



Afrikaners of the Kalahari: White Minority in a Black State (African Studies)

By Margo Russell, Martin Russell

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The popular image of the Kalahari is a romantic one of desert space and untouched Bushmen. The popular image of the Afrikaners is of a unique and vicious racialism. Yet Afrikaners have been living in the Kalahari for more than a hundred years, their presence often studiously ignored by writers; and since 1961 independent Botswana with its policy of scrupulous non-racialism has embraced both Afrikaner and Bushman in common citizenship. This book attempts to describe the complex and mundane reality of ethnic relations in the Kalahari, not only in the present, harried by relentless pressure to enter the cash economy of modernisation, but in the past. Using oral history as a source, the authors describe the 'Africanisation' of these poor white pastoralists of the interior, cut off by the thirstland from those influences which gave contemporary Afrikanerdom its particular cast. They describe the pragmatic relations developed by Afrikaners with other peoples of the interior, and how these have been perceived and redefined with the decisive shift in political power from British to Tswana hands.

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