

Modalities of Governance: Cartography in Colonial Africa

Avni Sunaina Lal

University of California, Santa Cruz
Department of History

11 June 2020



Professor Gregory O'Malley



Professor Benjamin Breen

This thesis had been completed to departmental standards and is submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in History.

Abstract

The European conquest of Africa, and indeed of many other parts of the world, was never just a conquest of land, nor can it be encompassed only by histories of territorial exploration and acquisition and economic exploitation. European powers were also animated by the Enlightenment idea that the world was knowable in every respect: the land could be surveyed, charted, and mapped, just as people could be counted and categorized and the flora, fauna, and mineral wealth could be enumerated and classified. Cartography occupied a significant place in the colonial state's apparatus of knowledge and governance. This thesis, which is focused on cartography in colonial Africa, first locates cartography among the various modalities of knowledge. I then consider what kind of maps of Africa were produced by European cartographers and argue that Europeans justified their territorial expansion in Africa with the argument that they were only laying claim to empty and unproductive land. I consider at some length the implications of the doctrine of *terra nullius* and attempt to show how European maps reflect this worldview. The "Scramble for Africa", the term used to describe how European powers—Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Belgium, and others—carved out Africa among themselves, ushered in a new era of map-making, one which nevertheless also reflected some of the assumptions of an earlier era of cartography.

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Prologue	... 4
I Colonialism and the Question of Orientalism	... 6
II Modalities of Governance	... 8
III Cartography as a Form of (Colonial) Knowledge	... 12
IV European Exploration in Africa before 1885	... 14
V Modes of Knowledge in Late 19 th and Early 20 th Century Africa	... 30
VI Cartography in Africa- The Formation of Colonial States	... 35
Conclusion	... 40
Endnotes	... 42
Appendix: List of Figures	... 46
Bibliography	... 47

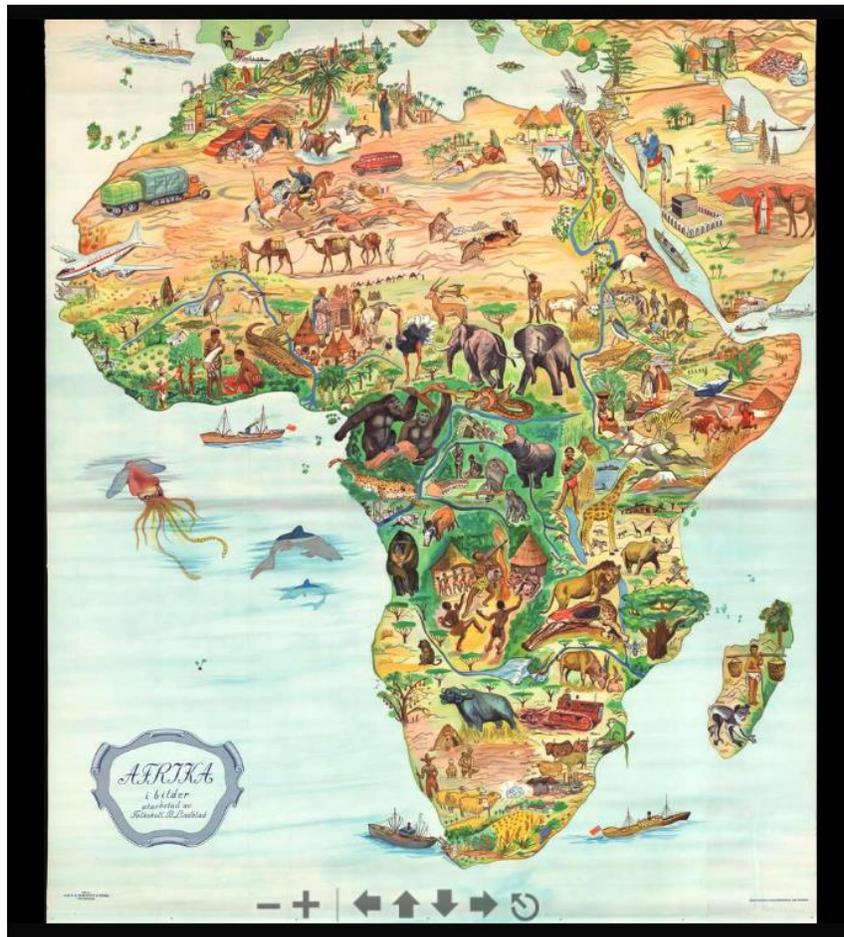


Fig. 1: 'Afrika I Bilder,' B. Lindblad (c. 1955)

Prologue

In the mid-1950s, the Swede B. Lindblad drew a map of Africa which offers considerable insights into the predominant conceptions of Africa in the West.¹ Even a cursory glance at the map suggests the mapmaker's preoccupation with the idea of Africa as a continent teeming with wildlife and yet slowly, ever so slowly, being drawn into modernity. Sub-Saharan Africa in particular is associated with wildlife in this map: the continent is peopled, as it were, by animals—large beasts which help to distinguish Africa from many other parts of the world and especially Europe. The center of the map is almost entirely taken up by images of apes, elephants, the giraffe, the lion, the rhinoceros, and the hippopotamus. To the extent that there are

any signs of modernity, of Africa's insertion into a narrative of the modern industrial age marked by advancements in transportation and the birth of aviation, they can be discerned largely on the coastline. A Douglas DC-7 aircraft appears on the west, somewhere in the vicinity of present-day Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau; just north of that, in the Western Sahara, we see a lumbering truck. It is as if modernity is still at the edge of Africa, still poised to truly make its impression upon Africa and thus bring the large continent into the orbit of world history.

This map appears to be strikingly different from the colonial-era maps of Africa, with which this thesis will be concerned, in many respects, perhaps most evidently in its exuberant representation of an Africa teeming with wildlife and yet being ushered into the era of modernity. Yet, on closer scrutiny, this map appears to share some features with the colonial-era maps, around which this thesis is focused. For instance, this map suggests a distinction, which is more than merely topographic, between the coastline—water being life-giving—and the interior and the desert, where, as in one common understanding of the word “desert”, nothing grows. Where in colonial-era maps the interior is a large, blank space, here the interior has been replaced with Africa's wildlife. The map also evokes a stark duality between the native lifestyle—locals scantily clad adorned with ivory trinkets, crafted spears, and woven baskets—and the landmarks of modern technology—airplanes, ships, and tractors which are depicted without people, suggesting that modernity and the African people are not capable of coexisting. Moreover, the inclusion of tractors, ships, and trucks beside local villages is suggestive of the idea that there is a large continent which awaits the presence of those who have the drive to strip the continent of its seemingly infinite supply of natural resources. In addition, there are no cities in this map even though numerous cities would have featured much more modern life in 1955. In

arguing all this, I do not question the possibility that the viewer may simply see the map as an invitation to the adventure that awaits those who are bitten by the travel bug.

Lindblad's map is one entry into the European cartographic imaginary and its place in carving out not only representations of Africa that have predominated in the public consciousness for well over a century but the critical role of cartography in shaping the very idea of "Africa." Though the thesis will focus on cartography, specifically the nuances within the maps themselves such as the distinction between the coastline and the interior, the influence of exploration and survey, the uncharted expanse of the continent, the politics of naming territories, and how maps from different moments in the timeline can be connected, we can better appreciate what the significance of cartography is if we keep in mind the narrative of European expansion in Africa. In order to situate my arguments about cartography, I turn first to a number of related questions: what general propositions can we say about the colonial attempts to create a body of knowledge about the non-West? In what respect can we speak of colonialism not only as the conquest of territory and economic exploitation, but as the conquest of knowledge? I shall look briefly at colonial knowledge formation before moving to the subject of cartography.

I Colonialism and the Question of Orientalism

Colonialism was generally studied by scholars, at least until the late 1970s and early 1980s when postcolonial studies and cultural studies contributed to the creation of a new landscape of humanistic inquiry, as a system of economic gain, political overlordship, and military expansion. There has also been a large body of scholarship revolving around the colonial state's legitimization of their rule in their overseas possessions, a question arising in part from the consideration that in many colonies Europeans were vastly outnumbered by the native

people. In undivided India, for instance, the British never numbered more than around 150,000, and this in a country that at the time of independence had a population of 400 million; in British Nigeria, a population of 20 million was governed by around 1,300 European officials, aided of course by an indigenous establishment.² This has entailed an understanding of the various ways in which the colonial state expanded its power, as well as the ways in which it made itself accessible to others, particularly to the people it colonized. To govern a people, it was essential for the colonial state to know them and gain their compliance. European powers engaged in the project of creating a vast body of knowledge, as will be discussed in this thesis, about the people that it conquered throughout their colonies around the globe. European cartography in Africa was one important part of this broader colonial knowledge gathering or producing process.

The twentieth-century histories of European colonial projects also focused on the empire's great proconsuls or the 'great man of history' theory, the administrative machinery of governance, and colonial policymaking. However, the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, introduced a new strand of theoretical thinking, one that led to significant reorientations in the scholarship on colonialism. According to Said, the Orient was "almost a European invention," one that arguably still had a special place in the European, or larger Western imagination.³ Said argued that the Orient does not exist without an explicit and tacit distinction between the Orient and Occident. One of the least understood aspects of Orientalism as described by Said, it appears to me, is that this body of knowledge was created not only for the consumption by, and education of, Europeans but rather for the education of the native people themselves, and this on the assumption that Europeans with their vastly superior intellectual endowments had a better "understanding" of the society being described than the native people themselves. It is Said's suggestion that, taken as a whole, European accounts of the "Orient" or

non-West tell us less about the countries or territories that are purportedly being described than about the intellectual milieu and worldview of the European writers. And it is for this reason that maps of Africa are so important for understanding colonization in Africa; they are not naive representations of an objective cartographic reality. Though these maps often depict Africa's vast interior as empty or uninhabited, this does not mean that Africa was without history. What it does suggest is that cartography was an important conduit for the mentalities explored by Said. But such characterizations do suggest that the European cartographer may have had in mind a distinction between the coastline with a settled population and an interior that was seen as dark, unexplored, and devoid of life-giving water. It may also suggest the European's fear of "emptiness" and his desire to make the land "full" and productive.

