

# AFRICANS AND THEIR HISTORY

---

*Second Revised Edition*

Joseph E. Harris



A MERIDIAN BOOK

Msiri, Nzinga, Lobengula, Alpha Yaya, Ja Ja, Khama, Shaka, Cetewayo, Lewanika, Behanzin, Lat Dor, or a host of others, known and unknown to outsiders—were guided by their assessment of what means best served African interests of survival, and in this sense contributed to the establishment of a heroic trend for future African freedom-fighters.

# 13

## The European Colonizers: Policies and Practices

Historically, much of Africa has been the scene of a long series of migrations and invasions of foreigners from the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Indians, Turks, to the Western Europeans. Each group was attracted to the continent by self-interest: economic, political, military, prestige; and Africans to varying degrees accepted that presence. The influx of increasing numbers of European explorers, merchants, and missionaries brought a significant new tide of forces from Europe: industrial expansion and mercantilist concepts, abolitionist sentiments and projects of foreign missions, doctrines and practices of racial superiority, the fervor of European nationalism, and the dissemination of firearms. Such forces as these made the Western European presence ominous because it represented a greater potential power than any previous alien group, and appeared in numbers at a time when racism was popularized as "scientific" truth by reputable Western scholars and statesmen. In short, the inquiring explorer, the benevolent missionary, and the well-meaning merchant were all products of that European milieu and thus served as precursors of colonial rule.

The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 legitimized the creeping European economic and political dominance in Africa and accelerated the shift from informal to formal involvement in African societies. This led to the drawing of artificial boundaries that more precisely defined areas claimed by European powers, but which also divided historically contiguous and closely related, sometimes kinship communities, and obstructed the normal historical thrust and continuity of African societies, whether in cultural developments, economic growth, or state-building.

No European power seems to have embarked on the partition and occupation of African territories with any fixed or preconceived monolithic policy. Only after territorial claims were made and resistance reasonably controlled did colonial policies begin to take shape. Three factors had great weight in determining the nature of those policies: (a) the prior colonial experience of the European power, (b) the state of the African society, (c) the assessment of local administrations in terms of politics and trade.

In terms of previous colonial experience, one must remember that Britain and France had already constructed colonial empires in Asia and the Americas before undertaking similar ventures in nineteenth-century Africa. Indeed, long before the Berlin Conference convened, some of the colonies in the Americas had rebelled and gained independence (the United States and Haiti for example). The two major imperial powers in Africa therefore had learned from their earlier colonial experiences and developed attitudes and policies they believed should apply in Africa.

### French Policies

The French had developed a highly centralized system that was as bureaucratic and direct as any. During the nineteenth century the policy was dominated by the theory of assimilation that stemmed from the era of the Enlightenment and the French Rev-

olution when the idea emerged that men were born free and equal. Those principles were extended to the French colonies and intermittently applied during the nineteenth century. In 1848 the French-inhabited settlements in Senegal were granted a seat in the Chamber of Deputies in Paris, and over the next three decades citizens of Saint-Louis, Gorée, Rufisque, and Dakar could elect their own councils. Although citizenship rights were primarily intended for the resident Frenchmen and mulattoes, they applied to all men born in those four towns or communes. It was not until 1914, however, that a Senegalese, Blaise Diagne, was elected to the Chamber of Deputies. While this experiment in Senegal was not seriously extended to other French colonies, except Algeria, until 1946, the idea of ultimate integration into French culture remained a distant possibility.

The French divided their colonies into two blocs: French West Africa under a governor-general and council with headquarters in the capital, Dakar, and French Equatorial Africa with a similar arrangement in the capital, Brazzaville. Each individual colony had a lieutenant governor and an appointed advisory council. This organizational structure facilitated a more centralized approach for governance and coordinated economic and military support, but it failed to take into account the diversities of peoples and structures contained therein. But colonial rule was not established primarily for considerations of Africans or their institutions.

