

NOTES ON THE WORKS OF KEVIN
SHILLINGTON, KWASI KONDU, AND
PROF. REMI ALAPO

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AFN 122

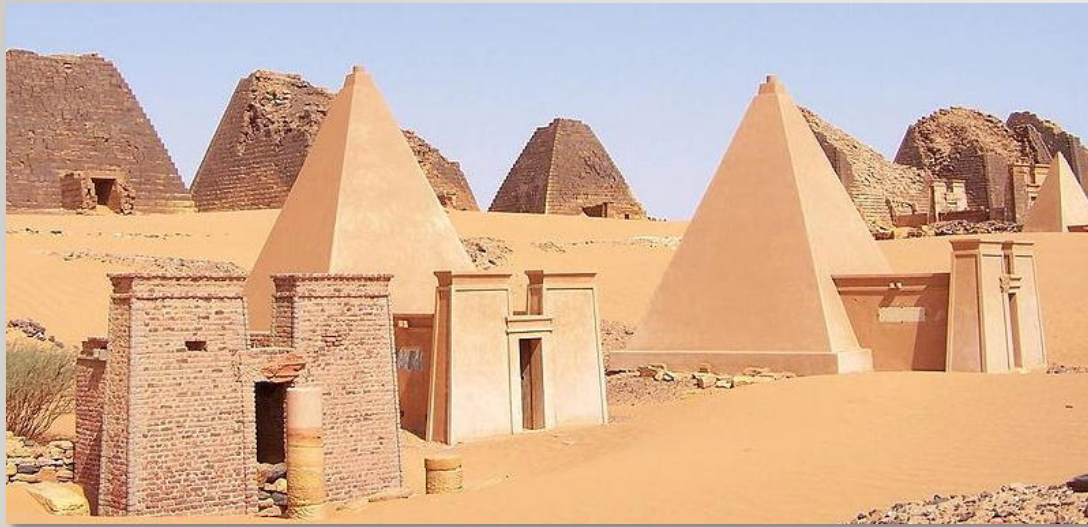
FALL 2021

THE SUMMARIZED HISTORY OF AFRICA FROM 1500 - PRESENT



THE IRON AGE IN NORTH AND WEST AFRICA SHAPED AND DESTROYED MANY AFRICAN KINGDOMS 200 BCE-1000CE

- THE IMPACT OF THE IRON AGE IN NORTH AND WEST AFRICA SHAPED AND DESTROYED SEVERAL AFRICAN KINGDOMS. THE TECHNOLOGY OF SMELTING TO EXTRACT IRON AND OTHER METALS LIKE COPPER AND GOLD THAT COULD THEN BE WORKED INTO TOOLS, WEAPONS, CRAFTED ITEMS, AND ROYAL DECOR SUITABLE FOR TRADING AND CULTIVATING CROPS. ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINS OF SMELTING CAN NOT BE TRACED TO ANY SINGULAR PLACE, MANY AREAS HAD SOME FORM OF SMELTING, IT WAS WIDESPREAD IN WEST AFRICA BY 400 BCE. FOUND ARTIFACTS LIKE POTTERY CAN TELL US A LOT ABOUT THE WAY THE EARLY AFRICAN PEOPLES LIVED AND HOW THEY USED IRON TO THEIR ADVANTAGE IN FARMING AND TRADING.
- THE KINGDOM OF MEROE DEVELOPED AFTER LOSING POWER IN EGYPT IN 670 BCE. THEY MOVED TO NUBIA AND DEVELOPED AN INDEPENDENT KINGDOM. THE MEROEVIAN PRACTICED LARGE AMOUNTS OF SMELTING, THE DISCARDED ORE. HERE THEY USED THE RED SEA AS A MAJOR TRADING POST TO CONDUCT TRADE WITH THE GREEK AND ROMAN POWERS IN ALEXANDRIA, MAIN TRADE WERE PRODUCTS OF MINING AND HUNTING. THE WEALTH OF THESE TRADING RELATIONS HELPED THE KINGDOM OF MEROE THRIVE. THE KINGDOM FELL AFTER CONFLICTS WITH ROMAN RULED EGYPT AND THEIR FADING POWER, OVEREXPLOITATION OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT FROM FARMING, AND LOSS OF TRADE AT THE RED SEA AFTER A CONFLICT WITH THE AKSUM IN 350 CE.
- THE AKSUM, A PEOPLE COMBINED WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND FARMERS FROM ARABIA, CAME TO EXISTENCE CLOSE TO THE SAME TIME AS THE MEROEVIAN, BUT SUSTAINED THEMSELVES SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER, INTO THE 8TH CENTURY. THE MINTING OF COINAGE, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TAXES ONTO RED SEA IMPORTS AND EXPORTS GREATLY PROFITED THE AKSUM AND AKSUMITE KING EZANA. AKSUM EXPERIENCED A SIMILAR FATE TO THAT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEROE.
- BOTH THE ABOVE PEOPLES LEFT EVIDENCE OF THEIR EXISTENCE WITH ORE DISCARD, POTTERY, TOMBS (USUALLY INSPIRED BY EGYPTIAN TOMBS OR ARABIAN STRUCTURES), AND CRAFTS.



