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The Dark Legacy of European Imperialism in Africa

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Abstract

The horrific side of European imperialism among the people of Africa illustrates the use of military force to either push their agendas on the indigenous people of Africa or to plunder the raw resources and artefacts they needed. Numerous difficulties serve as evidence that European nations continue to take advantage of Africa for economic gain. These profits were the main driving force behind the killing of so many natives in Africa during the colonial era. During this time of exploitation, Africans were subjected to

a variety of repercussions, such as the breakdown of their original social order and the imposition of a new structure or an entirely different way of life. This article argues that during the colonial eras in Africa, massacres were carried out with the assistance of soldiers. During the colonial and postcolonial eras in Africa, massacres were committed with the assistance of incompetent colonial policies. This study examines the structural mechanisms of the massacre as a particularly instructive example of dehumanisation.

Keywords: Massacre, Africa, Imperialism, Europe, Brutality, Colonialism

Introductory Discourse

Late in the nineteenth century, European imperialist objectives and pressures prompted African political and diplomatic responses, followed by armed resistance. Numerous European nations dispatched agents during and after the Berlin Conference to negotiate so-called protection treaties with the leaders of African civilizations, states, kingdoms, decentralised communities, and empires. Divergent interpretations of these treaties by opposing forces frequently lead to disagreements and, eventually, military engagements. For Europeans, these treaties meant that Africans had surrendered their sovereignty to European powers; but, for Africans, these treaties were only diplomatic and commercial friendship agreements. African rulers assembled militarily to fight the capture of their kingdoms and the imposition of colonial supremacy when they realised they had been tricked and that European powers now desired to impose and exercise political authority in their realm. (Oghenerioborue, 2019) ^[26]. Conflicts between European and African businesses made this situation worse. During the early stages of the rise of raw material commerce (erroneously referred to in the literature as "Legitimate Trade or Commerce"), Europeans obtained trade goods such as palm oil, cotton, palm kernel, rubber, and groundnut through African intermediaries. However, as the scramble intensified, Europeans desired to trade directly with the sources of the traded goods. Africans naturally rejected and demanded the continuation of a system of commercial interaction with outsiders that reflected their sovereignty as separate political and economic entities and actors. European merchants and commercial companies called on their own governments to intervene and impose "free trade" through the use of force. These political, diplomatic, and commercial considerations and tensions significantly contributed to the outbreak of armed conflicts and the organisation of African resistance to the European empire. However, the use of force and, subsequently, the act of massacre are not new to the European ruling class. There are instances where they have applied such techniques outside of Africa. Examples include the massacre in Mahua Dabar during the Indian rebellion of 1857; the Amritsar Massacre of 1919, also in India; and the Croke Park killings of 1920 in Ireland, among others. Military resistance in Africa mostly took the form of guerrilla warfare and direct military combat (Oyewale & Osadola, 2018). While they were deployed as required by African armies, the predominant kind was determined by the people's political, social, and military systems. Due to their small size and lack of standing or professional armies, small-scale societies, also known as decentralised societies (erroneously referred to as "stateless" societies), resorted to guerrilla warfare. Instead of professional troops, resistance was waged by small groups of organised fighters with a command of the terrain, using the traditional guerrilla technique of hit-and-run attacks against fixed enemy forces. Osadola & Gbadeyan (2023) ^[28] posited that the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria employed this tactic in their conflict with

the British. Despite the fact that the British imperialists stormed across Igboland in three years, between 1900 and 1902, and despite the Igbo societies' modest size, the Igbo fought back for years. Because the resistance was scattered and fragmentary, it was impossible to entirely defeat them and announce an absolute triumph. Long after the British established a legal colony in Igboland, they did not completely control the country. (Black, 2004)

Direct military engagements were most often organised by centralised state systems such as chiefdoms, city-states, kingdoms, and empires, which frequently maintained standing or professional armies and were therefore capable of confronting European forces with massed forces (Malesevic, 2013)^[20].