A reason that the West believed it had advanced while other societies were in a stagnant position was partly due to the fact that European expansion took place alongside, and was facilitated by, industrialization, now understood as Europe's initial station along the track of progress. Europe's own progress, however, halted and even deterred the natural progression of the places they conquered.

II Modalities of Governance

Bernard S. Cohn, a very prominent historian of British India, was among those who put forward the idea that colonialism can more profitably and creatively be studied as the conquest of knowledge, along with physical territories. Military conquest was accompanied by knowledge-gathering, anthropological projects, the institution of surveys, cartography, the use of photography, and the like—all of which we can think of as constituting the intellectual work of colonialism. As Cohn states, much of the documentation "created and normalized a vast amount

of information that formed the basis of their [the Europeans'] capacity to govern.”⁴ Merely wielding physical power over a population did not suffice; ultimately, the colonial state had to know the people and the land in order to govern it more effectively.

The documentation carried out by colonial officials created a framework of their understanding of what African history was. In the wake of decolonization and independence, certain intellectuals, scholars, and writers would attempt to reverse the damage by reclaiming the heritage and culture of Africa through mediums such as literature and film and by rewriting histories.⁵ What, then, purged the African people of their identity? During the eighteenth century, an intellectual and philosophical movement began to dominate the world of ideas in Europe: The Age of Enlightenment. This led to the shift in discoveries being made on the basis of reason and direct observation rather than faith in the 18th century. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, in their work, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, turned the perception of progress that had been accepted upside down. Enlightenment, or man's use of his own reason, was meant to be the antidote to the blind submission to both divine and temporal authority. The Enlightenment set up a sharp contrast between “reason” and “faith”. Their critique of this movement was that the Enlightenment, and the power of scientific reason, “wound up being directed against, not just the gods, but all metaphysical ideas such as including conscience and freedom.”⁶ One consequence of Enlightenment thought, says Stephen Bronner in offering an interpretation of the contribution of Horkheimer, was that “‘knowledge’ became divorced from ‘information’ and the scientific method, freed from any commitment to liberation, transformed nature into an object of domination.”⁷ The Enlightenment or “Age of Reason”, as the scholar Jeffrey Stone has argued in an influential article on European cartography in Africa, is conventionally also thought to have

produced a change in cartographic practices, with map-makers allegedly adopting “a scientific approach” that led to the “removal of many legends and assumptions.”⁸

The conversation that will arise in subsequent sections postulates that the maps produced in the 17th century onwards were illustrated and published by white European men, honing in on the argument that the knowledge produced stemmed from their world view. In their critique, Horkheimer and Adorno ultimately dissociated the Enlightenment with progress, suggesting that it could also be associated with a charter for oppression. The notion of human liberation supported the transition of an individual’s autonomy to believe and reason in any manner they saw fit. The white European male was construed as the only subject fit to be the bearer of reason, and of rights, such that all non-white people, and even white women, were excluded from this circle of reason, liberty, and rights. Moreover, and more importantly for the purposes of my discussion, the era of Enlightenment put forth the idea that the entire world was knowable: people and objects alike could be counted, enumerated, categorized, classified, just as places could be charted, surveyed, mapped, and fixed.

As I’ve suggested, a notion spread that everything in the universe could be catalogued, that every person, place, and object could be situated within the timeline of human existence. Communities like the Tasmanian and Australian aborigines, for instance, were viewed by anthropologists, like Raymond Corbey, as the pieces to solving the mystery of human evolution. He surmised that such native groups of Australia and Africa, “stood closest to the apes and prehistoric ape-men in the racial hierarchy, and therefore, were outstanding examples of ‘contemporary ancestors’ and ‘missing links’,”⁹ relative to the contemporary views of genetic variation of mankind. Amidst the colonial presence, anthropologists in the African continent primarily focused on smaller communities and treated their subjects as “residents of a ‘timeless

present' abstracted from history," thus linking a culture that could date as far back into the past at will and connecting it to the present and, "highlighting it as the essentialist core of social relations."¹⁰ This 'scientific' racism, as Bill Freund connotes, permeated European intellectual and popular culture, one that was premised on a warped interpretation of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution where Africans were placed at the end of the pecking order.¹¹

Social anthropology put forth a rigid distinction between states and 'tribes without rulers' or 'stateless societies' in the interest of relieving colonial administrative problems. Furthermore, anthropology was, Freund suggests, a veiled term for the social science research dedicated to finding the 'legitimate' older forms of social and cultural authority. This was labeled as 'indirect rule' as seen in Nigeria where the British limited the power of the emirs, making use of them for their own interests. Anthropology, however, was far from being the only mode of knowledge that was conceived under colonialism. Statistics and measurement began to acquire an extraordinary importance, particularly the measuring of people from allegedly savage and uncivilized areas, flourished under the colonial enterprise as an excuse to set the standard of European dominance above all else. A simple, yet poignant, example of how a racial stratum existed in European society comes to us from the European practice of human exhibitionism, the act of displaying people from around the world like animals in a zoo. Certain humans, most commonly Africans or "primitive" people, were exhibited as so many objects, often placed alongside other objects in a museum of "natural history, as the rather infamous case of Saartje Baartman suggests.¹² My opening discussion of the exceedingly colorful map of Africa by Lindblad offers a tantalizing thought that, into the middle of the twentieth century, maps were also a way of exhibiting Africa itself.

III Cartography as a Form of (Colonial) Knowledge

Institutions such as the anthropological survey, the geographical survey, the botanical survey, and the topographical survey were charged with carrying out scientific research in Africa and creating a body of knowledge about Africa and its inhabitants. The introduction and implementation of the census, as in Nigeria in the 1920s under the British, charted the population as another means of survey from a numerical and statistical standpoint. Cartography was one of the modalities of governance deployed by the colonial state that sought to map the land, the people, the flora, the fauna, and everything else encompassed in the map that were produced.

Denis Wood and John Fels propose that the dominant western view pinned cartography as a scientific model, “one in which it is claimed as a mirror of nature that can be projected through geometry and measurement.” With the implementation of measurement, cartography not only became a new method by which the idea of space was conceptualized, but it was meant to reflect how “maps were seen as the epitome of representational modernism.”¹³ The dissection of power inscribed on the land through cartography enabled the exploration of the unconscious political nature of maps. Such will be examined with maps produced between the 17th and 20th centuries by various cartographers including Vincenzo Coronelli, Ambroise Tardieu, and John Bartholomew.

Wood and Fels emphasize that maps and the practice of cartography are a human construction; political boundaries and land displacement are unnatural. Cartography is as ideological an enterprise as any, in that maps do not simply chart some reality which is (using a colloquialism) “out there,” but rather they help to shape and create that reality. Taking Africa as an illustration, one of the consequences of the Berlin Conference of 1885, where the continent was divided among the major European powers, was that tribes, or local groups, were rendered

into states. This begs the question: how were boundaries actually drawn? Should one really suppose that decisions taken at the Berlin Conference around how boundaries were to be drawn within Africa between different “states,” demarcating one group of people from another, were derived from some scientific understanding of the basis of African societies, or is it not really the case that such decisions stemmed from political compulsions? The Conference had consequences about how “land” would henceforth be conceived in Africa, as distinctions among the indigenous people did not exist along lines of nation states, but along lines of tribes. Most of these groups were nomadic, moving from area to another, so lines between tribes were not fixed. The whole idea of the Berlin Conference was to fix boundaries. Each European nation involved lay claim to a portion of the continent and then lines were drawn to show the extent of their possessions. Cartography does that as well: a space is being mapped and configured in a permanent manner. Maps, therefore, are not only the representation of reality, but they themselves are a way of taking possession of the land and of redefining or shaping reality.

Maps of Africa were utilized by explorers and soldiers alike during their campaigns, ranging from charts used to navigate the open seas, to topographical maps to determine the layout of the land, to political maps to reap the benefits of expansion. Therefore, Woods and Fels state, “the map itself remains uncontaminated; it is recovered as no more than a conduit through which the ideological content- as *all* map content- passes undistorted.”¹⁴ To the West, the true nature of cartography and mapmaking as a whole was the exploitation of space, the ability to create relations between various things and subjects within a given area invoking a sense of territory. If European powers contested for power on the battlefield, each seeking to lay claim to land, one should not be surprised that they also carried out this war through maps. The Anglo-French wars of the 17th century provide an example of what we can call a cartographic war.¹⁵ If a

piece of land was contested, each country produced maps that purported to show that the contested territory had been in its possession. Britain and France each turned to their cartographers and commissioned maps that marginalized their enemy's lands, carving up the continent of North America in their favor by extending their own boundaries.¹⁶ In this respect, we can certainly speak of cartography as a way of not simply taking possession, but also being utilized as a primary political weapon during the 17th and 18th centuries.

IV European Exploration of Africa before 1885

I shall now turn the history of European exploration of, and presence in, Africa before what is called the Berlin Conference of 1885, which is a landmark “event” in the history of modern Africa. The early modern period (16th and 17th centuries) consisted of explorations charted primarily by the Portuguese and the Dutch. In response to the profit to be made from the Atlantic Slave Trade, other European powers attempted to create outposts along the western coast of Africa. Up until the nineteenth century, the slave trade and the establishment of the colonies in the Americas took precedence over exploration of the African continent. By the mid-1800s, Britain and France emerged as major contending powers as they residually conquered and claimed vast expanses of land within the continent. Protestants also carried on active missionary work on the Guinea coast, in South Africa, and in the Zanzibar region. Africa was configured into a battleground in the mid-nineteenth century as a battle raged between Christianity and Islam, each religion striving to penetrate the most remote areas before the other. Simultaneously, Britain and France competed in the exploration of the Niger Valley, an area known for the gold deposits as well as the fabled city of Timbuktu.