The educational opportunities (the necessary means for assimilation) were designed for advancement within the French system, but these opportunities were extremely limited. French was the medium of instruction from the beginning, unlike the case in British territories where the vernacular was used in the lower grades. By 1920 only two lycées, both in Senegal, provided easy access to institutions of higher learning in France, and only a minority of Senegalese students were enrolled in these. Clearly, therefore, the French did not provide the means for achieving assimilation of the African into French society and culture. It



should be recognized, however, that most Africans preferred their own culture anyway, including those who received French citizenship. This is illustrated by demands that led to the passage of a law of 1916 allowing Senegalese citizens of France to retain their Muslim private status if they chose. In effect, this law allowed for cultural duality in Senegal, a situation repugnant to many Frenchmen.

Both the British and French had to recognize the state of African societies over which colonial rule was established. This was more difficult for the French, whose highly centralized system was less flexible. However, the French did attempt, in some areas, a decentralized policy of indirect rule. After they captured Segu, French officers installed Mari-Diara, heir to the Bambara dynasty that Al Haj Omar had overthrown. It was hoped that this return to "legitimacy" would win local support. But within a few weeks the French executed Mari-Diara for alleged conspiracy and replaced him with a more willing subordinate, Bodian. The French explained to Segu rulers that a French resident would be appointed to help maintain order by providing advice and military support to the Bambara ruler, who was prohibited from making war or entering diplomatic relations without the resident's approval. Bodian could collect taxes but he had to share them with the French. Otherwise, he was reasonably free to govern his area without French interference.

Another situation involved the Mossi, one of the societies whose basic social and political structure survived until well into the twentieth century. In 1905, the French supported Saidou Congo, a member of a traditional dynasty among the Mossi. Although the Mossi electoral council opposed Saidou because of his youth and immaturity, the French secured his election through bribes because they believed they could easily control him. Backed by the French, Saidou had a measure of internal power, except that the French policies regarding taxation, labor supply, and the military were not negotiable. Again, in Futa Jal-

lon the French supported Alpha Yaya as permanent ruler of Labé province. Yaya had some local autonomy but no power over taxes, the military, or foreign affairs. When Yaya sought to install a subordinate, the French intervened, installed their own candidate, and subsequently removed Alpha Yaya. These examples characterized much of French rule, showing a great proclivity for interference in local affairs even of bureaucratic societies.

*Mariage à la mode du pays* was practiced by colonial officials of the several powers, but France gave it official sanction. The French *Practical Guide for the European in West Africa* (1902) recommended temporary unions "with a well-chosen native woman." Two of the justifications for this policy were to assure a medically approved female who would be faithful, and to help cement relations with Africans. After completing a tour of duty the French official sent his African mistress back to her family, realizing that "former wives of Europeans are in great demand among the Negroes." Nothing more dramatically illustrates the contemptible disregard for African women and culture. Again, the French were not alone in this behavior, but they publicized official sanction of it.

Another distinctive characteristic of French rule was the *indigenat*, a system introduced in 1887 and modified in 1888 and 1924, whereby a commandant could summarily punish Africans for certain offenses, such as refusal to pay taxes or to do public work, disrespect for French authority, or giving refuge to offenders. No trial was necessary, there was no appeal, and the victim, immediately after serving one sentence, could be punished for another offense. In addition, while serving a sentence, the African could be required to do public work, thereby providing a source of bonded labor for the administration. The *indigenat* did not, of course, apply to French citizens, black or white. And in 1924 various exemptions were announced: veterans, some "chiefs," some merchants, and employers of the administration.

The French also placed particular emphasis on enlisting Africans in their armed forces for duty throughout the empire. In 1857 General Louis Faidherbe organized a standing force drawn from among Senegalese, and in time recruitment brought African soldiers from various parts of the Sudan. Many recruits were liberated slaves beholden to the French for their freedom. The force, known as *Tirailleurs*, greatly strengthened the French position not only as a fighting force but also as a politically divisive unit whose knowledge of local languages and customs, political organization, and geography became crucial to colonial officials. By the 1880s the *Tirailleurs* had become a well-trained and -armed unit under French officers (there were a few African junior officers); in time, the force distinguished itself not only in victories over African resistance, but in French battles overseas.

