

THE CAMBRIDGE
HISTORY OF
AFRICA



VOLUME 6
c. 1870 – *c.* 1905

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY
OF AFRICA

General Editors: J. D. FAGE and ROLAND OLIVER

Volume 6
from 1870 to 1905

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF AFRICA

- 1 From the earliest Times to c. 500 B.C.**
edited by J. Desmond Clark
- 2 From c. 500 B.C. to A.D. 1050**
edited by J. D. Fage
- 3 From c. 1050 to c. 1600**
edited by Roland Oliver
- 4 From c. 1600 to c. 1790**
edited by Richard Gray
- 5 From c. 1790 to c. 1870**
edited by John E. Flint
- 6 From 1870 to 1905**
edited by Roland Oliver and G. N. Sanderson
- 7 From 1905 to 1940**
edited by A. D. Roberts
- 8 From c. 1940 to c. 1975**
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Volume 6
from 1870 to 1905

edited by
ROLAND OLIVER
and
G. N. SANDERSON



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PREFACE

In the English-speaking world, the Cambridge histories have since the beginning of the century set the pattern for multi-volume works of history, with chapters written by experts on a particular topic, and unified by the guiding hand of volume editors of senior standing. *The Cambridge Modern History*, planned by Lord Acton, appeared in sixteen volumes between 1902 and 1912. It was followed by *The Cambridge Ancient History*, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, and Cambridge Histories of India, of Poland, and of the British Empire. The original *Modern History* has now been replaced by *The New Cambridge Modern History* in fourteen volumes, and *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* is now complete. Other Cambridge Histories recently undertaken include a history of Islam, of Arabic literature, of the Bible treated as a central document of and influence on Western civilisation, and of Iran, China and Latin America.

It was during the later 1950s that the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press first began to explore the possibility of embarking on a Cambridge History of Africa. But they were then advised that the time was not yet ripe. The serious appraisal of the past of Africa by historians and archaeologists had hardly been undertaken before 1948, the year when universities first began to appear in increasing numbers in the vast reach of the African continent south of the Sahara and north of the Limpopo, and the time too when universities outside Africa first began to take some notice of its history. It was impressed upon the Syndics that the most urgent need of such a young, but also very rapidly advancing branch of historical studies, was a journal of international standing through which the results of ongoing research might be disseminated. In 1960, therefore, the Cambridge University Press launched *The Journal of African History*, which gradually demonstrated the amount of work being undertaken to establish the past

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of Africa as an integrated whole rather than – as it had usually been viewed before – as the story of a series of incursions into the continent by peoples coming from outside, from the Mediterranean basin, the Near East or western Europe. This movement will of course continue and develop further, but the increasing facilities available for its publication soon began to demonstrate a need to assess both what had been done, and what still needed to be done, in the light of some general historical perspective for the continent.

The Syndics therefore returned to their original charge, and in 1966 the founding editors of *The Journal of African History* accepted a commission to become the general editors of a *Cambridge History of Africa*. They found it a daunting task to draw up a plan for a co-operative work covering a history which was in active process of exploration by scholars of many nations, scattered over a fair part of the globe, and of many disciplines – linguists, anthropologists, geographers and botanists, for example, as well as historians and archaeologists.

It was thought that the greatest problems were likely to arise with the earliest and latest periods: the earliest, because so much would depend on the results of long-term archaeological investigation, and the latest, because of the rapid changes in historical perspective that were occurring as a consequence of the ending of colonial rule in Africa. Therefore when, in 1967, the general editors presented their scheme to the Press and notes were prepared for contributors, only four volumes – covering the periods 500 B.C. to A.D. 1050, A.D. 1050 to 1600, 1600–1790, and 1790–1870 – had been planned in any detail, and these were published as volumes 2–5 of the *History* between 1975 and 1978.

So far as the prehistoric period was concerned, the general editors were clear from the outset that the proper course was to entrust the planning as well as the actual editing of what was necessary entirely to a scholar who was fully experienced in the archaeology of the African continent. In due course, in 1982, Volume 1, 'From the earliest times to c. 500 B.C.', appeared under the distinguished editorship of Professor J. Desmond Clark. As for the colonial period, it was evident by the early 1970s that this was being rapidly brought to its close, so that it became possible to plan to complete the *History* in three further volumes. The first, Volume 6, is designed to cover the European partition of the

continent, and the setting up of the colonial structures between c. 1870 and c. 1905; the second, Volume 7, is devoted to the 'classical' colonial period running from c. 1905 to c. 1940; while the focus of the third, Volume 8, is on the period of rapid change which led from about the time of the Second World War to the ending of formal control from Europe with the dramatic final collapse of the Portuguese empire in 1975.

When they started their work, the general editors quickly came to the conclusion that the most practical plan for completing the *History* within a reasonable period of time was likely to be the simplest and most straightforward. Each volume was therefore entrusted to a volume editor who, in addition to having made a substantial contribution to the understanding of the period in question, was someone with whom the general editors were in close touch. Within a volume, the aim was to keep the number of contributors to a minimum. Each of them was asked to essay a broad survey of a particular area or theme with which he was familiar for the whole of the period covered by the volume. In this survey, his purpose should be to take account not only of all relevant research done, or still in progress, but also of the gaps in knowledge. These he should try to fill by new thinking of his own, whether based on new work on the available sources or on interpolations from congruent research.

It should be remembered that this basic plan was devised nearly twenty years ago, when little or no research had been done on many important topics, and before many of today's younger scholars – not least those who now fill posts in the departments of history and archaeology in the universities and research institutes in Africa itself – had made their own deep penetrations into such areas of ignorance. Two things follow from this. If the general editors had drawn up their plan in the 1970s rather than the 1960s, the shape might well have been very different, perhaps with a larger number of more specialised, shorter chapters, each centred on a smaller area, period or theme, to the understanding of which the contributor would have made his own individual contribution. To some extent, indeed, it has been possible to adjust the shape of the last three volumes in this direction. Secondly, the sheer volume of new research that has been published since many contributors accepted their commissions has often led them to undertake very substantial revisions in their

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work as it progressed from draft to draft, thus protracting the length of time originally envisaged for the preparation of these volumes.

However, histories are meant to be read, and not to be commented on and analysed by their general editors, and we therefore present to the reader this further volume of our enterprise.

September 1984

J. D. FAGE
ROLAND OLIVER

INTRODUCTION

This volume deals with a period of about thirty-five years, from about 1870 till about 1905. This was, of course, the period which saw, first, the scramble by European powers and interests to stake out territorial claims in Africa, next, the paper partition of the continent by those powers, and finally the colonial conquest and occupation. In 1870, the only large areas to have suffered such inroads lay either to the north of the Sahara or else to the south of the Limpopo. By 1905, Ethiopia and Morocco were the only truly independent African states, and the innumerable petty polities of pre-colonial Africa, as well as a few larger ones, had been consolidated into the forty-odd colonies and protectorates which were destined to become, with only a few subsequent changes, the sovereign states of modern, post-colonial Africa.

Yet, to characterise the period wholly in this way, is to see it too much through European eyes. As the succeeding chapters show, African history throughout this period pursued paths still largely separate from those of the European colonisers. The treaty-making expeditions of a Binger or a Brazza, of a Johnston or a Lugard, of a Cardoso or a Serpa Pinto, were scarcely to be distinguished by any African observer from the trading caravans of the Dyula or the Hausa, of the Sudanese *jallāba* or the Swahili-Arabs, of the Mozambican Chikunda or the Angolan pombeiros. The diplomatic partition of the continent passed almost unnoticed by the Africans whose territory was at issue. The colonial conquest and occupation was experienced by them as a piecemeal phenomenon, which affected some of those living near the coasts as early as the 1870s and 1880s, but which reached most of the interior peoples only during the 1890s and the 1900s. Even by the end of the period, only a small minority of Africans had seen a white face or had any idea that their countries were subject to foreign rule.

Seen from the African end, the European infiltration and

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conquest was, as Dr Lonsdale makes clear in the concluding chapter, a process and not an event. Within the confines of any particular colonial territory, it lasted a full generation, in the course of which African power progressively diminished while European power correspondingly increased. At the start of the process, European agents travelled singly or in pairs, accompanied by two or three score of lightly armed caravan porters, very much in the style of the explorers and missionaries who had preceded them. The porters carried the usual trade goods, which were used to buy food and protection, and also to aid the negotiation of what were probably understood by the Africans as vague alliances, somewhat akin to blood brotherhood, which involved the gift of flags and the signing of crosses on pieces of paper. It was normal for several years to elapse between the execution of such treaties and the appearance of any colonial official appointed to carry things a stage further. Meanwhile the political and economic life of the African peoples continued on its accustomed way.

But this did not mean that nothing happened. The opening chapter by Mr Atmore, while in a sense only recapitulating the lessons of earlier volumes, does provide a massive summary of the extent to which the commercial opening up of Africa had already been carried out by Africans before the beginning of the colonial period. He concludes that by 1870 there was hardly a corner of the continent which was unfamiliar with some of the manufactured goods of Europe and Asia. Manchester cottons crossed the Sahara on camelback. The small arms of Birmingham and Liège were paddled up the Niger and the Congo in dug-out canoes. Portuguese brandy and Brazilian tobacco were carried on human heads from Luanda and Benguela to the Luba and Lunda states situated at the very centre of the sub-continent. The calicos of Gujerat and New England travelled up the East African caravan routes from Zanzibar. The cowries of the Maldives, which in medieval times had reached West Africa via the Red Sea and Cairo, were now carried round the Cape in European shipping, and moved inland on a scale which caused serious inflation all the way from Kano to Timbuktu. The main limitation on this kind of commerce was the cost of transport. The imports were expensive, and the exports which paid for them had likewise to be luxury items, valuable enough to justify human or animal portage – gold and copper, ivory, palm-oil, coffee, copra, ostrich

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feathers and rare skins, and of course the continuing traffic in slaves, no longer significant in the intercontinental trade, but still a vital lubricant of most of the internal long-distance commerce of Africa. In the long run, a breakthrough into bulk trading of primary produce against cheap manufactured goods could only come through the development of mechanical transport. In the short term, the indigenous caravan trade continued to grow through most of the period dealt with here. The early years of colonial rule merely added somewhat to the volume of goods that had to be carried long distances by men and beasts.

Besides the economic opening up of Africa by the extension of the traditional caravan trade, there was also detectable a parallel growth of political paramountcies, which continued through most of the period under review, and which constituted an important part of the context in which European colonisation took place. The most obvious examples are the conquests of Menelik, undertaken first as king of Shoa and later as emperor, which more than doubled the territory of Christian Ethiopia. In this case, the systematic rearmament of the Ethiopian forces with western weapons was effective enough to bring about the defeat of the Italians in 1896 and to secure the freedom of the country from further European aggression until 1935. Other instances of African imperialism were shorter lived, but at least as significant while they lasted. There was Khedive Ismā'il's attempt to found a North-East African empire extending to the Great Lakes and the Indian Ocean, and the simultaneous attempt of Sultan Bargash to extend the dominions of Zanzibar from the Indian Ocean coast into the East African interior. More typical, however, were the loose, military overlordships created by the magnates of the caravan trade to safeguard the sources of their wealth. Especially where traditional polities were small and weak, traders defended themselves by travelling with armed escorts and establishing fortified depots for their goods. From there, it was a short step to taking hostages or seizing cattle in order to assure the supply of ivory, slaves or rubber at attractive prices, and this in turn often led on to the trader settling down as ruler, taking tribute from the indigenous population by military means. Such were the origins, to name but a few, of Msiri's empire in Katanga, of Tippu Tip's between the Lualaba and the Lomami, of al-Zubayr's on the Bahr al-Ghazal, of Rabah's in Kanem, of Samory's on the upper

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Niger. All these hegemonies reached the peak of their power within our period, and together they probably affected the lives of more people than the nascent colonial states which were eventually to supersede them. Some of these hegemonies were, like the Mahdist state in the Sudan and the movement of Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Hasan in Somalia, the direct result of militant Islamic protest against alien and infidel encroachment. Such hegemonies could ultimately be destroyed by European armed force; but not the ideas and attitudes that had generated them. Mahdism and other militant manifestations of Islam often survived colonial conquest as a major influence upon the political behaviour of Muslim populations. The fear that this survival might once more generate major resistance, perhaps on a scale uncontrollable by local power-resources, was often a real constraint upon the policy of early colonial administrations, whose ‘internal security’ was almost always precarious.

Militantly Islamic hegemonies were by no means the only forces emanating from the world of Islam which took part in the ‘alternative’, internal, scramble for Africa. Moreover, there can be no doubt that in the period treated in this volume Islamic religious propaganda, and Islamic knowledge of the wider world, were vastly more significant than the incipient Christian rivalry. In the northern third of Africa the cultural predominance of Islam of course survived without difficulty. Here Islamic preponderance had long been established, sometimes for many centuries; and political prudence often constrained colonial governments to discourage or even prohibit the deployment of the full panoply of missionary education even in the later colonial period. In the middle third of Africa, however, the situation was very different, and had the forces of the alternative scramble been allowed even a little more time to establish themselves, the cultural predominance of Islam might today extend to the Zambezi and the Cunene rather than to the Bahr al-Ghazal and the Niger. It was not only where Muslims seized political power that Islamic influences spread. Where indigenous political systems were strong and centralised enough to afford effective protection to strangers, as in Yorubaland, or Buganda, or among the Yao principalities of the upper Rovuma, Muslim traders and clerics could re-enact the processes of infiltration from above familiar in the Sudanic belt of Africa since medieval times. Where societies were small and weak, like

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those of eastern Zaïre, the porters and camp followers of the long-distance traders, recruited often from the dregs of society, became the nucleus of a Muslim community which would long outlast the temporal overthrow of the Swahili-Arab masters by a Dhanis or a Chaltin.

Christianity, though still far out-distanced by Islam, was nevertheless another factor in the history of the period, which needs to be distinguished from the secular outreach of the competing European nations. In several key areas of tropical Africa, to the west, the east and the south, Christian missionary propaganda had anything from twenty to fifty years' start of the forces of imperial expansion. Pioneering outposts apart, however, most of the early penetration of the interior regions occurred during the 1870s and the 1880s, and at this stage missionaries from overseas were almost invariably accompanied, if not indeed preceded, by African converts, auxiliaries or independent evangelists from the neighbourhood of the earliest outposts. The spread of the formal cult, inevitably, was slow, depending as it did on long years of language study, on the translation of scripture and liturgy, and on the confrontation of radically different moral and social traditions. Within our period baptised Christians remained few, but what Livingstone called 'the wide sowing of the good seed' was in itself a revolutionary event, particularly in areas little affected by Islam. Even the first, superficial talk of Christianity turned minds and imaginations outward, beyond the immediate circle of small communities, and created an attitude of expectancy and questioning which prepared the way for later change. When colonial governments began to appear on the scene, societies with even the faintest degree of Christian contact were better able to pursue the politics of survival than those which had none. A later generation of colonial Africans would be brought up on the French revolution or the constitutional history of the Tudors and Stuarts. For the last generation of politically independent African tribal societies, it was perhaps more apposite to have heard the story of Jesus, with its background of imperial relationships between the Romans and the Jews.

At the time of its colonisation by Europe, therefore, Africa was, to a greater extent than ever before in its history, opening itself to the outside world as well as being forced open by that world. Its myriad societies were also taking some steps, however

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inadequate, to improve their own defences. Firearms, long familiar on the Guinea coast and along the sub-Saharan savanna fringe, were now to be found almost everywhere. In most of the larger polities at least the royal bodyguards were so armed. Of course, the weapons traded to Africa were usually out-of-date ones that had been replaced in European armies – usually, but by no means always. From about 1890 Menelik was able to refuse all but the latest models; and from about 1900 Ethiopia became a centre for the distribution of up-to-date firearms through much of north-eastern Africa. Again, there were no machine-guns in any African armoury. But until about 1890, when the Maxim gun came on to the market, there was no effective automatic weapon in any European armoury either. Of course, in any conflict, forces with modern equipment had the advantage of African armies many times their number. But the fact is that the military resources of colonial governments during the first twenty years of their existence were almost ridiculously inadequate also. Johnston was sent to ‘rule’ Nyasaland and North-Eastern Rhodesia in 1891 with a force of seventy Sikh soldiers seconded from a Punjab regiment and commanded by a single British subaltern. Lugard, as the first British high commissioner for Northern Nigeria in 1898, had two thousand African troops of the West Africa Frontier Force, led by less than a score of British officers and NCOs, with which to establish his authority over the Fulani empires of Sokoto and Gwandu, as well as over a host of independent ethnic societies. Clearly, in circumstances like these, no conceivable degree of superiority in weapons and training could enable a so-called ‘government’ to lay down the law to its subjects. With skilful management, it might just be able to protect its headquarters and its main line of communications with the outside world. But any wider operations to meet the inevitable challenges to its authority could only be undertaken on the basis of alliances formed with some of its ‘subjects’ against some others. Levies drawn from ‘friendly tribes’ were a regular feature of early colonial warfare, and they were rewarded with booty seized under the eyes of the colonial authority. In any balanced view of the period, therefore, an embryo colonial government was but one of many forces jostling for power in a given region. During their early years several of them came to the very brink of disaster and had to be rescued by special expeditionary forces, like those sent to Madagascar in 1894, to Asante in 1896 and 1900, to Uganda in

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1897, to German East Africa in 1888 and 1905, to German South West Africa in 1904. In the end, after twenty years of training and experience, and following the development of rapid communications by road and rail, colonial forces became more adequate to their task; but that situation was not reached in many parts of tropical Africa during the period treated here. And meanwhile the military potential of the African subjects, whether friendly or hostile, remained of great importance.

