



## **GERMAN OR GERMS: WHICH THE WORST ENEMIES IN AFRICA?**

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### **Abstract**

During the four years of the Great War, 1914-1918, was observed one of the largest developments in the medical field. This evolution was not restricted to the organization of medical and hospital military health services, but also to the field of treatment, diagnosis and management of surgical procedures.

There was also a breakthrough in terms of Pathology. Although in 1914 it was still taking its first steps as a science and branch of medicine, not only had a resounding impact as differentiated the results achieved in the health care services in Europe of the services provided in Africa, but also marked the difference between health care services provided by the British Army and the Portuguese Army in Africa.

In 1914 the Republic had the need to ship metropolitan troops to Africa, given the border conflicts with the Germans in southern Angola and northern Mozambique. The conflict on southern Angola was relatively quick to achieve the victory, in contrast to the conflict on northern Mozambique that lasted until 1918, claiming lives in a disproportionate number and even less justified way, because the most part of it had been caused by disease.

This communication shows how the material conditions influenced the chances of survival of the expeditionary soldiers on Africa and exposing basic failures in issues such as transport, cantonment and in particular the issue of hygiene so important in tropical climate. In this context it is seen the importance of Tropical Medicine in the war theater and is presented a comparative historical picture of the reality on the European Western Front with the African situation, as well as remarks the lack of prophylactic measures of the Portuguese Army during the Great War in Africa.