White Terror Documentary: Critical Analysis

After the end of the Atlantic slave trade, European countries focused on Africa as a source of raw material and market for the goods produced from their industries. This led Africa to be partitioned during the Berlin Conference of 1884-185 by the European powers. No African was present during this meeting resulting into a continent defined with artificial boundaries with little concern for present ethnic, African communities of geographic realities.

Once these countries had secured a territory in Africa, they introduced a system of governance which enforced the provision of natural resources with adverse effects for the indigenous population. One of the primary systems of colonialism used by the European nations in Africa was settler colonialism (Veracini, 2010). In this system, the colonialist aimed at replacing the indigenous population with invasive settler society. Some of the Settler colonial states in Africa include South Africa, Kenya, Algeria Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Angola (Veracini, 2010).

The settler system of colonialism can be distinguished from other systems of colonialism such as classical colonialism and neo-colonialism by several key factors. In the settler system, the colonial agents permanently occupied and asserted sovereignty over the native land. Secondly, settlers colonial invasion was perceived as a structure and not as an event. This is because the colonist persisted eliminating the indigenous population as well as declaring state sovereignty and juridical control over their lands (Veracini, 2015). This was evident in Kenya, where settlers took the lands of the Kikuyu community and forced them to work as slaves. According to the White Terror BBC Documentary, the white settlers had occupied the fertile lands (Archives, 2016).

Thirdly, the settler colonialists aimed its own end. In other colonial systems, the colonists aimed at maintaining the colonial structures and balance the power between the colonisers and the indigenous communities (Veracini, 2015). On the other hand, the colonist aimed at ending the colonial differences to create a supreme and unchallenged settler state. This drive was not an aim to decolonize the country but rather to eliminate the challenges faced by the settlers caused by the indigenous people. For instance, when the Mau Mau uprising began the government hunted and killed the Mau Mau followers. This is because the Mau Mau attacked and murdered the white settlers (Archives, 2016).

The Mau Mau rebellion was formed in 1952 as a result of increased tensions between the colonial settlers and the Kikuyu. Despite increased economic, social and political tensions by the settlers, the main cause of Mau Mau rebellion is still not clear. Some of the issues at stake during the Mau Mau rebellion were economic deprivation of the Kikuyu, killing and torturing of prisoners of the colony and poor wages (Archives, 2015). The Kikuyu's were unhappy since the white settlers in the country were taking their land, which was their primary source of income. Despite numerous attempts to address this issue, the colonial government ignored them.

Harsh restrictions were also imposed on the Kikuyus; for instance, they were forced to work in the white settlers' farms and taxed heavily. Additionally, the white settlers introduced disciplinary measures on the Kikuyu labourers; they were often tortured, whipped and at times raping the Kikuyu women. Consequently, anyone who opposed colonial rule was killed.

During their activities, the Mau Mau never made their objectives clear. However, from the documentary White Terror, the Mau Mau movement was political because they wanted to be free from the white Settler. The validity of this argument is proved when the Mau Mau held meetings, their relationship with detained leaders, and how they communicated with government to express their grievances (Archives, 2016).

References

1. Archives, K. D. (2016, August 17). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV0udfKrzTQ&feature=youtu.be
2. Veracini, L. (2010). Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Veracini, L. (2015). The Settler Colonial Present. London: Palgrave Macmillan.