While French policy was generally characterized by a high degree of centralization, there clearly were deviations that took into account variations in African societies. The French obviously failed, for various reasons already mentioned, to adhere to their policy of assimilation, but one should note that such a policy was in fact an arrogant reflection of French assumptions of black inferiority and their commitment to "civilize" an elite above the masses. The direct and disruptive results of this divisive policy remain embedded in many continuing conflicts in French-speaking Africa.

## British Policies

Britain, which had already developed a decentralized colonial policy leading to the commonwealth of nations, never envisioned African assimilation into British culture and institutions as black Englishmen. Not even the European settlers in America were granted seats in the British parliament. It was more natural, therefore, for the British to adjust, within limits, of course, to the state

of African societies. Because of their greater flexibility, British policies varied more markedly than other powers' policies.

The kingdom of Buganda in East Africa and the emirates of Nigeria in West Africa provide the British models of indirect rule. British merchants were attracted by the resources and trade of Buganda. In addition, Protestant and Catholic missionaries at the kabaka's court had witnessed the effective bureaucracy at Buganda; the missionaries also had cultivated some European influence. Indeed, the competition of Christian factions, Protestant and Catholic, on the one hand, and both against Muslims, weakened the authority of the kabaka, who vacillated from one side to the other in attempting to maintain power and reap the commercial benefits the religious factions attracted to the kingdom. It was into this state of affairs that British authority penetrated in the 1890s. After military engagements, British officials succeeded in reducing the kabaka's authority, and in 1894 declared a protectorate over Buganda. In the Agreement of 1900, therefore, the kabaka undertook to collect taxes for the colonial administration in exchange for the continuation of the traditional ruling hierarchy, which was subject to ultimate colonial authority. Land was divided between the British crown and several thousand Buganda rulers. Thereafter, the British laid down general policy, while the day-to-day regulations remained with Buganda. This model was gradually extended, with Buganda assistance as officials to other areas—Bunyoro, Toro, Ankole, Busoga, and others—comprising what became the Uganda Protectorate.

In West Africa the British model for indirect rule was northern Nigeria. The extension of British power over that area was largely the work of the Royal Niger Company formed by George Goldie. Two French companies, the *Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Equatoriale* and the *Compagnie du Sénégal et la Côte Occidentale de l'Afrique*, were competitors along the Niger, but the stronger financial backing of the National African Company (predecessor of the Royal Niger Company) forced both French



firms out by 1885. Goldie pressed for a government charter while also negotiating treaties, which formed the basis for British claims at the Berlin Conference. In 1886 the British government granted Goldie a charter, which launched the company as a spearhead of colonial rule. By the charter the Royal Niger Company was authorized to administer justice, to maintain order, and to levy taxes. The company was forbidden to interfere with African laws and customs (an impossibility in terms of the authorities mentioned above); it was also prohibited from establishing a commercial monopoly.

The company failed to honor its charge of maintaining free trade. Not only were German and French merchants eliminated, African traders were harassed and forced to pay taxes on their long-established trade. This led to an attack on the company by merchants of Brass in 1895. In 1897 the Fulani of Ilorin and Nupe fought the company. Because of the African attacks and the threats of battles with the French in Dahomey and the Germans in the Cameroons, the British government in 1897 organized the West Africa Frontier Force of African conscripts, and three years later, the British assumed control over the region and appointed Frederick Lugard to formulate the administrative policy for the region. The result was indirect rule.

A new emir was enthroned at Sokoto, but the Muslim courts and bureaucracy continued to function. A British resident, supported by troops, was appointed to advise the emirs on pursuing colonial regulations. Since the Fulani had already established a bureaucracy, the British had only to secure the cooperation of the emir in much the same way as was the case with the kabaka of Buganda. The assurance of his rule and economic benefits won his support. By agreeing not to interfere with the Muslim culture, the British thus isolated the area from European settlers, and, for that matter, greatly minimized the presence of British officials. While this seemed to be an African advantage at the time, such a policy had the effect of greatly restricting meaningful relations

with the southern provinces of Nigeria where European education, trade, and religion accelerated change and set in motion several developments in social and political life that led to self-government. The unification of Nigeria in 1914 did not change that situation.

