

Three Books on Africa

by [Armando Simón](#) (April 2024)



From Congo to the Capital and Back Again by Henry Taylor, 2007

I was originally going to do one book review in honor of Black History Month in February, but since Black History Month actually lasts the whole year, I decided to take the time to include two others. Hence, the following:

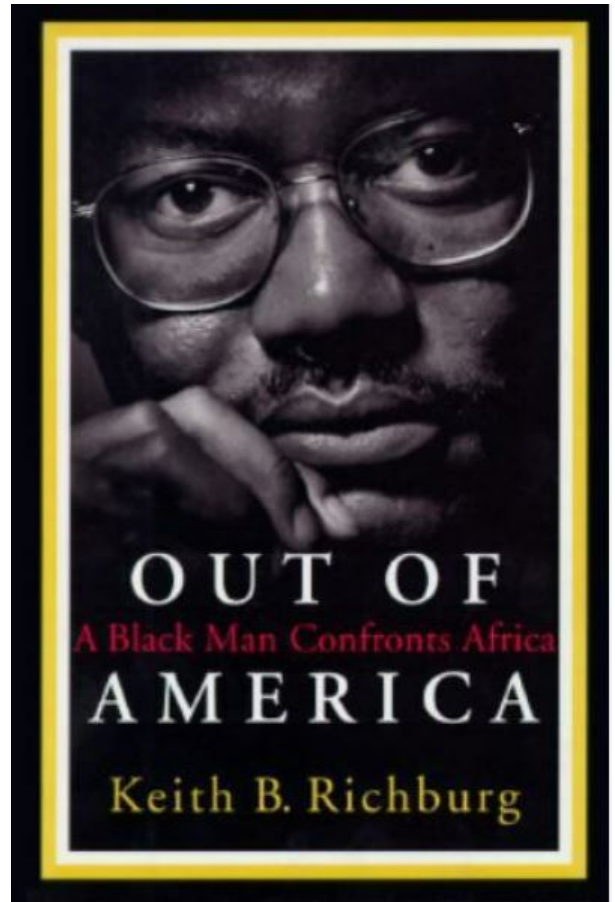
Out of America

This is an outstanding narrative of Keith Richburg, a journalist who was sent to Africa to cover the news, and there was a lot of news to cover. However, what makes it more poignant is that the writer is a black American who went to the continent with the illusion that so many black Africans hold dear of "Mother Africa" and had all his illusions shattered again and again. He began in the pestilential hellhole called Somalia and he admits to having used his articles as propaganda ("while the world does nothing") for humanitarian intervention

and we all know how that worked out. He admits to it having been a fiasco. Here are a couple of notable quotes: "When no one comes to help, they cry that the world is indifferent to their suffering. And when people do come what do the Somalis do? They shoot them in the back of the head, drag the naked bodies through the streets, beat them to death with bricks." (p.65-66) "No one ever calculated what you do next if the people you come to help have no interest in being saved." (p.78)

And someone had the bright idea of importing these Somali savages to America where they have become a malignant infestation. And are still doing so.

He went on to cover Liberia, Rwanda, Zaire, and throughout he was repeatedly shocked at the in-your-face corruption and the



constant savagery where masses of people were not just killed, but their bodies hacked into pieces. Everywhere, the brutality was unimaginable. Loyalty was to the tribe, not to the country. Ironically, it was precisely because he was black that his life was constantly at risk, and some of the other black journalists were not so lucky as him.

