

Solidarity with anti-colonial struggles – for an anti-colonial culture of remembrance.

November 15th marks the 136th anniversary of the beginning of the so-called Berlin Conference, also known as the Congo Conference. We would like to remember it, because this conference laid the foundation for the division of Africa into colonies. The conference took place at the invitation of Otto von Bismarck in Berlin from November 15, 1884 to February 26, 1885. Germany established itself as a colonial power in parts of what is now Namibia, Togo, Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

The colonial arrogance to divide Africa continues to have an effect in many ways to this day. Studies have shown that regions that were torn apart in this way still suffer much more from civil wars and are often poorer than others. [1]

Colonial tyranny, which sought to impose dystopian production quotas for rubber, among other things, by means of whipping and mutilation, turned into capitalist exploitation in many regions. This neo-colonial exploitation takes various forms, such as discriminatory trade policies, violent and destructive mining of mineral resources for the Global North, utilization of drinking water for profit, exploitation of sewers or displacement of peasants by agribusinesses. It is also these forms of destruction of natural resources and neo-colonial exploitation that drive migration processes. The continued colonial tyranny is expressed in the fact that migrants are criminalized and left to drown.

For the (moral) justification of colonial violence, the „race theory“ was developed and colonial racism was deeply burnt into the self-image of the colonizers. Colonial racism is also effective to the present day. For wealthy, white classes, trips to the Global South are common in the context of student exchange or voluntary service. In the reports about them, people and countries of the Global South are portrayed in a stereotypical and racist way – consciously or unconsciously. Some stories even read like colonial travel reports. [2] The first German Colonial Exhibition of 1896 in Treptower Park is also an expression of white supremacy thinking. It was also a „Völkerschau,“ in which the colonized were „exhibited“ in a zoo-like situation. The permanent exhibition „zurückGESCHAUT“, organized by the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland and berlin postkolonial e.V., informs about this. [3,4]

We are in solidarity with the resistance against (neo)colonial domination. Be it memorial struggles, such as the demands for reparations for colonization as a whole and especially for the genocide of the Herero and Nama, or demands for renaming streets and squares. Be it environmental and climate struggles for indigenous land, such as the North Dakota Access Pipeline in the Wet’suwet’en area in Canada or the slash-and-burn clearances of the Amazon and the Pantanal wetlands in Brazil.

We are for the abolition of the neocolonial order to pave the way for reconciliation and collective responsibility. Our anarchist perspective is inevitably anti-colonial, anti-religious, anti-capitalist, anti-racist.

[1] <https://www.dw.com/de/als-in-berlin-afrikas-schicksal-beschlossen-wurde/a-18278759>

[2] <https://www.glokal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/BroschuereMitkolonialenGruessen2013.pdf>

[3] <https://www.berlin.de/museum-treptow-koepenick/ausstellungen/artikel.649851.php>

[4] <https://vimeo.com/278646205>

PS:

The starting point to deal with colonialism more intensively as a group was the recommendable documentary „Entkolonisieren,,:

Part 1: <https://youtu.be/wovqAs62KqU>

Part 2: <https://youtu.be/2OOIA7kwBWc>

Part 3: <https://youtu.be/Ulm9QFb39yM>