

Whites and Democracy in South Africa: A Historical Perspective



Whites and Democracy in South Africa by Roger Southall

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The relationship between whites and democracy in South Africa is a complex and often fraught one. For centuries, whites have been the dominant group in South African society, and they have used their power to maintain a system of apartheid that has denied black South Africans their basic rights. However, in recent years, there has been a growing movement for democracy in South Africa, and whites have been forced to confront their role in the country's past and present.

Whites and Colonialism

The first whites to arrive in South Africa were Dutch settlers who established a colony at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. The Dutch were followed by the British, who took control of the Cape Colony in 1806. Both the Dutch and the British implemented policies that favored white settlers over black Africans. These policies included the dispossession of black

land, the imposition of racial segregation, and the denial of political rights to black South Africans.

Apartheid

In 1948, the National Party came to power in South Africa and implemented a system of apartheid, or racial segregation. Apartheid was a comprehensive system of discrimination that touched every aspect of life in South Africa. Black South Africans were denied the right to vote, to own land, to receive a decent education, and to live in white areas. They were also subjected to a wide range of other abuses, including police brutality, arbitrary arrest, and detention without trial.

The Struggle for Democracy

The apartheid regime was met with widespread resistance from black South Africans. In 1952, the African National Congress (ANC) launched a campaign of non-violent resistance against apartheid. The ANC was banned in 1960, but the struggle for democracy continued. In 1976, the Soweto uprising marked a turning point in the anti-apartheid movement. The uprising led to the international condemnation of apartheid and increased pressure on the South African government to reform.

In 1990, President F.W. de Klerk began to dismantle the apartheid system. The ANC was unbanned, and political prisoners were released. In 1994, the first multi-racial elections were held in South Africa, and Nelson Mandela was elected president.

Whites in a Democratic South Africa

The transition to democracy in South Africa has been a difficult one for many whites. Whites have had to confront their role in the country's past

and present, and they have had to adjust to living in a society that is no longer dominated by them. However, there have also been many whites who have embraced democracy and who have worked to build a more just and equitable society in South Africa.

Today, whites make up about 8% of the population of South Africa. They are a diverse group, with a wide range of political views. Some whites support the ANC, while others support the Democratic Alliance (DA), a center-right party. There are also a number of white supremacist groups, but these groups are small and have little support among the white population.

Whites in South Africa face a number of challenges. They are often seen as outsiders in a country that is now dominated by black Africans. They also face discrimination in the job market and in other areas of society. However, whites also have a number of advantages. They are generally well-educated and have access to good jobs. They also have a strong sense of community and a commitment to democracy.

The relationship between whites and democracy in South Africa is a complex and evolving one. Whites have played a significant role in the country's history, both good and bad. Today, whites are a minority group in South Africa, but they continue to play an important role in the country's political and economic life. The challenge for whites in South Africa is to find a way to live in harmony with the black majority and to help build a more just and equitable society.

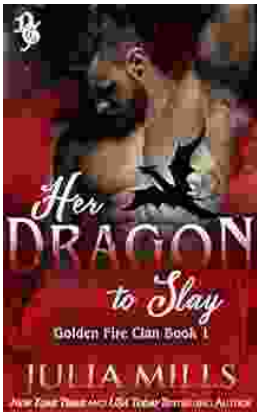
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