A common attribute of the maps of Africa prior to 1885 were the large portions of undocumented land that were intentionally left blank. Among historians, these empty and uncharted territories have promoted an interesting discourse about their nature. Just as the exhibition of Africans, Aborigines, other “primitive” people, and “freaks” tell us something about how Europeans conceived themselves, taking themselves to be the template of “normal” human beings, and even a more perfected conception of the “human,” so too can these blank spaces or “silences” hold insights into the practice of European cartography and the epistemological conceptions out of which it was derived.

J. B. Harley, a geographer, cartographer, and map historian who occupies a very prominent place in the scholarship on cartography, proposes that the silences within the maps of the era shed light on the hidden agenda of mapmaking. He has argued, rather intriguingly and to my mind quite compellingly, “that that which is absent from maps is as much a proper field for enquiry as that which is present.”¹⁷ This dialectic of absence and presence, of the seen and the unseen, furnishes us with some clues on how to read maps in general, though it may be argued that maps of Africa, for reasons that are described below, are particularly conducive to such an interpretation. Maps of the 18th century, like those of Jean B. B. d’Anville, a geographer who may have pioneered the practice of blank spaces, were subject to different interpretations: there the blank spaces were understood as limits of knowledge, there was no new information to be gained from the maps, as geographers at the time felt the land had no relative importance. The mode of thinking towards d’Anville’s maps gradually shifted, and by the nineteenth century, spaces “marked” or signified as “blank” were seen as an invitation to explore, navigate, name, and take possession of land. Moreover, it was a bold maneuver to gain the support of the public at home to encourage the imperialist project.

Harley suggests that the cartography of the state was a method used to maintain and legitimize state power. One such method was through the censorship of the cartographic knowledge that was attained. Just as literacy was censored in various forms in European culture in the sixteenth century, so was cartographic knowledge controlled and regarded as privileged information. From a commercial aspect, the spaces of the continent that were labeled as “unknown” were presented as a justification to appropriate the territory. In order for monopolies to survive, certain knowledge of the new land and trade routes had to be monopolized as well. In England those in charge of documenting navigations and discoveries practiced secrecy and “censorship” during the mid to late sixteenth century. The maps and sketches of Sir Francis Drake’s voyage in 1577-1580 became secret documents and were prohibited to be published until 1588.

Cartographic secrecy solidified a classic case of a ‘power-knowledge’ dynamic; “as maps were being transformed by mathematical techniques, they were also being appropriated as an intellectual weapon of the state system.”¹⁸ This ‘strategic secrecy’ ensured the classification of information regarding military exploits. A modern example of ‘strategic secrecy’ is deployed by intelligence institutions today; governmental offices ensure a significant amount of information remains hidden from the public, specifically in connection to the offensive and defensive operations of the military. Harley explains that information was not always hidden from the public. For instance, a strong monarchy would not have felt the need for extreme secrecy. There were instances where the public knowledge of cartographic information operated as a double-edged sword when used to support opposing parties during times of political power struggle. Harley provides the instance of England, wherein Saxton’s maps served to strengthen the monarchy; however, once maps were published and circulated among the public, the strong

articulation of provincial identity and independence grew which proved successful against the crown.¹⁹

Africa was the great “unknown” and part of the European impulse from the Enlightenment meant that Africa was the terrain which was entirely available to be mapped, surveyed, and known. In the maps of the continent prior to the Berlin Conference of 1885, large portions were left blank. Let us consider first the implications of leaving the enormous interior of Africa blank or “empty”. *Terra Nullius*, ‘nobody’s land’ in Latin (as explained in the OED), was a doctrine, used in international law, whereby land could be legally declared uninhabited or unoccupied. To the European, first the Dutch but by the late 18th century predominantly English, explorers who navigated the coastline of Australia, unoccupied fundamentally meant unoccupied by white Europeans. In 1788, *terra nullius* was applied to Australia and it may be said that this is what precipitated European settlement. For 65,000 years prior to European contact, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander peoples occupied the land. The customs, rituals, and laws of the indigenous population were not written or recorded, making European settlement justifiable on the basis that the territory, though occupied, was devoid of “civilized society.” As in Africa, the Aboriginal groups were nomadic, scattered across the continent. Through the eyes of the Europeans in the late eighteenth century, this would have been perceived as evidence of a barbarous country, and therefore, offered no impediment to legally settle.

Furthermore, a number of maps produced in the 18th century of these *terra nullis* territories propound a big distinction between new and old. Adrien Brué, a distinguished French cartographer of the early nineteenth century, configured a map of Australia, is titled ‘Nouvelle Holland’, or ‘New Holland’ (Fig. 2). By characterizing these acquired territories as such, Europe becomes the old world and everything that is discovered becomes the new world. The

supposition is that the history of Europe is prior to the history of every other place in the world because it has people. Every territory that is being discovered is all ‘empty land’— Australia, Africa, the Americas become the new world. However, it is ironic because chronologically, Africa is the origins of human civilization.



Fig. 2: ‘Carte de l’Australie,’ Adrien Hubert Brué, (1826)

To the extent that one can see the names of regions on the maps, there is a distinction between the coast and the hinterland. The main bulk of the exploration during the 17th and 18th centuries extends along the coast. The mapmakers produced a map where they labeled some outposts and settlements along the coast and then in the interior is just a body of information or a

grand illustration because there is nothing there to chart. When explorers claimed the land they thought to be empty they would name it in any manner they saw fit.

Maps dating back to the age of exploration included both the illustration and text, things that are seen as separate in the modern world. “Maps or pictures were often the point of entry, or the embodiment of an argument- with the text providing illustration or justification.”²⁰

Cartography and mapmaking, political endeavors aside, were truly an art when the practice began. Several maps that were made during the age of exploration were actually quite aesthetic as they were riddled with various drawing as images that were meant to fill the blank spaces on the page. This map by Nicolaas Visscher II of Amsterdam between 1682-85 is riddled with imagery of ships sailing in the seas surrounding the continent accompanied by curious creatures of the mythical nature (Fig. 3). The title of the map ‘Africa’ at the bottom-right, is amidst an elaborate scene of the African people, flora, and fauna. At the top-right lies a display of two geometrical spheres followed by a text describing, “how to determine the distance using triangulation.”²¹



Fig. 3: 'Nova Et Accurata Totius Africae Tabula,' Nicolaas Visscher II (1682-85)

What first draws our attention to the map is the cartographer's use of the phrase, "Nova Africae Tabula" (see Fig. 3 & 4). The word *tabula* can be rendered by slate, as in the phrase "tabula rasa", or "blank slate." It is often used to characterize the philosophy of empiricism associated with the 17th century English philosopher, John Locke, more famously known perhaps to some for his defense of individual property rights. Locke held to a view contrary to Plato's ideas about knowledge in arguing that the mind of the child is akin to a "blank slate": the child learns by sensory impressions which are planted upon his or her mind. The supposition, to carry the analogy forward, is that Africa could be conceived of in much the same way, as a blank or

barren expanse of land, a vast and unknown expanse of territory that was merely awaiting the imprint of the European's superior mind. This suggests the relationship of cartography as well to imperialism: in the first instance, the cartographer purports to make known what is not known by acts of exploring, surveying, naming, possessing. Explorers and cartographers from Britain, France, and Italy realize there is an entire empty land mass to be mapped out. It is as if the Africans' mind is also empty and, therefore, Europeans can come and provide and plant their knowledge on them. Similarly, the land is empty, so Europeans will map and chart it, and make it known by planting their impression on the soil of Africa.

As an illustration, this next map by Vincenzo Coronelli in 1690, displays the inhabited coastline and an empty interior (Fig. 4). He is seeing Africa as a place that is essentially going to be defined, by his point of view, by the coastline, the presence of people on the coastline. The sharpness of the contrast between the coastline and the interior becomes even more so because the coast signifies water. Water, in turn symbolizes life to the European, a natural element found in abundance in the homeland, whereas desert and sand meant to them death. The desert has a limited human presence as it is void of a sufficient amount of water to support life the way a forest or the coast can. The first use of the word 'desert', as Oxford English Dictionary suggests was used to refer to, "an uninhabited and uncultivated tract of country; a wilderness: now conceived as a desolate, barren region, waterless and treeless, and with but scant growth of herbage."²² The etymology of the word stems from the French word 'desert' and Latin 'desertum' correlating to the state adjective which is used to describe a place as abandoned and left waste.

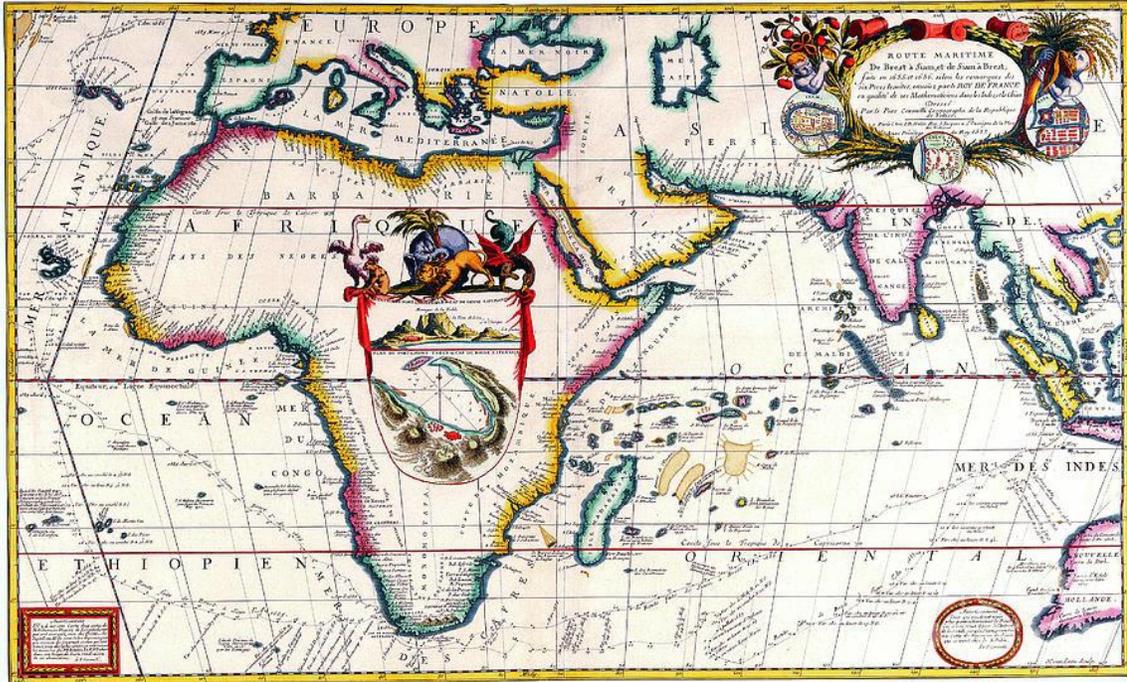


Fig. 4: *Map of Africa*, Vincenzo Maria Coronelli (1690)