Nubian pyramids of Meroe in Sudan Royalty free stock image



Aksum (Ethiopia) © UNESCO

NORTH AFRICA UP TO 1000 CE

- During The Graco Roman period when Egypt was under Greek Rule (approximately 300 years). Alexandria was founded as a trading post on the Mediterranean coast of the Nile Delta. Greek language and writing overtook traditional Egyptian language and use of hieroglyphics, however the Egyptian people maintained as much of their original language as possible combining with the Greek to create Coptic. Although Greek Colonization (The Ptolemaic Dynasty) brought Egypt into the Mediterranean world, it exploited the Egyptian people and destroyed Egyptian Civilization up to that point in history.
- After conquering Carthage in 146 BCE the Romans call their new land Africa, later permanently adopted by the continent as a whole. Continuing their conquest, the Romans overtook their Berber neighbors. They exploited the land for agricultural purposes, exporting all crop yields (grain and olive oil) to Rome, free to Roman Citizens. In the 5th century Rome falls in Egypt, ending their use of the land without care for its people.
- As Alexandria was home to many Christian scholars who wrote and defined the religion, many converted to the Monotheistic Christianity drawn in by its promise of afterlife. This gave Egyptians and other oppressed groups hope in a time of little freedom or happiness for peasant class under Roman rule. Roman leaders viewed these conversions as direct opposition to their adopted status as Gods in Egypt and persecuted Christians up until the early 4th Century when Constantine became the first Christian Roman Emperor.



Pharos Alexandria – Fischer von Erlach



Nile Mosaic of Palestrina Yann (Public Domaine)

ISLAM, TRANS SAHARAN TRADE, AND THE KINGDOM OF GHANA

- In the 7th century, the prophet Muhammad united Arabs under Islam creating a brotherhood for the formerly nomadic peoples. They built up an army and ruled North Africa from the Atlantic Moroccan coast to the River Indus. With an easily understandable doctrine and kind and generous spirit, Islam spread rapidly. In 640 CE the Arabic army conquers the fertile crescent and heads onto the Byzantine ruled Egypt. The extreme oppression brought onto the Egyptians by the Byzantine rulers leaves the people unwilling to defend their land from the Arabic Army, allowing them to overtake Egypt and sending the Byzantines out into the water to contemplate their next move with their Navy. Meanwhile the Arabic army builds their own Navy, ultimately defeating the Byzantine Navy in the 690's CE and making their way across Gibraltar into Spain in 711 CE.
- Trans Saharan trade would not be of historical note if it had not been for the implementation of the Camel in the 5th Century CE. Increasing caravan speed and mobility with their ability to conserve food and water (less stops), and their wide feet handling the desert sand more naturally than Ox or donkey previously used by Berber Nomads. As Hunting and over use of the land whipped out North Africa of resources, interest in trade across the Sahara became more desirable and necessary. Settlement societies popped up and managed goods like salt and gold, and Berber nomads managed the caravans transporting and trading goods from settlement to settlement.
- The most noteworthy settlement was that of Ancient Ghana. Here multiple chiefdoms had come together to protect themselves with numbers, and profit from the Gold trade. As the trade expanded, as did the wealth and power of Ghana's Kings. Although the people of Ghana were not literate, there are accounts of the settlement state in Arabic writings. Here the addition had widened North Africa's access to gold, and Ghana was the middleman in all dealings. By the end of the 12 century, Ghana had lost its monopoly and power over the gold trade, they had also deteriorated the ever-drying environment.
- Pictured: Prophet Mohammed appointing his cousin and son-in-law Ali as his successor in an Islamic miniature from A.D. 1307. The work is attributed to Rashid al-din Fadlallah