Essentially, then, early colonial governments in Africa were *weak* governments, and they were so because the European powers which controlled them were not sufficiently interested in their new possessions to subsidise stronger governments. During the period under review, the colonial powers were mainly concerned in reserving tropical African territories for possible development in the future. Meanwhile, all that mattered was that they should be as nearly as possible financially self-supporting, while maintaining enough internal security to command the respect of neighbours and rivals. The functions of colonial governments were thus seen as very limited. Ideally, the process involved the creation of a viable nucleus, either on the coast or, in the case of an inland territory, in some strategically central area. The populations of the nuclear area were seen as allies. They paid tax at an earlier stage than others, but they enjoyed the privileges of the trusted intermediary. All innovations, like roads and schools, reached them first, and the colonial government by taking its tithe of their prosperity, was gradually able to extend the administered area outwards until it reached the frontiers. In practice, things seldom worked out quite so conveniently. Those living beyond the pale did not always sit down quietly to await their incorporation. They raided caravans, or they cut down telegraph wires to turn them into bangles and necklaces, or they crossed the borders and threatened neighbouring colonial governments, and so they had to be 'dealt with' forcibly and out of due turn, sometimes by the despatch of a special, and very expensive, expeditionary force which put the colonial revenues quite out of kilter. Nevertheless, large areas in most African colonies did continue to administer themselves throughout our period with little more than an occasional glimpse of the new masters. Early colonial governments divided, but it can hardly be said that they ruled.

It was only, in fact, at the northern and southern extremities

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of the continent that a different kind of colonialism, initiated much earlier, and centring around the perceived interests of substantial bodies of European migrants, had, at least by the end of our period, established full governmental control over the lives of the indigenous Africans. In the case of Algeria, the decisive transition from military rule of most of the native population to civil administration conducted in the interests of the French settlers, occurred with the transfer of soldiers to the metropolis during the Franco-Prussian war. It continued with the great land seizures following the suppression of the al-Muqrānī rebellion. In southern Africa, although the history of white settlement was so much longer, the vital transition from a situation of wary coexistence between various European and African polities to one of comprehensive conquest, incorporation and the authoritarian rule of black societies by whites, was almost contemporary with that in Algeria. The precipitating factor in this case was mineral development, which led to a rapid reinforcement of the white population, to a surging demand for black labour in the industrial areas, to a rapid extension of the railway system and to an agricultural revolution stimulated by the food requirements of the new towns. All this made for the formation of a southern African colonial system which, as we now know, was to prove uniquely resilient by comparison with the rest of the continent. But that uniqueness was by no means so apparent to contemporaries, for whom developments in southern Africa could just as well have been a portent of what was to happen elsewhere. The mineral resources of southern Africa were, after all, not unique: a comparable situation existed round the Copperbelt. And, minerals apart, the southern African pattern of colonialism was widely assumed to be reproducible wherever Europeans were prepared to commit themselves to migration and settlement. The great nineteenth-century migrations to North America and Australasia were still fresh in the European memory. If, as Cecil Rhodes and so many others imagined, that trend were to continue into the twentieth century, then all Africa, and particularly all Africa south of the equator, might prove to be the next major destination. That it did not in the event prove to be so, was in large measure due to the response of the tropical African peoples to the alternative, much weaker style of colonialism established in their midst.

Enough has been said to show that much of the significance

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of the period 1870–1905 in African history arises from local situations. Hence, most of the volume is composed of regionally rather than thematically oriented chapters. It should perhaps be explained that the volume was planned, and the contributors chosen, by Professor Sanderson, who was the original volume editor. It is well known that collaborative works are subject to the hazard that the speed of production cannot be faster than that of the slowest contributor. When contributors are chosen from the leading figures in the field, it is almost inevitable that death, promotion or competing literary obligations will remove or delay some of them at an embarrassingly late stage in the programme. Often, it is the volume editor who has to step into the breach. On this occasion, however, it was the volume editor himself who found himself too burdened by other duties both to maintain the momentum of production among his colleagues and to write the two important chapters which stood against his name. It was in these circumstances that one of the general editors, Professor Oliver, was asked in 1982 to take over the remaining editorial responsibilities. He did so in the knowledge that progress on the volume had already been overtaken by that on volumes 7 and 8 which had been intended to follow it, and that, in the interests of completing the series within a reasonable time, some unevenness of presentation and coverage would have to be accepted. Professor Deschamps, for example, had shortly before his death written a chapter on Madagascar which was rather more concerned with the history of colonial administration than most other chapters. Professor Person likewise became ill and died before his contribution was quite complete. It will be noticed that the French contributors have proved much readier than their English colleagues to observe the editorial request to keep footnote references to a minimum. Ideally, of course, a volume editor should have all the draft contributions on his desk together, and in time for co-ordinating changes to be made: in practice, it is doubtful whether any editor of a collaborative work has ever enjoyed such a privilege. The production line of a great university press may be more accommodating than some others, but in the end there comes a moment when it, too, must be served.

CHAPTER 1

AFRICA ON THE EVE OF PARTITION

A. NORTH OF THE EQUATOR

It has become a truism of historical writing to conceive of Africa in the course of the nineteenth century as becoming increasingly a part of, and a product of, the expansion of Europe, which, beginning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had integrated ever larger areas of the world into a single economic system. In attempting an overview of the state of the continent on the eve of partition – roughly over the decade of the 1870s – a large number of questions arise from a consideration of this truism. To what extent was Africa already an adjunct of an economic system dominated by Europe? What was the relationship between Africa and this European system – was it one of an equal or an unequal exchange of commodities? To what extent was Africa dependent economically, if not yet politically? What social and ideological changes were beginning to follow from this dependency? Was Africa a fruit ripe for plucking in the 1870s, was there a certain inevitability about the forthcoming imperialist carve-up, or was partition an extraneous historical occurrence forced upon a continent which had within it other options for coping with the future?

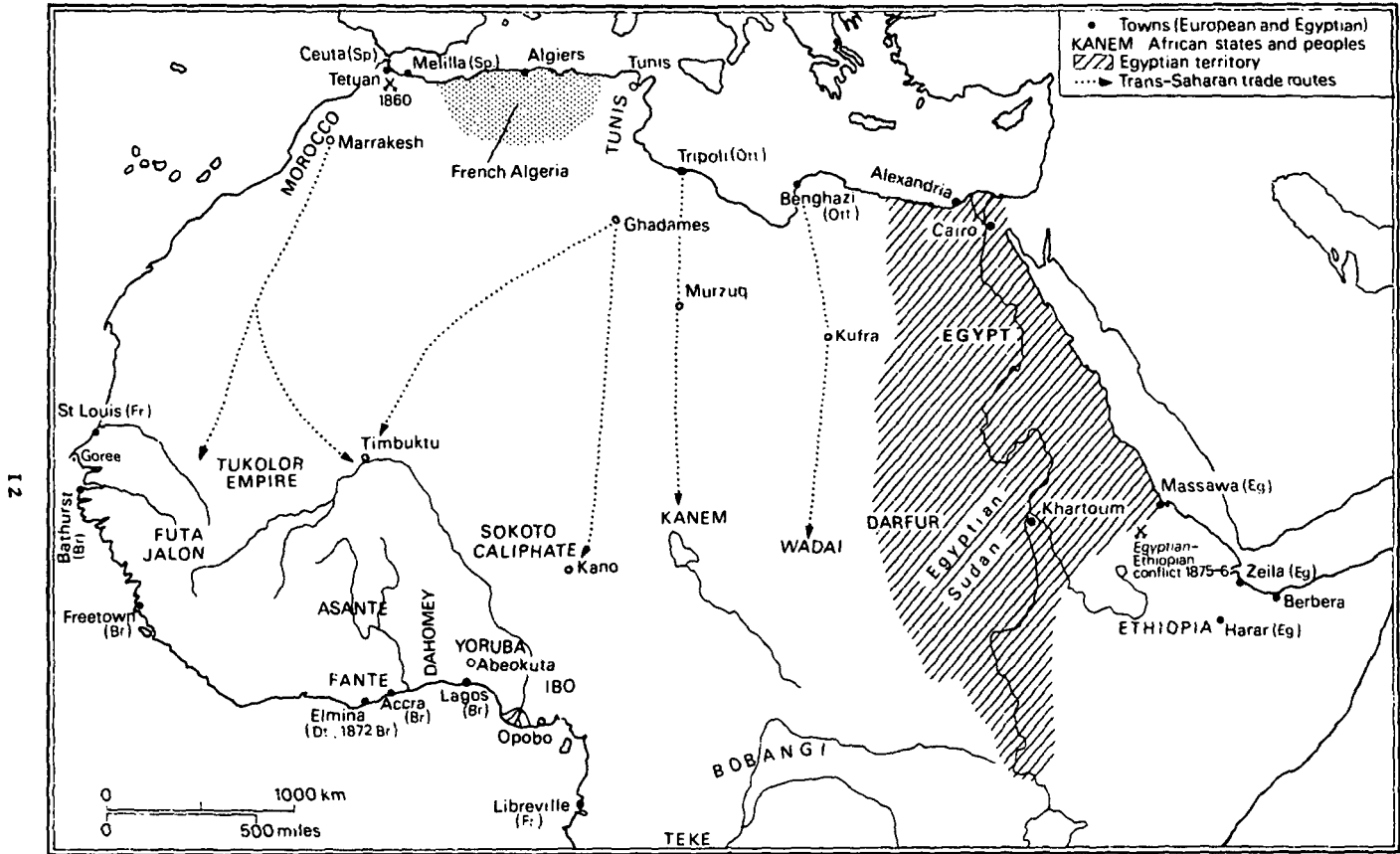
There are no answers to these questions that are at the same time simple and sensible. Certainly the answers to all such queries will differ, according to the region of Africa which is under scrutiny. Even within particular regions, the situation of individual states, societies or groups of people, their relations with each other and with the outside world (especially with the European capitalist economies) varied greatly. To avoid empty generalisations, an overview of the African 1870s is bound not only to break down the continent regionally, but also to explore themes such as independence or dependence of action among the diverse and changing societies who lived within these regions.

The metaphor of the Sahara as a sea, separating the lands to the north and to the south, and yet providing routes by which commerce in men, goods and ideas passed from one side to another, is very ancient. In this analogue, oases are islands, the camel is the ship of the desert and caravans are convoys. Arab geographers spoke of the country on the edge of the Sahara as the *sabel*, the shore. The French, the most imaginative of the European scramblers for Africa, revived the idea. After the invasion of Algeria it became a regularly stated theme of French political comment to regard North Africa and the western and central Sudan as the border regions of a 'second Mediterranean' which was to be a French *mare nostrum*.¹ In the actuality of historical events, this analogy is too fanciful and it became too much of a cliché to bring much enlightenment to an obdurate and complex reality. Yet for heuristic purposes, in attempting a bird's-eye-view of the northern part of Africa at the end of the 1870s, it is tempting to pursue it a little further.

There were many kinds of trade carried on in the desert and the countries surrounding it. There was short-distance trade, of which a good example was the age-old exchange of grain and dates. Surplus wheat and barley was produced in many of the settled lands bordering the Sahara on the north, and surplus millet in many of the countries to the south. Dates were produced in the oases and to some extent in the Sahelian lands. It has been suggested that the merchant class of Ghadames, who were the operators of the routes crossing the desert from Tripoli to Bornu and Hausaland, became involved in this long-distance trade as a result of their participation in an exchange of grain and dates with the southern Tunisian and Algerian borderlands.² A nineteenth-century example of this local trade, which again provided an entrance to the more lucrative fields of international trade for some of the people concerned, was that of the bedouin Arabs of southern Cyrenaica. The Mejabra at Jalu oasis, and the Zuwaya at al-Kikharra and Kufra, had date plantations which produced a 'huge surplus', but were unable to grow sufficient cereals for their

¹ Marion Johnson, 'Calico caravans: Tripoli-Kano trade after 1880', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1976, 17, 1, 99; A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *The conquest of the western Sudan: a study in French imperialism* (Cambridge, 1969), 26, 60-72.

² Stephen Baier, *An economic history of central Niger* (Oxford, 1980), ch. 3.



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inhabitants. They therefore traded their surplus dates for wheat and barley grown by settled Arabs living on the Jabal al-Akhdar and along the wadis of northern Cyrenaica.

It was the Mejabra who pioneered the international trading route across the desert from Cyrenaica to Wadai in the early 1800s, and the Zuwaya became involved after the foundation of *zawiya* (fortified settlements and caravanserais) by the Sanūsī order brought a greater degree of peace and security to the whole region. Further west, the Awlad Sulayman Arabs traded in dates and grain in the region between the Gulf of Sirte and the Fezzan. During the 1830s the Awlad Sulayman came into conflict with the Ottoman authorities, who were taking over the Fezzan from the old Karamanli rulers, and in 1842 they migrated across the desert to Borku on the northern edge of the Chad basin, to escape the alien intruders. In Borku they became involved with a similar network, trading dates and grain with the settled people of Kanem.³

A somewhat more complex variety of the same basic pattern of regional trade was to be found in the Sahel west of Lake Chad. In the country of Damergu, to the north of Zinder, the Tuareg nomad aristocracy engaged in an annual transhumance which took them from Air to the Hausa cities of Sokoto, Kano and Katsina. While pasturing their camel herds in Air, the Tuareg sent caravans to collect salt from Bilma. Moving south, the Tuareg visited their estates in Damergu and distributed salt and dates to the village heads of the local, semi-independent Hausa- and Kanuri-speaking farmers. On their return northwards from Hausaland, the Tuareg collected a prescribed quantity of millet from the villagers. The farmers of Damergu also engaged in longer-distance, but still regional, trade. By no means all the population of Air practised transhumance. Their basic diet of milk was insufficient for their needs, especially in the dry season. Millet was transported the 300–400 km to Air by Damergu farmers in caravans of pack animals, usually oxen. The millet was traded for cattle, sheep, donkeys and camels. Many of these found their way to the large markets of the Hausaland savanna. The inhabitants

³ Dennis D. Cordell, 'Eastern Libya, Wadai and the Sanusiya', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1977, 18, 1, 26–7 and 27, n.29; Cordell, 'The Awlad Sulayman of Libya and Chad: a study of raiding and power in the Chad Basin in the nineteenth century', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison (1972), 104–7; A. Adu Boahen, *Britain, the Sahara, and the western Sudan, 1788–1861* (Oxford, 1964), 91–2.

of Damergu had moved into the district towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the climate of much of the Sahel was improving greatly, following the disastrous drought of the middle of that century. Their complex regional trading networks – which appear to be wholly unrelated to the European economic system – were at a peak during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, before and after the establishment of European rule. By this time Damergu was also an important component in the international trade which was carried north across the Sahara.⁴

A somewhat simpler version of short-distance trade between desert herders and savanna farmers grew up in the Maraka country in and north of the upper Niger valley. The Maraka were ‘Malinke-ised Soninke’, not dissimilar in their trading activities to the Dyula and Diakhanke of the western Sudan. The basis of their internal economy was their trading relationship with nomadic Moors who lived in the desert to the north of the Bambara of Segou and Kaarta. In the dry season the Moors migrated south; and their herds grazed the harvested fields of the Maraka, eating the husks and manuring the soil. The Moors traded hides and some of their livestock for millet and cotton cloth. Like the Tuareg of Aïr, the Moors needed cereals to supplement their milk diet in the dry season, and used cloth for clothes and tents. In the nineteenth century the scale of this trade increased considerably, and the Maraka turned to a kind of plantation system to produce surplus grain. These plantations were operated by slave labour. Larger numbers of Moors were attracted by the larger amounts of grain, cloth and numbers of slaves available for trade in Maraka country. On their part, the Moors brought in horses and salt. The enlarged scale called for more sophisticated methods of conducting the trade. Plantations worked by slave labour were a type of surplus production which was common, in a number of varieties, throughout much of the savanna of West Africa in the nineteenth century; for example, in the Sokoto caliphate. And what has been termed the ‘desert-side’ trade was also widespread.⁵

A consideration of these pivotal local or regional trading

⁴ Stephen Baier, ‘Trans-Saharan trade and the Sahel: Damergu, 1870–1930’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1977, 18, 1, 51–3.

⁵ Richard Roberts, ‘Long distance trade and production: Sinsani in the nineteenth century’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1980, 21, 2, 170–4; M. Klein and P. Lovejoy, ‘Slavery in West Africa’ in H. Gemery and J. S. Hogendorn (eds.), *The uncommon market: essays in the economic history of the Atlantic slave trade* (New York, 1979); P. E. Lovejoy and S. Baier, ‘The desert-side economy of the Central Sudan’, *Int. J. Afr. Hist. Studies*, 1975, 7, 4.

networks of the Sahel and northern savanna leads naturally on to the trading systems linking the Sudanic countries to the Mediterranean lands, which appeared in the 1870s to be both generally prosperous and fairly secure. The western routes ran from Morocco to Senegambia and the Niger. Sijilmasa, in the Tafilet country south of the High Atlas, which had for centuries been the chief northern entrepôt, was no more. Its place had been taken by Taroudant in the Wadi Sous and Tindouf in the al-Haba oasis, south of the Wadi Dar'a. Northwards, trade from Taroudant and Tindouf reached Agadir, Mogador and Marrakesh, and thence the rest of Morocco. Southwards, one route ran more or less parallel to the Atlantic coast, via Idjil and the oasis of Chingetti in Adrar to the Sahel markets of Tichit, Walata, Kasambara, Nioro and Sokolo, to cross the upper Niger at Sinsani, Segou, the Maraka towns of Nyamina and Banamba, or Bamako. From the upper Niger, trans-Saharan trade interconnected with the complex trading systems of Senegambia and the Niger flood plain north of Mopti. By the 1870s this route from Tindouf to the upper Niger was being used only spasmodically, at least in its entirety. Arabic-speaking Berber groups such as the Trarza, Brakna and Kunta – the people known as the Moors – traded rock salt from Idjil both north to Morocco and south to Senegambia and the upper Niger. It was Idjil salt that formed one of the exchange commodities in the relationship between Moors and Maraka. Some cloth from Senegambia and Upper Niger found its way to Morocco, but most was used by the desert people themselves. A little gold from the ancient mines of Bambuk and Bure trickled north, and a few slaves continued to be transported into Morocco. But of all the trans-Saharan routes, the most westerly suffered most from competition of the networks spreading inland from the European trading posts on the Atlantic coast. In Upper Guinea these networks had penetrated well over 1,000 km inland.