Born in 1650, Coronelli was a Franciscan priest who lived most of his life in Venice known for his geographical knowledge and skills as a mathematician. By the late 17th century, he was recognized as one of the greatest Italian cartographers. In an attempt to fill the void in the center of the continent, he inserted a cartouche, an ornamental inscription, in the middle of the continent to utilize the space efficiently (a cartographic deployment of the ‘utilization of empty land’ that was mirrored on the ground a century or two later). It emphasizes the idea that there was no sense of civilization in the interior, only wilderness and wildlife. Such representations of the European perception of the African continent were a source of great inspiration for satirists like Johnathan Swift, an Anglo-Irish poet. In his work, “On Poetry: A Rapsody,” he quips about the imagery in maps such as Coronelli’s saying: ‘So geographers in Afric-maps/ With savage-pictures fill the gaps/ And o’er uninhabitable downs/ Place elephants for want of towns.’²³ The animals present in the cartouche appear to be a mix between realistic and fictional. These

mythical creatures seem more imperative to chart than the towns Europeans assumed existed within the region. The bird of the extreme left appears akin to a swan or a duck. The two creatures in orange could be classified as cats but look nothing like the lion we are familiar with today. The elephant in the center in dark blue, clutching a tree looks realistic enough, but the strangest character within the cartouche is on the far right. It has the body of a cat, the wings of a medieval dragon, and a neck of a swan, in other words, a creative expression of exoticism and mystic.

Coronelli collaborated with the French cartographer and engraver, Jean-Baptiste Nolin (1657-1708). Nolin's 1689 map of Africa reflected the updated information and knowledge from European explorations and permanent settlements as a large portion of the continent is filled in (Fig. 5). Still located in the center of the map is a cartouche in the shape of an oval: the text in Latin and emphasizes the mythological nature of the origin of the Nile River.²⁴ This depiction of Africa where it appears the interior is accounted for, suggests explorers and cartographers alike made progress in charting the land. Scholars such as Thomas Bassett argue that the "conventional periodization of the history of map-making into 'decorative' and 'scientific' phases is entirely exaggerated."²⁵ This periodization is congruent with the narrative of "man's progress," the idea that as we move into "modern times" science starts to reign supreme. Bassett is arguing that the supposition, which he puts into question, was that cartography during the 18th and 19th centuries was increasingly becoming a purely scientific enterprise, one that purports to offer a window into the real world. Nolin's map (as is also the case with the maps which appear as figures 3 and 12) seems to contain more information of the interior and is meant to reflect additional knowledge attained by French explorers, but upon closer inspection one notices that the map merely accentuates topographical features (that may not be real or accurate) and gives the illusion of

fullness. It suggests that the intelligence gathered in the field by the French may have been just as insufficient as that which was gathered by explorers from Italy, as Coronelli's map is intentionally left blank. He did not feel the need to fill in the interior with anything, even if he had the opportunity to use his imagination.



Fig. 5: Jean-Baptiste Nolin and Vincenzo Coronelli (1689)

This bears a relationship, as I have already suggested, to *terra nullis* or empty land- if the land is indeed empty, a wasteland, as they believed it to be, whoever goes there takes possession of it. This idea loosely relates to the expression in English, “possession is nine-tenths of the law,” commonly used to justify a number of disputes to this day.²⁶ Even as late as the beginning of the 19th century, this conception of the interior of Africa as “empty” land, which in European thinking was also rendered as waste land, or land that is barren and “unproductive,” persisted as is made amply clear by a map from the French cartographer, Ambroise Tardieu (1788-1841). He

was trained as an engraver and showed considerable talent which facilitated his appointment as a geographical engraver for the French government. This map of Africa in 1804, just like the one by Coronelli, displays the coast and the primary region of human habitation (Fig. 6). Nearly a century later there is slight expansion into the interior as the map is becoming more specialized into one tasked in charting the Western coast of Africa.

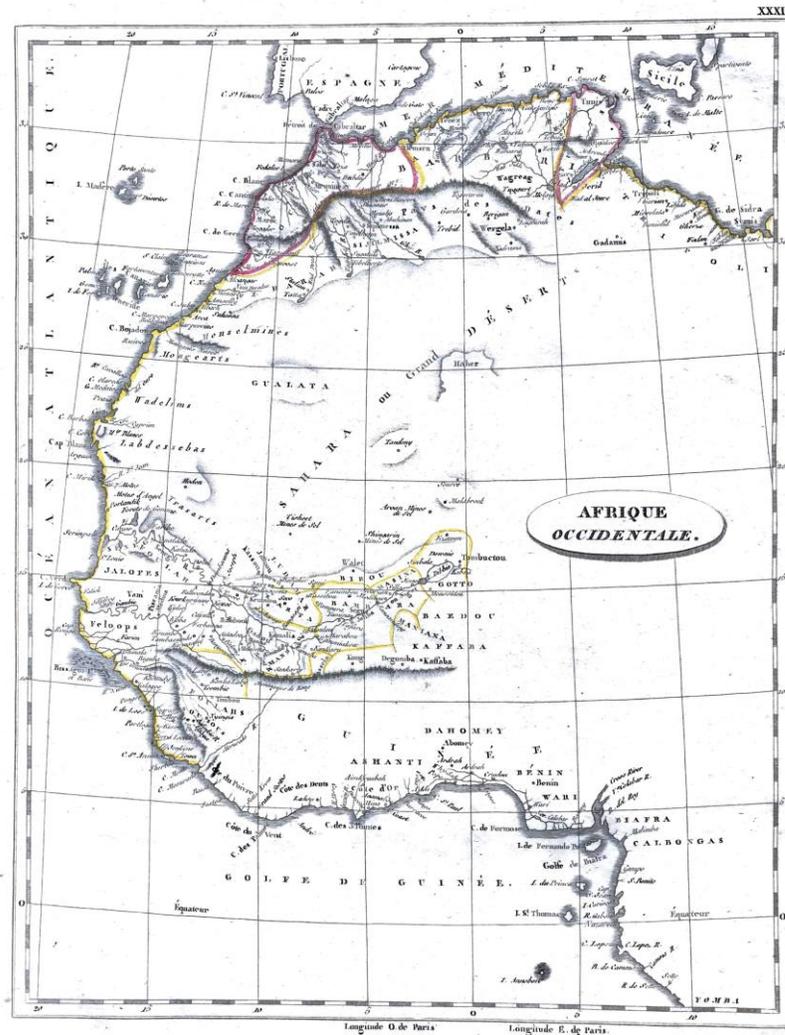


Fig. 6: “Afrique Occidentale,” Map engraved by Ambroise Tardieu (1804)

The names of certain region bear more resemblance to what will eventually become the breakdown of these countries- Benin, Guinea, Dahomey, Biafra. The Ashanti kingdom will

become Ghana, or the Gold Coast, as Britain and France competed in their explorations for the raw minerals that land held. Many names of towns and kingdoms in the interior were still untouched by Anglicization in the early 1800s. The only settlements whose names were of clear Western influence are those along the coast—Spanish territories of Fernando Po and the Gulf of Biafra off the coast of Equatorial Guinea, the Gold Coast under the custody of the French, and the British port of St. Paul—to recognize a few. The Fulani, are one of the largest ethnic groups in the Sahel and West Africa listed in Tardieu’s map. Though rooted in the Senegal region, their community is dispersed across West Africa as far as Nigeria and Cameroon. It is interesting to note that Tardieu indicated their territory in the map, which may suggest a slight shift in cartographers’ recognition of some of the major local groups. Perhaps it was because the Fulani occupied such a vast expanse of land, that Tardieu simply couldn’t ignore it in his map. 1804 was within the timeframe where the fictional Mountains of Kong made an appearance in maps of West Africa.²⁷ Despite the unsuccessful exploration conducted by other geographers in the nineteenth century, the mountain range continued to be included in a number of maps of the western region before it was deemed non-existent in 1889 by a French explorer. Below is a closer look at the details of the map honing focus on the various kingdoms, European ports, and the mythical mountain range (Fig. 7).

