

The in europe making  
them move to africa



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The course of African History took a new dimension between 1885 and 1900 when the Europeans took over African countries as colonies (Vandervort, 97). Before this period, larger percentage of African land experienced little interaction with Europe except the British who occupied Gambia, Lagos, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, France on the other hand occupied Senegal, Benin and Ivory Coast while Portugal established themselves in Mozambique and Angola(Vandervort, 102). The powers occupied African territory after a long period of free trade and peaceful relation between them and different African communities (Vandervort, 112).

## **Why Europe conquered and colonized Africa**

The Europeans initially considered African land as worthless, however, by the end of the 19th century their perception about Africa had changed due to the changes in Europe making them move to Africa for rescue (Vandervort, 145). They were motivated by several factors with political, social, and economical sphere among others.

To start with, European nations were motivated by economic factors arising from the industrial revolution which started in Britain and extended to other European countries such as Belgium, France and Germany (Hochschild, 158). They wanted cheaper mineral resources for their home industries claiming that resources were abundant in Africa for example, rubber was available in Congo hence being the greatest point of interest after Charles Goodyear had discovered its use (Hochschild, 159). Similarly, industrial revolution led to increased capital forcing European traders and their governments look for areas to invest (Hochschild, 164).

They believed Africa was the most appropriate area for investment since Europe had been flooded by goods produced, this enabled King Leopold get support from Belgium and British businessmen to venture and invest in Congo where he attained a profit of 28 million francs between 1878 and 1908(Hochschild, 160). Secondly, the Europeans were motivated by political factors from their countries for example, since by 1870, Britain and France were the most powerful nations in Europe , after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 in which Germany won against France and took over mineral - rich areas of Alsace and Lorraine, France therefore vowed to compensate by acquiring colonies in Africa (Hochschild, 280). In addition, political sentiments regarding public opinion by citizens of Europe motivated the governments to look for colonies in Africa for example, in 1882 the French Assembly agreed to ratify De Brazza's treaty with Chief Makoko in response to public opinion leading to creation of Congo as French colony(Hochschild, 281). Thirdly, the Europeans were motivated by strategic location of most African countries that would ease their trade movements into other parts of the world . The conflict of interest resulted to show of might by European nations such as France and Britain over the Egyptian (Hochschild, 284).

The loss of Egypt to Britain made France intensify her activities in Congo hence occupying Port Novo in 1882 while king Leopold II of Belgium after along travel over the world called a meeting in Brussels in 1876 aiming at stopping slave trade in Africa , he then sent Henry Morton Stanley to explore river Congo basin which was strategically located for trade between West and Central Africa(Hochschild , 95). Socially, the missionaries in Africa demanded protection from their mother countries as they faced several

problems such as rejection by Africans and sometimes violence from rebellious Africans thus hindering their aims of civilizing Africans (Hochschild , 147).

### **Tricks used by Europeans to conquer Africa**

After the scramble and Partition of Africa, the Europeans were faced with a challenge of establishing their rules in over Africans. They therefore applied different methods depending of the reception of Africans: to start with, they used Christian missionaries which were to spread the message of love and brotherhood among all groups of people making the converts submissive to their governments (Hochschild, 120). They build schools bases on their faiths where children of the African converts could go and learn Christian doctrines at the expense of traditional and Muslim believes that had been rooted in most parts of Africa (Hochschild, 124).

Secondly, the European nations signed treaties with African rulers giving them opportunity to occupy different parts of Africa. For example, the government of Belgium sent Henry Morton Stanley to sign agreement with Congo ruler so as to occupy the Congo basin (Hochschild, 85). The treaties were signed by African collaborators who were latter used as mercenaries against those who resisted. The Europeans also used the information from the explorers such as Speke and Stanley who gave repots on lakes, navigable rivers, mountains and minerals in Africa hence attracting the colonialists to Africa (Vandervort, 176).