The volume, or the potential, of the Senegambian and Upper Niger trade was great enough to tempt Moroccan merchants to establish themselves in Dakar and St Louis at the end of the 1870s. In doing so, they did not seem to incur open French hostility, although the Moroccans and the French had the same aim in mind – to capture and divert the trade of the interior. The Moroccans traded up the Senegal and as far as Timbuktu for gold, gum and other commodities which they shipped up the coast to

Mogador. This activity on the Senegal river by subjects of the Sultan can be seen as one aspect of a wider project to reaffirm Moroccan influence (and even control) over much of the western Sudan.⁶

If the western Saharan trade route was less used in the second half of the nineteenth century, that which led to Timbuktu still carried a considerable quantity of goods. This route started at the same north entrepôts – Tindouf or the oases in Tafilelt – and ran via the salt-mining oasis of Taodeni to the Sahel town of Arawan, and so to Timbuktu. Another route to Timbuktu began at the great market oasis of Ghadames and ran via Tuat to In Salah and Arawan. Further east, the route to Hausaland went south from Ghadames to Ghat, and so through Agades to Zinder and Kano. East of the Hausaland–Ghadames route was the ancient ‘Garamantian road’ from Tripoli to Bornu. This also had its main northern entrepôt at Ghadames. Tracks went either to Ghat or to Murzuk in the Fezzan, and then through Kawar, with its great salt-producing oasis of Bilma, before terminating at the market of Kukawa, just west of Lake Chad in Bornu. In the middle of the nineteenth century this route had been in decline, possibly because of the weak political structures at either end.

The most recent of the trans-Saharan routes was that between Benghazi and Wadai. This had been pioneered early in the nineteenth century by Mejabra Arabs in southern Cyrenaica. The desert journey on this route started at the oases of Awjila and Jalu, proceeded to a refreshment station at Kufra and then crossed the Tibesti massif to the Wadai capital at Abeche. Still further east was the famous ‘Forty Days’ Route, the *Darb al-Arba’in*, from the Nile at Asyut to Kutum and Mellit, to the north of El Fasher. This was the main means of communication between Egypt and the sultanate of Darfur. The major importance of the *Darb al-Arba’in* was as a route to the Negro lands beyond the frontier of Darfur, in Dar Fertit and the Bahr al-Ghazal.

There were also many lateral routes, running roughly east and west across the Sahara, the Sahel and the Sudan. One went from Cairo to Tripoli, the Fezzan and Tunis via Jaghbug, Jalu and Awjila. Another went from southern Morocco to Ghadames,

⁶ See C. W. Newbury, ‘North African and western Sudan trade in the nineteenth century: a re-evaluation’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1966, 7, 2, 244, especially notes 34–6; cited in Philip D. Curtin, *Economic change in precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the ear of the slave trade* (Madison, 1975), 280–1.

Tripoli and Murzuq, via Tuat. A third ran from the Red Sea port of Suakin across the Atbara to Berber, Shendi and Khartoum, and thence westwards to Darfur, Wadai, Bagirmi and Kanem-Bornu into Hausaland, reaching as far south and west as market towns such as Salaga on the edge of Akan country. These lateral routes catered for pilgrims and short-distance commerce rather than long-distance international trade. Trading networks emanating from the western Sudan and Hausaland were concerned with a wide range of commodities, almost always carried out according to well-regulated conditions. On the other hand trading activity from the Muslim states of the central Sudan – Bornu, Bagirmi, Wadai and Darfur – was almost entirely limited to slaves and ivory, obtained by raiding the non-Muslim peoples living in the savanna north of the Cameroun and Congo forests – in Adamawa, Dar Runga, Dar al-Kuti and Dar Fertit. The *jallāba* merchants operating from the Nilotic Sudan, and foreigners based at Khartoum, commenced their activities in Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal as ivory traders, but this became inextricably linked with raiding for slaves and livestock.

Only far to the east, beyond the Nilotic Sudan, was there trade on a scale comparable with that of the western and central Sahara. The products in the greatest demand by the outside world came from the Oromo (Galla) and Sidama country deep in the hinterland of the Horn. This was partly because these southern highland areas were the richest in the whole of the Ethiopian region. Surplus cereals and dairy foods were produced, and coffee and tobacco were grown. Elephants roamed the lower country of the Gibe and Omo valleys, and the Rift Valley lakes, as also in Kaffa and Walamo. There were civet cats, valuable for their musk-like perfume. Gold was produced in the Banī Shanqūl region which later became part of Wallaga, but was until the Mahdiyya still under Turco-Egyptian sovereignty.

The other reason why the economic heartlands of the Horn were situated so far in the interior was cultural or ideological. The enslavement of Christians and Muslims by their co-religionists was unlawful (in theory at least), and the greater part of the slave-raiding in the Ethiopian region was carried out over the pagan land to the south and west, mainly, as will be seen, by Muslim slave-dealers. Hence most of the ‘Abyssinian’ slaves, especially young girls, who continued to be in high demand in

Arabia and other parts of the Muslim world, were Oromo (Galla) and Sidama in origin, rather than Amhara. Highland Ethiopia, and the Oromo–Sidama lands, lacked salt, the main deposits of which were in the desert country inhabited by Afar (Danakil), near the Red Sea coast. The exchange of salt, and externally manufactured goods, for the products and slaves of the interior led to the development of regular caravan routes. Camels were used as beasts of burden in the lowlands, donkeys on the plateau.

There were three main lines of access to these economic heartlands, all passing over very difficult terrain. From the Sudan, parallel routes ascended the Atbara valley to Tigre and Metemma and the Blue Nile to Wallaga and Shoa. This last passed through the gold-producing borderland of Banī Shanqūl which was largely Islamised and was frequented by *jallāba* traders from the riverain Sudan.⁷ Another line of access was from Massawa, up the escarpment to Tigre, Gondar and Gojjam, and across the Abbai (Blue Nile) into the country of the Oromo and the Sidama. The third was from ports on the Gulf of Aden either up the Awash valley, through Afar country, or across Somali lands to Harar and thence over the Chercher highlands. There were two revivals of trade in the nineteenth century. The first followed the general pacification of the Red Sea area by Muḥammad ‘Ali Pasha, and was accompanied in the south by the rise to power of the Oromo (Galla) kingdom of Innarya. The second followed from the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the increasing use of steamships, first in the long-haul and then in short-distance transportation. The second boost coincided with the revival of Shoa under Menelik, who became its ruler in 1865. Shoan expansion into Somali, Gurage, Sidama and Oromo lands, during the whole of the rest of the century, was a direct response to the economic resources and potential of the south-western regions.

By the last third of the nineteenth century, the trans-Saharan routes carried generally similar staple and other goods – the distribution varied according to time and circumstance. From the Sahelian and Sudanic countries came ivory, tanned skins (mainly of goat), ostrich plumes, gold dust, gum, resin, slaves, some cloth and leather work, and kola nuts. The Ottoman government had abolished the slave trade in 1857, except to the holy cities of Hijaz,

⁷ Alessandro Triulzi, ‘Trade, Islam and the Mahdia in north-western Wallaga, Ethiopia’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1975, 16, 1, 55–71.

but the Moroccan authorities resisted European pressure for abolition and emancipation until the French occupation in 1912. There is no doubt that some slaves continued to be transported across the desert, the greatest number, towards the end of the century, on the Wadai–Benghazi route. Black slaves were also used extensively in the desert, working in extremely harsh conditions in the rock-salt mines, and on the date plantations and vegetable gardens of the oases. When the supply of slaves finally dried up, towards the end of the century, the desert economy was gravely disrupted.

From the north came cotton cloth, some woollens and satins, silks, waste yarn to be made up in Sudanic Africa, guns, horse trappings, scents and perfumes, pepper and spices, needles, tea and sugar, cups and saucers, and writing paper. The greater part of these imports were produced in western or central European countries. Manchester cotton goods amounted to three quarters of the total. Woollens came from Austria, satins from Bohemia, raw silk from the waste of the Lyons mills, prayer carpets from Dundee, sugar from Austria, tea from China (via Malta), and guns from every arms manufacturer in Europe and the United States. Taking all of the trade into account, British manufacturers dominated the desert-side imports to the Sudan. It appears that this was increasingly so as the century drew to a close, particularly in the case of the crucial Tripoli entrepôt. In the 1850s Barth considered that British cottons were less than an eighth of the total; in 1891 the British consul in Tripoli estimated that goods for the Sudan were worth £100,000, of which over £70,000 consisted of Manchester cottons. At Mogador, the southernmost Moroccan port at which Europeans and their agents were allowed to operate, and the gateway for commerce to the western Sudan, the British trading peak was in the 1860s and 1870s, but even after this the annual value of British trade was often worth twice that of French trade.⁸

To a far greater extent than in the Horn, the staple items in the long-distance trans-Saharan trade were dependent upon the fluctuations of foreign markets. The European and American fashion boom in ostrich feathers lasted barely two decades, the 1870s and 1880s, the main European market being, predictably,

⁸ Jean-Louis Miège, *Documents d'histoire économique et social marocaine au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1969), 234–7.

Paris. The demand for ivory from the woodland savanna between Cameroun, the upper Ubangi and the Bahr al-Ghazal (as from the other ivory regions of tropical Africa) was sustained at a high level throughout the second half of the century, and here it seems that London was the chief, but by no means only, staple market. The trade in tanned and dyed goatskins reached its peak in the later 1880s, the skin being used for women's footwear. Most of the market was in the United States. The trade began to decline with the adoption in America of the chrome-tanning process, and a growing preference for undyed skins. The widespread and deep recession in most of the European and North American capitalist economies, which reached its nadir between 1878 and 1884, had a damaging effect on much trans-Saharan economic activity. In particular it profoundly affected the Moroccan political economy. In a set of highly complex causal relationships, the great recession was a key element in determining the European partition of Africa. But recent research has shown how resourceful African producers were in switching to different trade items when demand fell off, and equally how resourceful merchants were in rapidly adapting to new means of transportation, such as the railway and the parcel post.⁹

European commercial firms involved in the trans-Saharan trade tended to be represented in North Africa by agents rather than by company branches. Many of these agents were Jews. Most British commercial activity was based on its Mediterranean possessions – Gibraltar in the case of Morocco, and Malta as regards Tunis and Tripoli – and Gibraltarians and Maltese (some of whom were Jews) worked as agents for British firms. The large Jewish communities in Tripoli and Tunisia lived reasonably peaceably with their Muslim neighbours while others had done so in Algeria until Napoleon III's *senatus consulte* of 1865 and the Crémieux decree of 1870 embittered communal relations.¹⁰ But in Morocco there was much harassment and some persecution of the local Jews. Nevertheless, most of the trans-Saharan commerce at Mogador was in the hands of Jews, who made up well over one-third of the population of about 18,000 in the 1870s. Hostility

⁹ Johnson, 'Calico caravans', 108; Marion Johnson, 'By ship or by camel: the struggle for the Cameroons ivory trade in the nineteenth century', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1978, 19, 4, 539–49; Jean-Louis Miège, *Le Maroc et l'Europe, 1880–1894* (Paris, 1962), 111, 375–459.

¹⁰ See below, pp. 22 and 28.

by Muslim Moroccans would seem to have been in an inverse proportion to Jewish prosperity.

The caravans from Morocco to the western Sudan were operated by Moroccans from the oases of the Wadi Sous, and Wadi Dar'a and Tafillet, and Berbers from the Tuat oases, with some assistance from Chaamba Arabs. Further south, Tuareg took over. Political control over Timbuktu was contested between Tuareg chiefs and Arab shaykhs of the Kunta family, which had also migrated from the desert. The Kunta collaborated with Fulani from Masina in a revolt against the domination of al-Hājī 'Umar in 1863, but Tuareg took advantage of their success, and re-established control over Timbuktu, which they held until the French occupation in 1894. A council of notables conducted the day-to-day business of the city, and its commercial life returned to normal after the disruptions of the jihad of al-Hājī 'Umar. Members of the Moroccan Jewish community managed to set themselves up in Timbuktu soon after the revolt of 1863, for the first time in the city's history. Moroccan policy in the Sahara was expressed mainly in religious and strategic terms, in relation to Morocco's position in the world of Islam, and to its aggressive and hectoring European neighbour in Algeria. But behind these declared aims lay the requirement to secure and control the lucrative trade.

If Moroccan traders and their clients in the desert played a major role in the Timbuktu and other western Sudanese commerce, that between Tripoli and Hausaland was dominated by merchants from the oases of Ghadames. By the second half of the nineteenth century, Ghadamasi firms were to be found in Tripoli and Tunis, where they were involved not only with the Sudanese trade of those cities, but also in trade between them. They had also spread across the Sahara into the central Sudan and as far south as Nupe and Adamawa. These Ghadamasi merchants, established all over the trading network, facilitated the exchange of credit and provided brokerage; arranged the collection, storage and distribution of goods, and arranged for their transport. At each relay point Ghadamasi merchants contracted the local Tuareg groups who provided transport animals and armed escorts for the caravans. The leading Ghadamasi had marriage ties with the Tuareg nobility and also with the notable Hausa families, which greatly eased commercial transactions. In northern Hausa-

land, Ghadamasi only became commercially dominant towards the end of the nineteenth century. Previously Moroccan and Fezzani merchants had played a major role in the international trade. The Ghadamasi were able to take full advantage of the boom in the export of ostrich feathers and tanned goat skins, which was at a peak in the 1870s and 1880s, and they ousted longer-established Magribi merchants on the central Saharan routes.

As in Morocco, most of the merchant houses in Tripoli were owned by Jews, but with a significant difference; whereas the Moroccan Jews were indigenous, many of the Tripoli Jews were outsiders – the majority from Italy. Indeed, these were probably the first important group of Italians domiciled in Tripoli. The only serious competitors of the Jewish merchants were Maltese, who were British subjects. These Jewish and Maltese commercial houses established in Tripoli (and later in Benghazi) were in direct contact with European financiers and manufacturers, and these were predominantly British. Thus, the sources of finance for the trans-Saharan trade, the production of goods imported into Africa and the chief markets for African produce, were all firmly situated in capitalist Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America.

The operation of the trans-Saharan trade on the most recently opened route, between Wadai and Benghazi, was in the hands of Mejabra and Zuwaya Arabs. But in this instance a religious institution provided much of the support system which made the hazardous trading network possible: the Sanūsī *ṭarīqa* or brotherhood. By the 1870s and 1880s the Sanūsīyya was at the height of its power and influence. Muḥammad al-Sanūsī had died in 1858, and was succeeded as head of the order by his son Sīdī al-Mahdi. There is some irony in the constant concern of the *ṭarīqa* to avoid European and Ottoman influence and interference by withdrawing its headquarters even further away from the Mediterranean and North Africa, and its distinctive role in promoting international trade which was so heavily dependent on European capitalism. The Sanūsī headquarters were moved from al-Baida, near the Cyrenaican coast, to the oases of Jaghbug in 1856, to Kufra in 1895 and to Quru in 1899. In fact these moves represented a shift in the economic interests of the Sanūsīyya, as it became more heavily involved in the trans-Saharan trading system. The chief sphere of its political influence remained in

Cyrenaica, where the *ṭarīqa* formed the de facto government among the bedouin groups, and where a number of the Ottoman officials became members of the order. New *zāribas* were, however, set up ever further south, all over the trading network, not only in the desert oases, but in the Sahelian and Sudanic states, from Darfur in the east to Timbuktu in the west. Many of the leading Ghadamasi merchants became members of the *ṭarīqa*, as did the rulers of Wadai. In northern Hausaland, on the other hand, the Sanūsī brotherhood was distinctly for foreigners, merchants and artisans. The Sanūsīyya was responsible for maintaining a considerable degree of stability among the factious Saharan groups whose quarrels had previously disrupted the trade. The order intervened in disputes between the Zuwaya and their neighbours, the Awlad Sulayman, and the non-Muslim Bideyat and Tubu. The Sanūsīyya, while remaining ideologically and politically hostile to European influences, actively promoted the European-orientated commerce of much of central northern Africa.

The equivalent of the Ghadamasi in the huge eastern section of the central Sudan – Darfur, Kordofan, the Bahr al-Ghazal – were northern Sudanese, mainly Danāqla (arabised Nubians from the Dongola region) and Ja‘aliyyūn, known collectively as *jallāba*. These had followed close on the heels of the European traders, who took advantage of the forcing of the White Nile by Turco-Egyptian expeditions in the 1840s. This provided the opportunity for the frontier of economic exploitation to move south from southern Darfur, the Nuba mountains, the Blue Nile and the Ethiopian marches, deep into Equatoria and the Bahr al-Ghazal. Thereafter, the immense plain stretching from the Nile westwards and southwards, towards the Congo watershed and beyond Darfur to Wadai, became a huge ivory frontier, open to the northern traders. These established their own settlements, *daym*, or fortified enclosures, *zāriba*, in the midst of Nilotic peoples such as the Dinka, Nuer and Bari, the Eastern Nigritic Azande and Banda, and the Central Sudanic Kreish, Bongo and Sara. Only the Dinka and the Azande had political structures strong or flexible enough to resist for long the exploitative impact of the Muslim traders. Some of these traders achieved the status of merchant princes, such as al-Zubayr Raḥma Maṣṣūr, but most operated on a smaller scale. Sudanese *jallāba* moved steadily westwards, setting themselves up in Darfur, Wadai, Kanem and Bornu. This was yet

another example, in the Saharan and Sahelian context, of a trading diaspora. By the 1870s *jallāba* had reached as far south as the Mbomu and Uele rivers, and had penetrated Mangbetu country in the Zaïre forest.