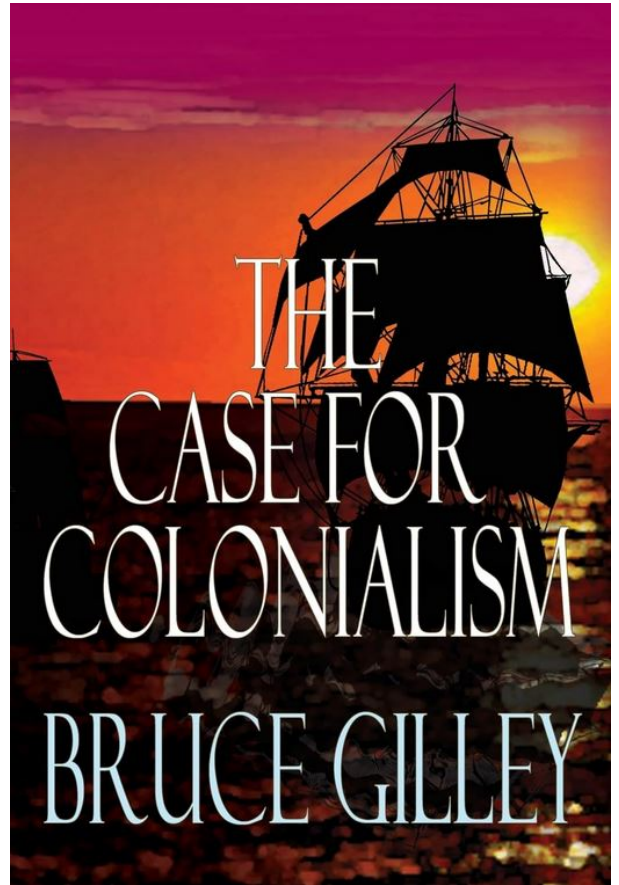
He writes with contempt about all the eternal excuses given by both the black dictators and the American blacks that come over for a Be African For a Week excursion which, of course, includes the "blame white people" spiel. He knows that the problems lie within the Africans themselves. Yet, it is funny that when he gets around to visiting South Africa he returns to the usual mantra of "white man bad, black man good," even when acknowledging that being black in South Africa is dangerous because of other blacks and that crime committed by blacks in that country has skyrocketed. He expresses confusion as to whites may be fearful of the blacks, when he acknowledges the rampant crimes and having experienced the horrors of "the north." Myopia is difficult to get rid of.

The book was written in the late 1990s and he visited Zimbabwe where at the time there was tolerance for white people by Mugabe. He held this as a success story. Well, that success story subsequently followed the same pattern of brutal dictatorship, racist violence and theft by blacks.

In the end, he left, as so many other idealistic journalists and do-gooders left, disgusted with the continent. The irony is that he expressed gratitude of being a black person in America.

The Case for Colonialism

It should not be surprising that the intense falsification of history by Communists that has been occurring everywhere in North America and Britain, the topic of colonialism has been particularly targeted, although in truth it has been going for decades and is not a recent phenomenon like the 1619 garbage. I'm certain the reader knows the mantra: prior to colonization, the peoples of Africa led a simple, peaceful life, at one with nature and in fraternity with their neighbors, frolicking through the savannah,



arms linked while singing songs. Either that, or the natives had advanced, sophisticated [cultures](#), akin to Wakamba. Then, the evil Europeans came, stole their scientific achievements and destroyed their way of life, and colonial life became hellish. After Europeans [left](#), any and all problems were due to "the legacy of colonialism."

The propaganda peddlers expect people to be stupid enough to swallow the propaganda (and, in all truth, there are people who do swallow it).

The mantra reminds me of those slasher movies where the characters do breathtakingly stupid acts that in reality no one would ever do; the director of the movie insults the audience's intelligence, expecting the audience to be equally stupid to believe (such as a party of teenagers is being hunted down one by one, so they individually split up and spread out to search for the killer).

As Bruce Gilley repeatedly points out, there is no verification for the dogma, no facts to back it up, just venom

and hatred for civilization, accompanied by a regurgitation of the usual slogans. On the other hand, Gilley documents—I repeat, *documents*—that prior to colonization, the continent was rife with cannibalism, torture, starvation, theft, kidnapping, high childhood mortality, constant war, poverty, genocide, human sacrifice and slavery. Europeans put a stop to that. And this is why the natives *supported* the colonial establishment and were loyal for almost all of the period *and why they moved in droves to be under the protection of Europeans (i.e., civilization)*. And this is on top of hospitals, schools, courthouses, roads and bridges. And peace and suppressing crime. In India, the practice of suttee was also suppressed.

Contemporary African dictators are nowadays demanding “reparations” from European governments for colonialism so that the dictators can buy bigger chalets in the French Riviera, having learned that scam from American blacks. Perhaps it would be more apt for Europeans to demand reparations from Africans for all the expenses and sacrifices made on their behalf.

At any rate, Gilley repeatedly points out that, throughout the colonies, the white colonials were a microscopic number compared to the millions of natives under them. If the natives had been truly resentful of their rule, they could have been easily overwhelmed.

And since the white man left? Starvation, genocide, poverty, torture, theft, dictatorship and, yes, slavery and cannibalism.