Pictured: Prophet Mohammed appointing his cousin and son-in-law Ali as his successor in an Islamic miniature from A.D. 1307. The work is attributed to Rashid al-din Fadlallah

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY SPREAD FAITH AND LITERACY

- A wonderful effect of the spread of Islam throughout North and West Africa was the rate at which literacy was growing. With schools of Islamic faith also becoming centers for thinking, developments in the modern numeral system, invention of Algebra, developments in physics and astronomy show us that African minds were eager to learn and had contributions of value for society. After Muslims are forced out of Spain, some settle into North Africa and further expand the gold trade, successfully as it was popular in Europe for money minting. The Empire of Mali, fueled by the Sunjata epic created a central leadership called Mansa of which Sunjata was the first Mansa. The most notable Mansa was Mansa Mousa. As a devout Muslim, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, highlighting the Muslim world outside Mali for his Subjects. Another Muslim empire was that of Songhay, coming to their greatest power after the empire of Mali had been defeated. Songhay took over the gold trade at that time, becoming a link on the trans Saharan trading route.
- The Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia was an important resource for many surrounding kingdoms both Muslim and Pagan. Their trade relations with Muslim Egypt allowed Ethiopians to take the Nile river to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Christian Monks build many churches into the mountainsides of Ethiopia that remain today. During the Solomonid Dynasty Ethiopia produced a great deal of literature and valuable historical resources.
- It's important to understand the different types of commerce and where they originated before the global market blurred the line of origin. It's also important to note the amount of scholarly thinking and experimenting that African minds were participating in and making breakthroughs that stand today in modern society.