The main article of trade was ivory. This poured in large quantities into Egypt, where it was purchased by European and American dealers operating from the safety of Cairo and Alexandria. The working capital for the traders seems to have been provided (at usurious rates) by capitalists – mainly Egyptian Copts – in Khartoum. Throughout tropical Africa the trade in ivory reached a peak in the 1870s and 1880s. It was not the most valuable item of trade to come out of Africa: Egyptian cotton, West African palm oil, South African diamonds and latterly gold, to name but four others, brought larger overall profits. The ivory trade, however, was the most widespread. Elephants were hunted for their tusks from eastern Nigeria and Cameroun eastwards to the Nile valley and the Horn, and southwards through Gabon to the lower Congo; they were hunted from the Horn southwards throughout East Africa, and across the whole belt of middle and south Africa from the Congo and Rovuma rivers, southwards over the Zambezi to the Orange river and the Drakensberg mountains. The pursuit of ivory was generally destructive and often violent. It involved the organisation of hunting bands, which even when developed locally, were disruptive of older social groupings. Too frequently, it involved raiding across the countryside by alien gangs. By the last third of the century, elephants were nearly always hunted with firearms. It was the use of European guns which transformed a series of minor local activities into an exploitative international trading system. The European and American demand was for ivory to make knife handles, piano keys, combs and billiard balls. It has been estimated that 65,000 elephants were killed annually in various parts of tropical Africa in response to this demand.¹¹

As far as the ivory frontiers of the Nilotic Sudan were concerned, attempts were made by merchants to build up a balanced trading system, by importing cloth and other European goods to be used in exchange for ivory. But conditions in the Bahr al-Ghazal, along the Congo watershed and in Eutoria were too unstable and societies were too inflexible for the more usual and

¹¹ Marion Johnson, 'By Ship or Camel', 548, n.41.

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profitable trading patterns to develop. Violence became the easy resort. Cattle were necessary not only to feed the traders but also to provide inducements to reluctant tribesmen. The traders therefore raided cattle and stole food crops. It was easier to use slave labour rather than free. Labour was required to take part in the elephant hunts, to run the fortified *zārība*, and to work on the riverain farms of the *jallāba* in the northern Sudan. A vigorous trade in slaves developed.

Regular government under the Turco-Egyptians was even more parasitic than were the traders. By 1880 soldiers, officials, traders, private retainers, their wives, concubines, children, servants, servants' families, etc., were so numerous (not less than 50,000, perhaps nearer 100,000) that there was something like a colony of settlement in the southern Sudan.

The Bari in southern Equatoria first co-operated and then, embittered by the tactics of the traders, resisted. During the 1860s the Zande chiefdoms entered into a series of uneasy relationships with the Khartoumers, but by the 1870s they were succumbing to the onslaughts of al-Zubayr Raḥma Maṣṣūr and other *jallāba*. The Turco-Egyptians attempted to conquer central Zandeland in 1878. Later, Mahdist forces also attacked, but by then the Zande were armed with guns, and could defend themselves. These weapons came into Zandeland from the Atlantic coast, via the Congo river system. Towards the end of the 1880s the Zande were being raided by slave traders from the east coast, 'so that Zande country became the place where all three trade networks finally met'.¹²

THE MAGHRIB AND EGYPT

The situation of Egypt and the Maghrib countries and their response to European influence and interference, and to 'modernisation' in general, varied considerably at the beginning of our period. They all shared a Muslim background, but the kinds of Islam they had experienced were diverse. Politically, Morocco was an independent sultanate, and indeed had been so since the eighth century. Algeria was a French colony, of which the settled areas were administered as overseas departments of metropolitan France, while the pastoral areas further inland were subject to

¹² Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson and Jan Vansina, *African History* (London, 1978), 441.

military rule. Tunisia was a beylicate, over which the Ottoman sultan exercised a nominal suzerainty, but which was in practice largely independent. Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were provinces of the Ottoman empire. Egypt was a kingdom (khedivate), politically independent, over which Ottoman suzerainty was even more nominal than over Tunisia. But, overshadowing the political processes of nineteenth-century North African states were a series of economic revolutions which, in various degrees, reduced the local economies to dependence upon the European capitalist system.

The Spanish invasion of Morocco in 1859 and the capture of the northern city of Tetuan the following year, had important consequences for the sultanate. The price of withdrawal by Spain was an indemnity of 100 million pesetas. Such a sum in specie was quite beyond the means of the Moroccan economy, and the sultan's government, the *makhzin*, was forced to borrow the money from British financial houses. The repayment of this loan gravely distorted the Moroccan economy – a large proportion of the country's customs receipts for the next twenty-five years was used for it. This aggravated an already difficult financial position. European economic penetration had slowly mounted since the 1840s, and already by 1860 the balance of trade had shifted from Moroccan to European interests. This tendency continued, as did inflation of the complex Moroccan currency, and the consequent rise in price of basic foodstuffs and goods. Morocco's principal exports to Europe – wool, hides and wheat – were undermined by international competition (a consequence of the increased use of steamships and railways). By the last quarter of the century imports from Europe greatly exceeded exports. Cheap Manchester cottons flooded the Moroccan market, and many artisans in the indigenous textile industry, in towns such as Larache, Sale and Rabat, were ruined. Natural disasters, such as periodic famines and epidemics, exacerbated the effects of the economic crisis. One immediate consequence was the drift of population from the rural areas to the towns, in particular to the coastal cities, which grew rapidly in size. The loss of population disturbed the political machinery which regulated the relations between government and the interior tribal groups, particularly in the Atlas mountains – the relationship of the *makhzin* with what was called the *bilād al-sibā* ('the country of dissidence').

As well as the insidious penetration of European commerce, in the 1870s still predominantly British, there was the more direct threat of foreign invasion. On the wider diplomatic front, Mawlāy al-Hasan was able to forestall intervention by balancing the contending concerns of the European powers. His policy was to keep to a minimum the concessions necessary to pacify the Europeans and to take such advantage as was possible of their mutual rivalry. Britain wanted a reformed, independent Morocco to safeguard the southern shore of the Strait of Gibraltar. Spain generally wanted the same, but solely to prevent French interference. France was in favour of a weak, crumbling, Morocco, so that when the time came, she could step in and pick up the pieces. The immediate points at issue between Morocco and the European governments were the position of European protected persons and the immunities these enjoyed from the enforcement of Moroccan law; and the European demands for favoured nation treatment, which would enable each country the more easily to penetrate the Moroccan economy. In regulations similar to the capitulations of the Ottoman empire, the Moroccan government had restricted access of Europeans to Tangier and Mogador, but agents – Gibraltarians and Jews, as well as Muslim Moroccans – could operate more widely and more freely and were seen as a threat to the political authority of the state, as well as to its economy.¹³

In September 1870 the French Second Empire collapsed with the fall of Napoleon III, and early in 1871 a series of violent uprisings broke out in eastern Algeria, particularly Kabylia, the most vehement of which was led by the wealthy landowner, Muḥammad al-Muqrānī. The causes of this revolt were complex and are examined in an earlier volume.¹⁴ For present purposes, the vital point of the revolt was that it failed, disastrously. Only about one-third of Algeria was affected. Al-Muqrānī's rebellion was not the signal for a general uprising against the French. The revolt was late in getting off the ground – when it broke out, fighting had stopped in France, and the new French republican government was able to divert troops to deal with it. After it was suppressed (with the usual French colonial ferocity), much of the

¹³ F. V. Parsons, *The origins of the Morocco Question, 1880–1900* (London, 1976); also Frank E. Trout, *Morocco's Sabaran frontiers* (Geneva, 1969).

¹⁴ Douglas Johnson, 'The Maghrib' in John E. Flint (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Africa*, v: c.1790 to c.1870 (Cambridge, 1976), 118–19.

land of the rebels was sequestered. Algerians could regain their land only at prices which few could afford, and the French settlers were ready and able to take advantage of the situation. Further land expropriation followed in the 1870s and 1880s.

Governments of the Third Republic, like those of the Second, were more sympathetic to the demands and aspirations of the settlers than was the régime of Napoleon III. The administrative apparatus first instituted by the Second Republic remained in force, as did the highly ambivalent *senatus consulte* of Napoleon III. This had extended French citizenship to Muslim Algerians if they renounced their Muslim legal status. Few Algerians were either able or willing to take advantage of this assimilationist device. In 1870 Jews were given no choice; by the Crémieux decree they became French citizens. Administratively, coastal Algeria – that part most densely settled by Europeans – was divided into three departments, equal in most respects to French mainland departments. Algerian affairs were dealt with by an appropriate ministry in Paris. The Third Republic introduced important changes in local government. The first actions of the new régime towards Algeria was to lessen the power of the army in the management of its affairs and to reduce the authority of the military *bureaux arabes*, which controlled the predominantly Muslim regions. The suppression of the 1871 revolt led, paradoxically, to an increase in civil administration and control.¹⁵

The quelling of the al-Muqrānī revolt, the subsequent land consolidation, the gradual increase of the authority and legality of the Third Republic, and the emergence from the recession of the late 1870s and early 1880s, ushered in the hey-day of settler colonialism in Algeria. Republican politicians with their liberal democratic and their nationalistic ideals, were faced with something of a dilemma, similar to the apparent dilemma that confronted their counterparts in Britain in regard to South Africa. They could not deny the full exercise of citizen rights to Frenchmen living across the Mediterranean, even when this exercise meant the withholding of rights to Algerians. Besides this ideological sympathy, the settlers built up powerful lobbies which often were able to operate most successfully in the flux of metropolitan politics. The settlers then, were assured of the

¹⁵ Wilfrid Knapp, *North West Africa: a political and economic survey* (Oxford, 1977), 67.

support of French governments. The rigours of the first decades of colonisation, when Algeria was very much a frontier situation, subsided. Life for many settlers became comfortable and well organised. Some of them prospered and became wealthy. They behaved with the apparent self-confidence of *petits blancs* on the make. Both the *senatus consulte* of 1865 and the land law of 1873 favoured individual ownership of property on French lines as against the various Muslim land systems, including communal land-holding. There was prolonged drought from 1866 to 1870, which hit all agriculturalists in Algeria; it was one of the immediate causes of the al-Muqrānī outbreak. The settlers recovered more easily than the Algerians, especially as more land became available to them as a result of the revolt. Between 1871 and 1880 the land in settler hands almost doubled, reaching 800,000 hectares as against 480,000 in the period 1830–70.

By the 1870s Algeria had entered an era which Jacques Berque described half a century later, and which had many echoes of settlerdom in South Africa:

The most provocative symbol of the colonial period in the Maghrib is that of the titled farmhouse, a cheerful dwelling standing amid vineyards. It aroused the most violent, and violently opposed, reactions from Frenchmen and the people of the Maghrib. The fact that it was surrounded by more significant forces matters little; it implied all the rest. Banks, military camps, factories and schools may have played at least as important a part, but none made so deep an impression on everyone's feelings as this French farmstead, this heraldic emblem on African soil.¹⁶

Muslim Algerians benefited very little from the amenities of the colonial state. Apart from obvious religious, cultural and linguistic differences, they had a different and separate legal status, and enjoyed only minimal civil rights. But they contributed in various forms of taxation – both traditional Muslim and the new French colonial taxes – a wholly disproportionate amount of the revenue of the colony. Algerians had to bear most of the burdens of alien rule but gained from few of its improvements. Apart from a small handful, Algerians were educated in the 1870s and 1880s in traditional Muslim schools, not in the more modern French schools: this handful did, however, form the core of the new élite. Algerians were conscripted into the French army in 1870, and were again to be so treated in 1914. The old landed aristocracy

¹⁶ Jacques Berque, *French North Africa* (London, 1967), 35.

were reduced to little more than peasant farmers; peasants were pauperised on the land, or moved into the rapidly growing towns as casual labourers, beggars and criminals. Their numbers began, by the 1880s, to increase fairly rapidly, as public health measures improved. The Algerian petty bourgeoisie, in the towns and the countryside, found niches in the structures of the colonial state, and some did quite well for themselves. Characteristically, it was members of this group, who also took advantage of the few modern educational facilities which were available for Algerians, who slowly emerged as political leaders, both within the colonial state and in opposition to it. These were the early stages of a classic situation of deprivation examined by Franz Fanon; the confrontation of what a perceptive scholar of the Maghrib has termed 'anarchic society' with the French imperialist state.

On the one side was an aggressive, dynamic, insatiable Europe... On the other, North Africa was neither barbarous nor uncultured... careful study reveals a perfect coherence between the spiritual, economic and social aspects of its culture. That culture was however, different from Europe's, particularly in that nothing arose within it to stimulate the society as a whole. Its population growth was too late and too abrupt; there was not enough vitality in urban crafts or foreign commerce; and there was no intellectual renewal. The Maghrib lived at a slower pace, and this no doubt was one of the reasons for its colonization...¹⁷

Algeria, however, was not just a matter of three overseas French departments with a French settler population alongside an indigenous one. It was the forcing ground for much subsequent French imperialism in Africa. By the end of the 1870s, especially after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, which indirectly and unofficially recognised Tunisia as a French sphere of influence, France had regained international status and confidence, and plans for expansion from the Algerian base toward the western Sudan began to be seriously considered. These centred around designs for the construction of a trans-Saharan railway, which was mooted by geographers and engineers in France and Algeria from about 1875. By 1879 Freycinet, minister of Public Works, and Jauréguiberry, minister of Marine (responsible for colonies) were to become enthusiastic supporters of the *trans-Saharien*, and provided the scheme with the stamp of official support.¹⁸

¹⁷ Lucette Valensi, *On the eve of colonialism: North Africa before the French conquest* (London, 1977), 80.

¹⁸ Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest of the Western Sudan*, 65.

In 1873 the Circassian *mamlūk*, Khayr al-Dīn, was appointed Chief Minister of the government of Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, the bey of Tunis. This move was partly in response to European, especially French, pressure. Khayr al-Dīn initiated a series of thorough-going reforms. He belonged to the establishment élite of the Ottoman empire, and he attempted on the smaller scale of Tunisia what the Tanzimat reforms had set out to achieve for the empire as a whole. Central and local administration, and the complex taxation system, were overhauled, and every effort was made to make these operate more effectively. Army reforms, which had first been put into motion in the 1840s, were pressed forward. Efforts were made to modernise the economy, but these largely resulted in the continued growth of foreign-owned concerns, such as railways, telegraph lines, textile factories and large agricultural estates. Nevertheless, the Tunisian economy in the 1870s was more prosperous than it had been, at least since the abolition of slavery in 1846.

Perhaps the most crucial of Khayr al-Dīn's reforms were in education. At the peak of his secular school system was the Sadiqi College, a school to train civil servants and members of the liberal professions, with a curriculum which included French and Italian, mathematics and science. This college and its pupils were to have a lasting effect on the course of Tunisian history during the protectorate period. But in all his efforts at reform Khayr al-Dīn was hamstrung by the restraints laid upon Tunisia by the International Financial Commission, which had been imposed in 1869. During the years following the suppression of the revolt of 1864, the bey's government had piled up an enormous debt to European financial interests and had become bankrupt. The commission, made up of representatives of French, Italian and British bankers, took over control of the beylicate's finances, and to all intents and purposes, Tunisia lost its economic independence.

The intrigues of members of the commission, and internal opposition to Khayr al-Dīn, led to the minister's fall from office in 1877 (he retired to Istanbul and became for a time grand vizir to the sultan). By this time, the conflicting interests of Britain, France and Italy brought a series of crises to Tunisia: if the scramble for the rest of the continent had yet to unfold, that for the old Roman province of Africa was well under way.

Between Tunisia and Egypt lay Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, which had been ruled directly by the Ottoman sultan since the fall of the Karamanli dynasty in 1835. In Cyrenaica the Sanūsī brotherhood exercised almost undisturbed religious and political authority. Cattle were exported from Tripoli to Benghazi, as were sponges and the trade goods of the western and central Sudan. In the late 1860s, esparto grass was developed as a new export crop, which went mainly to Britain for paper-making. But economic activity was on a low scale. Italian steamship lines handled most of the export trade. Apart from the *katatib*, the Koranic schools, and the Sanūsī *zawiya*, the only educational establishments were a handful of Italian and Jewish schools. The Ottomans were present in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as colonial rulers. They used techniques of 'indirect rule' not unlike those of some later European imperialists.

Egypt was in the 1870s still the wealthiest of all African countries. Since the agricultural revolution of the neolithic age, Egypt had maintained this position, and if by this time it had any rival, it was the British colony of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1875 Egyptian exports and imports were worth £13.3 million and £5.6 million respectively; figures for the Cape Colony were both £5.7 million. Government revenue in that year was £10 million in Egypt and £1.6 million in the Cape. In 1875 exports to Britain from what was termed the West Coast of Africa were valued at £1.7 million, and it has been estimated that the total trade from the western Sudan and the Maghrib – mainly Morocco and Tripoli – in the same year was £1.5 million.¹⁹ The total Egyptian indebtedness to European interests in 1876 was nearly £100 million – possibly an amount greater than the sum total of the fiscal value of the wealth of the whole of the rest of the continent. Roughly 10 million people lived densely packed in the immensely fertile countryside and towns of the Nile delta and valley. The scale and magnitude of the political economy of Egypt put it on a par with European and Asian countries rather than those in Africa.

The first attempt to set up a modern state structure to utilise and develop the potential of this political economy occurred during the reign of Muḥammad 'Alī; the second, and in many respects more radical restructuring was the work of the govern-

¹⁹ P. M. Holt, 'Egypt and the Nile valley', in *Cambridge history of Africa*, v, 39–50.

ments of Khedive Ismā'īl. This is not the place to detail the reforms and other changes introduced by the khedive in the 1860s and 1870s, in commerce, industry and the agricultural economy; in local government and education; in the institutions and policies of the state; and in the army.²⁰ The results of those reforms were manifold. Legally, and in theory, the *fallāhīn*, peasant farmers, benefited from legislation brought in by Sa'īd and Ismā'īl. They obtained individual rather than collective rights to their land holdings. Ismā'īl's *muqabala* law of 1871 granted full rights of ownership. But rural society was becoming much more differentiated. Big landowners other than the ruler himself had emerged, and there was also increasing differentiation among the *fallāhīn* themselves.

There was massive migration of poorer *fallāhīn* to the towns, if for no other reason than to escape the payment of increasingly burdensome taxation. The importance of cash crops, especially cotton, was another factor in this differentiation. Peasant land was heavily taxed, while the great estates escaped lightly. Military conscription and forced labour added to rural pauperisation. One group of peasants, however, achieved a kind of kulak status. These were the families of village headmen (*shaykh al-bilād*), who became substantial land-owners. Sa'īd and Ismā'īl opened the ranks of the officer corps to sons of these headmen, a measure not entirely popular, but with far-reaching consequences. But the village headmen were small fry compared to the rural aristocracy. These were members of the viceregal family (not least Ismā'īl himself) and their protégés from amongst the Turco-Egyptian establishment (Turks and Circassians) who amassed huge estates. 'By the time of Ismā'īl, there had developed in Egypt something like a Turkish-speaking landed aristocracy, the creation of the Turkish-speaking dynasts.'²¹ There was also the emergence of a 'service class' and a (largely bureaucratic) petty bourgeoisie, and simultaneous relative eclipse of the traditional merchants and 'ulamā' as important social groups. What was lacking was an affluent and self-confident upper bourgeoisie, its functions being largely usurped by foreigners.