Some of the Massacres in Africa

Sétif and Guelma, May 8th, 1945: In the majority of the Constantine département, in the east of the country, people were celebrating the allied victory over Germany (in which Algerian local forces participated). After the police got involved, the protest in Sétif descended into a riot. The region between Sétif and Bougie was then affected by this riot (Bejaia). The army, and to a lesser extent, the civilian populace, coordinated the repression; the death toll, which is still unknown, is likely in the tens of thousands. A protester was slain in Guelma, a tiny hamlet between Constantine and Bône (Annaba). However, 12 French citizens died on May 9 and 10. At least 1,500 to 2,000 Muslims perished at the hands of civilians. The exact number of fatalities is still unknown. But we do know that 102 of them were French. In addition, several thousand Muslim people suffered fatal injuries or other harm (Greenhalgh, 2017)^[13].

Nambuangongo, March 15th, 1961: The first assaults against colonial farms and settlements in northern Angola began in 1961. During this genocide, hundreds of black and white settlers in the coffee fields of Dembos, Negage, Cua, and Nambuangongo were slain and dismembered. Many people died through hacking. Men, women, and children, black and white, were all killed in the slaughter. No one was spared from the UPA's rage (later known as the FNLA, or National Front for the Liberation of Angola). There are several tales of the day. "The horrible destruction has spread over the Zaire and Uige regions in less than 48 hours. An excerpt from Franco Nogueira's book "Salazar Volume V - The Resistance" reads, "Plantations and lonely houses were looted and set on fire; villages were razed to the ground; the siege was laid on villages and small hamlets, their supplies were cut off; roads and means of communication were destroyed." (Anderson, 1962)

Benin Expedition, 1897: The 1897 expedition, also known as the Benin Punitive Expedition, was an invasion of Benin City, the capital of the Kingdom of Benin, by British soldiers, 1200 of whom were under the leadership of Admiral Sir Harry Rawson. The invasion took place over the course of 17 days, and the occupying army seized complete power. The British expedition was primarily intended as retaliation for the assault that a column of British officers led by the acting consul-general, James Philips, and indigenous soldiers disguising themselves as porters and musicians suffered when they attempted to reach Benin City in 1897 in order to attack the city and overthrow the Obá. The raid, which came to be known as the Benin Massacre, left just two policemen alive. The mission, however, was a component of British efforts to seize control

of the area and annex Benin in order to take use of its riches (Charles, 2014)^[4].

Congo massacres during King Leopold's rule (1885–1908): Atrocities in the Congo Free State refer to a number of confirmed atrocities committed in the Congo Free State (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), a territory ruled personally by Belgian King Leopold II, between 1885 and 1908. These crimes against humanity were mostly related to the labour laws that were implemented to harvest natural rubber for export (Weisbord, 2003)^[36]. Such atrocities, together with epidemic illnesses, starvation, and the reduction in the birth rate brought on by these disruptions, were a major factor in the Congolese population's dramatic decline. Although the exact size of the population drop throughout the time period is debatable, it is generally agreed that it ranged from one to fifteen million. Belgian King Leopold II pledged to go out a charitable and humanitarian mission to better the lives of Africans. In return, he was given 2m2 (770,000 square miles) to create a private colony where he could live as he pleased by European leaders gathered at the Berlin Conference. The Congo Free State is what he dubbed it. It gradually evolved into a cruel and exploitation-based system that relied on forced labour to cultivate and trade minerals, rubber, and ivory. Administrators of the colonies also kidnapped orphaned youngsters from their homes and took them to "children's colonies" where they were forced to work or undergo military training. According to estimates, more than 50% perished there. Perhaps 10 million people died as a result of murders, starvation, and illness combined, but historians debate the precise number. Despite never having visited, Leopold II used the money to enrich both Belgium and his own wallets. On the grounds of his mansion in Tervuren, he constructed the Museum of Africa, which included a "human zoo" with 267 Congolese natives (Shihada, 2015)^[35].