On arrival to these areas, their representatives were able to convince African rulers who later accepted their occupation(Vandervort, 177) Similarly, they

were able to use military conquest against African rulers who failed to recognize their rules (Vandervort, 184). Their military forces defeated many Africans who resisted giving them the opportunity to establish their rule in various parts of Africa (For example, the British used excessive force in Southern Africa in oppressing the Shona and the Ndebele who resisted against them (Hochschild, 125). They also applied military force in East Africa against the Bunyoro of Uganda and the Nandi of Kenya (). The Belgium on the other hand used mercenaries from Zanzibar against the resistance to establish colony in Congo (Hochschild, 127). To reduce the cost of administration, the colonialists used chartered companies to administer over their areas of influence and were charged with the responsibility of collecting taxes, building roads in the colonies and representing their governments in these areas().

The British used the British South African Company in Sothern Africa and British East African Company to administer over East Africa while the Germany used Germany East African Company to Rule over Tanganyika (Vandervort, 135). In addition, in some cases the colonialists used bribery tactics by giving gifts such as cloths to African chiefs and kings so as to accept their policies and ended up constructing military posts to ease their attack on resisting communities (Vandervort, 136).

## **Response of African to colonial rule**

The scramble for Africa by Europeans resulted to conflicts between the powers hence the German chancellor Otto Von Bismarck invited other European leaders for the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 in which they agreed upon laying rules for any country wishing to acquire territory in

Africa(Hochschild , 84). During the conference the European leaders' greed on areas of jurisdiction leading to increased aggression into the continent thus evoking African anger. The rulers were faced with options of either surrendering or retaining their positions leading to their responses, to start with, some communities developed resistance movement in which they took arms against the colonial powers in an attempt to protect their political and religious independence (Hochschild, 9).

During the second half of the 19th, the Asante and the Fante of Ghana offered great resistance to the British occupation in their land while King Leopold II encountered fierce resistance when the Sanga people of Congo led by Chief Mulume Niama rebelled killing one of his officers and refused to surrender leading to the death of 178 people by the Belgium army (Hochschild , 10). Other African rulers such as Toure of the Mandinka empire adopted both diplomatic and military strategies when he requested Napoleon of France for protection against the British so as to safeguard his position, he however, failed since the Berlin Conference prohibited any signatory from occupying other members sphere of influence(Hochschild, 11). However, French accepted the offer but due to their hostility , he approached the British and later offered the greatest resistance against the European powers(Hochschild, 12). In addition, some African rulers collaborated with the Europeans who had conquered their land because they expected to receive several rewards from Europe.

Collaboration was an African response to imperialism through active policy of cooperation and compromise (Vandervort, 156). It was adopted by African rulers due to factors such recovering their lost territories from their

traditional enemies for example, the Maasai of Kenya expected protection against their traditional enemies the Nandi who had conquered their land while the Buganda of Uganda expected protection against the Bunyoro who were their enemies (Vandervort, 123). The African leaders benefited on short-term basis, through access to fire arms, consumer goods as well as protection from external conflict from neighbors().

The Europeans signed agreements with African rulers who applied collaboration tactics in order to reserve certain areas for their own interest for example, Dahomean government of Porto Novo collaborated with France to prevent the British expansion movement(Vandervort, 129). The benefits of collaboration such as protection against traditional enemies, material gains through fire arms and clothing as well as ruthless military expeditions from European leaders forced Africans give in to colonial rule hence colonization of Africa(Vandervort, 134).

## **Conclusion**

The European scramble, partition and colonization of Africa emerged in the last quarter of the 19th century and witnessed mass movement of Europeans to the continent.

With the defeat of Africans the European governments were able to establish authority over the subjects (Hochschild, 166). They proceeded to institute brutal and repressive administration that called for African fight for independence. For example, King Leopold forcefully conscripted African men, women and children into serious physical punishment and persecutions over the harvesting of rubber in Congo (Hochschild 165). The colonization of

Africa however changed the destiny of many Africans who adopted the Western civilization through religion and education.

## **Works Cited**

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