beliefs of the time, feared the decline of American intelligence because of African Americans. Verwoerd was influenced by this and together with the German views, he formulated his own policy specific to South Africa. This segregation laws in apartheid South Africa for example, were similar to the Nazi Racial Purity Law, which banned sexual relations between Aryans and non-Aryans. His views were transformed into law such as the Population Registration Act and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act.

■ ***What was the Population Registration Act ?***

- *In South Africa, race classification determined people's voting rights, where they could live, where they could buy or sell property, their social status, the job for which they could apply, the amount of their pension and the quality of their children's education.*
- *The Population Registration Act of 1950 defined racial groups quite loosely. A Coloured person was defined as a person who is not a white person nor generally accepted as a member of aboriginal race or tribe of Africa:
For instance:*
 - *The Act was revised at least six times.*
 - *Race was no longer judged only on appearance, but also according to line of descent.*
 - *Amendments to the Act sub-divided Coloured South Africans into further different categories such as cape Coloured, Cape Malay, Griqua, Chinese and 'other Coloured.'*
 - *After the Population Registration Act became law, the classification of whites and coloureds in Cape Town was carried out by the Electoral Officer. Later, in 1958, a Population Registration Office was opened.*

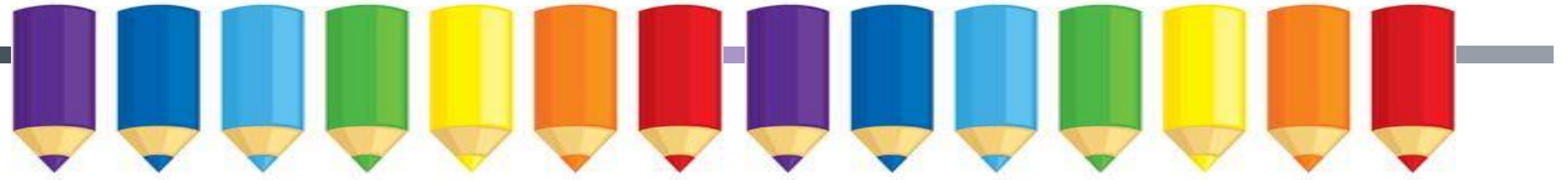
■ ***What impact did the Population Registration Act have on the people of South Africa ?***

- *The Population Registration Act (1950) determined people's race, which in turn determined the implementation of the other racially based laws. For example, the Group Area Act (1950) determined where people of different racial groups could live. It did not permit mixing of any groups.*
- *In February 1958, the Cape Times reported the Minister of the Interior as saying that the Population Registration Act was assisting people by removing uncertainty and unease. However, at the end of 1961 the newspaper reported that there were at least 20 000 people in the Cape Peninsula who were still uncertain whether they were officially 'white' or 'coloured'.*
- *In 1954, the first Race Classification Review Board was established. At first, classification was based largely on general appearance as shown in the following:*
 - *Informers could raise questions about a individual's classification and vendettas could be settled by casting doubt about a person's acceptability as a member of a specific racial group.*
 - *In the 1960's, at a cost of R20, one could lodge an objection to a person's classification leading to an investigation of their background and social relationships.*

■ ***What impact did Apartheid laws have on South Africa ?***

- The system of Apartheid was implemented by the law. The following restrictions were adopted socially and were strictly enforced by law. For example:
 - The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act specifically allowed the government to provide different levels of amenities for the different races.
 - Non-white people were not allowed to run businesses or professional practices in areas designated as 'white South Africans' without a permit. They had to move back to the homelands and set up businesses there.
 - Transportation and civil facilities were segregated.
 - Black people were excluded from living or working in white areas unless they had a pass.
- The result was that non-white people, even those who lived in 'white South Africa', were excluded from having a vote or any influence on the running of the country. Their rights were restricted to the homelands which many did not have the opportunity to visit. Education, medical care and other public service were identified as 'separate but equal', however, those available to non-white people were in fact inferior. The government also prohibited sex and marriage between the races.

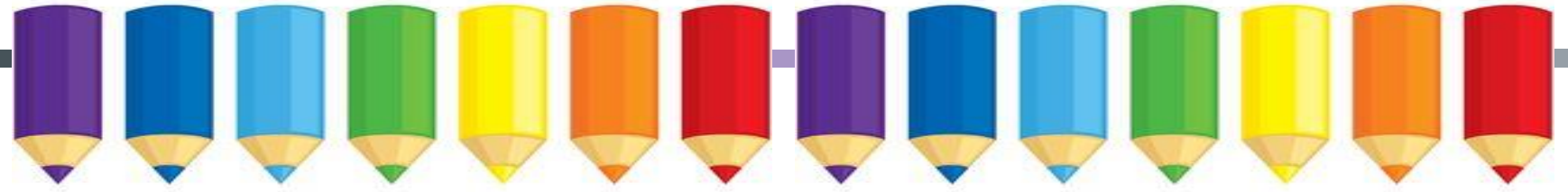
ACTIVITY 8:



Source A : On February 18, 1958, the Cape Times reported a story of 'Mr B' who fell in love with a European woman but could not marry her because his birth certificate was not in order. The only way he could get his birth certificate changed was through the Population Registration Office in Cape Town. The report said that the officials there scrutinised him and noted the colour of his hair, eyes and skin. They sent the details to Pretoria for a decision, but nothing happened. Mr. B then went to Pretoria himself.'

'I was desperate and humiliated and I can't tell you the misery I and my fiancée have been through,' he said. 'Fortunately I managed to get an affidavit from an influential man to the effect that I was a European. They changed my birth certificate and now we can get married. But I am afraid to say anything because something might happen. They told me that if any complaint was made against me they could reconsider my case and change their decision.'

ACTIVITY 8:



Source B : The Mixed Marriages Act

'This law was enforced in 1949, and banned the marriage of a white person to a person of any other colour. Not only was their marriage banned, but any sexual relations, whether within or outside the marriage bond. If discovered, the couple was arrested and imprisoned. Often, these couples were discovered after police were tipped off and suspicious of the relationship. They would be under surveillance, their homes invaded and ransacked and the couple eventually arrested. Underwear was used as evidence against the couple.

1. Refer to Source A.
 - a) What effect did the Population Registration Act have on Mr. B and his fiancée?
 - b) Explain whether you think the Population Registration Act was justified.
 - c) Comment on the irony of 'they changed my birth certificate'.
2. Refer to Source B.
 - a) In South Africa the Apartheid government made sexual relationships and marriage between whites and blacks illegal. Why do you think the Apartheid government made this illegal?
 - b) What do such laws suggest about the nature of society in both the United States and South Africa?