Yekatit 12, 19th February 1937: The greatest slaughter in Ethiopian history, according to some accounts, occurred here. After Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, Marquis of Negele, Viceroy of Italian East Africa, was assassinated on February 19, 1937, Ethiopians were massacred and imprisoned by the Italian colonial forces. Graziani, the supreme administrator of Italian East Africa, had commanded the Italian soldiers to victory over the Ethiopians in the Second Italian invasion of Ethiopia (Forgacs, 2016)^[10]. The number of fatalities in the three days after Graziani's assassination is uncertain. Italian reports said that a few hundred persons were slain by the Ethiopians; however Ethiopian accounts put the death toll at 30,000. According to the report on the 2017 massacre, 19,200 out of 100,000 individuals, or 20% of Addis Abeba's population, were slaughtered (Forgacs, 2020)^[11]. The next week saw the roundup and execution of several Ethiopians, including Black Lions and other aristocratic members, who were thought to be opposed to Italian control. Emperor Haile Selassie sent 125 men to study at universities overseas, but the most of them were assassinated. Many more people were detained, including accomplices who assisted the Italians in locating the two guys who attempted to kill Graziani.

Mau Mau Uprising Massacres: In 1952, the Mau Mau revolt had its start in response to injustices and inequities in British-ruled Kenya. The colonial government's response was a brutal crackdown on the rebels that left many people dead. Although the revolt had been completely put down by

1956, it had made evident how strong the resistance to the British government was, and Kenya was now on the road to independence, which it ultimately attained in 1963 (Newsinger, 1992)^[23].

In order to establish a base of resistance against the government, thousands of Mau Mau abandoned their homes and set up camp in the forests of the Aberdares and Mount Kenya. The rest of 1952 saw comparatively calm hostilities, but 1953 saw a string of brutal deaths of Africans who supported British and European farms. The white community was sufficiently alarmed by this to urge that the government do more to resist the Mau Mau, and as a result, the Kenyan security forces were put under the British Army's command and started to encircle the Mau Mau strongholds in the woodlands. This was done in conjunction with the widespread displacement of Kikuyu squatters from territory chosen for European settlement. Collective punishment was a strategy that the government forces utilised in an effort to erode public support for the Mau Mau. According to this approach, if one villager was discovered to be a supporter of the Mau Mau, the entire community was assumed to be one. As a result, some Kikuyu were compelled to leave their homes and goods behind and were relocated to places designated as Kikuyu reserves. The eviction policy's usage of concentration camps to house anyone accused of supporting the Mau Mau was a particularly repulsive aspect. As British guards employed beatings, sexual assault, and executions to elicit information from captives and coerce them into renouncing their support for the anti-colonial movement, abuse and torture were pervasive in these camps (Crook, 2013)^[6]. Hundreds of squatters were compelled to join the Mau Mau rebels in the forest as a result of the huge eviction process, which exacerbated the Kikuyu's already severe resentment and dread over land reallocation that they had endured for decades.

Two significant attacks by Mau Mau militants caused the insurrection to intensify. First, there was an attack on the Naivasha police station, which led to the police suffering a humiliating loss and the liberation of 173 detainees, many of them Mau Mau, from a nearby detention centre. The second was the killing of Kikuyu supporters in Lari, which resulted in at least 97 Kenyan deaths. The episode was utilised by the government to further portray the Mau Mau as barbaric savages, and no public mention was made of the execution by machine gun of a similar number of Mau Mau detainees by government forces in the Aberdare Forest. These assaults marked the start of a sequence of raids by the Mau Mau against the police and allies that persisted throughout 1953. Military units were formed as a result of the rebel forces' progressive organisation in the woodlands, despite their limitations due to a lack of equipment, supplies, and training.

The battle and massacre at Shar al-Shatt, October 23rd, 1911: A 10,000-strong Turkish-Arab army ambushed Italian forces as they marched through the Mechiya oasis near Sciarra Sciat. According to some reports, 250 soldiers were killed by Turkish forces when they seized two companies of Italian infantry in a nearby cemetery. Some report that Italian corpses with their eyes and genitalia disfigured were fastened to trees as payback for the Italian forces' alleged sexual assaults on local women. The following day, in retaliation, the Italians attacked the locals of the nearby Mechiya oasis and massacred roughly 4,000 people over the

course of three days, including women and children. Although the Italians apparently took steps to stop word of this move from spreading outside, international press correspondents extensively covered the incident (Forgacs, 2020)^[11]. This unfavourable press contributed to the British Parliament's decision to take a more pro-Turkish stance later that month and reject a proposed Anglo-Italian Mediterranean accord.

