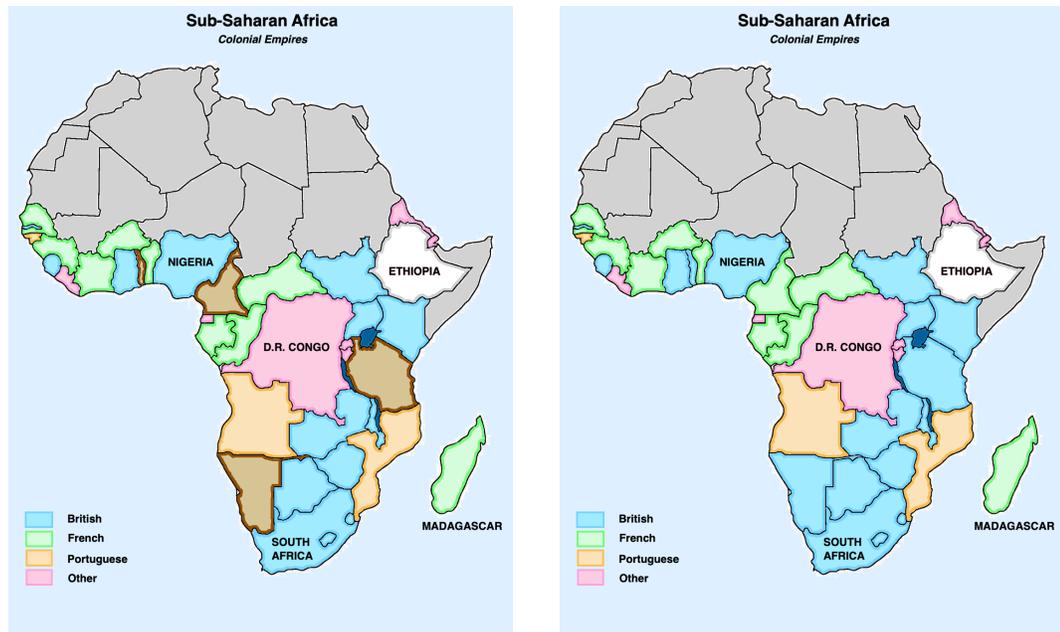


D. The Scramble for Africa (1882-1914)

1. As if the impact of the slave trade was not bad enough, the European of nations, having exhausted other options by taking over everything else available, set its sights directly on Africa as a target for empire.
2. The inciting incident for a “scramble” for Africa were the rise of the German empire in the heart of Europe, which defeated France (the previously dominant nation in Europe) in the *Franco-Prussian War* of 1870-1, and sought to create an empire for itself to match the French and British empires around the world.
3. Germany’s leaders looked at the world map and realized that if they didn’t act quickly, there would be no other part of the world they could take control of for themselves. They created companies to establish outposts and look for available resources on every available spot on the coast of Africa, and began taking control.
4. Afraid of Germany’s ambitions, the other European powers joined in the rush for the last remaining land unclaimed by a great power. Spain and Portugal had lost control of the Ibersphere, and were eager to make up for it. France, already one the biggest empires of Europe, saw a change to extend its grasp on resources. Britain desired the same, but was also motivated by the desire to end slavery and engage in tutelary imperialism.
5. The particularly tragic note in the story comes in the form of the King of Belgium, Leopold II, who took advantage of the general desire of other European powers to end slavery by announcing a personal project to create a benevolent empire of his own in Congo. In fact, Leopold’s rule over the vast area of central Africa became an infamous episode of oppression and ruthless imperialism. Only decades later did the true extent of his hateful imperial approach become known.
6. When Britain claimed Egypt for itself in 1882 because of the failure of its government to pay its debts, the scramble was on, and all these powers, wishing to avoid imperial wars, adopted a straightforward “first come, first served” policy at the Berlin Conference of 1884. Soon all the land was claimed, with the exception of independent kingdom of Ethiopia—the only country not to be colonized in the entire cultural block.

E. 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 the fighting in Africa itself. 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 "detribalization." 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, and other aspect of the law, and commercial system that encouraged urbanization. Also the language used by those in power was a European language, which "detribalized" Africans started to use as well. It was often the only language that people of the same colony had in common, because of the tribal diversity of Africa.