The British did not always support strong rulers. The experiences of Ja Ja in the Niger delta provide an example in which an African leader attempted to cooperate in commerce with the British, but within the context of freedom for his people. Ja Ja, by 1870, had emerged as head of the "house," or trading association, in Bonny, but subsequent fighting forced him to flee with his supporters to Opobo where he founded a new trading settlement. Through skillful diplomacy he succeeded in having the area's palm oil flow through Opobo. He thus won the respect of British merchants who hoped to benefit from his policies.

When, in 1885, the British declared a protectorate over the lower Niger and Oil Rivers, Ja Ja questioned the meaning of a "protectorate," and refused to accept provisions for free trade. Because of his influence and good relations with British merchants, these provisions were not included in the treaty Ja Ja signed. Inevitably, however, the British consul interpreted the protectorate as including the aim of developing trade on British terms, while Ja Ja insisted on maintaining his monopoly. In order to retaliate, several British firms organized the African Association and decided to pay less for Opobo's oil. When Ja Ja induced one firm to accept his terms, the die was cast. Invited to visit the consul, Ja Ja was arrested and deported, and direct rule was applied.

Although direct rule in Africa is generally associated with the French, the state of several African societies caused Britain to resort to a more direct policy. This occurred in Iboland, where neither a strong central ruler nor a centralized bureaucracy existed. Even the British-established rulers could not control the individualistic tradition embodied in the Ibo town or village

councils. Colonial administration thus took the form of direct rule by British officials.

Kenya provides an example of both direct administration and the influence of white and Indian settlers. Located just next to Uganda, Kenya was traversed to reach Buganda. Between Buganda and the coast lived the Luo, Masai, Nandi, Somali, Turkana, Kamba, and Kikuyu, who were organized primarily along kinship lines and came to be regarded, like the Ibo, as stateless societies. When in 1895 the British declared the protectorate (the East African Protectorate, later Kenya), the imposition of Western laws, collection of taxes, recruitment of labor, and many other necessary components of the colonial administration required the formation of a central bureaucracy. The British thus appointed officials whose success depended on their direct involvement in African states.

The key to the successful extension of British rule over Kenya was the policy toward the Masai, whose power in the interior could have seriously obstructed British penetration toward Uganda. But the Masai were preoccupied with raids, epidemics, and famine, the latter two providing an opportunity for British assistance, which impressed the Masai. In addition, British firepower also impressed the Masai. The British, moreover, were not yet prepared to force the issue of control because of limited personnel, funds, and the havoc Masai raids could cause on the construction of the Uganda railroad. Both sides therefore saw gains in cooperation.

The highlands of Kenya, like those in central and southern Africa, led to deliberate colonization schemes in which the British supported the apportionment of land to white settlers, the recruitment of cheap African labor, and blatant racial discrimination. As farmers and herders, the Africans suffered greatly from land alienation, which reduced their subsistence agriculture and forced them to work that land or in the urban areas for Europeans. In this situation British policy favored white settlers, who even-

tually came to regard Kenya as the "white man's country," as was the case in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia).

In addition to the European settlers, the position of the Indians posed a great problem after the completion of the railroad in 1901. Some Indians had helped to build the railroad; many others accompanied the construction as traders. Indian troops were also used by Britain to suppress African rebellions. European and Indian settlements were encouraged by the British commissioner until about 1902 when the European settlers forced him to reverse the practice for Indians. But Indians in Kenya, and also in Tanganyika, began to have visions of an Indian empire in Africa.

In 1910 A. M. Jeevanjee, an Indian in Kenya, advocated annexing the territory to India; in 1919 Indians meeting in Nairobi passed resolutions calling for the colonization of German East Africa by Indians. Support by Indians came from Tanganyika and England, and in 1921 an Indian publication in Kenya foresaw Indian administration of the territory. These, of course, were only dreams. The European settlers not only resisted that pressure but demanded and received a greater measure of local rule, the reservation of the highlands as settlement areas for whites, ordinances for contract African labor, and segregation of public facilities.