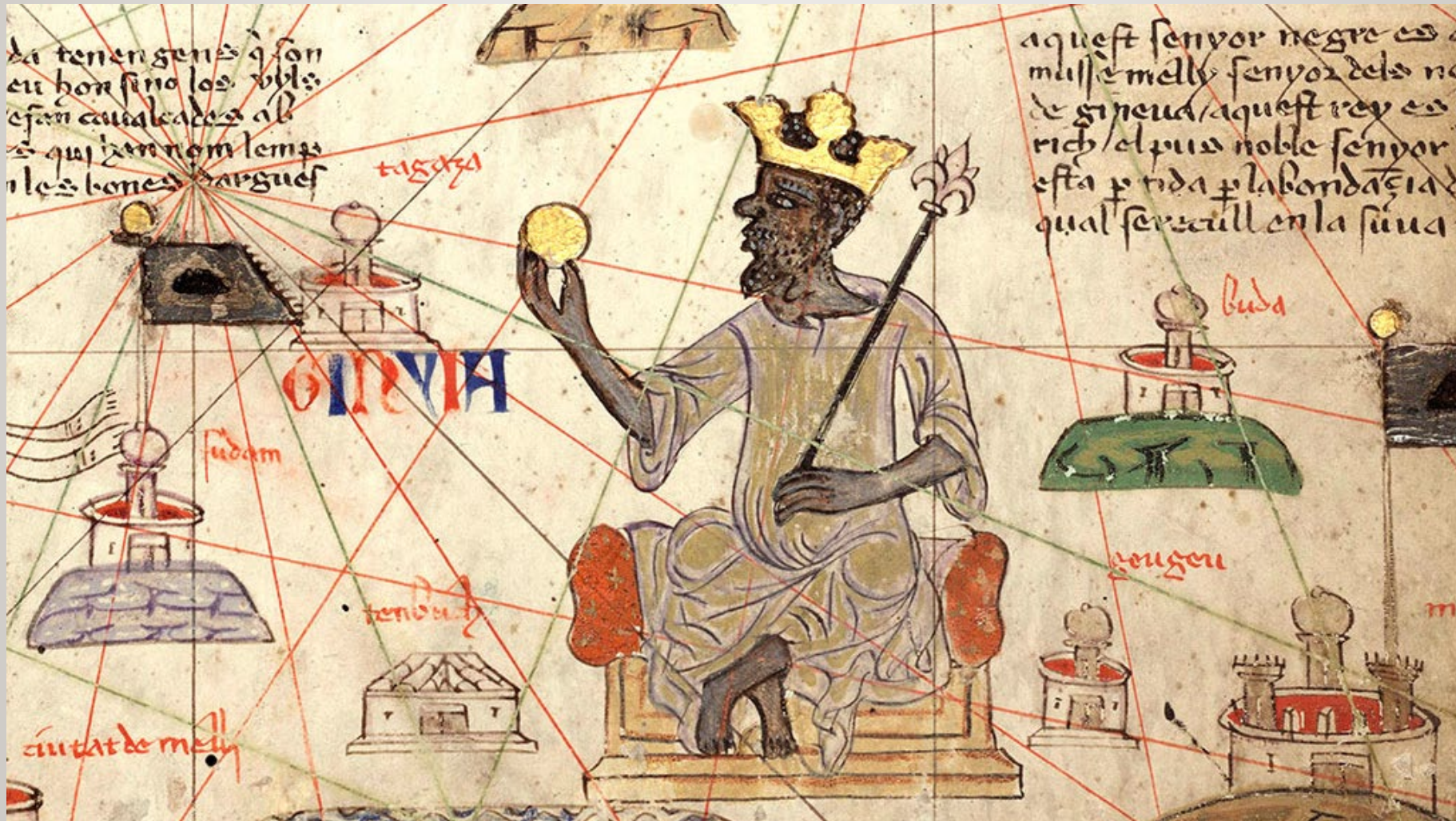


Photo: Mansa Musa Facsimile of the Catalan Atlas, fol. 7v

CENTERS OF TRADE FORM GOVERNMENTS

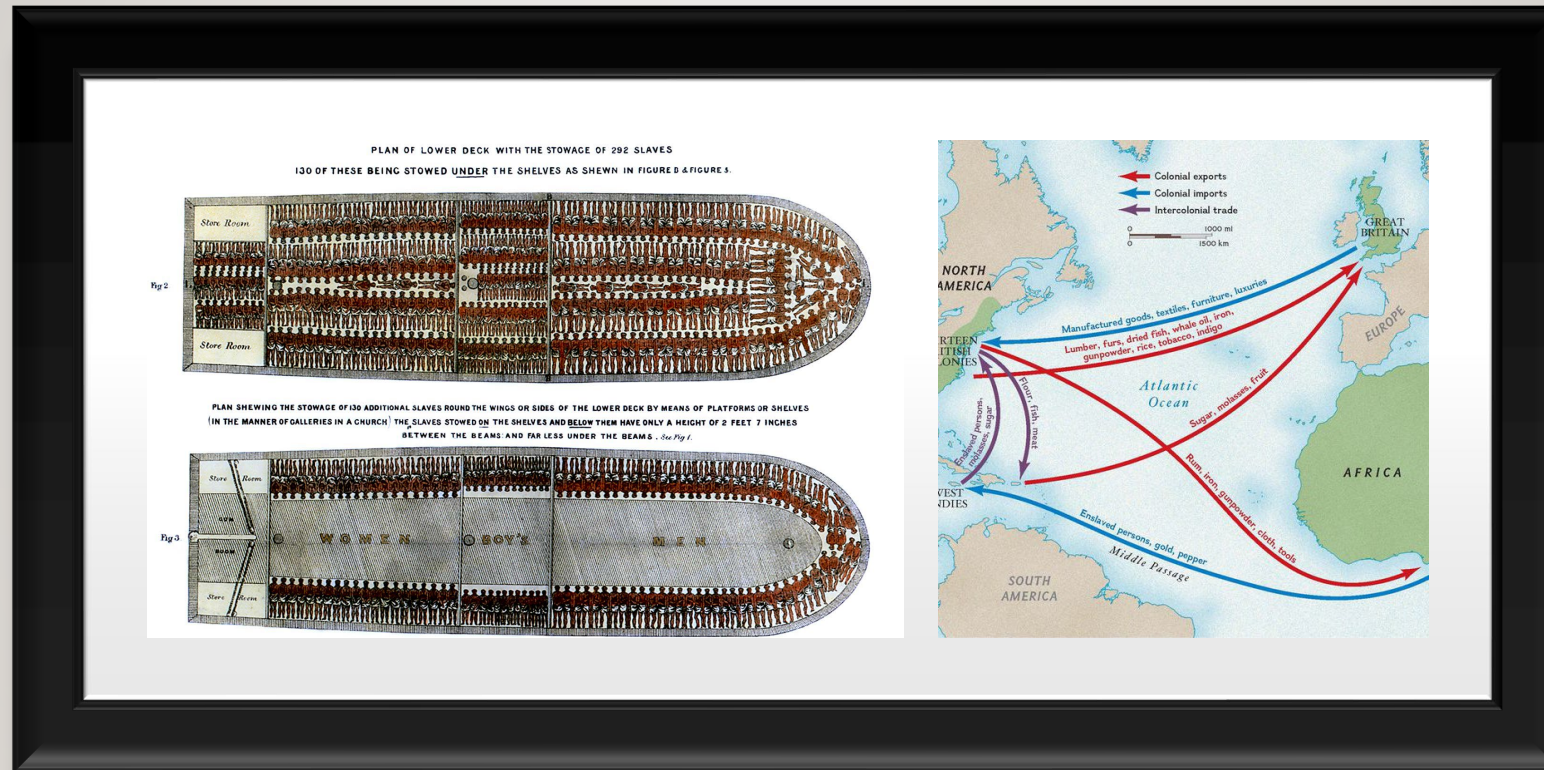
- City states, Kingdoms, and Kingdoms all formed centered around possibility of trade and formation of ruling government or individual ruler, usually religious and responsible for their subjects. The State Formation of North Zambezi was prompted by the late Iron Age. The Luba Kingdom of the fourteenth century represents a resourceful people who made the most of the raw materials they had in their region, as well as inventors of hand tools like nets and harpoons, and use of canoes to clear canals. These expert craftsmen also developed a way to preserve and therefore trade fish. The Kingdom of the Kongo is traced back to a few small prosperous farming villages along the lower Congo river. A people highly skilled in arts and crafts, metalwork pottery, and weaving. Cloth made in the Kingdom of Kongo was traded all the way to the Atlantic Coast. Great Zimbabwe was formed as a center for cattle keeping and farming. Here they recognized the value of cattle, its products, and trade value. All civilizations discussed in this chapter were thriving and maintaining lifestyles and work that contributed to their societies.
- Chapter 10 continues to highlight successful trading communities such as the East African Coastal trading societies. Creating trade centers to trade ivory, rhinoceros' horn, and coconut oil. Receiving iron tools, weapons, cotton cloth, wheat, and wine. As coastal societies it's no surprise they were skilled fishermen. Muslim Arabs were known to have married into ruling families in order to attempt to control some of the trade process. The wealthy Swahili trading towns traded gold and other goods and implemented high taxes creating a wealthy upper class, desirable for seizure when the Portuguese rounded the tip of Africa on their way to find passage to India.

TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

- Slavery puts a stop to the wheel of human economic development by absolute disregard of enslaved humans' prior knowledge/skills or their quality of life. Once enslaved, there is no individual.
- Early African slavery was centered mainly around war captives paying off their debt or serving their remaining years to a chiefdom other than their own. Men often were sent to the local army, and women were sold as concubines or house servants. African slaves within Africa always had the hope that they may return home, or their tribe would buy their freedom. Enslaved individuals transported across the Atlantic to the Caribbean and the Americas would never have that hope.
- A number of factors led to the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade, including the discovery of the New World (the prior success that Portugal had creating the model for) thriving sugar plantations on the islands of Principe and Sao Tome, the ease at which African leaders would sell their captives at a cheap price, but ultimately, Capitalism and the Entitlement of rich men who believed that labor should be free.
- Europeans turned to Africa for Slave labor when the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the Americas perished due to battle, but mostly disease brought by Europeans. The demand for Sugar and tobacco in Europe was growing greater, as was the population of Europe. Africans had some immunities to tropical diseases as well as desired skills and trades that would benefit plantations and their benefactors.
- Europeans profited at the expense of everyone during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade by setting up a triangle trade system where European merchants benefited at every point. They sold cheap manufactured products, like guns, to Africa. African Slaves were then sold at Caribbean and American slave auctions at 2 to 3 times what they paid in Africa, then they would finish the triangle back in Europe with a ship full of goods made with Slave labor. The disparity created was social and global. The effects of the trans Atlantic slave trade seem to be everywhere in our modern society.