French Colonial Massacre, March 29th, 1947: The Malagasy people stood up to throw off the burden of colonialism. Tens of thousands of people were killed in France's huge crime as a response to this insurrection. Insurgents numbering several hundred attacked the military base at Moramanga, east of the island, using a column of underprivileged peasants armed with outdated weapons. This served as the start of an uprising that burned for almost two years in the French colony of Madagascar off the coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean. A nationalist fire had been lit on the Red Island, which was the site of bitter Franco-British conflict before being given French colonial sovereignty in 1896. A few months previously, a limited-authority elected assembly had been established, but it was not enough to put out the flame. The commencement of the uprising was sparked by the return of Malagasy foot soldiers who had served in France during the Second World War, the appalling living circumstances of the native population, and the involvement of nationalist organisations and secret societies (Cole, 2003)^[5].

Chilembwe uprising, 15th January 1915: This was an uprising in Nyasaland against British colonial control (modern-day Malawi). Black African Baptist clergyman John Chilembwe served as its leader. The rebellion's leaders were primarily members of an emerging Black middle class, and they were centred on his church in the settlement of Mbombwe in the protectorates southeast. They were driven by complaints over the white colonial system, including forced labour, racial discrimination, and additional demands put on the indigenous people after World War I broke out. Three white settlers were slain when rebels assaulted the A. L. Bruce Plantation headquarters in Magomero after being provoked by Chilembwe. The next night, an attack on a weapons store in Blantyre was generally unsuccessful. By daybreak, the colonial authorities had redirected regular military forces from the King's African Rifles and recruited the militia of white settlers (KAR). On January 25, following an unsuccessful assault by government forces on Mbombwe, the rebels assaulted and destroyed a Christian mission in Nguludi (Stuart-Mogg, 2007)^[37].

On January 26, the KAR and militia captured Mbombwe without facing any opposition. In an effort to find sanctuary in Mozambique, several of the rebels, including Chilembwe, escaped there, but many of them were seized. In the wake of the uprising, some 40 rebels were put to death and 300 were imprisoned; Chilembwe was killed on February 3rd by a police patrol close to the border. Despite the rebellion's short-lived success, it is frequently referred to be a turning point in Malawian history. The revolt had a long-lasting impact on Nyasaland's British administrative structure, and some change was implemented as a result. The burgeoning Malawian nationalist movement rekindled interest in the Chilembwe uprising following World War II. After Malawi gained its independence in 1964, it was recognised as a pivotal period in the history of the country. Politicians in Malawi frequently use symbolism and language to refer to

Chilembwe's memory, which is still prominent in the general national consciousness. The revolt is now remembered every year, and Chilembwe is revered as a national hero (Bone, 2015)^[2].

Mueda, 16 June 1960: Mueda Massacre is another another tragedy brought on by colonial exploitation in Africa. On that day, officials of the colonial authority with Portuguese headquarters and the Mueda district, in the north of the Mozambican realm, met for administrative purposes. After the incident, numerous Mozambicans were killed by gunfire from the colonial authority. The quantity has not yet been counted. According to reports, MANU, the main group advocating for the district's independence and the territory's split from Mozambique, made the demand at the conference in question. The incident had a profound impact on Mozambicans and played a significant role in the formation of FRELIMO, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, two years later. The narrative of the movement during the early stages of the War was heavily influenced by the case's gratuitousness and the bloodshed committed by the Portuguese in the massacre (Israel, 2017)^[14].

Wiriyamu, 16 December 1972: Similar atrocities occurred throughout wars of repression by white colonial and settler powers in Africa, and the Wiriyamu massacre was an example of structurally organised mass violence during the Portuguese colonial wars. In the Tete region of northern Mozambique, an operation known as "Marosca" that included commandos, aircraft, and PIDE/DGS operatives was conducted with the goal of eradicating five villages: Wiriyamu, Juwau, Djemusse, Riacho, and Chaworha. The troops of the Comandos reacted when bombs were dropped on the community of Wiriyamu, and brutality followed. Women and children were among the hundreds of victims that were killed. The slaughter continued in many inhumane ways to the four communities along the Zambezi River. Many are shot, while others are imprisoned within cubicles where incendiary explosives cause them to burn to death. Soldiers burn down homes, businesses, and entire communities. They also rob and shoot at individuals, placing some of the dead on funeral pyres while others are still alive (Reis and Oliveira, 2012)^[32].

