



The Impact of Colonialism on African Life

TERMS & NAMES

missionary

Hutu

Tutsi

MAIN IDEA

The slave trade and colonialism destroyed traditional cultures and social systems in Africa south of the Sahara.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Africa is still recovering from the effects of the slave trade and colonialism.



Movement • Enslaved Africans were forced to wear shackles like these. ▲

Africa Before the Europeans

Before Europeans came, Africans had varied ways of life under different kinds of governments. Kings ruled great empires like Mali and Songhai. Some states had democratic rule. Some groups had no central government. Some Africans lived in great cities like Timbuktu, while others lived in small villages deep in the forests. Some were nomadic hunters, and some were skilled artists who sculpted masks and statues of wood, gold, or bronze.



The Slave Trade

Slavery existed in Africa long before Europeans arrived. Rulers in Mali and Songhai had thousands of slaves who worked as servants, soldiers, and farm workers. Villages raided one another to take captives and sell them. Often, a slave could work to earn his or her freedom. In the 1400s, however, Europeans introduced a form of slavery that devastated African life and society.

From Africa to the Americas In the early 15th century, European traders began to sell slaves. They raided towns to capture unwilling Africans. Some Africans captured in wars were sold to European traders by other Africans. One estimate is that 10 to 12 million Africans were forced into slavery and sent to European colonies in North and South America from 1520 to 1860. Many more were captured but died of disease or starvation before arriving. About 1750, movements to stop the slave trade had begun. By 1808, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Denmark had made it illegal to bring in slaves from Africa. However, it would take longer for countries to make owning a slave illegal.

BACKGROUND

Conditions on slave ships were so bad that about 16 percent of slaves died during transport.

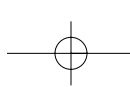
Impact on Africa In addition to the Africans captured and sold, many were killed during raids. About two-thirds of those taken were men between the ages of 18 and 30. Slave traders chose young, strong, healthy people, leaving few behind to lead families and villages. African cities and towns did not have enough workers. Family structures were destroyed.

African Slave Trade, 1520–1860



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- Region** • From what part of the African continent were most enslaved Africans taken?
- Region** • Name three destinations of enslaved Africans.



BACKGROUND

During the Industrial Revolution, inventions increased the speed of making goods. This created a need for more raw materials and markets.

European Colonialism

When Europeans ended the slave trade, they did not lose interest in Africa. The Industrial Revolution had changed economies in Europe and the United States. Africa could supply both raw materials, such as minerals, and new markets for goods.

Explorers and Missionaries Europeans knew little about the interior of Africa, but many were curious. Scientists and explorers were interested in African wildlife and natural resources. European missionaries also traveled to Africa. A **missionary** is a person who goes to another country to do religious and social work. Missionaries wanted to convert Africans to Christianity and bring education and health care to Africa. Many also taught European ways of thinking, which often conflicted with, and destroyed, African traditions.

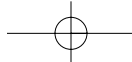
Competition for Africa In the 19th century, European nations began to compete for control of Africa. Each wanted the biggest or richest colonies and control of trade. To avoid wars over territory, European and U.S. leaders met in Berlin in 1884. There, and in later meetings, they discussed how to divide Africa. No Africans were consulted. Over the next 20 years, Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire all established colonies in Africa. By 1912, only Ethiopia and Liberia remained independent.



A Wealth of Animals When European explorers came to Africa, they saw impressive sights—lions and cheetahs stalking zebras, elephants trumpeting messages to their young, giraffes delicately nibbling the tops of trees. Today, Tanzania's Serengeti National Park is where modern explorers watch animals in the wild—animals that most non-Africans have seen only in zoos.

The Serengeti is home to an astonishing variety of life. It is also the last place in Africa where huge migrations of animals take place. The sight of a million gnus, zebras, and gazelles moving majestically through the park is one of the wonders of the world.





European Colonies in Africa, 1912



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- Region** • Which country had the greatest number of colonies in Africa in 1912?
- Region** • Which countries remained independent?



Impact of Colonial Rule

When Europeans divided Africa, most colonizers cared mainly about gold, diamonds, and other resources. The Europeans knew little about Africa's political and social systems. Many Europeans looked down on Africa's rich cultures and tried to make Africans more like Europeans.

Europeans also created conflicts among ethnic groups that had not existed before. For example, the Belgian rulers of Rwanda-Burundi insisted that everyone carry identity cards saying whether they were **Hutu**, the ethnic majority, or **Tutsi**, the minority that had ruled the Hutu. Many people did not know which of these they were. The Belgians decided that anyone who owned more than ten cows was Tutsi. The Tutsi got the best education and jobs. Soon the Hutu were resentful, and a violent conflict began. In 1994, the conflict between the Hutu and the Tutsi escalated into a brutal civil war. The Tutsi were victorious and formed a new government in Rwanda.

Movement • During and after the civil war, thousands of Tutsi were massacred, and thousands of Hutu refugees, such as these, were driven from their homeland. ▼



SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) missionary (b) Hutu (c) Tutsi

Taking Notes

2. Use a chart like this one to list the ways in which Europeans changed Africa, and the effects of the changes on African life.

Change	Effect

Main Ideas

3. (a) How did Europeans change the institution of slavery in Africa?
 (b) Why did European interest in Africa turn from the slave trade to colonization?
 (c) How is the modern conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi a result of the actions of European rulers?

Critical Thinking

4. Comparing

How was the way of life of many Africans different after the arrival of Europeans?

Think About

- ♦ goals of missionaries and European countries
- ♦ history and traditions of ethnic peoples

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Write an **opinion paper** explaining the negative effects of colonization.