EFFECTS OF TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

- Islamic wars of the 18th and 19th centuries continued to fuel the trans-Atlantic slave trade by offering captives of war up to slave traders always in need of more to send to the Caribbean and Americas. Well into the period of trans-Atlantic slave trade new Muslim African Kingdoms were constantly at war with one another, creating three new empires, all participating in the turning over of war captives to traders for profit, these empires were the Sokoto, the Tukulor, and the Mandinka Empires. The failure to properly organize administration and leadership succession led to the fall of each empire, as well as giving the French an in to take control of some of the regions of West Africa.
- European leadership began to respond to calls for Abolition in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many political debates were had over the state of the European economy, and how it would be affected by abolition. Amid the Industrial Revolution in Britain and its spread through out Europe, questions were posed if slave trade was still lucrative. Investors began to realize they could easily increase their investments on their home soil through industrial investing. Low wage workers not only worked demanding jobs for little pay, but they often purchased the goods they created in order to survive, a capitalist venture was born. Although History leads us to believe abolition was achieved through humanitarian effort, little evidence of that truth can be found. In fact, European Christian missionaries sent into Africa after Britain declared slave trade illegal we likely there as a band aid to cover up the gapping wound that had been left upon Africa from which Britain had experienced the greatest profit.
- African writers who had been enslaved wrote of their experiences from England, France, and the Americas. These writings had great effects on the decision to ban slavery but were rarely credited for their contributions to abolition. In addition, the success of the Haitian revolution of 1791 gave hope to enslaved people in the Americas and Caribbean and showed that enslaved Africans as well as freed Africans were just as much part of the movement for abolition as their white counterparts who received the historical credit had been.
- The effects of the trans-Atlantic slave trade were so vast and epically devastating that they continue to merit serious discussion and continued learning. The ripple effect of Trans-Atlantic as opposed to other forms and systems of Slavery can still be seen in America today. The systematic racism upon which the trans-Atlantic slave trade was built continues to be disappointingly un-dismantled in the United States, and therefor continued calls for justice and exploration into the history of the TAST to learn why and how it happened are powerful tools to gain understanding and prevent global destruction of this magnitude from repeating.



1. ROYALTY-FREE STOCK ILLUSTRATION ID: 237236926

BRITISH ABOLITIONIST BROADSIDE (POSTER) DEMONSTRATES THE CROWDING OF A STANDARD SLAVE SHIP THE BROOKS BUILT IN 1781, CA. 1790 ENGRAVING WITH MODERN COLOR.

2. COLONIAL TRADE ROUTES AND GOODS

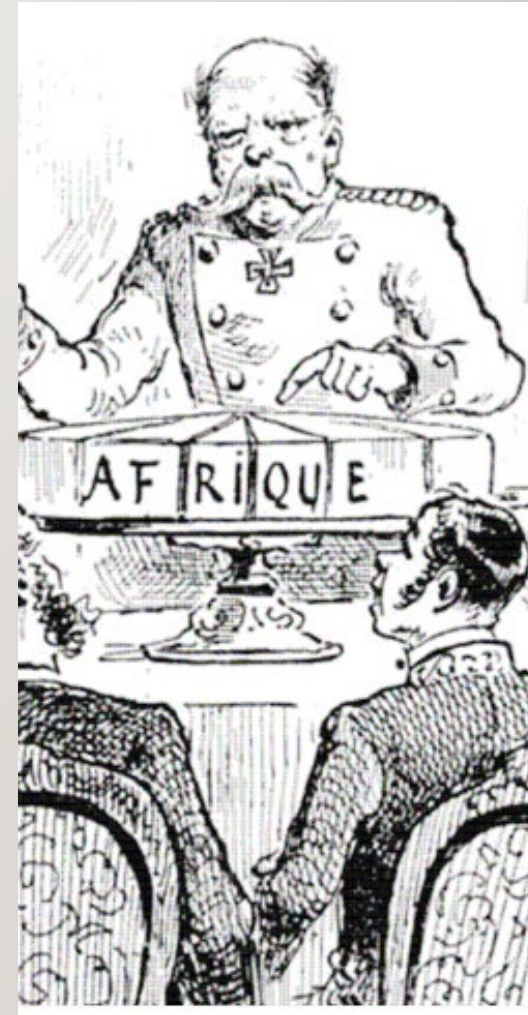
SOURCE: FROM THE BOOK THE MAKING OF AMERICA, PUBLISHED BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY © 2002

SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

- The main reasons for the European scramble for Africa were the emergence of European Industrialization led by Great Britain, but closely followed by France and the newly formed Germany. Europeans turned to Africa for new markets after they over produced manufactured goods, and new sources for raw materials. This gave France and Germany the opportunity to make gains and potentially surpass Great Britain. This created the drive for competition through Nationalism to become the "Best Nation" or world power. Additionally, European scouts became privy to vast plots of diamonds and gold in many African regions creating a scramble for control of Africa's most profitable natural resources.
- Although there were many countries involved in the Scramble for Africa, seven stand out as major players. Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and Italy. The majority of the power of resources was divided primarily amongst Great Britain, France, and Germany with the hugely profitable Congo region under control of King Leopold of Belgium. This was all decided at the Berlin Conference of 1884 orchestrated by Otto von Bismarck.
- Egypt was colonized for preservation of trade routes, cotton and grain. The Gold Coast and Nigeria were colonized to preserve trade routes, gold, timber and diamonds. Algeria produced grain and olive oil. The Congo produced rubber, and its Belgian rule was deadly for Congo's indigenous peoples. Mali, Ghana, and Morocco were all rich with Gold. South Africa was rich in diamonds, gold, and copper.