Social differentiation was as apparent, if not more so, in the towns and cities, in which a cosmopolitan class of *nouveaux riches*

²⁰ P. M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922* (London, 1966), 203.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 211.

inhabited the recently constructed, fashionable quarters of Cairo, Alexandria and Port Said, while the urban poor lived as slum dwellers in the ancient parts of the cities. The new quarters had the appearance of European cities, and in particular had a pronounced French stamp, as did many aspects of Turco-Egyptian culture. Railways, postal services and telegraphs linked these cities, as steamships linked Egypt with Europe and with near and further Asia; after 1869 ships steamed direct from Europe via the Suez canal to the east. Egypt had become one of the two or three key communications areas in the world in the new era of technological innovation in transport and production. Many aspects of Egypt in the 1870s were as modern and as up-to-date as anything elsewhere on the continent, or beyond. Yet there were very serious contradictions and eccentricities in these developments. Little of the modernity was home-spun. Practically all the infrastructure of the Turco-Egyptian state was owned and operated by foreign concerns. The price in money and in power of Ismā'īl's policies was immense.

When Ismā'īl became khedive in 1863, he inherited not only a considerable debt from his uncle Muḥammad Sa'īd (some £7 million, £3 million of it to one firm of European bankers), but also a thriving economy. The exports of long-staple cotton increased over six-fold between 1850 and 1865, by which time the American civil war had put a premium on Egyptian cotton; its value increased four times. But with the end of the civil war prices suddenly collapsed, and the cotton boom ended. This was an economic disaster, from which Egypt did not recover until well into the period of the British occupation. Large numbers of big land-owners and innumerable *fallāḥīn* were ruined. Faced with high taxation and the threat of conscription into the army, there was much political discontent among the *fallāḥīn*, which Ismā'īl's hesitant social and political reforms only partially alleviated. The khedive introduced an assembly of delegates (*majlis shura al-nuwwab*) in 1866, which was part of a system of checks and balances which aimed to control the *fallāḥīn* through the village headmen and at the same time to keep an eye on the headmen themselves. Very significant advances were made in the establishment of a nationwide modern state educational system (schools were set up for girls in 1873), so that by the end of the 1870s Egypt had perhaps the most advanced schools on the continent.

The collapse of the cotton boom did not deter Ismā'īl's declared aim of aggrandisement, both within Egypt and beyond. He was forced to turn to extra-Egyptian sources of finance. In so doing, he ran up huge foreign debts, the very high rates of interest of which crippled whatever recuperative powers the Egyptian economy possessed. It is perhaps not very remarkable that Ismā'īl utilised foreign capital in this manner or that European bankers were so willing to aid and abet the aggrandisement schemes: this was the normal *modus operandi* of risk capital. What has to be questioned is the motive behind Ismā'īl's schemes, especially the Turco-Egyptian expansion into tropical Africa. There is a measure of sense in suggesting that the earlier Turco-Egyptian expansion into the Nilotic Sudan in Muḥammad 'Alī's time represented the economic interests of the governing élite. But by 1850 Muḥammad 'Alī's system of monopolies and compulsory cultivation had collapsed. In the mid-1850s Muḥammad Sa'īd seriously contemplated abandoning the Sudan as unlikely ever to pay for its own garrison and administration. After extensive experience as a khedival governor in the 1870s and 1880s, Gordon was to write it off as financially hopeless. The further one moved away from the Khartoum–Gezira heartland, the more economically hopeless did the whole empire become. Neither the khedive's ostentatious 'modernisation' policies in Egypt, nor the expansion of the empire, can be explained in socio-economic terms. Ismā'īl was motivated solely by self-aggrandisement. What has to be explained, perhaps, is the nature of Turco-Egyptian society that allowed him to get away with so much for so long.

Ismā'īl had some of the means of imperial expansion at hand: a fairly well equipped army, technological innovations – railways, the telegraph – and expertise, either native Egyptian or foreign hired. These he largely squandered. The Egyptian empire was (metaphorically as well as literally) built on sand. Ismā'īl lacked the financial and human resources necessary to provide a long-term administration which might have induced modest economic development. The timing of the collapse of Ismā'īl's empire was set by the major financial and political crisis in Egypt, by the Mahdiyya in the northern Sudan and by insurrection in the Equatoria province.

ETHIOPIA AND THE HORN

In 1872 Dejazmach Kassa, governor of the northern province of Tigre, was crowned king of kings of Ethiopia, Yohannes IV, after a power struggle in the interregnum following the suicide of Tewodros in 1868. The empire he ruled over was as politically divided as it was ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse. It was also relatively isolated, both geographically and ethnographically, from the outside world. Ethiopia enjoyed the strength and suffered the weakness of this isolation: the unifying influence of a long (and literate) history, and the dead hand of the past. Most of the emperor's subjects were highlanders, surrounded by alien lowlanders inhabiting deserts, arid plains, swamps and sea coasts. Only its border with the Turco-Egyptian province of the Sudan in the north and north-west was in any sense a frontier. Here, a Christian state and a Muslim state confronted one another with no intermediary peoples. Between Massawa and the Takazze (Tekeze) river, south of Kassala, the frontier ran across northern Eritrea, the Ethiopian side keeping more or less to the mountains. It then continued south to Gallabat, an important town on the Atbara river close to Begemder province, and the gateway to Gondar, and from there to the Blue Nile, dividing Gojjam from Sennar.

Following the border region southwards, the Oromo (Galla) of Wallaga were practically independent of the centre of the empire; they were more closely involved with Shoa. This, the southernmost province of the old Christian kingdom, was ringed by a group of states or chiefdoms inhabited by western Cushitic-speaking Sidama peoples, who practised intensive settled agriculture with *ensete*, the false banana, as the staple crop. This was the wealthiest region of the Horn. From the seventeenth century onward much of it had been overrun by Oromo pastoralists. Most of the Sidama had passed under Oromo rule, while retaining their Sidama languages and cultures, but some such as Kaffa and Walamo, situated in the most mountainous and densely forested areas, had retained their independence. Kaffa was an isolated, nominally Christian and wealthy state, which resisted Shoan expansion until nearly the end of the century. The Oromo were eastern Cushitic-speaking peoples, like the Somali; it was the pastoralists among them who had migrated over the surrounding

region, though many of these had later abandoned cattle-keeping for settled agriculture. In the early nineteenth century Oromo-ruled kingdoms emerged from the old Sidama states on the upper Gibe river, the most important of which were Innarya and Jimma. Under the influence of Afar and Harari merchants the two states became islamised. Innarya was eclipsed in the 1850s and 1860s by its rival Jimma, East of Innarya and Jimma were the Gurage chiefdoms, some Muslim and others Christian, but all speaking a Semitic language, and all heavily influenced by the Amhara.

Highland Ethiopia was in fact surrounded on all sides by pastoral, nomadic peoples: Nilotes to the west, Cushites to the south and east, Beja and Arabs to the north. The mainly Christian peoples of the highlands were Semitic-speakers, of two main groups, Amhara and Tigrinya, with smaller groups of other, Cushitic-speaking peoples, such as the Agau, Damot and the Judaic Falasha. Isolated from the main concentration of Semitic-speakers were the Muslim Harari of the mountainous area east of the Awash valley, on the borders of Afar and Somali country. The city of Harar, originally the capital of a small Muslim emirate, had grown to be the foremost trading centre of the Horn. But by the nineteenth century it had become hemmed in by the settlement of Oromo, who interfered with the commerce of the townsfolk.

There were about ten long-established provinces of the Christian empire: in the far north, Tigre and Simien, then Begemder, Amhara, Wag, Lasta, Yeju, Wollo, and in the south, Gojjam and Shoa. The last, though once the central province of the medieval Christian empire, had been practically severed from the main body of Christian territory by Oromo infiltration up the eastern side of the northern highlands. It was thus practically independent of the central authority, and its young King Menelik maintained his own links with the Europeans at Aden and the Red Sea ports, and obtained from them the firearms necessary to defend himself from his theoretical overlord as well as to practise an imperial expansion of his own in the Oromo/Sidama states. By the later nineteenth century the Oromo living under Christian rule had mostly become Christians or Muslims, the others remaining pagan. Many had become Amharic speakers. The Oromo had penetrated mainly the eastern side of the highlands. In the north, the Azebo Oromo lived in the eastern parts of Wag and Lasta. Then there were the Yeju and Wollo Oromo, whose

Amharic-speaking aristocracy had played leading roles in the troubled times of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the south very large groups of Oromo such as the Barentu and the Mecha, had settled within and around the borders of Shoa, and many of them therefore were Muslim. By the 1870s Ethiopia was a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic/linguistic empire; but in its ethos or ideology, in the thrust of its politics and (very largely) in the personnel of its governmental and religious establishment, it was Amharic and Christian.

Ethiopia was also an empire based upon Amhara and Amharised peasant farmers. Land ownership and land holding were complex, and differed from one province to another. Some peasants owned the land they tilled, and paid taxes to the sovereign. Others were tenants on the lands of the nobility or of the church, and paid taxes and other dues to these landlords. Church ownership of land was permanent and no taxes were paid to the state. Part of the programme of centralising reform promulgated by Tewodros was an attempt to tax church lands; the attempt failed, and brought down the wrath of the religious establishment upon him – Yohannes and Menelik did not repeat the attempt. ‘Fiefs granted to other landholders were either permanent and inheritable’ – called *rest* land – ‘or temporary’ – called *gult* land – ‘burdened by a variety of obligations, such as the collection of taxes and tribute and the raising of armies. In the final resort the burdens were shifted to the tenants, who paid taxes usually in kind or in the form of corvée labour’.²² The political domain of the empire was made up of a smaller number of great landlords, secular and ecclesiastical. During the eighteenth century these had been the real rulers of Ethiopia, and their power did not greatly diminish during the reigns of the later nineteenth-century emperors. Tewodros tried to force them into submission; Yohannes and Menelik, more wisely, used diplomacy to achieve a measure of co-operation. Both Tewodros and Yohannes, in their different ways, were keen ideologues, proclaiming the glories of the Solomonic empire and the crusade of Christian Ethiopia against the Muslim ‘Turks and Ishmaelites’.

Of all the provinces, Shoa was the most independent, a vassal state of the empire. It was distant from the northerly centres of power, and because it was close to the wealthiest regions of the

²² Sven Rubenson, ‘Ethiopia and the Horn’, in *Cambridge history of Africa*, v, 70.

Horn of Africa, it was in a position to benefit economically from the rich trade from the south-western interior to the coast. Menelik astutely used the economic circumstances of Shoa to strengthen and expand what he considered to be his kingdom.

Neither Yohannes nor Menelik conceived of any political or economic threat from European states in the 1870s and early 1880s, and all the evidence suggests that their appreciation was correct. The threat, as far as the emperor was concerned, came from the Turco-Egyptians, both materially and ideologically. Islam was feared not only as an external and inimical religion, but also as a source of severe internal strain. A number of the great territorial magnates were secret (or even open) Muslims, and some elements of the army could not be relied upon. Although an examination of the political economy of the Turco-Egyptian expansion from Egypt in the nineteenth century leads one to question the reality of this threat, there can be no doubt that, to Ismā'il and the members of the Turco-Egyptian establishment, encirclement of, encroachment upon and subversion of Ethiopia was a serious policy. Hence Yohannes positively courted European intervention, as Tewodros had done before him. These repeated blandishments towards the European powers were as repeatedly rebuffed. Politically, no European states were concerned to intervene in the Horn of Africa in the 1870s. Commercially there was some interest, particularly in supplying arms and ammunition. Menelik, being a southerner, had not the responsibilities of Yohannes in defending the empire from the Turco-Egyptians, but had his own imperatives – the expansion of Shoa and control of the trade of the south-west – which in this period made him compete with Yohannes for European support. This pro-European (in Ethiopian eyes, pro-Christian) alignment was to change dramatically at the end of the 1880s, when European imperialist moves in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden forced Yohannes and Menelik to switch policy, and to attempt to gain the co-operation of the Mahdists in the Sudan against the Europeans. In the earlier decade, Ethiopia was concerned to break out of its dangerous (as well as glorious) isolation, imposed in part by geography and in part by Turco-Egyptian, Muslim encirclement.

WEST AFRICA

In the remarkably uniform ecological zones of West Africa the patterns of economic production and trade on the one hand, and political development on the other, had by the 1870s undergone a century or more of rapid change. The 'desert-side' trading concerns of Sahelian countries merged with a great variety of local trades across the Sudanese savanna and into the more thickly wooded lands to the south. Long-distance continental trade flowing across the Sahara penetrated deep into the central and western Sudan and even into the forest belt. Again, the economic impact of the long-established European trading enclaves was being felt several hundred kilometres inland from the coast, all the way from the Senegal to the Bight of Biafra. The political configuration of West Africa was, by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, immensely varied. If there was a tendency or pattern, it was rather in the direction of agglomeration (economic, military, demographic, and even administrative) but many communities remained very small.

The coasts of West Africa had, of course, attracted the attention of Europeans since the fifteenth century, yet the predominant feature for most of the region, in the 1870s, was the small and restricted degree of European influence. Unlike some other parts of tropical Africa, this was not a case of European neglect of economically unprofitable lands. On the contrary, it was the richness and diversity of the economies of West Africa which gave its societies the strength to withstand European influence. During the succeeding two decades, it was information about this wealth that was one factor at least which impelled France, Britain and Germany to partition. The fact that these alien colonisers did not reap a great deal of economic benefit or profit from their hastily acquired possessions is profoundly indicative of the nature of colonial rule and systems, not of the economies of West Africa. The richness and diversity of these economies were not an illusion: the Europeans failed to understand in a general manner how they worked, and in particular they failed to grasp that they were dealing with indigenous varieties of economic operations which, while often being themselves exploitative, could be more intensively exploited only at the peril of their being extinguished. On the eve of partition, even from a wholly Eurocentric point

of view – that of the impatient colonels in St Louis, the harassed British consul on Fernando Po, or the combative traders in the Niger delta – what was apparent, and a matter of grave concern, were West African strengths, not weaknesses, assertiveness, not passivity.

In the context of long- and middle-distance trade, West Africa can be divided conveniently into two great regions, east and west, to which the old European geographical terms can usefully be applied: Central Sudan/Lower Guinea and Western Sudan/Upper Guinea. Neither of these two regions was in any way homogenous economically, but each did comprise production and trading networks or systems, some of which were of considerable antiquity, which were closely interconnected and interrelated. This approach to the political economies of West Africa avoids the dichotomy of ‘European oriented’ and ‘Sudanic’ economies, which increasingly is seen to be false. West African systems of production and trade, and the wider political economies in which these operated, were not specifically differentiated according to whether or not they were associated with the international trade of capitalist Europe and North America. From the West African viewpoint, European traders were one species of a familiar genus of trading diasporas. Their operations were limited to coastal lands precisely because they were foreigners in a much more immediate and obvious sense than any of the other trading diasporas, such as those of the Hausa and the Dyula. Because the Portuguese, French, Dutch, British and other European traders were so comparatively disadvantaged, they increasingly tended to resort to force to achieve their ends. The broad pattern of partition – certainly in West Africa – reflects the extent to which Europeans were able and willing to use force in competing against one another and against Africans.

Viewed from the perspective of partition, the European traders cannot of course be dismissed so easily. They were the West African representatives of European international capitalism, which had pronounced inclusive tendencies. All trading diasporas in West Africa were instruments of some change – religious and social as well as economic and political – and the European trading diasporas came increasingly to be so. They sought to bend the native West African systems to their demands, implicitly or explicitly. Throughout the nineteenth century – and indeed

earlier – expanding zones of European economic influence (in some cases, predominance) spread inland from coastal enclaves. By the 1870s these zones of European economic activities had possibly reached a critical stage. Here were technical economic problems of profitability and terms of trade which required drastic means for resolution. These networks of European economic activities operated, however, within the larger West African economic regions; they were not detached or differentiated from them. If the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century witnessed an economic revolution in West Africa, then the focus of this was internal rather than external: ‘...the economic revolution identified with the nineteenth century and the shift from slave exports to so-called legitimate trade in vegetable oils and other goods... began at least half a century earlier and was more closely related to internal West African economic developments than European-induced policies and demands.’²³

The Central Sudan/Lower Guinea economic region

The Central Sudan had recovered from the long-lasting drought of the mid-eighteenth century, and thereafter enjoyed what must have been unprecedented economic growth. This was maintained until well into the nineteenth century. The upheavals of the jihads of 1804–20 caused some economic disruption, but the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate brought political stability and enlargement to much of the region. Economic prosperity continued until at least the end of the century, by which time the central Sudan had been partitioned between the French, British and German colonisers. Trade flowed into and out of the Central Sudan from many directions. Maghribi and Ghadamasi merchants exchanged Manchester cloth, brought from Tripoli, at Kano for ostrich feathers and hides, and Tuareg and Hausa engaged in more regional trade from the old Air sultanate and the Hausa Sahel. Relations between Sokoto and Bornu were generally peaceful, and Kanuri participated in much of the regional trade of the north-eastern Hausaland (Zinder) and Bornu borderlands, while in Bornu itself, Hausa had become the commercial language.

Indeed, not only was the greater part of the trade of the Central

²³ Paul E. Lovejoy, ‘Interregional monetary flows in the precolonial trade of Nigeria’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1974, 15, 4, 563–85.