Direct rule in Kenya therefore was characterized by a growing number of European settlers who asserted their influence for advantages from London. As they won those advantages, their local power increased, thereby greatly alienating them from the Africans, forcing the Indians into middle ground locally, and causing British policy to become a vain attempt to balance all groups to maintain stability and control.

The central African colonies of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) were affected by two powerful European influences, British and white South African. Missionaries in the area during the nineteenth century had sought British government support to abolish the slave trade, to limit the Arab influence, and to protect missionary inter-



ests. When Lord Salisbury appeared doubtful, Cecil Rhodes offered to pay for the administration of the territories. With this incentive Britain declared a protectorate over the Shire Highlands of Nyasaland in 1889. Rhodes, under the cover of the British South Africa Company, spearheaded British advancement into the Rhodesias in 1890. Of the three colonies, the largest number of whites settled in Southern Rhodesia where they received representation on the legislative council as early as 1898. Largely because of that and the fact that the British South Africa Company had promised that self-government would come to the settlers, Britain, when it assumed control from the company in 1923, granted the colony internal self-government. But the smaller number of settlers in Northern Rhodesia preferred to become a crown colony with a legislative council, which in fact occurred in 1924. Nyasaland remained a protectorate.

Self-government in Southern Rhodesia provided the constitutional authority for white domination of blacks. African land was alienated, reserves were expanded, contract labor became common, and discriminatory legislation assured whites the better jobs and higher wages. Segregation in public accommodations also received legislative support. This approach was less stringent in Northern Rhodesia, where most whites were discouraged from settling because of malaria and the appearance of economic poverty. But during the 1920s better prospecting techniques revealed large quantities of copper ores. After the depression of the 1930s, production increased, and by 1945 Northern Rhodesia was one of the world's leading producers of copper. This development quite naturally attracted many white settlers who received the skilled jobs. It also attracted Africans, in the form of migrant labor, which was unskilled. Although the migrant labor was essentially short term, the settlers feared the possibility of emerging African communities, especially since the government neither included Africans nor provided them with suitable housing or other amenities of urban life. The situation was further aggra-

vated by the fact that the migrants were single men, but after World War II mining companies increasingly provided accommodations for the families of migrants, though the quality was usually substandard.

The third colony, Nyasaland, lacked the economic incentives to attract many white settlers. While this did not promise much in the way of economic development, it did assure less racial friction in the colony, although Africans had no voice in the colonial administration. But migrants from Nyasaland did work in the Rhodesias and South Africa, and thereby gained a higher awareness of problems affecting themselves and others.

After 1945, federation became a major preoccupation of whites in central Africa. Settlers in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia wanted union to protect their small numbers against rising pressures for freedom by Africans in and outside the colony. Southern Rhodesian settlers favored union as a means of sharing the wealth of the northern copper mines, and as a step toward a broader-based white rule in central Africa. Many Britishers and settlers argued that federation would facilitate coordination of Southern Rhodesian skills and capital, Northern Rhodesia's copper, and Nyasaland's labor. Thus, over vigorous African protests, the British established in 1953 the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Central African Federation). In the federal legislature Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia received eighteen seats, while Southern Rhodesia received seventeen. Each territory elected two Africans and one European to represent African interests. This amounted to nine representatives for Africans (six blacks and three whites) and twenty-six for the settlers. This was indeed an ominous beginning: The settlers hoped the Federation would solidify settler control, while in fact it became a signal for more aggressive political action by Africans.

Although the British usually responded to African pressures and demands, there was never any question about ultimate power or the status of Europeans over Africans. So long as changes did



not seriously threaten those prerogatives, the British could compromise; when the "winds of change" blew more intensely, British flexibility made accommodation more palatable.