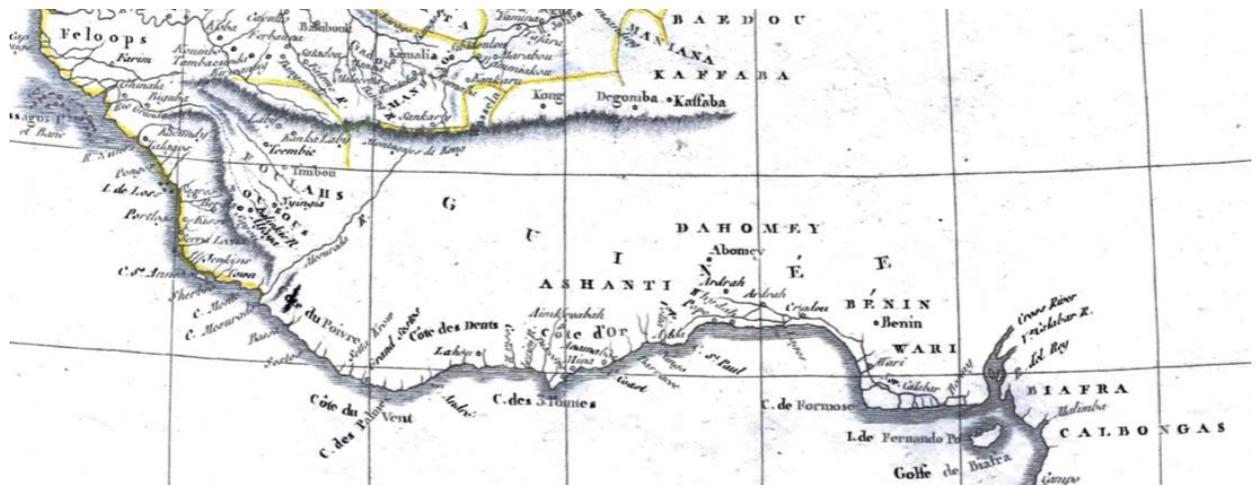


Fig. 7: Detail from map, “Afrique Occidentale,” Map engraved by Ambroise Tardieu (1804)

Similar to possessing a collection of rare silks and porcelain, controlling territories was seen as a great prestige- a status symbol. Africa, to Europe, was merely an area waiting to be cherry-picked by the white man so much so that, “the more the English, in particular, came to know about the world through geography and cartography, the more interested they were in exploring and establishing authority over parts of it.”²⁸ Imperial conquest in the late nineteenth century has been associated with the rise in capitalist enterprise, specifically, that of raw materials. In the late nineteenth century, diamonds had been discovered in Southern Africa soon followed by gold in the Western region. The largest supply of raw materials lay deep in the Congo, also coined as the ‘heart of darkness’ by Joseph Conrad in his 1902 novel. Demands for rubber grew subsequent to the Berlin Conference by businessmen like Karl Benz. Sensing a profitable future for his new automobile, he invested in market for natural rubber offered the by the Congo.²⁹ The ivory trade was another lucrative market within the continent, most prominent in East Africa during the nineteenth century. The material gained its popularity in Europe as well as America after Arab traders and European explorers opened up East Africa leading and

increased exploitation of the interior's resources. The Lindblad map from the opening section contains an image of ivory, as well as diamonds, a prized mineral mined extensively in southern Africa.

New technology and various medical discoveries not only made the journeys more cost efficient but allowed for longer periods of duration in the continent.³⁰ Exploration gives, what we might call, a new cartography of disease, for cases of malaria and yellow fever. Scholars have suggested, over the years, that “European subjugation of Africa was preceded by another conquest, the conquest over malaria, the main killer of Europeans.”³¹ Malaria, was often mistaken for yellow fever during the diagnosis until the middle of the nineteenth century, as doctors supposed that the two diseases were related. Yellow fever was classified as an endemic in the continent, one that the local population developed immunity to.³² Before the Europeans could conquer the land and do its cartography, they had to conquer disease. The health of Europeans abroad was a concern for the imperialist project, as they were exposed to numerous pathogens that their systems were unable to combat. In the early nineteenth century, European influence in Africa had been limited to the coastlines, specifically the tropical zones such as the Gold Coast in West Africa. A rather colorful moniker of the “white man’s grave” designated these areas as the European mortalities were a staggering number in the initial years of settlement.³³ As expeditions into the interior of the continent commenced, the explorers and soldiers alike fought for their lives against the smallest opponents: insects carrying diseases such as malaria. Several colonial officials lost their lives before quinine was successful in combating tropical fevers. This medical development, many scholars argue, facilitated European expansion in Africa and thus, filled in the blank spaces on the maps made up until that point.

It is instructive to consider in this connection the views of a preeminent geographer of that age such as Major James Rennell (1742-1830) who became known principally for the mapping of India. But as Rennell's work suggests, the same colonial officials who worked in India often worked in Africa as well. For a geographer, such as Rennell, the African continent drew their attention as it contained, in the words of Clements R. Markham (1893-1905) on Rennell's life and feats, "the largest extent of entirely unknown country and the most interesting problems to be solved."³⁴ It should be noted that Rennell's understanding of the land seems to reject the knowledge of various African peoples regarding their own land and environment. Markham too was an English geographer and explorer who began his career as a Royal Navy cadet, his first real voyage was in hunt for missing ships of a previous expedition in the Arctic. He had a limited role, but he kept a detailed journal of the journey and the findings of the crew. Like Rennell, he pursued his geographical interests in India where he was in charge of cultivating the cinchona plant—its bark was a source of quinine, the ultimate medical advancement in colonial exploration, as the first known treatment for diseases like malaria and yellow fever.

Markham praises Rennell's acute eye for details in his observations that constitute a part of his legacy as a geographer. Markham credits his legacy, and thereby his inheritance to the community of aspiring geographers, to the Greeks, as, "the ability of the Grecian race is higher by several grades than that of any people that has appeared since," and therefore, "we must ever look to it for our models in the exposition of geographical, as of every other branch of human knowledge."³⁵ He accounts that Rennell's studies on the Greek historian Herodotus, is what contributed to his authority on matters of African geography. This suggests that European

historians were more aware of the history of Africa and possessed a greater body of knowledge than the local population.

Western embodiment of acquiring knowledge and history did not, of course, include the ancient practice of the oral tradition. ‘Griots’ were formally the advisors to kings; their memory held the secrets and history of entire family trees that stretched across generations. In the hierarchical society of Africa prior to colonization, “the griot appears as one of the most important of this society, because it is he who, for wants of archives, records the customs, traditions and governmental principles of kings...The social upheavals due to the conquest oblige the griot to live otherwise today.”³⁶ Encompassed within the knowledge of families and stories, the griots themselves surely had an immense knowledge of the land they traversed as they were global performers.

V Modes of Knowledge in Late 19th and Early 20th Century Africa

As I have argued in earlier in this thesis, the European expansion around the world also entailed the European conquest of knowledge. The work of Edward Said and Bernard Cohn to which I referred earlier suggest, though there are many other scholars who have done work in a similar vein, suggests that it may once again be intellectually productive to situate the advent of cartography in Africa within the larger ambit of how European colonial powers created a vast body of knowledge about the territories that came under their control. It is necessary at this juncture to revisit very briefly the modalities of governance and consider what where the modalities, very briefly, that were deployed in Africa. I shall look only at three such colonial knowledge formations, namely the importance of survey during European exploration, the

introduction of the “census” and the emergence of the study of the physical sciences, before turning to a lengthier discussion of cartography in the early twentieth century.

The surveying of the land was often a precursor to mapping by the cartographer. A relationship cultivated between the physical land and the process by which said land was mapped; they assessed the land and determined what sort of revenue could be gained from it. Thus, it is imperative to emphasize that there was often a direct relationship between the work of the cartographer and that of the surveyor.

In order to understand the utilization of cartography, one must look at the work of surveyors. Who did the work of surveying the land? In these expeditions, “soldiers and explorers alike carried the most recent and authoritative maps with them.”³⁷ This is rather compelling because the soldiers are doing the work of conquest in the typical sense, but so are the explorers. This is one dimension that can be used to understand how knowledge was political. These explorers were not merely charting the land; accompanying the soldiers in their conquest of land, the explorers seek to further the project of the conquest through knowledge. Documenting geographical information in a standardized fashion made West Africa accessible to European conquest, commerce, and colonization. An imperative, and interesting component of the 19th century maps is due to Rennell’s 18th century compilations of geographical knowledge drawn from previous explorers, like Mungo Park who traversed the region of the Niger River in the 1790s and paved the road for new mercantile opportunities. It was in Rennell’s map in 1798, that the Mountains of Kong were shown for the first time, with the assistance of Park’s sightings and accounts on his travels (Fig. 8). As mentioned earlier, the range was deemed fictitious nearly a century later by military officers who utilized these maps to further their campaigns.



Fig. 8: The Mountains of Kong first shown in James Rennell's 'A Map Shewing the Progress of Discovery & Improvement in the Geography of North Africa' (1798)

Thomas J. Basset describes the expeditions of two military officers, Joseph S. Gallieni and Louis G. Binger.³⁸ Prior to their campaigns in the late nineteenth century, the maps made by various cartographers and topographers contained uncharted areas, a common characteristic in many maps of Africa of that time. Gallieni, as Basset states, used maps during his campaigns in the western Sudan, charting, and subsequently, acquiring new territories that would fill in the blank spaces on several contemporary maps. Sharing the limelight with Rennell in the field of cartography was Regnault de Lannoy de Bissy, who charted territory for the French in the late nineteenth century. Many of his maps were of the upper Senegal and Niger rivers. In one such sheet he draws out forts that link two river basins where a potential railroad project could

commence. Section of his sheet are blank as well, suggesting unknown areas that were controlled by local African rulers. Nevertheless, Lannoy wrote, in his description of the sheet, “It is in this immense country that we have just sketched that France is destined to play a considerable civilizing and pacifying role.”³⁹ His words reinstate the idea that Africa was merely something to be claimed, that is was the “destiny” of European nations to impart their knowledge to the people of Africa. Named after the town of Kong that dates back to the 12th century, was the great mountain chain across West Africa; the snow-covered mountains were said to be rich in gold and an, “‘insuperable barrier’ hindering commerce between the coast and the interior.” However, as Thomas Basset and Philip Porter express, “what is intriguing about the Kong Mountains is that they never existed except in the imaginations of explorers, mapmakers, and merchants.”⁴⁰ It was Binger, a French officer, who declared the legendary chain was, in fact, a myth. He spent two years (1887-8) exploring the region, during which he disproved, and established his own credentials as a geographical authority in the area. As he approached Kong, he observed, “on the horizon not even a ridge of hills! The Kong mountain chain, which stretched across all the maps, never existed except in the imaginations of a few poorly informed explorers.”⁴¹ The fictitious mountain range suggests the linear trajectory of European cartography—that progress was made in the maps between the 18th and 19th century, that cartography was purely scientific—needs to be put into question.