Sudan in Muslim hands (nearly all the traders in Bornu and the Sahel of northern Hausaland were members of the Sanūsī order), but most of these Muslims were Hausa speakers. The Hausa trading diaspora had begun before the nineteenth century, but that century witnessed a huge expansion of Hausa production at home and trade abroad. By the early nineteenth century the strength of the Central Sudan economy, combined with the collapse of the Yoruba empire of Oyo, had allowed Hausa traders to assume a large share of the long-distance trade all the way from the middle Volta basin to Adamawa and south to the Atlantic coast. From the main economic centres of the Sokoto caliphate, Hausa exported livestock, potash, salt, textiles, leather goods and slaves. In exchange they obtained kola from Asante, west of the Volta basin and from the Yoruba towns textiles and re-exported European firearms and cloth. Lancashire cottons reached Kano both from the Mediterranean and from the Bight of Benin. A crucial re-export from the Yoruba towns was cowries, which formed the common currency and the main medium of exchange for almost the whole of the Western Sudan/Lower Guinea economic region.²⁴

It is also apparent that trade did not consist entirely, or perhaps even primarily, of 'luxury' products. Bulk goods, especially foodstuffs and raw materials, were carried to and from the caliphate, the Yoruba towns and the Ibo country. Indeed, the distinction between luxury goods and bulk goods is misleading, since goods such as kola, potash and salt, for example, were transported in considerable quantities. Production of manufactured goods and agricultural crops involved large numbers of people, many of whom were slaves or semi-servile labourers. By the middle of the nineteenth century there were big concentrations of slaves on plantations in the textile belt of Hausaland – Kano, northern Zaria, southern Katsina and Zamfara. The forced relocation of agricultural populations from the peripheral areas to the prosperous central regions was the most significant economic effect of the Fulani jihads.²⁵ Much of the collection of

²⁴ Marion Johnson, 'The cowrie currencies of West Africa', parts 1 and 2, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1970, 11, 1, 17–49 and 11, 3, 331–33.

²⁵ Paul E. Lovejoy, 'Plantations in the economy of the Sokoto caliphate', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1978, 19, 341–68; J. S. Hogendorn, 'The economics of slave use on "Plantations" in the Zaria emirate of the Sokoto caliphate', *Int. J. Afr. Hist. Studies*, 1977, 10, 369–83, and 'Slave acquisition and delivery in pre-colonial Hausaland' in R. Dumett and B. K. Swartz (eds.), *West African culture dynamics: archaeological and historical perspectives* (Chicago, 1979).

oil in the palm-growing lands around the southern Yoruba city states was undertaken by slave labour. Among the trading communities of the south-eastern area, commerce was greatly dependent upon domestic slaves. They were used as canoe boatmen, in the portage of the oil, in marketing and in raising food crops to feed those people employed in production and trade – this last being a common feature throughout West Africa. Some of these domestic slaves could reach the highest positions in these socially mobile communities.

It is a curious fact [wrote Consul H. H. Johnston] and an evidence of the mild character of the slavery in the Niger Delta, that nearly all the leading men in the oil rivers at the present time are ex-slaves, – such as Yellow Duke of Old Calabar, Ja Ja of Opobo, Waribu and Oko Jumbo of Bonny, and William Kia of Brass.²⁶

In northern Iboland large numbers of slaves worked on yam plantations, the produce of which was sold to the people to the south, where most of the fertile land was given over to the growing of palm trees.

The use of slave and other forms of coerced labour in the Central Sudan and Lower Guinea is characteristic of particular forms of political economies, but it is not an indicator of economic decline or stagnation. Even when the prices and volume of palm products in the south-eastern area fell after the 1860s, the variety and scale of internal trade remained high. The huge dug-out canoes used in the coastal lagoons were manufactured scores of kilometres up-country. Dried fish and some sea salt were traded inland for yams and other vegetables and for local tobacco. The transmission to the interior of European goods took up more and more of the internal trade – an index of dependence on such foreign goods but also a sign of growing prosperity. Manchester cloths and clothing, European firearms and ammunition, iron and other metal goods, salt from British mines, cowries, from the Indian Ocean, American tobacco, Jamaican rum – these and other goods worked their way through the old established local markets and made use of the routes and techniques of trade developed when slaves were the major item of export. The goods manufactured in capitalist Europe had not by the 1870s seriously undermined local industries and production. The south-eastern

²⁶ H. H. Johnston, 'Report on the British protectorate of the Oil rivers (Niger delta)', 1888, cited in D. Northrup, *Trade without rulers: pre-colonial economic development in south-eastern Nigeria* (Oxford, 1978), 222.

area was wealthy enough, and palm-oil production and trade greatly increased the number of people involved in these economic processes, so that expanded demand and preferences could absorb without much difficulty both local goods and services and the flood of inexpensive European manufactures and other imports.

The palm oil and palm-kernel oil production belt coincided more or less with the area of tropical rain forests on either side of the southernmost stretch of the lower Niger river, from Cameroun to the hinterland of the lagoons from Lagos to Whydah, and along the eastern Gold Coast west of the Volta mouth. The relationship of African producers to the European oil firms differed from one part of the coast to another. In the eastern section – the Niger delta and Cross river areas – African merchant princes intervened between producers and European firms. These merchants had become so powerful that distinctive polities, such as Bonny, Brass, Opobo and the other delta or Oil river states, played a dominant role in the most lucrative of the palm regions. In the Yoruba and Aja-speaking section, from Lagos to Whydah, the role of the middlemen was much less marked, and many merchants from Ibadan, Ijebu Ode and Abeokuta were also producers.

On the Gold Coast west of the Volta mouth, trade in palm products was much less developed, but such as it was, it had been in the hands of Fante merchants, who dealt with the producers inland, in the Fante states and in Asante. Along the Gold Coast, however, a major transition had already taken place by the 1870s. Much of this medium-distance trade, and also much of the local trade, especially the exchange of European manufactured goods for cash or produce, had been taken over by Europeans. Many Fante firms had failed; some had gone bankrupt, and this enabled Europeans, in particular the firm of Swanzy, to take the kind of initiative that in most other parts of West Africa followed rather than preceded the imposition of colonial rule. The formation of the southern Gold Coast as a crown colony in 1874, following the Asante war, was a recognition of the British orientation of much of the commercial life of the territory. This failure of the Fante to continue to operate commercially in their own country lay behind both the birth of the Fante confederation in 1868 and the breakdown of its politics and constitution in 1873. It must be emphasised, however, that these European-owned businesses on

the Gold Coast were largely concerned with local exchange; the Gold Coast had still not succeeded in finding a viable legitimate export trade as an alternative to the trade in slaves.²⁷

These differences in the economic relationship between African producers and merchants and the European traders reflected the political diversity of the southern zone. Asante had moved much more into the production of kola nuts for the northern markets than into palm products, and its concern with maintaining routes to the coast was to secure an adequate supply of firearms. In the 1870s kola nuts were carried south to the Gold Coast, and transported by sea to Lagos, for sale in Yoruba country (as also were kola nuts from Sierra Leone). The cession of the Dutch forts, including Elmina, to the British in 1871–2, resulted in a severe crisis in the Asante political economy, and led to the Asante–British war of 1873. On the British side, this was an unusual incident in its relations with tropical African states. It had been foreshadowed in the Ethiopian campaign of 1865, and these two military adventures seem to be symptomatic of an increased confidence by Europeans in their own military technology and organisation, so that expeditions deep into the interior of Africa no longer seemed a complete impossibility, or at least a quite unacceptable military and political risk. The Asante campaign was a massive use of force on a scale out of all proportion to the merits or necessities of the situation on the ground.²⁸

Dahomey presented both contrasts and parallels to Asante. It was still militarily one of the most powerful states in West Africa. It had certainly retained its internal cohesion. Unlike Asante, Dahomey had obtained its independent access to the sea, with the ports of Whydah and, less directly, Porto Novo. This was immensely important to the kingdom. It was assured a supply of firearms. Although it had been notorious as a slave-exporting state during the first half of the century, by the 1870s Dahomey had managed effectively the changeover to palm produce. Palms were tapped in the forests behind Whydah and Porto Novo, in both royal and private plantations. Oil was traded to merchants, many of them Brazilian creoles (who also owned some of the plantations) and the representatives of French firms. These plantations were

²⁷ Edward Reynolds, *Trade and economic change on the Gold Coast, 1807–1874* (London, 1974).

²⁸ Freda Harcourt, 'Disraeli's imperialism, 1866–1868: a question of timing', *Hist. J.*, 1980, 23, 1, 104.

operated with slave labour. In 1876–77 the British navy was to blockade the Dahomian coast, including the port of Cotonu, over which the French has possessed vague rights since 1868. This blockade was ostensibly to protect British traders and to stamp out the vestiges of the export of slaves. The real reason was the wish of the British traders, and intermittently of the British government, to close the gap, to extend British control over the coast from the Volta mouth to Lagos, and thereby to increase greatly the profitable customs returns. It achieved little. The Lagos merchants prospered; the French were slighted, Dahomey suffered hardly at all. After less than a year, the British called off the navy, after collecting a nominal fine from the foreign traders. Gelele's kingdom emerged unscathed. But the change-over from being primarily a slave-exporting to a palm-oil producing state led to considerable social and political tensions, which found expression in one group supporting the old-established militaristic nature of the kingdom, and another in favour of more peaceful production and commerce. The conflict between Dahomey and the Egba and western Yoruba country continued, but here the basic reasons were not purely military, slave-raiding campaigns, but control over routes to the sea – particularly to Badagry – and over populations that could supply labour in the palm plantations.

The prolonged internal conflict between the Yoruba states, and between the Egba and Dahomey, should not lead one to underestimate their strength as political units and their considerable prosperity. During the middle years of the nineteenth century, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijebu Ode and other towns were growing in population and in economic diversification. A thriving trade existed between these states and the emirates of the Sokoto caliphate. One of the chief causes for dissension was competition over economic (which also meant human) resources and over trade routes. The Yoruba civil wars were all marked by a concern to control the vital links between these inland cities and their surrounding plantations of oil-palm trees, and the coastal ports. There was also the need to have access to the north. Most of the routes leading northwards went through the powerful emirate of Ilorin to Hausaland. Of the Yoruba states, Ibadan, over 200 km from the coast, was the most dynamic. It attempted to spread its political and economic influence, especially eastwards into Ekiti country, and to procure an independent outlet to the sea. These

moves were resisted by the Egba state of Abeokuta and by other Yoruba states such as Ijebu Ode and Ilesha. British activities at Lagos, proclaimed a crown colony in 1861, and at Badagry, taken over in 1862, were aimed largely at controlling the seaward (or lagoon) termini of the Yoruba trade routes, and imposing tariffs on imports and exports. British activity incurred the ire of French firms established further west along the coast at Cotonu and Porto Novo, and of the German firms which were to try to build up a trade based on Lagos in the 1870s and 1880s.

Although much stronger economically and much more militarily oriented, the Yoruba and Egba city states in the 1870s resembled the Fante states in one important characteristic. Since the 1840s Christian missions had been established in all the main urban centres by repatriates from Sierra Leone. In 1859 Yorubaland's first newspaper was launched in Abeokuta, to be followed by another one in Lagos in 1863. While the northern Yoruba were strongly under the influence of Islam, those in the south were open to Christianity, and Western education, conveyed in the English language. Abeokuta reacted to the British presence in Lagos by establishing the Egba United Board of Management in 1865, with a president-general and a high sheriff. A secular school was set up, some measures of town planning instituted, there was a court to settle commercial disputes, and a postal service to Lagos; this was thirty years before British colonial expansion into Yorubaland. It was from Yorubaland that the African clergyman Crowther set out in 1857 to proselytise the people of the lower Niger and the delta, and indeed this mission introduced Christianity to the merchant princes of that region. The African-run Niger mission was an active and successful Christian endeavour; only in the late 1870s did the white personnel of the Church Missionary Society, the parent body of the mission, begin their racist attack on the African clergy.

The Yoruba city states remained politically independent. Only the ports of Lagos and Badagry were in foreign hands. The official British presence in Lagos had little more impact than the unofficial Brazilian creole or French presence at Whydah and Cotonu. The British colonial government maintained itself on import and export dues, as many contemporary African rulers did. British traders prospered, but no more so than up the Niger or on the delta. So did German traders at Lagos, in spite of tariffs weighted

against their goods, especially spirits. The colonial government became involved in the Yoruba civil wars, but only as yet another competing state, concerned to keep open the trade routes, which were the source of the colony's wealth and revenue.

If the Yoruba and Egba states were dynamic and expansive during the middle part of the nineteenth century, the empire of Benin was very much on the defensive and lost so many of its provincial areas, that by the 1870s it had shrunk to its Edo heartland. From the north, armies from the Muslim emirate of Nupe pushed down the Niger river into Benin territory; Ibadan moved in from the west. To the south, the kingdom of Warri became economically independent, especially after Itsekiri oil-palm producers and traders set up new centres of exchange with European firms at the mouths of the Benin and other rivers. The Itsekiri effectively excluded Benin from the profitable oil trade. For many years Benin was largely ignored, both by other Africans and by Europeans: it was not until 1897 that Britain saw fit to conquer the heartland of the ancient empire and to incorporate it into colonial Nigeria.

The Niger delta country, including the Cross river area to the east, was the oil-producing region *par excellence*. In the earlier part of the nineteenth century the European demand was for palm oil, used for the production of soap and lubricants. By the 1870s the demand was more for the oil from palm kernels, which was used in the manufacture of margarine. Earlier, much of this oil trade had been handled by British merchants. From 1841 French merchants, in particular the Marseilles firm of Régis, competed on the Dahomian coast and, to a lesser extent, at Lagos and on the Niger delta. The 1870s saw the rapid growth of German trade in the palm zone; by 1880 Hamburg had come to appropriate nearly one-third of all West Africa's overseas trade. This increased European economic activity on the coast of Lower Guinea was accompanied by, and was in part a response to, a depression in value of palm oils to the African producers, and to the middlemen engaged in the trade. In the twenty-five years from 1860 to 1885, the price of palm oil fell by nearly 50 per cent, and palm-kernel prices fell by about one-third. The terms of trade, for the first time in the century, turned distinctly against African merchants and producers. These reciprocated by taking protectionist and monopolistic measures, some of which entailed the use of force.

Force had always been latent in the highly competitive and socially mobile milieu of the Niger delta oil barons. By the middle of the century civil wars, with underlying economic causes, were beginning to break out all over the delta/Cross river area: Calabar in 1850–1, Bonny in 1869, Kalabari in the 1870s. In 1869 Jaja broke away from Bonny to found Opobo. Around 1879 Olumu set himself up at Ebrohimi at the mouth of the Benin river, in competition with Warri, and in 1883 he was succeeded by the famous Nana. The newer delta city states appeared to be stronger economically than their older rivals. Not all the European firms attempted to by-pass the oil barons by making contact with African producers inland. Some continued to trade satisfactorily with the delta states. It was rival firms to these that had used the Niger river as a means of penetrating the interior. A British firm traded in ivory and shea-butter with the emirate of Nupe from 1871, and a little later was able to tap the oil trade at markets such as Onitsha. There were thus rival trading systems on the Niger river and in the delta, although the former was small compared to the latter. The European river traders were protected by warships of the British navy, but the four main British firms were in competition with one another as well as with the delta oil barons. Only in 1879 did George Goldie succeed in merging the British Niger river interests in the United African Company. By this time French competitors had established themselves up the Niger. Although prices for palm products had fallen, the increased – and sometimes violent – competition among African and European traders did not adversely affect African producers, and there is little evidence to support the notion of an economic crisis enveloping the delta states and Iboland in the 1870s.

In the 1870s Ibo country (and also the land of the Ibibio and Efik) and its coastal outlets were still heavily committed to the trade in palm oil and palm kernels, even though the boom conditions of the previous two decades had given way to the beginnings of a recession in this trade. The trade in slaves had come to an end, as had consequently the transitional period when both slaves and oil were exported. The slaves were now employed internally on palm plantations and on food-producing farms. Opobo, which was founded by Jaja in 1869, developed as a direct result of the oil-dominated export trade. The site of Opobo effectively cut off Bonny from participation in the trade, and

Opobo became the premier oil port. Production was in the palm belt of the southern half of Ibo and Ibibio country, and involved large numbers of people, unlike the specialised slave trade, which had been in the hands of groups of people who specialised in this economic activity.

Apart from the fairly widespread use of slave labour, the complex and laborious operations of production were essentially egalitarian. Most free producers were members of both village and age-set communities; and even where so-called secret societies were involved, the membership of these was widespread and easily acquired. With the cessation of the slave export trade, the formerly vital role of the diaspora of Aro traders gradually diminished in importance, though some Aro groups took part in oil production and trade. Most oil was transported to the coastal ports by canoe, using the numerous rivers and creeks of the region. The construction of the large craft, their manning and the services required, all led to intense economic activity. The northern part of Iboland was not left out of this widespread area of prosperity, because the palm belt increasingly became dependent upon it for food, especially yams. What the palm tree was to the production, commerce and transportation of the south, yams were to the north. The development of a mass-production force in Iboland generated a demand for cheap goods, which coincided neatly with the importation of mass-produced European manufactured goods for the first time on a large scale. At this period such imports stimulated rather than depressed the local economy: 'Iron bars actually stimulated hinterland industry by freeing smiths from dependence on inefficient local iron-smelting, thus greatly increasing the availability of locally made tools and weapons.'²⁹ All this economic activity – on a scale perhaps unparalleled in tropical Africa – took place in societies notable for the absence of states or any form of political units larger than lineage groups, age sets and secret societies. 'The political organisation of south-eastern Nigeria', concludes Northrup, 'was able to cope with the conditions of the pre-colonial period without major structural changes.'³⁰ In this respect, Iboland could not have been more dissimilar from the Sokoto caliphate.

The caliphate of Sokoto was the largest political unit in West Africa: it was not a state, in either the general or the theoretically

²⁹ Northrup, *Trade without rulers*, 226.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 230.

technical sense of the term, and neither is 'empire' an adequate description. It was a Muslim theocratic federation, comprising nearly thirty emirates, most of which were ruled by the descendants of the Fulani jihadists of the first three or four decades of the century. These emirates were linked, in a variety of ideological, constitutional and administrative ways, to the two rulers of the divided caliphate, the emir of Gwandu (in the west) and the caliph of Sokoto (in the east). The caliph was the ultimate source of religious and political authority. The emir of Gwandu related to the caliph in much the same way as individual emirs related to the two higher authorities. The caliph was responsible for appointing emirs, and his *wazîr* (or the *wazîr* of the Emir of Gwandu) toured the federation to ensure that the emirs kept to the complex rules.