For stating these self-evident facts, Communists have attacked and censored this scholar, with one individual going so far as demanding that his PhD be revoked. Again: they don't cite facts; they just regurgitate slogans and spew out insults. Unfortunately, he is in the minority and other scholars who agree with the facts are cowards, too afraid to speak out.

As he points out, "The non-totalitarian center is shrinking." And, "The field [of history] has become a cult, not a place of science."

Incidentally, Gilley does not restrict himself to Africa, but also includes colonization in Asia and Canada.

One shortcoming to the book is that he briefly mentions that most of the colonies were operating at a deficit. In other words, most of the colonies were a financial drain on the mother country (I had known this for a long time, but I wish that he had been more thorough in developing this fact). The most obvious ones were the colonies of Saharan Africa, which were mainly desert, long before the discovery of oil fields. With Europe economically exhausted and devastated from the Second World War the drain became intolerable. This is also why, with few exceptions like Indonesia, decolonization was peaceful rather than through armed violence from the natives. In fact, at times violence immediately occurred soon after the Europeans left the colonies as the Africans and Asians went back to their tradition of butchering each other (just take India and Palestine/Israel as an example).

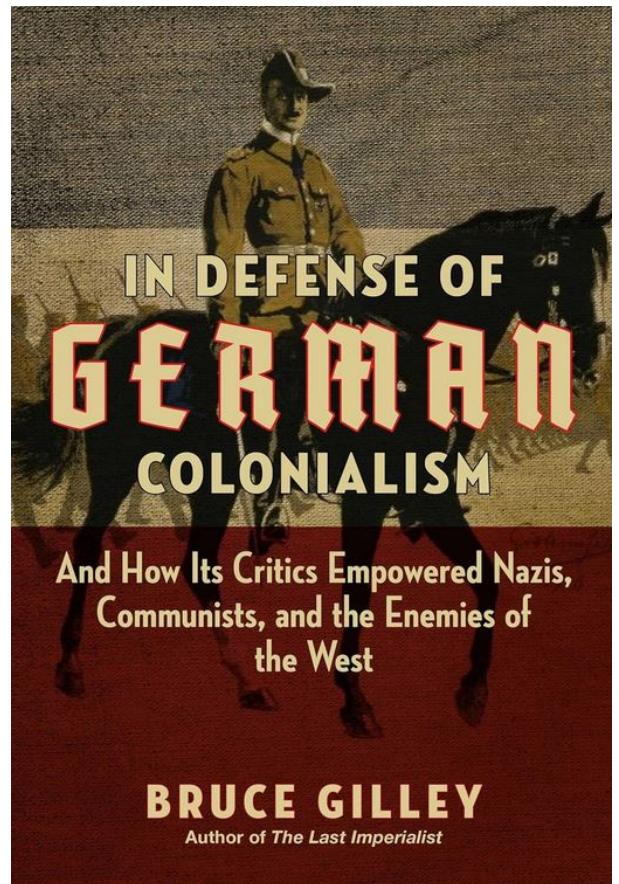
The Case for Colonialism is published by New English Review Press.

In Defense of German Colonialism

Whereas the above was an analysis of colonialism by the European countries, Gilley's *In Defense of German Colonialism: And How Its Critics Empowered Nazis, Communists, and the Enemies of the West*, as the name implies, narrows its focus. The reason for this is that, Germans being Germans, they were the acme of efficiency in administering the few colonies they had in a humanitarian manner, easily surpassing their British counterparts—the latter admitted as much. Nowadays, it has been forgotten that Germany

was the pinnacle of civilization during the 1800s in industry, science and philosophy (Germans used to call their country "The land of poets and thinkers") with Britain and France being a close second, and Spain, Italy and Russia a distant third. At that time, only in industry did America hold its own.

But German efficiency in what? Well, in eliminating the slave trade, in putting an end to the endless back and forth vicious wars over the pettiest of reasons, in ending human sacrifice, in ending epidemics, in ending cannibalism, all of which were anathema to European civilization values (the epidemic of sleeping sickness, spread by the tsetse fly had an 80% mortality rate and was tackled by German scientists; as unbelievable as it may sound, some leftists have blamed the tsetse fly on colonialism). Some cultures tended to raid other tribes to sell to Muslims for slaves. A captured widow was much prized for multiple gang rapes, after which the captors would slice her up while alive and the flesh would be cooked and eaten, with the right loin reserved for the chief.