Indigenous mapmaking aided in European cartography of regions that were unknown to the colonial population. Hugh Clapperton, a Scottish naval explorer of the early nineteenth century, was among the first Europeans in West Africa to compile a firsthand account of what is now northern Nigeria. In 1824 he utilized a map that the sultan of the Sokoto caliphate,

Mohammed Bello, drew in the sand as he informed Clapperton of the region's surroundings (Fig. 9).⁴²

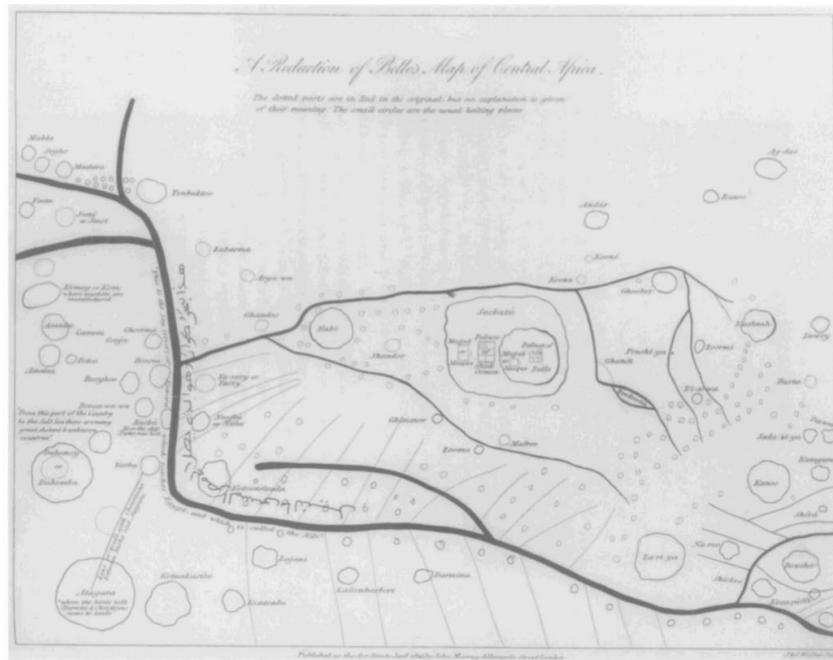


Fig. 9: Sultan Bello's Map of the Niger River's Course (1824)

At the time, the course of the river was still a subject of debate, but Bello's map, which was later transcribed and published, answered certain inquiries regarding the location of the river. There was a theory that the Niger and the Nile River were the same, one that Bello's map seemed to support as he drew the river flowing from the west to the east. However, there is reason to believe, as scholar Thomas Basset suggests, that Bello was "persuaded by Moorish and Arabic merchants to conceal the true course of the river from Clapperton in order to impede European entry into the region."⁴³

It is understandable that the local population would be the perfect resource for European explorers to gauge a better sense of the land and terrain. However, when we think of the maps that were produced at the time, the final projects that come to mind are ones composed by the explorers; not much credit is given to the indigenous members across the continent who clearly

possessed the ability to compose maps of some form or another themselves, and who consciously or unconsciously, lent their geographical knowledge to Europeans for their own projects that were then manufactured on a grand scale.

Following the Berlin Conference in 1885, European powers solidified their hold on the African territories they lay claim to during their “Scramble for Africa.” In 1921, the first comprehensive census was conducted in Southern Nigeria, though there had been smaller ones conducted in individual cities prior. The officer in charge of conducting the census was a man by the name of Percy Amaury Talbot, someone who had long been interested in the field of anthropology. Under the British, it appears the model for the colonies was consistent around the globe as the census of 1921 in Nigeria, “was part of the census of the Empire, which in principle was held every 10 years and included every British colony and dominion, as well as the United Kingdom itself.”⁴⁴ Dmitri van den Bersselaar is a cultural historian who focuses on coastal West Africa, particularly Nigeria and Ghana during the 19th and 20th centuries. He explains that the only issue with a statement like this was that, as in Nigeria and India, the data was incomplete due to a series of technicalities such as alternative names for territories, or when some of the data related to different periods. In his research, van den Bersselaar states one such example for limited data was for young girls of 15 years of age to be classified as adults. In a number of the societies accounted for under the census, that age “did not coincide with the age of marriage (which could be younger), or with any relevant indigenous transition in the individual’s life,” which made it “difficult to determine who were adults and who were not.”⁴⁵ Talbot’s comprehensive report contained sources ranging from history, ethnography, and language of multiple settlements which divulges how detailed the colonial state’s extensive knowledge was

during their time abroad; naturally the data the British, specifically, gathered in Nigeria is only a glimpse of the entirety of information gathered in course of their long reign across the seas.

The study of physical sciences in Africa proved to be just as profitable as its social counterparts. Helen Tilley's book, *Africa as a Living Laboratory*, meticulously argues that science conducted by British officials in the colonies establishes exclusive policies, but also assisted in the liberation process. The title derives from a quote by Lord William Hailey from a publication in 1938 where he wrote, "Africa presents herself as a living laboratory, in which the reward of study may prove to be not merely the satisfaction of an intellectual impulse, but an effective addition to the welfare of a people," attesting to another mode of knowledge production in colonial British Africa in the nineteenth century.⁴⁶

VI Cartography in Africa- The Formation of Colonial States

By the early 1900s, the continent of Africa was divided concisely into European territories. The Belgian Congo, German Southwest Africa, British East Africa, and so on. A handful of these regions, as seen in this map of 1910,⁴⁷ label many of the territories as "protectorates" (Fig. 10). This concept was adopted by modern international law whereby a dependent territory is granted some autonomy and independence while continually recognizing its relationship to a greater sovereign state. The Berlin Conference allowed European colonies to establish protectorates in their African colonies. This map is now shows the new altered political reality post-1885. Colonial states and territories under the British Protectorate, as shown in the map, include Bechuanaland, Northern and Southern Nigeria, and Uganda.



Fig. 10: *Map of Africa, 1910. C. S. Hammond & Co.*

In comparison with the following map by John Bartholomew (1831-1893), there are a few notable features worth discussing. Bartholomew’s map was compiled with knowledge about Africa in the year 1885, however, it was published before the “Scramble for Africa” took place (Fig. 11). By 1910, the last blank spaces of the map had essentially vanished and were claimed by European powers. The imposition of modern day Europe can be seen in the naming of regions and towns in Africa. Within the map there are places such as ‘East London,’ ‘Port Elizabeth,’ a river labeled ‘St. John’ along the coast of South Africa, and a town named ‘Livingstonia’ in what appears to be present day Tanzania. In the wake of the Berlin Conference, colonial territories

were now Anglicized along the coast as before, but more so in the interior of the continent. The region currently known as Zambia was named Rhodesia after Cecil Rhodes a nineteenth century entrepreneur who coined the phrase “From the Cape to Cairo,” for his vision of a continental railway.



Fig. 11: *Historical Map of Africa, John Bartholomew (1885)*

The root of the word ‘Protectorate’ is ‘protect’, which begs the question- Who protected whom? European powers in the early twentieth century, “protected” the people, their investments, and their enterprise. The British, French, German, and Belgians invested their own

possessions, but essentially it meant they viewed the Africa population as if they were children—people who needed the protection of the Europeans. What did they need protection from? The justification behind this was that European powers like the British and French determined that the people across the continent were not fit to rule themselves. Hence, to protect them from other European powers, from each other, and from the world, a new system of governmentality was established. In an attempt to elaborate on this point, I will suggest that the 1910 map links up with a map made in the seventeenth century by Jocado Hondio, an engraver based in Amsterdam (1563- 1611), although they seem to have no relation (Figure 12).