Not all the peoples within the confines of the federated caliphate accepted the position of the emirs or the caliph. The old Hausa state of Kebbi, for instance, remained independent (except for an eighteen-year period), as did many non-Muslim peoples scattered throughout the caliphate. Borgu to the west, Damagaram, with its capital at the important trading city of Zinder, to the north, and Bornu and Mandara to the east were outside the control of the caliph. There was considerable internal friction, over succession disputes within the emirates, and with revolts of emirs against the caliph's authority. The emirates on all except the northern borders tended to expand militarily. Ideologically the caliphate can be seen as being in a state of continuing jihad; or rather, by the last third of the century it was a vast geopolitical area living with the consequences of the earlier jihads.

In spite of conflict and revolt, there was a large measure of stability within the caliphate as a whole, and within each emirate. Administrative, judicial and fiscal systems had been established, and generally functioned satisfactorily. The caliphate was multi-ethnic, with other groups besides the Fulani and Hausa, and it was also stratified socially. With increased commercial and general economic activity, this stratification was becoming more marked. Society was divided between freemen and slaves. At the top of the non-servile social ladder was the aristocracy, newly established Fulani lords or more ancient Habe (Hausa) lineages. This was a feudal aristocracy with many lords living on their fiefs and others, employed in the local or central bureaucracies, living on the

proceeds of their estates. Below the aristocrats, socially, were their clients. The religious authorities, '*ulamā* and others, were a distinct group. At the bottom of the scale were commoners, *talakawa*, peasant farmers and urban craftsmen. Although stratified, it was not a closed society; social mobility was possible, and the rate of slave manumission was high.

By the 1870s the caliphate was gaining in cohesion and strength from the effective operation of its religious and administrative linkages, and from its active and varied economy: 'Economic growth which had begun after 1750 continued through the nineteenth century, and the steady enlargement of the caliphate (throughout the middle years of the century) facilitated the movement of merchants and led to the economic supremacy of Hausa traders throughout the savanna from the Volta to Adamawa, the northern Yoruba country, Borgu, and the middle Volta basin.'³¹ Kano was the great commercial and industrial centre, but by no means the only one. In each emirate the capital and certain other towns were markets, and were the focal points of agricultural and manufacturing production. Only in the outlying emirates, such as Kontagora in the west, Adamawa (Yola) in the east, and Nupe and Ilorin in the south, was the accent on predatory rather than on peaceful commerce. Trade between Zinder (Damagaram) and Kano flourished, in spite of hostility between the rulers of the two emirates, the one without, the other within the caliphate. Barth's mid-century comments on Kano are worth repeating, because the economic activity of the city was a barometer for most of the caliphate as a whole.

The great advantage of Kano is that commerce and manufactures go hand in hand, and almost every family has its share in them. There is really something grand in this kind of industry, which spreads to the north as far as Murzuk, Ghat and even Tripoli; to the west, not only to Timbuktu, but in some degree even as far as the shores of the Atlantic, the very inhabitants of Arguin dressing in the cloth woven and dyed in Kano; to the east, all over Bornu, although there it comes in contact with the native industry in the country; and to the south it maintains a rivalry with the native industry of the Igbira and Ibo, while to the south east it invades the whole of Adamawa, and is only limited by the nakedness of the pagan *sans-culottes*, who do not wear clothing...³²

³¹ Lovejoy, 'Interregional monetary flows', 571–2.

³² Heinrich Barth, *Travels and discoveries in northern and central Africa*, 5 vols. (London, 1857), 1, 510.

The Western Sudan/Upper Guinea economic zone

The second economic zone of West Africa comprised the immense area from the Atlantic coast between Cape Blanco and Arguin island, north of the Senegal mouth, around to the mouth of the Bandama river on the Ivory Coast, on the seaward side; on the landward side, from the Sahel north of the Senegal and upper Niger rivers, as far east as Timbuktu, across the upper Volta basin and the woodland savanna of Bonduku, Kong and Baule. The interior was dominated by two great empires, one declining, the other emerging: the northern Tukolor (Fulani) conquest state ruled by Aḥmad, the son of ‘Umar Tal (al-Ḥājj ‘Umar); and the southern Dyula conquest state of Samory Ture.

To the east, in the borderlands between this region and the Central Sudan/Lower Guinea economic zone, were a series of much smaller states, such as the kingdoms of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples. Inland from Sierra Leone were the small pagan chiefdoms of the Mende, who had reached the sea in the eighteenth century, and north of the Rokel river the Muslim Temne chiefdoms were consolidating their position. The Muslim Fulani theocratic state of Futa Jalon, founded in the eighteenth century, continued to exercise great cultural and religious prestige even after its military prowess had waned. In the middle of the century the aristocracy of Futa Jalon had to contend with a complex religious movement, that of the Hubbus, composed of followers of the Tijāniyya teachings introduced by al-Ḥājj ‘Umar, as opposed to the Qādiriyya brotherhood held to by the majority of Fulani. This religious civil war was not brought to an end until the alliance of the Fulani of Futa Jalon with Samory between 1879 and 1893. Futa Jalon exerted considerable influence over the small coastal populations of what the French called the Rivières du Sud, between the Rio Grande (Portuguese Guinea) and the Melakori and Scarcies rivers, north of the Sierra Leone peninsular.

Senegambia experienced a series of politico-religious revolutions in the 1860s and 1870s, which led to the establishment of a number of dynamic states, and which spread Islam among the populations of most of the region. The revolutions were sparked off (as were many other political events in the whole zone) by the presence in the region of ‘Umar Tal, a Muslim cleric from Futa Toro, who returned from pilgrimage to Mecca in 1840 and

proclaimed a jihad in 1852. Large numbers of Fulani from Futa Toro migrated east to settle in 'Umar's domains. The Islamic revolution in Senegambia began in Babidu, a Mandingo kingdom on the north bank of the lower Gambia river, led by Maba Diakhou Ba, who conquered the Serer country of Salum. Maba converted two Wolof leaders to the rule of the Tijāniyya – Lat Dior, *damel* of Cayor, and Alhuri N'Diaye, who held the traditional Wolof kingly title of *burba*, and who exercised considerable influence over the Wolof. The last of the great Senegambian jihadists was Muḥammad al-Amīn, a Soninke who in the mid-1880s established an anti-French and anti-Fulani state centred on Bundu.

The physical impact of what Curtin terms the 'trade diasporas from overseas' on the western half of West Africa was still very small. A few scattered forts and trading posts on the Senegal river, such as Podor, Bakel and Madina, inherited from the burst of activity early in the nineteenth century or during Faidherbe's governorship, barely secured French trading and political interests along the river. Such power as the French enjoyed was exercised by a few gun-boats which could only move when the river was in flood. During the dry season their neighbours resumed superiority. Futa Toro controlled much of the southern bank of the river. One hundred and fifty kilometres to the south of St Louis were the French island of Gorée and the coastal settlements of Rufisque, Dakar and Joal.

The British position on the Gambia was similar but even more minuscule, with Bathurst on St Mary's island in the river mouth, a few miles of river bank, the ex-French factory of Albreda, and MacCarthy Island, a trading depot 200 km up-river. French traders competed with British, Portuguese and Afro-Portuguese at the mouth of the Casamance. The Portuguese retained their ancient tiny settlements on the Bissagos islands and the neighbouring mainland, including the small port of Bissau. The British colony of Sierra Leone consisted of the stony peninsula on the estuary of the Rokel river, the Isles de Los to the north and Sherbro island to the south. Kennedy, who was governor of the British West African settlements from 1868 to 1872, built up a delicately balanced informal sphere of British political and commercial influence among the Temne and Mende chiefdoms in the hinterland. But the system of British informal influence broke down after 1873, and this contributed to the upsurge of European

aggressiveness in the area. Some 10,000 repatriated African slaves from the United States occupied coastal settlements at Cape Mesurado (Monrovia) and a few other colonies scattered along the Liberian coast, between the Gallinas river and Cape Palmas, but the coast of the Kru country attracted very little long-distance or overseas trade. The tiny trading settlements at Grand Bassam and Assinie on the Ivory Coast, which the French had occupied in 1842, formed a westward extension of the Akan/Gold Coast economic region.

The traditional economic heartland of the Western Sudan/Upper Guinea zone was the great basin formed by the tributaries of the upper Niger and the upper Senegal. The axes of trade spread out from this core area. The great majority of the long- and middle-distance traders were Soninke or Malinke in origin, or a mixture of the two, their collective name being Dyula. The Dyula dominated the trade and commerce of the western zone to an even greater extent than did the Hausa of the eastern. The majority of the Dyula were members of lineage groups whose members included not only traders but also Muslim clerics. They often set up distinctive clerical towns along the line of their trading routes, or they were congregated in separate quarters in the towns of the host community. In an increasingly differentiated society, they occupied distinctive petit bourgeois positions. The Dyula not only had a remarkable economic effect on most regions of the western zone, but also spread Islamic influences far and wide, and they were instrumental in the growth of two large polities – in the eighteenth century, the Wattara empire of Kong, between north-western Asante and the Bani tributary of the Niger, and, in the nineteenth, the state built up by Samory Ture.

The main axes of Dyula trade radiated in almost all directions from the Upper Niger/Upper Senegal core area. The upper and middle reaches of the Niger were traversed by canoes, some of them very large, which were crewed by specialised rivermen – the Bambara Somono above Timbuktu, the Songhay from Timbuktu to Gao and Say – and this crucial waterway carried goods, largely in the hands of Dyula merchants, from the woodland savanna areas of Lower Guinea to the desert boundary in the north. The trans-Saharan trade to Morocco and Tripoli from Timbuktu experienced a revival in the 1860s and 1870s. Some of the desert trade was regional rather than international. Moorish merchants

transported salt from Idjil to Galam on the middle Senegal, to be exchanged for gold from Bambuk, which was then carried north to Morocco 'in exchange for manufactured products in a form of triangular trade'.³³ A major and long-established trade route ran from the river ports of the middle Niger and Bani through Bobo Dioulasso, Kong and Bonduku to the Akan forests and the Gold Coast. By the nineteenth century the main item of trade was kola nuts. These were obtained in great quantities from Asante, and from the Senufo lands south of Kenedugu (one of the successor states of the Kong empire).

The chief Dyula group on the section of the Niger around Segu was the Maraka, who were of Muslim Soninke origin. Their main commercial settlement was Sinsani (Sansanding), some 25 km downstream from the Bambara capital of Segu. In the early nineteenth century Sinsani had taken over from the Jenne the role of the major trading entrepôt in the middle Niger valley. But the conquest of the Bambara states by al-Hājj 'Umar in the 1860 led to a sharp decline in the fortunes of Sinsani, and thereafter the main trading focus shifted to the Maraka city of Banamba, in the savanna west of the river. 'Umar's conquest of Segu and Kaarta, the two eighteenth-century Bambara states, and of the Fulani state of Masina, seriously disrupted, but did not suppress, trade. 'Umar's empire did not succeed in establishing political and administrative stability, and therefore in benefiting from its great increase in geographical scale, before its long-drawn-out conflict with the French.

The Maraka engaged in a thriving 'desert-side' economic interchange with the Moors of the Sahel and Sahara. Millet and other grains, and cotton cloth were exchanged for salt, horses and animal products. This desert-side trade depended on the ability of the Maraka to produce a surplus of millet and cotton cloth. This in turn depended on the availability of slaves, to grow the millet and cotton on plantations and to operate the textile industry. The desert-side economy was the basis for more widespread trading activities. Additional surplus grain and cloth was transported by donkey to the south, to Kong and Tangrela in Kenedugu, and up the Niger by canoe to Kankan, as were re-exported animal products earlier traded with the Moors. In the woodland savanna areas, these goods were exchanged for kola

³³ Curtin, *Economic change*, 283.

nuts and slaves. A further branch of Maraka trade was by canoe down the Niger to Timbuktu, with slaves from the woodland savanna regions and salt from the Sahara. The profit on selling slaves at Timbuktu was sufficient to cover the expenses of the trading voyage and to provide money – in the cowrie currency common to the western Sudan, but not to Senegambia – to purchase further slaves from the south. The Maraka economy was thus both slave using and slave exporting.³⁴

The greatest kola nut emporium in the woodland savanna region of Lower Guinea was Kankan, on the Milo river, a tributary of the upper Niger. The city had grown from a village to a Dyula merchant republic in the eighteenth century, eclipsing Bamako. It worked in close alliance with the Fulani theocracy in Futa Jalon, which indeed was an economic necessity, as Futa Jalon controlled the routes between Kankan and the coastal outlets on the Rivières du Sud and Sierra Leone. In the aftermath of the Umarian disruption, Kankan adopted a more aggressive policy in the 1870s. This resulted in an alliance of most neighbouring peoples against ‘the imperialism of Kankan’, and the fortunes of the city were saved only by the actions of Samory, whose involvement on behalf of the city was his first move in taking up a distinctly Muslim position in his great military and political campaigns.

Kankan was the junction of two of the major trading axes of the western zone – that which ran north-east, down the valley of the Niger to Timbuktu, and the north–south routes which started in the Kaarta Sahel around Niore and ran via Kita and Siguiri to Kankan, Bissandugu and Bayla. This was one of the main kola nut trade routes, one item given in exchange being Saharan rock salt. To the west of the Kaarta–Kankan axis were other kola nut routes – one set starting in the Freetown/Port Loko region of Sierra Leone and crossing the Futa Jalon to Bakel and other towns on the Senegal. Some kola nuts and other forest produce had been shipped by European merchants from Sierra Leone to the Gambia and the Senegal since the sixteenth century.

While there was some through traffic from the Rivières du Sud and Sierra Leone to the lands of the upper Niger and its tributaries, especially in firearms, Senegambia was the area where the European-dominated maritime trading systems most signifi-

³⁴ Roberts, ‘Long distance trade and production’, 169–88.

cantly penetrated the western Sudanic heartlands of the western economic zone. Senegambia was the nearest sub-Saharan African region to Europe. The two waterways, the Senegal and the Gambia, gave a means of access to the economies of the interior unparalleled in West Africa, and indeed, with only a few similar examples in the continent as a whole (the Kwanza river in Angola was one, and the Zambezi in Mozambique another). French and British traders used the Senegal and Gambia rivers respectively; in the opposite direction, various Dyula groups similarly exploited these routes. Foremost among the French and British were two particular groups, both of great importance in the history of West Africa. One of these were the people of mixed descent – Afro-Portuguese, Afro-French (*créoles*) and Afro-British – who as small-scale traders dominated many of the coastal economies from the Senegal to the Rivières du Sud until the intervention of big European, mainly French, firms in the groundnut trade in the second half of the nineteenth century. The other group was that of the recaptives or ‘liberated Africans’, the Creoles in the English sense of the term, who were people of mixed culture in Sierra Leone and the Gambia, though they were mainly of African descent. These recaptives played a major role in the economic and political history of Sierra Leone and, to a lesser extent, of the Gambia; and also, as migrants, in the economic and political history of the Gold Coast, Lagos, and Oil rivers and, especially, in Yorubaland.

There were a number of axes of Dyula trade leading from the interior to the Senegambian ports. The Gambia river routes ran from Bamako and other towns on the upper Niger to Barakunda Falls or MacCarthy Island, the head of navigation on the river. These routes were controlled by Diakhanke and Malinke Dyula. In the wet season goods were transported down the Senegal, in boats owned by the French or Afro-French of St Louis. There was also a desert camel route from Senegambia to the interior, from the country of the Trarza Moors north of the Senegal via Tichit, Walata and Arawan to Timbuktu. By the second half of the nineteenth century, after the export of slaves had ended, these interior routes to Senegambia were involved in regional rather than international trade. The only overseas import of significance was firearms, and the majority of these destined for the interior entered via the Rivières du Sud and Sierra Leone rather than via

Senegambia. European goods on the upper Niger, mainly textiles, were still imported by way of Morocco and Tripoli and the trans-Saharan routes at the end of the 1870s. Curtin concludes,

Even though it was fifty to seventy percent further from [the Middle Niger valley] to North Africa, the desert routes were dominant until the beginning of the colonial period; which suggests that camel transportation was at least fifty to seventy per cent cheaper than the combination of boats on the Senegal and donkey caravans from [Galam] eastward. The east–west route of Sahel or savanna, however, was vastly superior to the route through the forest from the Gulf of Guinea – not because the forest itself was a barrier, but only because on that route donkeys gave way to human portage.³⁵

Senegambia, however, was important in the nineteenth century not so much because of the trade generated between the coast and the interior, but because of the cultivation in parts of the region of groundnuts for export. The cultivation of groundnuts by local African peoples began along the Gambia in the early 1830s, spread south towards Sierra Leone, and north into Senegal in the 1840s. The groundnut (*arachis hypogaea*) is a plant of the dry savanna. Along the Rivières du Sud and in northern Sierra Leone groundnuts were produced largely by slave labour, which was supplied from Futa Jalon and elsewhere in the interior by Dyula and other merchants. Along the Gambia, in Sine-Salum, the Rufisque/Petite-Côte region, in Cayor and along the lower Senegal, groundnut production was mainly by free labour – that of the owners of the land being supplemented by seasonal migrant labour from the interior. These ‘strange farmers’ of the Gambia and ‘navétanes’ in Senegal were the people, Dyula and others, who previously had come down to the coast to trade in wax, ivory and slaves.³⁶ As in the palm-oil regions of the eastern economic zone, this African production of a major export item stimulated the development of a host of service and supplementary activities, such as transportation, marketing and feeding. Groundnut production also led to considerable social change and diversification, in regions which were either already predominantly Muslim by the 1870s, or were becoming so.

The pioneer merchants of the groundnut export trade had been African and Eurafican traders, but from the 1860s these were

³⁵ Curtin, *Economic change*, 281–3.