## Belgian Policy

Prior to World War I Belgium had only one colony in Africa, the Belgian Congo. Up to 1908 the Belgian Congo was known as the Congo Free State, and it was unique both in the way it originated and in its early administration. In 1876 the king of Belgium, Leopold II, launched the International Association, which negotiated the treaties that provided the basis for international recognition of the Congo at the Berlin Conference in 1884. Leopold II thus acquired not only a huge, rich piece of real estate, he was also invested with private sovereignty over the territory. The administration was direct, absolute, and worked closely with the Church and big business. Raymond Buell in his *Native Problem in Africa* noted in the 1920s that the density of administration in the Congo was unequalled in Africa, except for the minor cases of Mauritania and Dahomey. Indeed, most regions of the Congo Free State, rural and urban, felt colonial rule directly.

Leopold II believed that the colony should contribute directly to the interests of the imperial country. He therefore sought to extract maximum profits from the Congo, and instructed colonial officials to follow that policy. The state was declared proprietor of all lands not occupied or being exploited by the Africans. The result was that what became the territory's most valuable products, ivory and rubber, came from those "vacant" lands and could be collected only by the state. Compulsory cultivation and public work became common and led to great abuses of Africans. Local Belgian officials were charged with seeing that work was performed and harvests, mainly rubber, were collected. Because their position and pay depended on the quantities collected, the

officials made harsh exactions from the Africans. To help achieve the desired results, varying degrees of force were applied: Hostages were taken, floggings were common, and military expeditions were launched. Africans were even mutilated and killed as punishment for falling short in crop collection.

In addition to state lands, concessions were granted to companies that received government permission to collect crops and taxes. Concessions were also granted for railroads and mining. The state, in exchange for concessions, received shares in the companies, and in several instances retired colonial officials assumed more lucrative positions with some of the companies. In short, the urge for profits and position by the officials and the overall philosophy of Leopold led to dehumanizing and extensive exploitation of Africans, especially those who inhabited the rich rubber areas.

Partly because of the Congo's rich endowment of resources, which were in great demand by the industrial European countries and the United States, and partly because of Leopold's belief that colonies existed for the benefit of the metropolitan country, Belgium benefited immensely from the Congo's economy. But the brutal means to that end became known internationally and created such great pressure that in 1908 Leopold was forced to transfer his personal rule over the Congo to the Belgian government, which meant that colonial policy became a prerogative of the constitutional monarchy and a minister of colonies. Obligatory cultivation for the state was abolished and other reforms were made.

On the missionary front the Congo was largely a Belgian preserve also. In 1906 a set of regulations laid the basis for cooperation between the administration and missionaries. Catholic mission schools and missionaries were subsidized, and land grants were made to the missions. Colonial administrators were expected to give full support to the missions. With this kind of support, non-Belgian missions obviously could not effectively compete.

After 1908 Belgian policy in the Congo was paternal. The government and the great concessionary companies, notably Union Minière du Haut Katanga and Huiteries du Congo Belge, concentrated on looking after the economic well-being of African workers. While the colonial economy rested primarily on wild rubber, ivory, and oil palm prior to World War I, by the 1920s large-scale mining in Katanga (copper and tin), Kasai (diamonds), Kivu and Orientale (gold) was becoming the key industry. Government and company accommodations for African families, while below that of the Europeans, were probably better than elsewhere in colonial Africa. Food, clothing, medical care, and other amenities were provided to maintain a satisfied labor force. Primary education was available, and secondary education was geared to training clerks, nurses, and others not destined for the liberal professions or university education, except priests. The theory was that this paternal approach would assure contented Africans, and the skewed educational system would prevent the rise of political activists who would agitate against black inequality. Segregated facilities were justified on cultural rather than racial grounds. This system prevailed with a minimum of violent resistance and a maximum of censorship of the communication media until the late 1950s.

## German Policies

German colonial administration in Africa was highly centralized and carried out by a hierarchical bureaucracy of colonial officials responsible through the chancellor to the kaiser. Like the Belgians, English, and French, the Germans granted concessions to companies. There were, however, some variations in policy from one colony to another. This resulted mainly from African initiatives and responses as well as prior German interests in certain specific areas.