All of these, though acknowledged, are of little consequence to leftist [intellectuals](#) who usually indulge in a cascade of verbal diarrhea in condemning the “racism” of colonialism—not citing facts, but simply indulging in a torrent of indignant insults. They also paint the benevolent actions with cynicism and scornful interpretations—but no facts. These tactics are particularly the case with German Marxist “scholars” (I believe that today there are more Communists in Germany than in the whole of the former Soviet Union). In addition, they engage in the Marxist tradition of historical falsification (Gilley makes the curious observation that the Nazis, for all their crimes, never indulged in historical falsification). For example, a few revolts took place which they claim were “movements of national liberation,” but in reality were attempts to reestablish hunting for slaves and selling them to Muslims. “It [history] is not scholarship so much as ideological vivisection. It begins with conclusions and then selects and interprets evidence to the desire narrative.” (P. 6) and “The idea of history as an objective set of facts that one could accurately describe and explain has been replaced by a postmodern idea: ‘history’ is now a progressive narrative forced upon the past in order to advance contemporary political projects, whether social restructuring or banning fossil fuels.”(P.251) Sometimes the intellectual antics towards this end are worthy of a contortionist.

It reminds me of the many times in my youth I was told by American intellectuals who could not speak *one* word of Spanish, had *never* gone to Cuba, knew *nothing* about Cuban culture or history, that Castro was a wise humanitarian. In my naivete, I argued and reasoned with them with no result, whereas looking back I should have opted for other actions.

The Africans in Togo, Cameroon, East Africa and Namibia, and the islanders of the Pacific were relieved by the Germans ending the never-ending blood feuds and cannibalism, could

breathe easier now without having to constantly look over their shoulders for an enemy. They were so relieved and so grateful that during the First World War, they remained loyal to the Germans, even when the British invaded (the askaris could not even be paid). In Cameroon, 95 German officers went to nearby Spanish Guiana—followed by 42,000 natives. In East Africa, the native soldiers fought on to the end of the war, alongside the German officers; in 1914, East Africa had 200 European soldiers in a native population of 8 million. If German colonial rule was as oppressive as European based intellectuals claim, they would have deserted en masse during the war. or would have been swallowed up. Yet the reverse was the case. Decades later, old men and women would recall the Germans with fondness.

Two things that I think Gilley falls short on. First, is the relatively cursory way in which he relates the finances of colonialism. Since the anti-colonialism stance is that colonialism was the “exploitation” of natives and resources, detailed yearly figures should have been provided, and not just for the German colonies. Instead, we are simply informed that in 1912, colonial expenditures were £6 million, and revenues were £2.4 million. Germany should have simply walked away.

The second is that Gilley omits altogether the zeitgeist of Europe during the 1800s which is very relevant to colonialism. Central Europe in particular was [steeped](#) in the idea of *progress*. All the scientific discoveries, accompanied by a constant stream of inventions had imbued the Europeans with the novel concept of *progress*, the concept that the quality of life and civilization in general was steadily and unquestioningly improving and it was irreversible (like evolution). Humanity was bettering itself. Alongside this, because of the birth of nationalism, there was a friendly rivalry between nations in regard to progress in general and scientific discoveries in particular. As a result, the idea of

bringing civilization to Stone Age savages with the repugnant practices of human sacrifice, cannibalism, etc. and thereby improving their lot was part of the zeitgeist. There was a certain degree of competition as to which European country would be the best at doing so.

Gilley hammers the point home that the advances/contributions of colonialism, not just in the material sense, but also in the psychological sense, should be preserved by the former colonies since they have proven to be benevolent, whereas a return to pre-colonial attitudes and ideas have resulted in a catastrophe in many of the countries. He would be gratified to learn a Cambodian recently stated the [same](#) idea.

A curious phenomenon that hovers over the anti-colonialism debate is that leftists seem to have a deeply held subconscious belief that *they* hold a monopoly on good intentions, but anyone else who carries out beneficent acts or expresses a benevolent outlook must be viewed with cynicism. Only *they* are the true humanitarians. Or so they think. They are not rational persons.

I would like to leave with a last quote from Gilley, which I believe is an excellent assessment of today's ills: "The defense of German colonialism with reference to empirical facts is important in the ongoing defense of the West itself. Its enemies, most of whom live in splendor in the West itself, would like nothing more than to see a collapsed civilization of state-dependent serfs looking for guidance from arrogant elites telling them how guilty they should feel." (P.248)

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[Prison](#) Mosaic.

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