A third of the 1350 residents of the five villages, or 385 persons, are claimed to have perished. Domingo Kansande and Father Domingos Ferro collected the list of victims and the story of what happened before giving it to priests in Spain and the Netherlands. On July 10, 1973, a few days before Marcelo Caetano's trip to London, the English clergyman Adrian Hastings would break the news of the slaughter in the British newspaper "The Times." The UN would get involved in the situation as well (Dhada, 2013)^[8]. The incident illustrates how the anti-colonial fight had nuances and different protagonists from those who were portrayed in the official narratives. In this instance, black Mozambican, Spanish, or Dutch priests supported the population's battle for independence. Portugal never presumptively assumed what had occurred.

The massacre would have been lost to recorded history if not for the role played by data gatherers, counter-reporting priests, and fact-checking journalists in producing a list of the dead, mounting a concerted effort to verify and then publicise the massacre, and engaging in a daring rendition of a surviving eyewitness. They were successful in getting their story on the front page of The Times 206 days after the occurrence, on July 10, 1973. Five days later, the Sunday

Times Insight team repeated this, offering in-depth background coverage of the case.

Namibia Genocide, 1884–1915: From 1884 until 1915, Germany dominated what was then known as German South West Africa as a colony. Tens of thousands of indigenous Herero and Nama people were massacred by colonial soldiers and settlers between 1904 and 1908. Because they had opposed German settlers' attempts to seize their land, the Herero and Nama people were targeted by German soldiers. Africans died in concentration camps after being shot, hung, left in the desert, and more. Herero and Nama survivors were sent into the desert and eventually housed in concentration camps where they were used as slave labour. Some were the victims of sexual exploitation and medical experimentation, while others perished from sickness, weariness, and malnutrition. Up to 80% of the indigenous inhabitants are estimated to have perished during the genocide. The Herero and the Nama, two marginalised ethnic groups in Namibia, have preserved their genocide narratives through oral tradition and cultural activities. Following Namibia's independence in 1990, a movement to recognise the genocide gained momentum, which grew stronger in 2004 as the crimes' 100th anniversary approached (Niezen, 2018)^[24].

Iva Valley, November 18th, 1949: At a coal mine in Enugu controlled by the British government, 21 striking workers and a bystander were shot to death, and 51 others were wounded (Jaja, 1982)^[15]. The miners, who had been sacked after a work to rule, were seeking back pay that was due to them for a period of casualization known as "rostering," which was ultimately ruled unconstitutional. They took over the mine in order to stop a repetition of the lockout they had experienced during the general strike in 1945. Since the Zikist independence movement, which included Marxists and other radicals, was headquartered in Enugu, police were dispatched to disarm the mine's explosives together with Hausa troops drawn from the country's north, whose language and even their uniforms were foreign to the Igbo miners. Local Igbo police officers made friends with the employees and persuaded them that they would receive their just compensation from the government in exchange for their assurances that they would not start a confrontation. They wouldn't stop the cops from taking out the explosives, but they wouldn't assist because it wasn't their responsibility. Hewers and Tubmen were subject to the tight work division established by the British (Brown, 2003)^[3].

The Batepá Massacre: February 3, 1953: In Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Portuguese colonial soldiers carried out a slaughter. Uncertainty surrounds the number of people who have died via electric torture and drowning. The decision to have the local people labour on the public works projects and in the cocoa and coffee plantations, made by the then governor-general Carlos Gorgulho, was at the centre of the events (Rodrigues, 2019)^[34]. Most employees were Angolan and Cape Verdean locals due to the archipelago's persistent labor deficit. On the farms, labor was either unpaid or paid inhumanely little. Constant whipping-based violence and attempts to compel indigenous people to work led to a populace uprising in early 1953. Machine guns and grenades were used to drive them away. Both native and indigenous people fled to the fields and the forest, respectively. The colonial government then armed slaves and prisoners. It employs white militias and discredits the police. With horrific outcomes, the so-called "dark hunt" has started. A

thousand Santomeans were brought to prisons where they were tortured; some were killed; and nearly all were sent to forced labor camps. Homes were burned down. Women were raped. According to the historian Inês Rodrigues, the Portuguese sources estimate 200 fatalities, whereas the So Tomé sources estimate 1032 dead. Therefore, it is hard to estimate the number of victims with any historical precision. The massacre is seen as the catalyst for San Tomean nationalism, and those who were killed there became champions of the country's freedom (Keese, 2014) ^[17].

