

# Impacts of european colonialism in africa history essay



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Prior to 19th century the rest of the world influenced little concerning Africa so called the Dark Continent in the time. However, there was some growing in the beginning of the early 1800s when explorers started their mission to the continent's interior. Most of the first European explorers in Africa were the missionaries who came with the mission of ministering to pagan African tribes. The majority of these missionaries wanted to eradicate the harmful trade (slave trade) that wrecked danger on most of poor Africans... (Paula 1998).

After seven centuries of being mistreated by Arab slave traders, Europeans took the available advantage of existing system towards blacks and captured to cater for the large plantations in America. So Swahili or black traders tramped through Africa buying prisoners and capturing blacks from the national tribes and sold them at the coast. Being led by Christian officials like Wilberforce, the Great Britain prohibited slave trade in 1807 and slavery in 1834. The British ships commenced to patrol the coast of Africa and tried to resist other nations from performing the slave trade.

Meanwhile, more of explorers; secular and Christian from British and other Continents started to explore Africa. In the beginning, African diseases and hostile natives disgusted most expeditions in Africa... (Johnson 1994).

Nevertheless, the European society made some progress with novel discoveries and inventions like the Maxim gun and quinine. Being armed with this modernism, the explorers commenced to make their way via the African jungle and natives. The Great Britain guided the way in Africa colonization with its colonies in South Africa. Then France attacked Tunisia in 1881 as

Great Britain captured Egypt which France and Great Britain had formerly ruled together.

Pierre de Brazza and Henry Stanley exploring France and Belgium respectively rushed into West Africa in attempt to get the Niger River for the countries which collaborated with them. To eradicate the European war which could rose from conflicting claims, the German chancellor Otto Bismark held conference in West Africa in Berlin from November 1884 to February 1885 which came to be called " the Scramble". Ambassadors gathered to the talk about the African policies especially regarding notification for any novel contest by one signing the country and all the other to sign countries... (Paula 1998).

Although the conference dealt with Africa greatly, not even one of the fourteen countries in the conference was Africa. Of all the seven European countries that lastly controlled most of Africa, France, Great Britain and Belgium jointly took control over the most African territory. But what were the policies, motives and abilities of these nations? How easily could their territory colonization turn into independence?

The numerous motives prompted the Great Britain, Belgium and France colonization in Africa. For one reason, as Europe felt worn out natural resources which it needed for industrialization, the entire nations had some interest in raw materials in Africa. However, besides this, the country's main reasons to have great interest in Africa differed..... (Johnson 1994). After the Napoleon Bonaparte was at last defeated at Waterloo in 1845, which the humbled Frenchmen influenced colonization in Africa and gave them an

opportunity to gain back their prestige and dignity in their traditional competition opposed to English.

As for Belgium, King Leopold II realistically supported the matter concerning colonization in Africa and not the country. The entire king's advisors and his counsel members imagined that Leopold must have lost his marbles since he spent much of his fortune into the colony. Unlike the purely lucrative about interest of African colonization which France and Belgium sought, the Great Britain had Biblical motive of colonizing Africa. Its real most of Englishmen viewed Africa as a good economy opportunity though some of the Englishmen needed to exploit their continent to Livingstone's. They needed to finish slavery, civilize the continent and also convert the black... (Johnson 1994).

One of the lucky results concerning the African colonization was the reality that the colonizers usually mishandled the indigenous inhabitants of African colonies. Officials in Belgium Congo initially won their prize as the worst abusive of all the colonizers in Africa. Afterward, Leopold lastly got the Belgian Congo performing and making profit and rumors reached Europe concerning the atrocities which occurred in the Congo River basin. However, the remote rumors had little witnesses and fewer who spoke since the Belgium cut down taxes upon other benefits which kept them quiet and happy.

In 1904, the British Foreign Office had to publish a report on Belgium Congo by Casement which the skeletons in Leopold II's closet became exposed.

Actually, the Leopold II utilized the Belgium Congo as a personal asset

instead of state colony. He never cared what happened to inhabitants as long as he benefited from resources of colonization. When the British published the report, the France give little attention to matters since France had commenced to follow the guidance of Belgian Congo and exploited land at all the costs to natives.. ... (Johnson 1994).

The British Christians and humanitarians got shocked and the Great Britain never treated natives in British colonies as the best though they never treated them as wild animals or slaves as officials treated them in French Equatorial Africa or Belgian Congo. As for missionary task in British, French and Belgian colonies, the missionaries whether catholic or protestant had liberty for work in all the British colonies. They offered medicine help via hospitals which they established, education via the mission schools, and performed duties in bible translation into local dialect and attempted to get converts into Christianity. Missionaries in Belgian and French colonies never had much of freedom.

In the beginning of 20th century, the French government halted to support the missionaries in colonies. However, the missionaries had the freedom to remain in colonies. Ironically, the severance did their evangelism to have good returns. The blacks do not ignore easily the colonial authorities which were harsh to us and the religion differed with the whites who dwelled in Sudan... (Johnson 1994). Anyway, missionaries inn Belgian Congo had the toughest time in all. Before the Belgium controlled the Belgium Congo, the Leopold II had showed forbidden by the Catholic missionaries and work in Belgium.

Despite of that, he allowed various Protestant missionaries into his area. But in the three countries, Leopold resisted the missionary task in Africa the most. The African colonies lastly got their freedom later in the 20th century... (Paula 1998). Of all the British, Belgian and French colonies struggled for independent states when they got their freedom.