In South-West Africa (Namibia), for example, the long struggle for political supremacy between the Herero and Nama peoples made it easy for the Germans to play one against the other. In addition, the Berg-Damara (or Damaras) for many years confronted the pressures of white advance from the south as well as the stronger African groups, the Herero and Nama. In all of these cases the Germans met with resistance that sometimes caused them serious losses. Thus, mindful of their losses in battle with others, the Germans shied away from the Ovambo, known as well-armed and disciplined soldiers. Indeed, in 1906 the Germans forbade entry into Ovamboland, except on the governor's approval.

South-West Africa was not Germany's largest colony, but portions of it were suited for white settlement. However, those suitable areas were already inhabited by Africans. This fact led to the eviction of Africans for settlement on reserves so Europeans could acquire the better lands. This action not only deprived the Africans of pastures for their cattle and land for their subsistence, it also meant that they had to submit as laborers on many of the European farms. With the development of mining, labor recruitment became more critical, and Africans were forced to seek employment in European establishments. Then following the rebellions of 1906-1907, Africans were required to carry passes and forbidden to acquire land or animals without official permission. By that time the Africans were scattered, weak, and under the strong hand of the German conquerors.

Togo was small in size and had little accessible mineral wealth. These factors and the climate made Togo less attractive to European settlers. Thus, no great companies or plantations emerged there. The colony did produce palm oil, and Africans were encouraged to grow coffee, cocoa, cotton, coconuts, and corn. Except among the Fulani of the north, German officers and appointed African assistants directly supervised colonial affairs. African labor was conscripted for road building and other public works, and traditional laws were subordinated to German codes.



A similar policy obtained in Cameroon. In the northern region the Fulani were employed in the system of indirect rule, while more direct administration occurred in the south. Compulsory labor was practiced, with laborers being rounded up, shackled together, and marched to work for Europeans. Africans were also forced to collect wild rubber and transport ivory. The European cacao and rubber plantations and other cash crops encouraged the development of railroads and port facilities. Official German schools were established in Cameroon from 1886, and Christian missions with their schools were active in the south, while the northern section maintained its Muslim schools in somewhat the same way as the Muslims in northern Nigeria.

The German East Africa Company was responsible for the administration of German East Africa (Tanganyika) from 1885 to 1890, when the state assumed direct responsibility. There was physical resistance by the coastal people from the beginning, and it culminated in large-scale uprisings from 1905 to 1907. In addition to the general desire for freedom, the local inhabitants resented taxation, physical brutality, forced labor, and the exploitation of African women by some German officials. The German response to the rebellions was an attempt to redress grievances in all the colonies. But in Tanganyika the settlers, some of whom came from South Africa, resisted reform and continued to exploit the territory's human and material resources. Ivory remained important as an export. Plantations grew coffee, cotton, tea, tobacco, and sisal among other crops, and African labor was conscripted to work them.

In its East African colony the Germans made use of the *akida*, Swahili or Arab administrator, who helped to supervise colonial administration. Swahili thus became more widely disseminated and deeply entrenched as a vehicular language. In addition, newspapers and other tracts, secular and religious, appeared in Swahili. Indeed, missionaries, traders, and the colonial administration facilitated the development of Swahili as a language of the people of Tanganyika.

With its defeat during World War I, Germany lost its colonies, which became mandates technically under the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. In fact, the colonial powers that occupied the German colonies during the war became mandatory powers and generally administered the mandates as if they were colonies. Britain and France shared Togo and Cameroon; South Africa received South-West Africa; Britain received Tanganyika; and Belgium received Burundi and Ruanda. While the Mandates Commission was charged with overseeing the administration of the mandates, it had no executive powers. It thus sought in vain to hold on-the-spot investigations, to hear oral petitions, and to require that mandatory powers submit regular annual reports. These powers were not assumed until after the Trusteeship Council was organized in 1945.