French caricature (from 1885): German chancellor Bismarck divides the African continent among the colonial powers.



Detail from a Punch cartoon of King Leopold II of Belgium as a snake entangling a congolese rubber collector.

AFRICAN RESISTANCE TO COLONIZATION

- Uprisings, resistances, and rebellions erupted all over the continent to varying outcomes. Menelik II, emperor of Ethiopia, led his army to accomplish a unique feat in 1896, defeating the Italian Army and its Eritrea allies at the battle of Adwa. The Ethiopian emperor refused to concede his land to Italy resulting a war in which the Ethiopian troops unexpectedly out numbered the Italians. Ethiopia remained one of the only unoccupied regions/countries of Africa during the Scramble for Africa.
- Another example of successful African militant strategy and resistance to colonial rule was the Angulo-Zulu War. At the battle of Islandlwana the Zulu tribes successfully delivered the British Army their greatest defeat in Africa, refusing to let British troops infiltrate Zululand. 40,000 Zulu tribe members outsmarted the British troops who believed their column war tactics to be too smart and innovative for the African Zulu's to properly respond to, and were again, caught off guard by the sheer number of Zulu tribesmen ready for combat.
- Many other civilizations under threat of colonization faught back, but few were as successful as the above mentioned.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND AFRICAN NATIONALISM

- THE CHRISTIAN DESIRE TO DO MISSIONARY WORK LIKELY SPRANG FROM THE HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENT FOR ABOLITION, PROMPTING EUROPEAN AND SOME AMERICAN MISSIONARIES TO SET THEIR SIGHTS ON AFRICA. ONCE THERE, THEY PLANNED NOT ONLY TO CONVERT THE AFRICAN PEOPLE TO CHRISTIANITY, BUT ALSO BRING THEM MORAL SALVATION AND CIVILIZATION. MISSIONARIES IMPOSED WESTERN WAYS OF LIFE INCLUDING VALUES, MANNERS, AND EVEN DRESS.
- THE ROLL OF COLONIZATION AND MISSIONARIES ON THE AFRICAN RELIGION TRADITIONAL WAS TO ERADICATE ANY FORMER AFRICAN IDEOLOGIES USING CHRISTIANITY'S PROMISE OF ETERNAL SALVATION TO CONVERT AFRICANS WHO WOULD THEN BE FORCED TO FIGHT IN THE COLONIAL ARMY. THE INTENTION TO STRIP AFRICANS OF THEIR ESTABLISHED CULTURE, RELIGION, AND COMMUNITIES USING A RUSE OF CIVILIZATION AND SALVATION WOULD BUILD A STRONG EUROPEAN CONTROLLED ARMY THAT WOULD ASSIST EUROPE IN ITS STRONGHOLD OVER AFRICA. CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS LED CONVERTS TO BELIEVE ANY SIN WOULD NOT ONLY BE UNPLEASING TO GOD BUT WOULD COST THEM THEIR SALVATION.
- SIERRA LEON AND LIBERIA, BOTH NEWLY INHABITED BY DISLOCATED PEOPLES WERE ALREADY CHRISTIAN, COUPLED WITH SLOW CONVERSION PROGRESS, MISSIONARIES WANTED TO GO DEEPER INTO AFRICA THAT THEIR COASTAL MISSIONS HAD ALLOWED.
- WITHIN SIERRA LEON AND LIBERIA BRILLIANT AFRICAN MINDS WERE WRITING IDEOLOGIES AND CREATING MOVEMENTS TO EMPOWER AFRICANS. EDWARD WILMONT BLYDEN WAS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL INTELLECTUAL OF HIS GENERATION AND INTRODUCED SUCH IDEAS AS AFRICAN NATIONALISM, AND WHAT HE CALLED AFRICAN CIVILIZATION. HERE HE BELIEVED AFRICA NEEDED THEIR OWN ENLIGHTENMENT AND SPREAD OF IDEAS ACROSS THE CONTINENT, RATHER THAN THE CULTURAL ERASURE THAT CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES INCLUDED IN THEIR CIVILIZING MISSIONS.