Langa Massacre, 21 March 1985: In the Eastern Cape of South Africa, near the cities of Uitenhage and Langa, members of the South African Police opened fire on a throng of civilians assembled on Maduna Road. The gathering was during the burial of one of the six people killed on March 17, 1985, by the apartheid police. When the police blocked the road with two armoured vehicles and told the crowd to leave, they had congregated in Maduna Square and were on their way to the home where the burial was conducted. Police fired on the gathering when it didn't instantly obey, killing 35 people and injuring 27 more (Dbow, 2015) ^[9].

Sharpeville Massacre, 21 March 1960: Afrikaner police assault an unarmed gathering of South African Black protestors. A hail of submachine bullets resulted in 180 injuries and the deaths of 69 persons. The demonstrators were opposed to the travel restrictions imposed by the government of South Africa. After the Sharpeville massacre, demonstrations broke out in Cape Town, and more than 10,000 people were imprisoned before government forces could recover control. The event convinced Nelson Mandela to abandon his nonviolent stance and organise paramilitary organisations to confront South Africa's entrenched system of racial discrimination. Mandela was sentenced to life in prison in 1964 after being found guilty of treason for a minor military action. After 27 years of imprisonment, he was released, and in 1994 he was elected South Africa's first Black president (Lodge, 2011) ^[19].

Maji Maji Rebellion, 1905–1907: The Maji Maji Rebellion was an armed uprising of Islamic and animist Africans against German colonial rule in German East Africa (German: Maji-Maji-Aufstand, Swahili: Vita vya Maji Maji) (modern-day Tanzania). German policies forcing the native people to cultivate cotton for export, which resulted in 250,000–300,000 fatalities, started the conflict. Following the conflict in Africa in the 1880s between the major European powers, Germany tightened its grip over a number of recognised colonies in Africa. These included German South-West Africa (now Namibia), Cameroon, and Togoland. German East Africa included Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and a portion of Mozambique (now divided between Ghana and Togo). German East Africa was under the Germans' control only to a limited extent. Nevertheless, they kept a network of forts across the territory's interior and exercised considerable control over it. They used highly coercive methods to keep the populace under control since their grip over the colony was tenuous (Lliffe, 1967) ^[18].

Pyahodo Massacre, 21 June 1957: The populace used the arrival of the UN mission, headed by the Liberian King, as an opportunity to voice their displeasure with the Togolian French colonial government. On the instructions of the deputy circle commander, the colonial forces (gendarmes and circle guards) opened fire on the market throng in response to the villagers' objection to a warrant for the arrest

of a particular Bouyo Mouké. A slaughter took place! Twenty individuals were killed and dozens more were injured (Gayibor 1995: 215) ^[12]. The mission had no choice but to criticize the occurrence in light of the tense, violent, and homicidal political climate that existed at the time. Although it was initially believed that the area was governed by France, it was later determined that the victims were protesters calling for Togo to gain independence immediately, a viewpoint supported by the Comité de l'Unité Togolais (CUT) party and Juvento (Tcham and Tanai, 2019) ^[38]. The residents of this region, like most Togolese, chose independence from internal autonomy nearly a year after this violence, namely on April 27, 1958. A white marble stele bearing the inscription "They died so that Togo may live" was later constructed in Pyahodo during the single party RPT era in honour of all those who perished at the hands of the French coloniser. The struggle of the Togolese people to rid themselves of the colonial yoke is recalled as these lines introduce the names of the roughly twenty victims of this slaughter.