Most of novel African states did not have a capable population. Some of the previous British colonies had capable citizens compared to Belgian and French colonies due to significance of education in their missionaries. On the entire European colonization for Africa, undersized the country. Europeans had utilized resources in the whole country to make a big progress in development of colonies under its power. Because of slave trade and effective slavery in most European colonies in Africa, the inhabitants in Africa came down greatly hence creating short natives who cultivated and developed their country, especially after the African countries gained independence...(Johnson 1994).

For instance, the scholars' estimation due to cruelties perpetrated in Belgian Congo, and Leopold II minimized the area population by more than 50%. Most of Africans were not offered with enough education to rule their country in harsh manner of European model. To make the matter complicated, the arbitrary boundaries for colonial set up in " the scramble" had originally formally been considered as originally ethnic diversity and resisted formation of a unified national spirit crucial for beginning of a new country.

Some of traditional evil practices and superstitions of natives set back succeeded even after independence despite the horrors carried out by

Europeans. Immoral practices, slavery, idol worship, land disputes and war caused starvation due to crop failure, for example due to mismanagement in modern Zimbabwe, and serious diseases like AIDS which resulted from sexual promiscuity, upon other sins in biblical instruction.

Immoral lifestyles and occult practices could have been the reason why God give room to European nations to take over Africa initially. As renowned by the black African Christians, the depraved and violent European countries were a tool used by God into which light was brought into the African continent. The direct European contact in West African countries goes back to 15th century when the Portuguese who traded made their initial West African coastal links. Europeans has been keen of and contributed in many levels to West African people via the trans-Saharan trade.

In the latter part of 15th century, the Dutch, Spanish, French and British started to establish themselves in West African region. The timing of these is linked nearly to development of maritime capabilities and enhanced interest in trade activities of Africa, Far East, Age of Exploration, and religious expansion. In the time, West Africa particularly came and represented crucial possibilities of policy expansionist with European powers in the next five centuries. The early contacts done by Europeans basically the Portuguese in 15th and 16th centuries were extensively focused on coastal regions and connected with trade although exploration and missionary work occurred as well... (Paula 1998).

Europeans traded in sugar, pepper, wax, ivory and gold in the period. The trade in gold was a main factor in extension of European commitments in

West Africa. Gold from Ghana especially represented almost 1/10 of the globe's gold production in the early part of 16th century. Europe's development greatly relied on gold and other associated growth of merchants' capitalism which reinforced Europe's connection in West Africa.

The West Africa coastal peoples in particular as influenced by presence of European traders represented a minute number of complexity and richness in region generally. Previous to European contact, the region experienced solidification and emergence of various ancient African politics and these included the Mali, Ghana, Hausa and Songhai states and empires. These pre-colonial states influenced a strong Islamic expansion and strong pre-colonial commercial network in contributed to complex and diverse social environment in European traders, missionaries and explorers.

In the beginning of 16th century up to the middle of 19th century, the trans-Atlantic trade of slaves grew highly in West Africa as the European powers enhanced their Africa slave traders and connection. By 18th century, the slaves' activities were an important element in trade which was conducted by Europeans in West Africa. The slaves were destined basically for the new world plantation economies. the warfare and rivalry between the pre-colonial nations, expansion of Islamic jihads, and new world demand of labor all contributed to environment in which the transfer and consolidation of African peoples became dominating economic activity for Europeans as well as the segments of African population in West Africa who got involved in capture and captives transport to markets.



Although the French had established the trade port in West African coast, their participation in West Africa increased greatly till the later of 19th century... (Johnson 1994). Their contribution in trans-African slave trade was always with minimal importance to European counterparts particularly the British, Dutch and Portuguese. The French came to concentrate on groundnuts, gum Arabic and other raw materials which originated from interior parts of West Africa.

The main slave port and were the most active in the period between the 17th and 19th century and were strategically located in the modern Ghana and Cameroons upon being extensively controlled by British, Portuguese and the Dutch. Although the French had its contact on other regional parts of West Africa, their efforts were more concentrated on Senegal River and the hinterland. In St. Louis, French started what lastly became the colonial project. Assimilation lay on the base of France's experience in West Africa... (Paula 1998).

By early 19th century, French had set up their original goal though by the middle of century most of promising hope for development came via French traders and merchants and enhancement of their needs and interests in Savanna regions of interior. The French goal to increase its stake in West Africa got influenced by particular policies which were undertaken by Europeans in Africa and culminated in 19th century with European for Africa.

Industrialization and other economic conditions in Europe influence the enlargement of European interests in West Africa since 19th century. The French and British imperialism in West Africa continued their activities hand

in hand. In the whole 19th century, the French and British were at work to make contracts and solidified their interests in their interior. The French started their main push eastwards towards the savannah regions with the influence of General Louis Faidherbe. Faidherbe got appointed as Governor for Senegal in 1854 and started his expansionist schedules thereafter.

In 1885, the major European powers greatly wanted to control the huge tracks of Africa as they signed the Berlin Act which legalized process for African partition. Germany, France, Portugal and Britain had interests in West Africa and the Act offered the guidelines in which they could expand their territories. By 1890, French had signed some agreements with various African leaders which greatly gave them power to capture large part of Western Sudan. They negotiated the agreements for powerful military activities... (Paula 1998).

The French expansion was precisely connected with the superior firepower and their campaign towards the Niger Valley was found on that superiority. The French conquest of West Africa went on to every fort with enlarged territory which they controlled. One of the significant crucial aspects of French colonization in West Africa was to pay its OEM way as the regions colony. The French administration increased productivity and enhanced the valuable resources. They enhanced production of cotton and groundnuts in appropriate conditions and imposed taxation as a way of participating in economy. They as well encouraged migration towards wage earning areas in places where crops could grow.

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