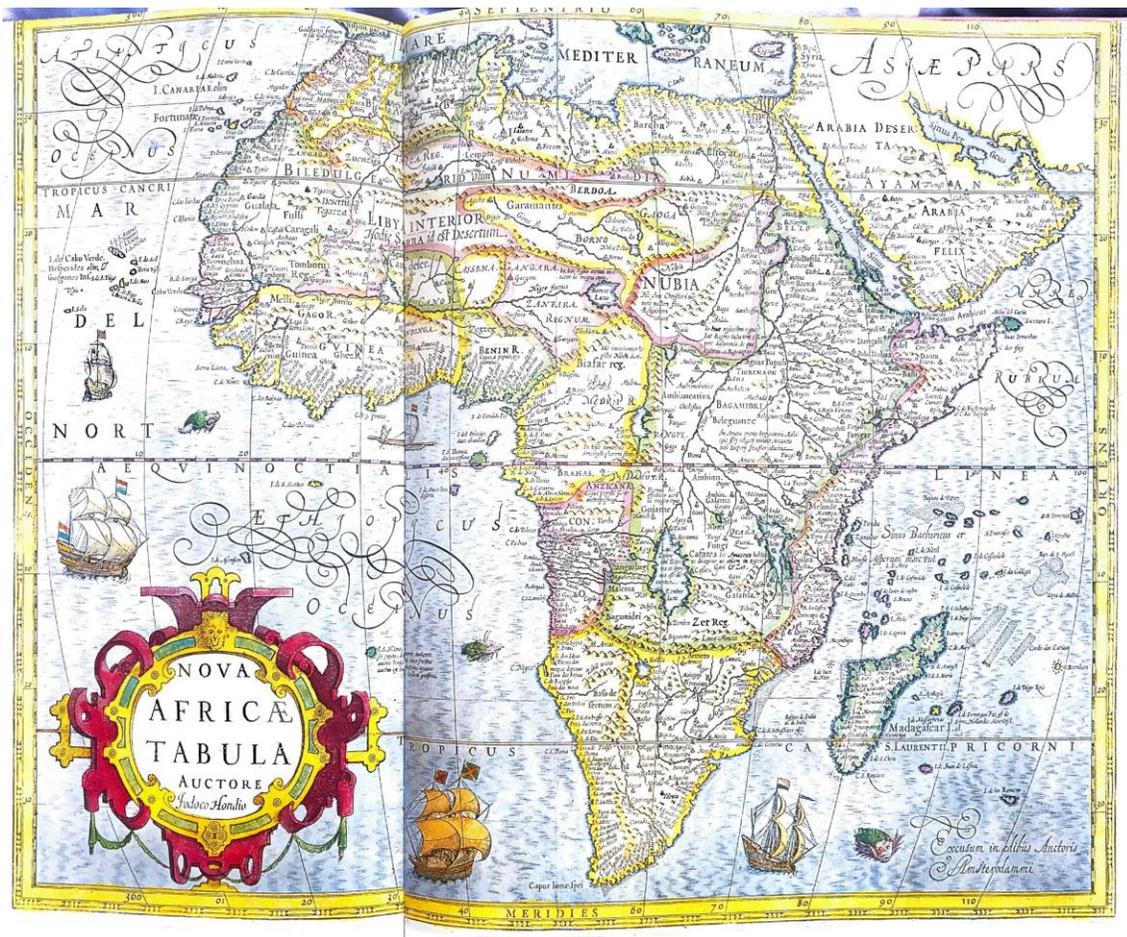


Fig. 12: 'Nova Africae Tabula,' Jocado Hondio (1610)

The origins of the idea of the European protectorates lie in the “Scramble for Africa”; as the Oxford English Dictionary makes clear, “following the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 the term became widely used with reference to intervention by European powers in the affairs of territories whose inhabitants were considered to lack sufficient political organization for them to be recognized as states.”⁴⁸ A similar philosophy is present in here as in the discussion of ‘tabula rasa’ or the ‘blank slate’. In the eyes of the Europeans, the African population were viewed as immature, so much so that they did not have the capability of governing themselves seeing how they had nothing in their history that enabled them to do so. The powerful message that the Europeans conveyed, one that carried on for decades, was the suggestion that prior to the European presence, Africa was merely a giant land mass; it was the idea that the history of Africa starts with the introduction of European exploration. In the wake of independence from Britain, authors like Chinua Achebe explicitly argued that despite the lack of “civilization”, Africa had a rich history, culture, and tradition.⁴⁹ It had an identity. An identity that was slowly stripped away and buried as the colonial project ensued.

Conclusion

European knowledge of the African continent, as this thesis has deliberated, was accumulated through a number of different fields of study, including cartography, the focus of this paper. The maps produced from the 17th century, depict a vastly empty continent with geographical and cultural landmarks attained from firsthand accounts of European exploration. The blank spaces were gradually filled in as new information was attained over the centuries (though as stipulated, some of this information may not have been accurate), simultaneously mirroring the expansion of the European empire, and with it, the imagination of Africa. I began

with a map of Africa from 1955 and as a frame, I provide here a cartoon from 1953 when decolonization was beginning in the continent.



Fig. 13 “Gulliver Africanus,” *Punch Magazine*

The figures seated round the middle of the image seem to allude to the Berlin Conference of 1885 where European powers decide the future of Africa. Africa, in the image, is represented as a large, supine beast. In a sense, that is what the interior was to the European imagination: large, beastly, and unproductive, as the cartoon depicts with the African yawning in the midst of a slumber. The other men surrounding the African are “scrambling” for secure their hold of the man, who embodies the continent as a whole, as if to suggest that they wanted to take control of the continent and what it has to offer before the local population “wakes up” and realizes the true nature of the situation. It may not have been intended, but the coloration and the shape of the image reminds me of a fingerprint. The same manner in which an inked thumb leaves an impression on a piece of paper, one could argue that European exploration and colonization left

an impression upon the continent of Africa that can be showcased in the maps dating back to the 17th century and along the timeline to the formation of colonial states.

It has not been possible within the confines of this thesis to consider several questions that are doubtless very pertinent. As an illustration, I think it would be worthwhile considering the extent to which the conception of Africa as it developed in English, European, and even American cartography in the colonial period was absorbed into the school curriculums of geography in the countries of the West. It is rather interesting, and perhaps a possible point of criticism, that Edward Said, though he delves into vast expanses of colonial knowledge, including travelogues, official reports, histories, colonial records, and even novels, does not at all look at school textbooks and the extent to which colonial knowledge formations were (or were not) replicated in such textbooks. There is a vital consideration, which I admittedly have not taken into full consideration, about the various constituencies for which these maps were prepared. Obviously, as my own thesis suggests, mapmakers drew upon the work of earlier cartographers, but a great deal more needs to be known about the larger public consumption of such maps and the inroads that these maps may have made into carving out a public view of Africa.

¹ No full name is indicated; the map itself is not dated exactly either. Inferences as to the date were made based on the model of the plane in the map, a Douglas DC-7, which was produced from 1953 until 1958. However, the map appears to have been drawn by Bertil Lindblad, a Swedish astronomer (1895-1965), based on the cartographic work of Per Adolf Norstedt (1763-1840), a Swedish merchant and publisher who became the *de facto* state publisher. The map was published by a company in Stockholm, Sweden. See geographicus.com/P/AntiqueMap/Afrika-lindblad-1955 [accessed 27 May 2020]

² Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, (Princeton University Press, 1996), 73.

³ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 1.

⁴ Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), 3.

⁵ One such author was Chinua Achebe, who grew up in British colonial Nigeria. In his novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe sought to, “fill a gap in the literature a child would read that would not be derogatory of Africa.” With the publication of his book, he wanted to restore a sense of self-worth that European took away, and most importantly, that prior to European incursions, there was something such as civilization in Nigeria as well as in every corner of the continent. The most stunning attribute to the novel, for me as a reader, was his use of the English language—a British imposition. Achebe writes a story in English about a culture that is not English, or western. He is seen as the pioneer among African writers to colonize the English language and masterfully demonstrate how certain legacies of colonialism and imperialism can be turned upon themselves to benefit those it originally displaced.

⁶ Stephen Eric Bronner, “Interpreting the Enlightenment: Metaphysics, Critique, and Politics,” In *Reclaiming the Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement*, 1-16, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 3.

⁷ Bronner, 3.

⁸ Jeffery C. Stone, “Imperialism, Colonialism, and Cartography,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 13, No. 1 (1998), 58.

⁹ Raymond Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930,” 8, No. 3 (Aug. 1993), 355.

¹⁰ Bill Freund, *The Making of Contemporary Africa: The Development of African Society since 1800* (London: MacMillan Press LTD, 1984), 6.

¹¹ Freund, 86.

¹² For more information on Saartje Baartman, please see:

Crais, Clifton C., and Scully, Pamela. *Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: A Ghost Story and a Biography*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Qureshi, Sadiya. “Displaying Sara Baartman, the ‘Hottentot Venus.’” *History of Science* 42, no. 2 (June 2004): 233–57.

¹³ Denis Wood, John Fels, *The Nature of Maps: Cartographic Constructions of the Natural World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 189.

¹⁴ Wood and Fels, 190.

¹⁵ John O. E. Clark, *One Hundred (100) Maps: The Science, Art, and Politics of Cartography throughout history*, (New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 2005), 192.

¹⁶ Clark, 192.

¹⁷ J. B. Harley, “Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe,” *Imago Mundi*, 40 (1998), 58.

¹⁸ Harley, 59.

¹⁹ Harley, 60.

²⁰ William Sherman, “Putting the British Seas on the Map: John Dee’s Imperial Cartography,” *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization*, 35 no. 3-4 (1998), 8.

²¹ Richard L. Betz, *The Mapping of Africa: A Cartobibliography of Printed Maps of the African Continent to 1700*, (t Goy-Houten: Hes & de Graaf, 2007), 128.

²² *Oxford English Dictionary*

²³ Johnathan Swift, *On Poetry: A Rapsody* (1733).

²⁴ According to the antiquarian map-dealer Barry Lawrence Ruderman, where a copy of this comparatively rare map is available for sale, “the text annotations describe the explorations of Pedro Paez and Manuel de Almeida, along with the Nile River as it was known in ancient times. While the Blue Nile is shown correctly as flowing from Lake Tana, the White Nile is not shown

at all, and the Niger River appears straight, running east to west.” See:
<https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/22227/afrique-selon-les-relations-les-plus-nouvelles-dressees-et-de-nolin> [accessed 10 June 2020]

²⁵ Thomas J. Bassett and Philip W. Porter, “‘From the Best Authorities’: The Mountains of Kong in the Cartography of West Africa, *The Journal of African History* 32, No. 3 (1991), 367.

²⁶ Even though there is a 1/10th chance of someone legally contesting one’s claim to something, the basic idea still stands that once someone has possession of something, it is theirs. This expression sheds light upon the controversial issue of stolen art. African art, in particular, was looted during the colonial era and taken possession of by the Europeans and were placed in museums. When African countries became decolonized and people started becoming aware of what had actually happened to their culture and heritage, they demanded to have their art returned. Over the recent years as few possessions have been returned, but the majority of African art is outside of Africa, partly because of the whole question of possession.

²⁷ Bassett and Porter, 370.

²⁸ Ken MacMillan, “Sovereignty ‘More Plainly Described’: Early English Maps of North America, 1580–1625.” *Journal of British Studies* 42, no. Vol. 42, No. 4 (October 2003), 415–420, quoted in Stacy Dugan Montebello, “Maps as Propaganda in the Age of Exploration,” Norman Rockwell Museum.

²⁹ John O. E. Clark, *One Hundred (100) Maps: The Science, Art, and Politics of Cartography throughout history*, (New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 2005), 202.

³⁰ Freund, 89.

³¹ William B. Cohen, “Malaria and French Imperialism,” *The Journal of African History* 24, no. 1 (1983): 23.