## Portuguese Policy

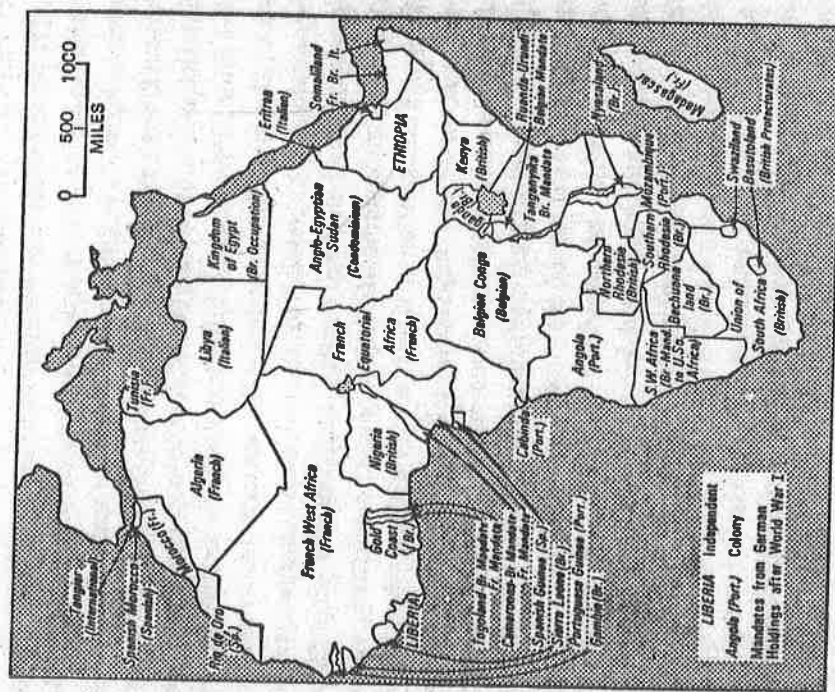
The tenacity of Portugal's hold on colonies in Africa was remarkable. An impoverished country that lost Brazil in the nineteenth century, Portugal also lost to King Leopold's Congo Association at the Berlin Congress of 1884-1885, but it did retain its claims to Angola, Mozambique, a portion of Guinea, and some offshore islands. Whereas distance, lack of swift communications, lack of funds, and the slow growth of Portuguese settlements were great problems, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the establishment of the telegraph cable in Mozambique in 1879, and the European discovery of gold and diamonds in southern Africa raised the economic prospects of Portugal's colonies and inspired a resurgence of national interest in them, and thus a greater concern for Portugal's administrative policy in Africa.

The Portuguese had regarded their rule as paternal, bringing civilization to Africans. But the means of extending their civilization followed a slavlike path. Into the twentieth century

Africans had no political rights, were sent "on contract" to sugar and cocoa plantations in São Thomé, in French Indian Ocean colonies, and in the mines of South Africa. Many Africans were required to collect rubber and could be leased to plantation managers. This, in effect, was a form of slavery and was criticized as such. However, during the 1930s, Portugal began to articulate and apply a more coherent policy that aroused greater interest in Portugal. The government began to emphasize the unity between the colonies and Portugal. This, of course, reemphasized the need for centralization and direct application of Portuguese customs and law. In theory, the new policy stressed the integration of the metropolis with the colonies and the assimilation of Africans in some distant future. Thus, Africans in Portuguese colonies were divided into assimilated and unassimilated categories. The former could hope to enjoy rights and privileges of Portuguese citizenship if they could speak and write Portuguese fluently, had become Christians, had sufficient income to support a family, received testimonials of good character, paid taxes, and remained loyal. Only a few Africans acquired that status—some fifty thousand of over seven million by 1950. The great majority of Africans were treated as children; they were frequently disciplined with a hippopotamus hide whip (the cikoti) and a wooden paddle (the palmatoria) with holes in it to raise welts. Portugal was a small and poor country, but its rule in colonial Africa was as strict and harsh as any, if not more so.

I  
Eur  
ing  
lition  
abol

s revivals in  
of establish-  
ter the abo-  
upport for  
sed serious



Colonial Africa