

# Colonization in africa

Government, Colonialism



European colonization effected Africa negatively, as it resulted in the continent being taken advantage of, people and resources exploited, and their economical standpoint being very low. By looking at Africa's experience with the Berlin Conference and the effects it had, we can see how greatly the continent was negatively influenced. The Berlin Conference brought King Leopold II into Africa, but the world did not know that it would result in genocide of about 5, 000 people in Sierra Leone.

Continuing into the 1990's, four million people were killed in Africa as a result of the wars that the excavation of diamonds caused. When the Europeans came to Africa, they were very forceful and they took advantage of the Africans. In the Scramble for Africa, " Representatives of fourteen European nations met in 1884 and 1885 to carve up the African continent" (Colonialism/Kenya DBQ). No Africans attended this meeting because the Europeans did not want anyone else besides them to control Africa, although they were the ones who inhabited the African continent at that time.

Once King Leopold II came into power, everything changed. Leopold wanted control over Africa's abundant resources, since they were so valuable. These resources supplied things that we use and see in everyday life. He wanted to exploit " raw materials such as wool, copper, and tin to supply their manufacturers; cash crops such as tea, coffee, and cocoa to fill their cups; and diamonds and gold to decorate themselves" (Colonialism/Kenya DBQ). Not only did King Leopold II do this for the European colonization, he did this for money. King Leopold II used the profit from these resources for personal benefit.

He was very greedy when it came to money and he did not care about anyone besides himself. Since the values of these resources were high, they were very costly and in large demand; “ the average value of a diamond from Sierra Leone is \$200 a karat” (Blood Diamonds). To achieve this profit, he found the cheapest possible labor forces that he could, so there wasn't the idea of losing a large amount of money to pay the workers. In fact, they were not paid at all. He forced brutal labor practices on the Africans, along with guards watching them while they worked in case a diamond was stolen.

The Europeans would resort to extreme measures with the Africans, Leopold's forces would torture and beat them if they did not do their work right or refused to do it. Some of the time they made fellow Africans torture another. This occurred because Leopold wanted to show the Africans that they were not afraid to resort to extreme measures, even if it ended up killing them. They assumed that they needed to scare the Africans, so they would not try to escape. Sometimes they would try to escape, but once they were caught many Africans were killed or tortured.

The European authority even took away children, like in Rabbit Proof Fence, A. O. Neville said, “ The continuing infiltration of white blood finally stamps out the black color”. They were trying to teach young Africans the way of the Europeans, to change their culture and religion. We see the Europeans trying to tell the Africans “ that they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone” (Achebe 145). This did not allow the Africans to thrive and create independent countries, civilization, or their own way of life.

As a result, we will never know what the Africans would have been like if the Europeans did not colonize their people in such a barbaric way. Although,

through statistics, it seems as though Africans were cheated out of pay in earnings. In average earnings in agriculture, “ European men earned about 33 times more pounds per year than the Africans” (Colonialism/Kenya DBQ). In this same statistical analysis, “ Asian men earned about 16 times more than the Africans” (Colonialism/Kenya DBQ). African education correlates with neglect.

The lack of adequate school facilities can help to explain the low education rates, whereas other races such as the Europeans and Asians have a significantly higher education rate. On the other hand, the other side of this argument would probably say that the Europeans influenced the economy for the better. They helped the country move forward technologically, set up an education system for the Africans, and unified and strengthened the nation by building the railroad that went through the country, gaining more trade and money.

Although they did move forward technologically and set up an education system, I strongly argue against that they unified and strengthened the nation. It seems as though they did completely the opposite by King Leopold II's affects. Given these points, there is evidence that shows how the colonization of Europeans affected the country very negatively. From the Berlin Conference to Leopold's control, and Leopold's control to the blood diamonds, the loss of life that took place was catastrophic.

Therefore, there was the fact that the Europeans came to Africa to take advantage of the people and took control of their land. Next, Leopold came into the picture and so did the forced brutal labor, along with the exploitation of diamonds, rubber and other resources. Then, there is the idea that <https://assignbuster.com/colonization-in-africa/>

Africans were paid significantly less than the other races and not to ignore the fact that education was also neglected. With these instances considered, it shows that the colonization of Africa had very negative effects on the country and it resulted in the mass genocide of Africans.