³² Sheldon Watts, “Yellow Fever Immunities in West Africa and the Americas in the Age of Slavery and Beyond: A Reappraisal,” *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 4 (2001), 955.

³³ Jeremy Greene, Marguerite Thorp Basilico, Heidi Kim, and Paul Farmer, “Colonial Medicine and Its Legacies,” In *Reimagining Global Health: An Introduction*, by Farmer Paul, Kim Jim Yong, Kleinman Arthur, and Basilico Matthew, 37.

³⁴ Clements R. Markham, *Major James Rennell, F.R.S., and the Rise of Modern English Geography* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1895), 122.

³⁵ Markham, 65.

³⁶ D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic Old Mali*, 1965.

³⁷ Thomas J. Basset, “Cartography and Empire Building in Nineteenth-Century West Africa,” *Geographical Review* 84, no. 3 (July 1994), 319.

³⁸ Basset references ‘Louis G. Binger, Le capitaine L.-G. Binger, “Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée par Kong,” *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris, 1889) (338-9).’

³⁹ Basset quoting Regnault de Lannoy de Bissy (Ministère de la Guerre 1882, notice 24:2), 318.

⁴⁰ Bassett Porter, 367.

⁴¹ Basset and Porter quoting ‘Louis G. Binger, Le capitaine L.-G. Binger, “Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée par Kong,” *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris, 1889) (338-9),’ 395.

⁴² Thomas J. Basset, “Indigenous Mapmaking in Intertropical Africa,” Vol. 2 Book 3 of *Cartography in the Traditional African, American, Arctic, Australian, and Pacific Societies*, eds., David Woodward and G. Malcolm Lewis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 34.

⁴³ Basset, “Indigenous Mapmaking,” 35.

⁴⁴ Dmitri van den Bersselaar, "Establishing the Facts: P. A. Talbot and the 1921 Census of Nigeria," *History in Africa* 31 (2004), 72.

⁴⁵ Bersselaar, "Establishing the Facts," 73.

⁴⁶ Ruth J. Prince, "Science, Knowledge, and Colonial rule in Africa," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 43 (2012), 821.

⁴⁷ I have not able to establish the name of the mapmaker, but the company that produced it, C. S. Hammond & Co., specialized in maps and they may have assigned a house mapmaker to the map.

⁴⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary*.

⁴⁹ A famous piece of mythology, based on historical events, is that of *Sundiata*, an epic of old Mali. D. T. Niane's version of the story tracks the odyssey (to use the Western term) of Sundiata who will become the king of Mali during the 13th century. As we learn more about Sundiata, and the people he meets, we are also educated about the traditions that shape the identity and history of the people of Mali. A specific example is that of the oral tradition. As with the Aborigines of Australia mentioned earlier in the paper, written records didn't exist. Instead, griots, or storytellers, narrated and recited the stories and histories of every family in the community. Generations of knowledge was learned and passed down from one student to the next in this manner, something that European explorers and colonialists never understood.

Appendix

Figure 1: 'Afrika I Bilder.' B. Lindblad (c. 1955)

Source: <https://www.geographicus.com/P/AntiqueMap/afrika-lindblad-1955>

Figure 2: 'Carte de l'Australie.' Adrien Hubert Brué, (1826)

Source: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g8960.ct000508/?r=0.026,0.123,0.785,0.399,0>

Figure 3: 'Nova Et Accurata Totius Africae Tabula.' Nicolaas Visscher II (1682-85).

Source: Richard L. Betz, *The Mapping of Africa: A Cartobibliography of Printed Maps of the African Continent to 1700*.

Figure 4: 'Map of Africa.' Vincenzo Maria Coronelli (1690)

Source: <https://fineartamerica.com/featured/antique-maps-of-the-world-map-of-africa-vincenzo-coronelli-c-1690-r-muirhead-art.html>

Figure 5: Jean Baptiste Nolin and Vincenzo Coronelli (1689)

Source: https://alteagallery.com/view_product.php?prod_id=PROD100002452

Figure 6: 'Afrique Occidentale.' Ambroise Tardieu (1804).

Collection: Avni Lal.

Figure 7: Detail from map, "Afrique Occidentale." Map engraved by Ambroise Tardieu (1804). Collection: Avni Lal.

Figure 8: The Mountains of Kong first shown in James Rennell's 'A Map Shewing the Progress of Discovery & Improvement in the Geography of North Africa,' (1798).

Source: Thomas J. Bassett and Philip W. Porter, "'From the Best Authorities': The Mountains of Kong in the Cartography of West Africa."

Figure 9: Sultan Bello's Map of the Niger River's Course (1824)

Source: Thomas J. Basset, "Indigenous Mapmaking in Intertropical Africa".

Figure 10: *Map of Africa*, 1910. C. S. Hammond & Co.

Source: https://www.gifex.com/detail-en/2010-01-05-11629/Africa_in_1910.html

Figure 11: *Historical Map of Africa*, John Bartholomew (1885).

Source: <https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/africa-historical-map-1885.htm>

Figure 12: 'Nova Africae Tabula.' Jocado Hondio (1610)

Source: <https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/60929/nova-africae-tabula-auctore-jodoco-hondio-hondius>

Figure 13: "Gulliver Africanus." Cartoons about Africa, Colonialism, and Imperialism. Punch Magazine.

Source: <https://punch.photoshelter.com/gallery-image/Imperialism-and-Colonialism-Cartoons/G0000vKN2v8ZjQ.g/I0000lcYmufG5txs>

Bibliography

Achebe, Chinua, and C. W. Bacon. *Things Fall Apart*. 1958.

Basset, Thomas J. "Cartography and Empire Building in Nineteenth-Century West Africa." *Geographical Review*, 84, no. 3 (July 1994). 316-335.

Basset, Thomas J. "Indigenous Mapmaking in Intertropical Africa." Vol. 2 Book 3 of *Cartography in the Traditional African, American, Arctic, Australian, and Pacific Societies*, eds., David Woodward and G. Malcolm Lewis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. 24-48.

Bassett, Thomas J. and Philip W. Porter, "'From the Best Authorities': The Mountains of Kong in the Cartography of West Africa," *The Journal of African History* 32, No. 3 (1991), 367-413.

Beachey, R. W. "The East African Ivory Trade in the Nineteenth Century." *The Journal of African History* 8, no. 2 (1967): 269-90. Accessed May 27, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/179483.
Branch, Jordan. *The Cartographic State: Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty*. Cambridge University Press. 2014.

Berselaar, Dmitri van den. "Establishing the Facts: P. A. Talbot and the 1921 Census of Nigeria." *History in Africa* 31 (2004), 69-102.

Betz, Richard L. *The Mapping of Africa: A Cartobibliography of Printed Maps of the African Continent to 1700*. 't Goy-Houten: Hes & de Graaf, 2007.

Bronner, Stephen Eric. "Interpreting the Enlightenment: Metaphysics, Critique, and Politics." In *Reclaiming the Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement*, 1-16. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Clark, John O. E. *One Hundred (100) Maps: The Science, Art and Politics of Cartography throughout History*. New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 2005.

Cohen, William B. "Malaria and French Imperialism." *The Journal of African History* 24, no. 1 (1983): 23-36.

Cohn, Bernard. *Colonialism and its Form of Knowledge*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966.

Conrad, Joseph, and D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke. *Heart of Darkness*. Peterborough, Ont: Broadview. 1999.

Corbey, Raymond. "Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930." *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Aug. 1993), 338-369.

Dumett, Raymond. "The Rubber Trade of the Gold Coast and Asante in the Nineteenth Century: African Innovation and Market Responsiveness." *The Journal of African History* 12, no. 1 (1971): 79-101.

Freund, Bill. *The Making of Contemporary Africa: The Development of African Society since 1800*. London: MacMillan Press LTD, 1984.

Greene, Jeremy, Marguerite Thorp Basilico, Heidi Kim, and Paul Farmer. "Colonial Medicine and Its Legacies." In *Reimagining Global Health: An Introduction*, by Farmer Paul, Kim Jim Yong, Kleinman Arthur, and Basilico Matthew, 33-73. University of California Press, 2013.

Harley, J. B. "Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe." *Imago Mundi*, 40 (1998). 57-76.

Harms, Robert. "The End of Red Rubber: A Reassessment." *The Journal of African History* 16, no. 1 (1975): 73-88.

MacMillan, Ken. "Sovereignty 'More Plainly Described': Early English Maps of North America, 1580–1625." *Journal of British Studies* 42, No. 4 (October 2003), 415-420, quoted in Stacy Dugan Montebello, "Maps as Propaganda in the Age of Exploration," Norman Rockwell Museum.

Mamdani, Mahmood. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Markham, Clements R. *Major James Rennell, F.R.S., and the Rise of Modern English Geography* London: Cassell and Company LTD, 1895.

Mungo Park, *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa*.
<https://archive.org/details/travelsofmungopa00parkiala/page/xxii/mode/2up>

Niane, D. T. *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*. Longman Group Ltd. (English Version). 1965.

Oxford English Dictionary

Prince, Ruth J. "Science, Knowledge, and Colonial rule in Africa." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 43 (2012), 821-824.

Rennell, James. (chapter) *Proceedings of the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa*
<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/102153#/details> (accessed 30 March 2020).

Röhl, Tobias and Regine Herbrich. "Mapping the Imaginary: Maps in Fantasy Role-Playing Games." First publ. In: *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* 9, no. 3 (2008).

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

Stone, Jeffery C. "Imperialism, Colonialism, and Cartography." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 13, No. 1 (1998), 57-64.

Swift, Johnathan. "On Poetry: A Rhapsody." 1733.

Watts, Sheldon. "Yellow Fever Immunities in West Africa and the Americas in the Age of Slavery and Beyond: A Reappraisal." *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 4 (2001): 955-67.

Wood, Denis and John Fels. *The Nature of Maps: Cartographic Constructions of the Natural World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. (It is an excerpt from the book that was included in the journal *Cartographica*, 43, issue 3, 189-202.