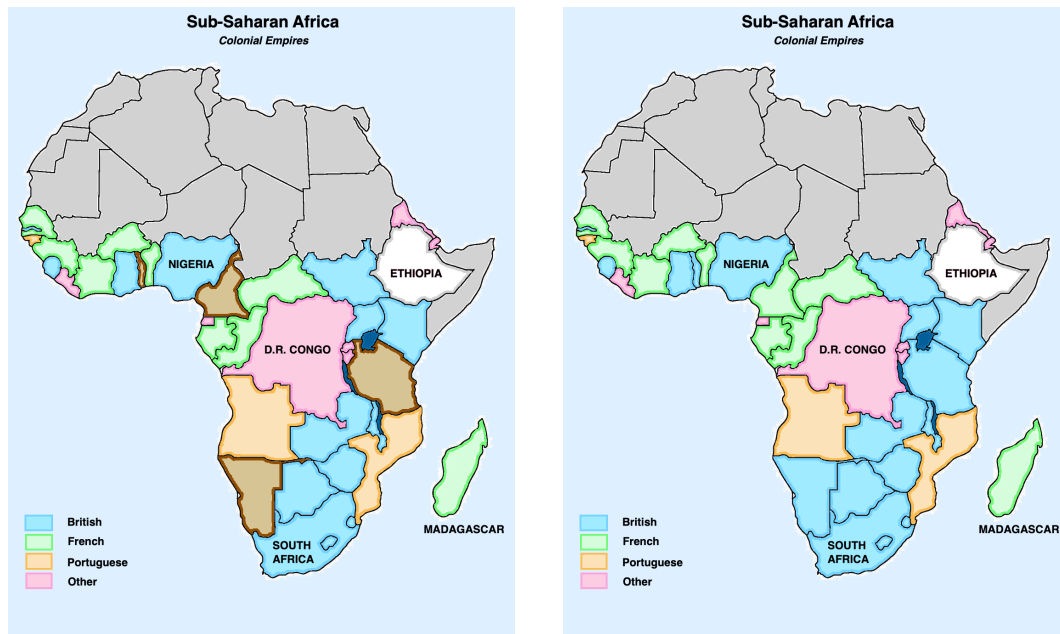


D. Africa During the World Wars

1. Although there was some fighting in Africa during both world wars, the fate of Africa was not determined by those aspects of either war. Africa, dominated by Europe, was carried along by Europe's history.
2. World War I was straightforward in that regard. Germany, which lost the war, was forced to abandon its overseas empire, including four major territories in Africa. These were taken over by France and Britain.



Colonial empires in Africa before (left) and after (right) World War I. Germany's territories were split between the victorious European powers, France and Britain.

3. The main impact of this change was how it affected the changing experience of European rule for African people in those regions.
4. All parts of Africa were gradually changing under European control. The main way life was changing is called "detrribalization." It means simply that being part of a tribe was slowly becoming less and less important. The traditional tribal structure of African life was being replaced by a modern European government that controlled property, commerce, and other aspect of the law. Also the language used by those in power was a European language, which "detrribalized" Africans started to use as well.

E. French and British Imperialism and Decolonization

1. The detrribalization process was disrupted by the wars when Africans had to adjust to the new cultures in charge. The French and the British expected to rule their colonies according to a different approach, and, of course, in *their* language, not German!

2. The British model was loosely based on the tutelary imperialism the British empire was using in India. This benevolent despotism was based on the idea that British culture, including representative government and industrialization, was the ideal, and that British colonial rulers had a moral obligation to pass on these values to the people they ruled.
3. The main reasons for the differences between the success of this model in India and its relatively poor outcomes in Africa were that African societies were starting from a more primitive starting point, and British rule began later and did not last as long. In some areas, nonetheless, such as Ghana, which became the first independent African country in 1957, the tutelary approach was quite successful. Detribalized Ghanans, educated in America and Europe, were adept in participating in a gradual, legal scheme to take control of government for themselves, and the British were willing to let them do it.
4. Where the local population was more diverse, and the people were caught between tribal ways and detribalization, the process was sometimes quite disastrous. A particularly violent case was the Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya after WWII, where detribalized Africans created a new kind of violent pseudo-tribal identity as an expression of their hatred for colonial rulers and the disruption of their lives by Europeans. The British responded to the terrorism of the Mau Mau rebels by extreme brutality of their own. It was a shameful episode that led the British to become demoralized about the prospects for tutelary imperialism.
5. The French, for their part, attempted a process of “Francization.” As the name suggests, it means trying to make its African subjects into French citizens, which French values.
6. The failure of Francization stems mainly from the fact that it was tried in *Islamic* Africa as well as Sub-Saharan Africa. Disintegrated Islamic culture was trying to find its footing again after the world wars and did not want to be controlled by Europe. Thus in French Algeria, a war of independence from 1954-62 triggered a wave of rejections of Francization in neighboring Sub-Saharan Africa as well.
7. The peak of the process of “decolonization” (the abandonment of colonial empires) was reached in 1960, which is often called the “Year of Africa.” Seventeen countries in Africa became independent that year alone.

F. The Struggle for Identity (1960-)

1. The theme of modern history in partially detribalized modern Africa is the struggle for identity.
2. This means that the tribal way of life that preceded the European arrival is obviously not suited to modern reality with technology and global trade, but that Africans have had difficulty defining a new identity within the countries that were formed through decolonization.
3. Anti-colonialism, i.e. opposition to European rules, was a kind of identity that unified people for a time, but once the European rulers left, there was no one left to oppose! The harsh reality of independence set in. Any problems Africans would have would now have to be dealt with exclusively by them, and the longer they were independent, the less national leaders could resort to blaming Europeans for their problems.

4. Looking at Africa from the vantage point of living in a country that has a long history and a strong cultural identity, it is difficult to have empathy for Africans in their new countries. They don't have a strong self of belonging to any particular culture, but they are basically stuck in one, and have to forge ahead within that framework. In most cases the challenge has yet to yield any definitive results. Sadly, this means a continuation of poverty.
5. The most successful model of a culture that Africans feel drawn to isn't Europe (because of the history of imperialism) or America (because of the history of African-American slavery) nor Russia (previously communist) or the Islamic world (because of Islamic triumphalism that produces terrorism wherever it interfaces with Sub-Saharan cultures).
6. The only cardinal culture that seems to offer a way forward for Africa is Post-Maoist China. China was also subordinated by Europe, and its traditional society and monarchy disintegrated under European pressure. But China seems to have righted itself under Post-Maoism. It has become rich and influential, and sees Africa as an appropriate partner to reestablish itself as the "Middle Kingdom."
7. For now the African-Chinese partnership seems to be working. China is helping to develop by building railroads and other industries, which helps Africa, and gives China access to the resources it needs. It remains to be seen if China's intentions are substantially different than those of Europeans when they proposed to "develop" Africa.