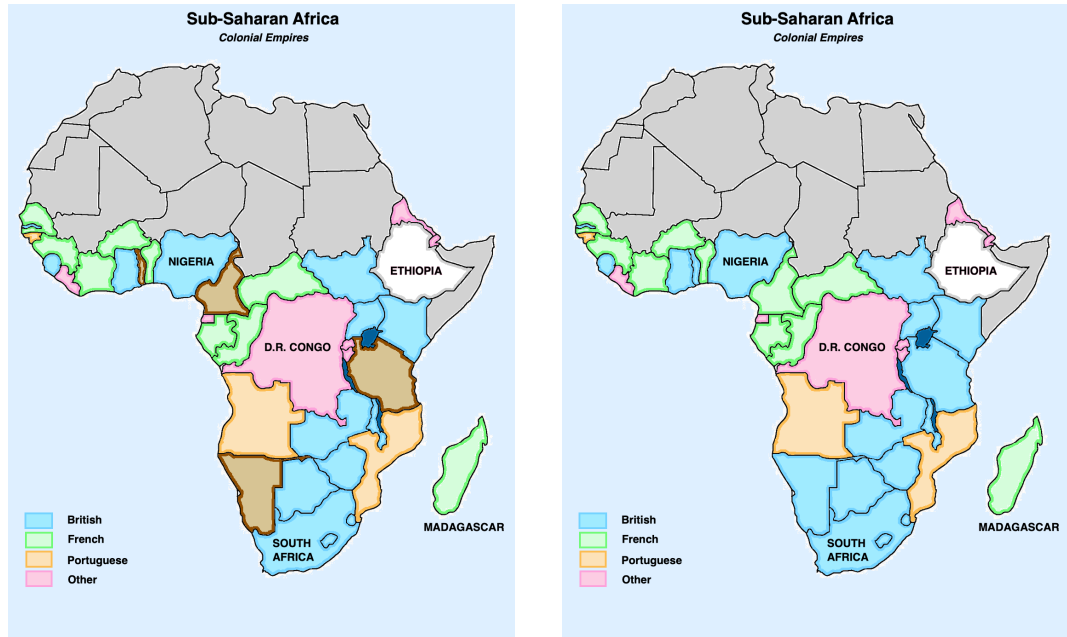D. The Scramble for Africa (1882-1914)

1. As if the impact of the slave trade was not bad enough, the European of nations later decided to colonize Africa (to take control of it for its own purposes).
2. A "scramble" for land began when Germany, the last country in Europe to become politically integrated, finally unified, and decided to copy the others in building an empire.
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 Iberosphere, 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 King of Belgium, Leopold II, announced a personal project to create a benevolent empire of his own in Congo. In fact, however, 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 violent rule become known.
6. When Britain claimed Egypt for itself in 1882 the scramble was truly 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, and only the kingdom of Ethiopia avoided being 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.
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.

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.