

**A CENTURY OF POSTGRADUATE ANGLO-  
BOER WAR (1899–1902) STUDIES:  
MASTER’S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES  
COMPLETED AT UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH  
AFRICA, IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING  
COUNTRIES AND ON THE EUROPEAN  
CONTINENT (1908–2008)**

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*André Wessels*

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205 pages

Seven appendices, source list

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André Wessels, a professor of history at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa, and currently also a Visiting Fellow in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra, is an established Anglo-Boer War historian. In addition to numerous publications on other topics, he has published a wealth of articles and books on the Anglo-Boer War. The latter include *Lord Roberts and the War in South Africa* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2000) and *Lord Kitchener and the War in South Africa* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2006).

*A Century of Postgraduate Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) Studies* is the

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culmination of more than two decades of tracing postgraduate studies on the Anglo-Boer War at universities around the world. It builds on a limited study that Wessels published in 1987, entitled *Suid-Afrikaanse verhandelinge en proefskrifte oor die*

*geskiedenis van die Anglo-Boere-oorlog: 'n bronnestudie* [Translation: *South African theses and dissertations on the history of the Anglo-Boer War: a source publication*]. The latter listed and analysed master's and doctoral theses completed at the history departments of South African universities from 1929<sup>1</sup>–1986. The current publication is much wider in scope: it covers a period of a hundred years (1908<sup>2</sup>–2008), includes studies at universities in South Africa, as well as in other English-speaking countries and Europe, and is not limited to studies at history departments, but also includes studies completed in the fields of Literature, Political Sciences and several other disciplines.

Counting full master's and doctoral theses only (thus excluding mini-theses at master's level and all theses at levels other than master's and doctoral), Wessels located a total of 560 theses (264 master's and 296 doctoral) in seventeen different countries dealing to some extent with the Anglo-Boer War. Of these, 239 (42,7%) had been completed at South African universities (146 master's and 93 doctoral). Out of the total of 560 theses, 223 (139 master's and 84 doctoral) deal exclusively or almost exclusively with the Anglo-Boer War. Of the 269 theses completed at South African universities, 239 (77 master's and 36 doctoral) deal exclusively or almost exclusively with the Anglo-Boer War. For most of the basic analyses provided in his book, Wessels takes into account only those 139 master's and 84 doctoral theses that deal exclusively or almost exclusively with the Anglo-Boer War.

Wessels has divided his book into four chapters, supported by seven appendices, which discuss, categorise and list the theses from different perspectives. (The titles of all theses written in languages other than English are translated into English wherever they are listed.) Chapter 1 is the introduction, in which he explains his approach and the nature of his work, as well as the scope and contents of the various chapters. In Chapter 2, he analyses the theses in terms of topics, universities and supervisors, the number of degrees per year, the publication of theses, and aspects of the Anglo Boer War that have not yet been researched (or properly researched). In terms of areas still to be researched, he contends that many fields have not yet been addressed and that “most of the theses on the Anglo-Boer War so

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1. This was the date, as far as Wessels could ascertain, when the first thesis on the Anglo-Boer War was completed in South Africa – C.J.S. Strydom, *Die verdediging van die noordwestelike grens van die Kolonie* [*The defence of the north-western border of the Colony*] (M.A., University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1929).

2. The first thesis on the Anglo-Boer War was completed in the USA in 1908 – R.G. Campbell, *Neutral rights and obligations in the Anglo-Boer War* (Ph.D., Department of International Law, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1908).

far concern [sic: regard] this war as a *war* ... [and that] the time has definitely come to also determine the way in which this war, with its far-reaching consequences, ultimately became an instrument of cultural and social change” (p. 30). In Chapter 3, Wessels discusses and lists the theses according to their seventeen countries of origin, indicating in each case the role of each country in or with regard to the war. In his fourth and final chapter, Wessels discusses and lists the theses thematically according to the topics they cover, ranging from the causes of the war, the run-up to the hostilities, the course and phases of the war, to the peace efforts, the consequences of the war, civilians and the war, “non-whites” and the war, the war and the wider world, the media and churches and the war, the personalities of the war, and several other topics.

*A Century of Postgraduate Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) Studies* is an invaluable addition to the ever-growing body of literature on the Anglo-Boer War and should appeal to academics and other Anglo-Boer War enthusiasts alike. It should stimulate further studies on the war both by identifying aspects yet to be explored and by bringing a wealth of sources at numerous institutions across the globe to the notice of researchers in a single, well-organised volume.

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