Nyadzonia Massacre (5 August 1976) & Chimoio Massacre (23–25 November 1977: Both the particularly gruesome killings that took place during the independence struggle in Zimbabwe included Zimbabwean exiles and freedom fighters, and both were carried out by the colonial government in neighbouring Mozambique. Over a thousand Zimbabwean freedom fighters, refugees, and children perished in each of these two massacres at the hands of a colonial authority that was opposing the majority indigenous Zimbabweans' movement for freedom and independence. Working with a freedom fighter, colonial forces learned the location of the refugee camp, where children, untrained boys and girls waiting to be taught, and freedom fighters lived. Before the Rhodesians began firing at point-blank range, the insider collaborator Morrison Nyathi sounded a whistle, which served as an emergency signal for the camp inmates to gather at the parade field, which was now held by enemy forces (Masoga *et al.*, 2018) ^[21]. Numerous people were shot or drowned while attempting to flee into the adjacent river, resulting in the carnage that followed. Documents from the ZANLA found during the operation revealed that 1,028 of their number had been murdered, a number far greater than the 300 Rhodesians had previously stated. Also unknown is whether ZANLA retained records on the camp's non-combatants, including children and refugees. In Nyadzonia, mass graves held the deceased (Munguambe, 2020) ^[22]. From November 23 to 25, 1977, Chimoio, which is said to have been the freedom fighters' largest camp in Mozambique, was under siege. The victims included fighters and non-combatants; men, women, and children. Although the precise number of people killed in Chimoio is still unclear, it is in the thousands. The fact that there were more than 20 mass graves where the dead were interred and that fresh mass grave are still being found nearby demonstrates the seriousness of this crime.

The Aftermath of European Imperialism in Africa

The racial rivalries that had been held in check by the patriotic wars for independence came to light as soon as the British colonies were free of British rule. For instance, in Nigeria, ethnic tensions rose sharply after independence and reached a boiling point during the 1967–1970 civil war (Osadola and Oludemi, 2021) ^[29]. It is only possible to make sense of this conflict by seeing it as the culmination of a

chain of events that started with allegations of election rigging six years earlier (Osadola, 2012) ^[27]. Nigeria's situation is comparable to that of the other postcolonial British colonies in Africa. For instance, in Sierra Leone in the 1990s, ethnic tensions led to a civil war that claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. The Asians (Indians), who were citizens of Uganda, were exiled from that country during the military dictatorship of Idi Amin. There were a lot of racially motivated murders committed between 1971 and 1979 during Amin's rule. About 300,000 Ugandans perished, with the majority of them being Bugandans (Roberts, 2014) ^[33].

Racial and ethnic relations have significantly improved in the southern African subregion, where there were settlement populations during postcolonial times. In this regard, Zimbabwe stands out as the only major exception, where Robert Mugabe has encouraged racial and ethnic conflicts since the late 1990s in an effort to maintain power (Compagnon, 2011) ^[7]. Since winning a majority government in 1994, South Africa has emerged as a role-model nation where racial and ethnic tensions have greatly diminished.

Racial and ethnic tensions sowed by British colonial policy led to the murder of millions of Africans in the former British colonies (Oyewale and Osadola, 2018). Unfortunately, some in positions of political authority still support British colonial practices. The leaders of these countries continue to use ethnic rivalries and tensions as a political tool (Nwachukwu and Osadola, 2019) ^[25]. Second, the majority of ethnic conflicts in these nations are caused by competition for a few resources that must be distributed among different groups. Third, there are covert actors involved in the ethnic disputes in the once-British territories of Africa. It's remarkable that the majority of racial conflicts occur in resource-rich African nations (Kaczynski and Fluharty, 2002) ^[16]. In order to continue plundering Africa's riches, British and other foreign interests foment civil conflicts in African nations. Last but not least, the British government's ongoing meddling in the affairs of its former colonies has not made things better. They continue to promote their preferred ethnic groups openly and secretly, which allows them to rule and marginalise all other groups.

Conclusion

One conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the British government continued to carry out atrocities in Africa far into the post-colonial era. The massacres that occurred during the colonial periods were carried out through the use of military force, whereas those that occurred and are still occurring in the post-colonial periods were carried out through the implementation of ineffective colonial policies and the pervasive presence of neo-colonialism within the spheres of these former British colonies.

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