THE EFFECT OF COLONIALISM ON AFRICAN WOMEN

- The social system, common in Western society, that was established in Africa through missionary work and colonialism, disregarded all previous ideologies and practices within African cultures, that often did not factor gender into the equation of power, colonists and missionaries implemented the notion that men were superior to women both physically and mentally. When creating new systems of government, a patriarchal European state system was used, African chiefs were permitted to serve on lower-level branches of Government...unless they were females. "Separate sex practices" were established throughout all social systems, including schooling of children. It was taught and widely believed that females were not as mentally capable as males. So not only were African women dealing with colonial racism imposed by Europeans, but also forced gender subordination.
- The impact of Western culture on the lives of women in Africa are outlined in the day-to-day life of a young girl in contrast to that of a young boy, her brother in "Nervous Conditions" . Although Tambu gets to attend school like her brother, there is an expectation of her time and labor after hours to help support and provide for her siblings and assist her parents. Tambu is made to fit into Western cultures expectation of young women as well as her family's perception of what life skills she should be learning. Her tenacity to ensure she is educated as much or as well as her brother comes from the fact that she had to earn her own way into school.

DECOLONIZATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

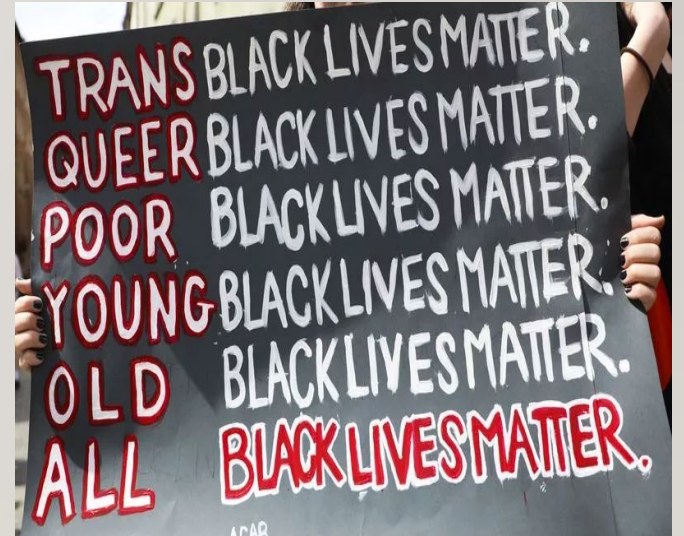
- Decolonization and independence in Africa were achieved through numerous movements throughout the 20th century that would shift the dial of change and form a sense of togetherness and pride. Beginning in 1897, Panafrikanism took shape as a political and cultural movement to unify peoples of African descent under the umbrella of commonalities. In the 1920's **Marcus Garvey** advocated for Black Nationalism. This political and social movement encouraged Black individuals to maintain a sense of community and unity, acquire economic power, and eventually create a separate black nation. Black Nationalism was readopted in the 1960's during the civil rights movement. Slogans like "Black Power" and "Black is Beautiful" sought to incite a sense of pride for black communities. Also, in the 1960's South Africans participated in the Black Consciousness movement in opposition of apartheid.
- African decolonization began when Africans wanted to take back their own lives from their colonizers. In May of 1963, 32 heads of African States assemble intending to unify Africa as one but failed to create a master plan. This group is called the African union, but quickly earns the nick name "The weak Bulldog". Continued trouble in Africa comes at the hands of crooked politicians eager to get their share of what their colonizers had had. Poor leadership decisions led to lack of food and local resources, which ultimately leads to famine. African women struggle with few opportunities to work in a post colonial Africa. African children who leave Africa to seek success elsewhere experience extreme racism. May 1994-June 1999 **Nelson Mandela** becomes President of South Africa, "Rainbow Nation", but soon after he leaves office South Africa returns to its previous struggle.



1. MARCUS GARVEY, CONVENTION OF THE NEGRO PEOPLES OF THE WORLD AT LENOX AVENUE, HARLEM, NEW YORK, AUGUST, 1922

2. UNTITLED (BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL POSTER FROM 1971), 1971. CREDIT...KWAME BRATHWAITE/COURTESY OF PHILIP MARTIN GALLERY, LOS ANGELES

3. MANDELA VISITS A JOHANNESBURG SCHOOL. PHOTOGRAPH: LOUISE GUBB/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES



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