³⁶ Colin W. Newbury, ‘Prices and profitability in early nineteenth century West African trade’ in Claude Meillassoux (ed.), *The development of indigenous trade and markets in West Africa* (London, 1971), 96.

being put out of independent business by the representatives of the big European firms. By this time, along the whole of the *zone arachide* from Senegal to Sierra Leone, French commercial interests had gained the upper hand over their American and British rivals. British industry preferred palm oil for soap-making and other uses, leaving the way open for French industrialists to promote the groundnut as a source of oil for similar processes, and for Marseilles (and to a lesser extent, Bordeaux and Nantes) merchants to dominate the trade. French tariffs discriminated against 'colonial' produce imported in foreign vessels, and this meant in effect that West African groundnuts were transported in French ships. At the outset of peanut commercialisation, French mercantilist policy also imposed metropolitan processing on Senegambia, a pattern of colonial dependence which became increasingly restrictive after partition. By the 1860s and 1870s the French had established a commercial hegemony over the Upper Guinea coast. This corresponds to some extent with the British position over the Lower Guinea coast, although this was by no means hegemonic; the British had to face German, and to a lesser extent, French competition. The commercial framework in the coastal regions, so clearly apparent by the 1870s, indicated fairly exactly the pattern of later colonial penetration. The persistence of British Sierra Leonean and Gambian interests, and of French activity on the Dahomian coast, and the failure of the Anglo-French exchange proposals of 1875 and 1876, emphasise the ability of small pressure groups to exert negative influence upon apathetic governments rather than either a departure from the predominant overseas trading patterns of the two economic zones or the opening moves in a territorial partition of West Africa.

B. SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR

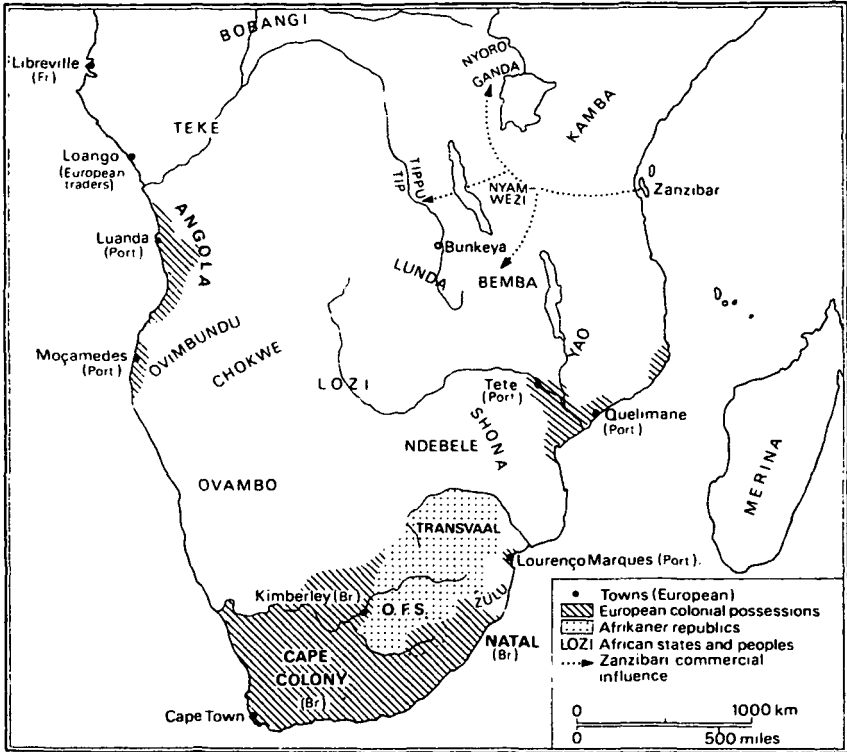
Africa south of the equator is nearly synonymous with Bantu Africa. Since the Late Stone Age, this part of Africa has been less densely populated than that to the north. South of the equator farming populations only started to build up their numbers within the Iron Age. Forest and bush remained largely uncleared. Tsetse infestation was widespread, and the beast of burden was practically unknown. Human societies were smaller and more isolated. The

combinations of production and trade were markedly less developed than those which had taken root in most parts of West Africa. The growth of more intensive economic activity, 'market-oriented', in which trade freed itself from the shackles of subsistence and kinship, depended very largely on the intrusion into areas of Bantu Africa of overseas trade and commerce (and also settlement), whereas in West Africa this overseas factor was only one among other entirely indigenous elements of economic growth. Economic change in Bantu Africa, and the social and political restructuring which accompanied it (often violently), was mainly dependent upon Indian Ocean and European/Atlantic economic systems. In contrast to West Africa, there were few instances in Bantu Africa of the growth or exploitation of agricultural resources for overseas markets. Also in contrast to West Africa, many of the outposts of those overseas economic systems were colonies of settlement rather than mere trading enclaves.

Three distinctive and complex trading and colonial systems had by the 1870s spread their economic tentacles over much of Bantu Africa. The Arab Indian-Ocean network operated in eastern Africa from its African base on Zanzibar island. Portuguese colonisation and especially trade had penetrated far inland from the coasts of Mozambique and Angola, while the southern lands of Bantu Africa were already well within the outreach of South African British colonial and Afrikaner republican economies. The north-western segment of Bantu Africa was the exception to this type of economic penetration. Here, the situation in the coastal region from the Cameroun estuary to the Congo estuary resembled that in West Africa: the difference was in the hinterland, which contained no equivalent of the western Sudan and Sahel, and no long-standing connections with the world of Islam.

This north-western equatorial hinterland also differed from other isolated hinterlands in Bantu Africa, notably the interlacustrine region and the savanna lands of southern Zaïre. These other comparatively isolated countries were agriculturally rich and fertile, and could thus support large populations. This was especially the case with the interlacustrine lands, where large political units were able to take root. But the hinterland of north-western equatorial Africa was poor in economic and human resources. Farming was difficult, and political communities small

WESTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA



2 Southern Africa on the eve of partition

and fragile. The differences between the equatorial country to the north-west of the Congo basin, and that to the north-east (the interlacustrine lands), had a profound ecological effect on the ways in which these regions reacted to the introduction of European colonisation.

WESTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA

From Mount Cameroun south to the Congo estuary economic patterns similar to many of those of the Central Sudan/Lower Guinea zone had been established by the 1870s, but on a smaller scale. Leading groups among the coastal peoples, notably the Duala, the Mpongwe and the Vili acted as entrepreneurs for the European commercial firms which dealt in palm and kernel oil and ivory. For a century or more before the 1870s, however, much of this region experienced very large movements of population,

similar in size, and in some respects in political consequences, to the Nguni/Ngoni migrations of southern Africa. These population movements modified agricultural production and trade, in many instances adversely.

Fang people, who had previously lived north of the Cameroun rain forest, began to move south in the late eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century they were already entering the forest zone, adapting their grassfields culture to the more difficult forest environment. These forests were sparsely inhabited by Pygmy people, who were eradicated or absorbed by the Fang migrants. The Fang were politically acephalous, but laid great stress on the acquisition of wealth, which resulted in considerable social differentiation. Their migration was very rapid. By the 1840s Fang groups were exchanging ivory for guns with European traders and their African agents on the Gabon river estuary; thirty years later they had reached the Ogowe river, after having expanded southwards some 800 km from their northern homelands. Elephant hunting by the Fang accounted for much of the ivory collected in the forests of Cameroun and Gabon, and their infiltration towards the coast was aimed at eliminating the Duala and Mpongwe middlemen.

In the early nineteenth century slaves were the chief export of western equatorial Africa. Some slaves were exported northwards, across the Sahara trade routes; others from the coastal hinterlands of Cameroun and Gabon were sold for export to the Americas till as late as the 1880s. But by the middle of the century the export trade in slaves was clearly in decline. The trade goods that replaced slaves were ivory, palm oil, kola, hardwoods and, later, wild rubber. Most of the ivory came from the Cameroun savannas and woodlands. The history of the trading systems by which this ivory reached the outside world is complex, and provides a striking example of the capacity of African merchants to wrest trade from European factors, who, at first sight, would appear to have been better advantaged.

The middlemen of the northern Cameroun coast were the Duala, who exercised the same kind of economic role as did the Ibibio and Ijo people of the Niger delta. Most of the Duala merchant princes had successfully manipulated the change from slave exporting to palm oil and ivory production and exchange. British firms dominated the Duala coast, where British missionary

societies had been operating since the 1840s. The Hamburg firm of Woermann had begun to compete with this British presence from 1863, and it was representatives of this firm who signed treaties with the Duala merchant princes in 1884.

South of Cameroun, from the Spanish station at Bata to the Congo estuary, was a long and rather inhospitable coast. The French had founded their freed-slave settlement of Libreville on the Gabon estuary in 1848, but external trade on the coast was dominated by the British. The illegal slave trade persisted until the end of the 1860s; 'legitimate' trade commodities were ivory and hardwoods. The role of middlemen, similar to that of the Duala in Cameroun, was played by Mpongwe merchant princes, but the business of trade was complex and protracted. Inland, Mpongwe trading activities were challenged by the Fang, who had reached the Gabon coast south of the Ogowe river by the 1870s. The Fang traded for guns, and were formidable adversaries.

By the 1870s British and other traders were becoming more assertive. The old complicated system of credit had broken down. The traders advanced up the rivers, setting up stations and using Mpongwe as their agents. Wild rubber supplanted ivory as the main export. When slaves were no longer exported, they were used as labourers by Fang and Mpongwe to gather the wild rubber, and to transport it by canoe down the west-flowing rivers. There was little or no French participation in this trade.

South of the Ogowe river a different pattern of trading had grown up. Here, the economy of the region had been dominated by the powerful Vili state of Loango and the lesser kingdoms of Kakongo and Ngoyi on the coast, and by the Teke (Tyo) kingdom inland to the north of Malebo Pool (Stanley Pool). These states had been active in the slave trade, and indeed the power of the kings of the Loango coast had been largely usurped by an official known as *mafuk*, the governor of harbours and 'a minister of trade and Europeans'.³⁷ Power was passing from agnatic noble groups to powerful businessmen and commoner village headmen. Fang and other people of the upper Ogowe and the coastlands to the south of Cape Lopez traded with the Vili and Teke kingdoms rather than with the Mpongwe trading stations around the Gabon estuary. By the second half of the nineteenth century these

³⁷ Jan Vansina, *Kingdoms of the savanna* (Madison, 1966), 195.

kingdoms were in economic contact with an even wider trading system in the interior of western equatorial Africa.

When in 1877 Stanley was travelling down the Congo river, he left the sphere of Swahili-Arab ivory and slave-trading activities at Stanley Falls (Kisangani). At Lisala, 450 km further downstream, he came upon a trade in firearms being undertaken by the Ngala people. Indeed, by the 1870s the outreach of Ngala trading was as far east as Basoko, only 200 km from Stanley Falls. South of the area where the Ikelemba tributary joined the Congo, the Ngala gave way as the river-side traders to the Bobangi. The Bobangi controlled the trade on a 500 km stretch of the river, as far south as the Kwa river confluence, at no great distance from the borders of the Teke kingdom.

Before the impact of the European Atlantic slave-trading system on the central Congo basin in the eighteenth century, the Bobangi were fisherfolk living in the triangle between the Congo and Ubangi rivers. There they had developed a typical river-bank trading network within the forest zone, similar in its main aspects to the desert-side economies of the Saharan and Sudanic lands. Fishermen exchanged fish for agricultural products, mainly cassava. They made pots from river-bank clay and extracted salt from river-side grasses, which they exchanged with the 'inland' people for vines which were used for making fish nets, cloth and mats. Such local trading networks, seldom spreading over more than a hundred square kilometres, were common throughout the whole of the Congo river basin region.

During the eighteenth century the central part of the Congo basin was drawn into the expanding Atlantic slave-trading system. Slaves, bought from all the major ethnic groups of the basin, were taken by canoe to markets, like those around Malebo Pool in the Teke kingdom, and then marched overland to the European shippers on the Loango and Kongo coasts. The Bobangi fishermen responded with alacrity to these enlarged economic circumstances. They established settlements on the Congo river south of their homeland, and by the middle of the nineteenth century they dominated the river trade. The key section for Bobangi control of trade was the narrow 'channel' between Tshumbiri and Missongo, where the river narrows from being several kilometres wide upstream to a single channel only a few hundred metres across. As the slave trade came to an end, so, opportunely, the

price of ivory rose rapidly in response to the increasing demand in Europe and North America. Slaves, however, continued to be used in large numbers by the Bobangi traders. A number of these traders rose to prominence, creating riverain firms based on slave labour, some slaves becoming trusted agents and rich men on their own account. The transition from local fishermen traders to powerful merchant houses, fiercely competitive amongst themselves, caused severe social tensions, which encouraged the merchant chiefs, known as *makonzi*, largely to abandon their matrilineal kinship structure and to turn to slaves even as a means of increasing their population. The economic success of the Bobangi was won at a heavy social price: by the end of the century they had a very low birth rate, which continued into the colonial period.

Ivory followed the same main routes to the coast as had slaves in earlier decades, coming from far and wide over the Congo basin and from as far north as the upper Ubangi river. Here the Bonjo were famous ivory hunters; they traded the tusks to the Loi who in turn traded them to the Bobangi. The upper Ubangi was close to the territory of the somewhat amorphous Bandia sultanate of Bangassou, which presided over the trade in ivory and slaves that was conducted either through the Nilotic Sudan or via Wadai and the trans-Saharan route to Benghazi. The hunters of the Sanga river valley were Pygmies, and as the headwaters of the river reached towards Adamawa, there was competition for ivory in this region between traders from the Congo basin, the Cameroun coast and Bornu. Ivory transported out of the central basin in the great canoes of the Bobangi merchants converged on the markets around Malebo Pool: it was then taken overland to the European factors on the coast, mainly to Ambriz via São Salvador. Earlier in the century the Bobangi had attempted to take over the Teke markets by force. After failing to do so, they agreed to continue their profitable trade, using the Teke as intermediaries, but not to set up their own market towns on the Pool.

The Bobangi and other Congolese peoples, however, did not limit their response to the economic opportunities created by the international system merely to providing its basic requirements: slaves and ivory. A regional economy was built up, covering the entire river basin, which made intensive use of the facilities of the slave and ivory trades: canoe transportation, brass-rod currency,

brokerage agencies, commercial relationships. The Bobangi controlled the middle Congo, the artery of the regional economy; but other riverain people controlled the commerce on all its main tributaries. The chief item of this regional trade was cassava: the more both the international and the regional networks grew, the more the demand for cassava increased. Cassava, which was a food crop that could be stored in the ground for up to two years, was grown by the 'inland' people away from the rivers, and was traded to the riversiders, who took it by canoe down the tributaries to the Bobangi towns on the main river. The volume of the cassava trade was immense – in 1885 it was reported that 40 tons a day went down the Alima river alone. Other trade crops included tobacco, palm oil and palm wine, and vegetable salt. Craft manufacturing produced cloth, pottery, iron knives and spears, and canoes. The construction of the great trading canoes, which were up to twenty metres long, involved the concerted efforts of large teams of men. Much of the iron and iron work came from the rich iron-ore district between the headwaters of the Alima and Kuku rivers (tributaries of the Congo) and the Ogowe. This iron work was transported by canoe south to Mbe (the capital) and to other markets in the Teke kingdom, and north and east up the Ikelemba and Tshuapa rivers to the lands of the Mongo. European textiles, firearms and ammunition, and other goods were exchanged for the cassava, iron and other products of the Congo basin, as well as for ivory, which was the main item of export to the international system. Up to the 1870s at least, the incursion of European goods seemed to stimulate the regional economy rather than stifle it.

The situation in the central Congo basin by the early 1870s was paradoxical. Despite the disruption and destruction of the slave and ivory trades, the regional economy flourished. The increased production was

real growth in the sense that it was based on the application of previously underemployed productive capacity... The income was widely distributed because in most cases it went directly to producers... and did not go to enrich political authorities... It was the traders, above all, who benefited from the trade, for the output of many producers passed through the hands of each trader... the trading centres had emerged as the points at which the wealth of the central Zaïre basin was being concentrated.³⁸

³⁸ Robert W. Harms, *River of wealth, river of sorrow: the central Zaïre basin in the era of the slave and ivory trade, 1500–1891* (New Haven and London, 1981), 70.

It was these centres, and the regional trade as a whole, that proved so attractive to the colonial officials of King Leopold, and yet were so vulnerable to their intervention.

The Teke kingdom, based on the sandy plateau north of Malebo Pool, had maintained its integrity, although it had become greatly dependent upon overseas trade. From the markets on the banks of the Pool, the Teke supplied the Bobangi with European trade goods, and took over the produce transported from the interior forests. This was carried, not generally down the main Congo river, which passed over a series of hazardous cataracts between the Pool and the estuary, but via the small rivers and streams that led through the hilly region north and south of the lower Congo, to the coast. In the north, the trade was handed over to the Vili and Lumbo peoples of the Loango coast. To the south, among the Bakongo, most of the traders were also Vili, who transacted their business with the European firms on the coast, from the harbours of the estuary to as far south as Ambriz. British, Dutch, French, Portuguese, American and other merchants operated on the Loango coast, on the Congo estuary, and to the south up to the ill-defined frontier of Portuguese Angola, but the British predominated. Slaves were still being exported in the early 1870s, but this was the final flicker of the old trade. The main exports were ivory, palm oil and palm kernels, gum and beeswax, cotton and coffee, mostly traded illegally out of Angola.

Ivory was traded from the Kwango river valley by Zombo traders, but the outreach of the coastal trading economy had not, by 1870, reached the basin of the northern Kasai and its tributary rivers. Here, Kuba, Lulua, Pende and other peoples, were still largely untouched by the outside world. Their rich agricultural countryside supported only small-scale, regional trade. Much nearer the Congo mouth, however, vine rubber was being collected and exported by the middle of the 1870s. Soon wild rubber was to outrun all other exports. Imports included textiles, alcohol and firearms. By the 1870s the political cohesion of the states of the Loango coast had broken down almost completely, and trade suffered accordingly. Increasingly, more and more of the trade of the whole Congo area was being concentrated on the ports of the estuary itself. The agents of European commerce were making concerted efforts to cut out the African middlemen, and to reach the economically productive areas. The estuary region

had become one of the most important trading areas in Africa for the British, comparable in value to the oil trade of southern Nigeria. As in southern Nigeria, the international economy accelerated political, social and economic diversification. The economic base of much of western equatorial Africa was precariously balanced in the pre-colonial nineteenth century. The region lacked natural resources, such as the oil-palm of West Africa, and the skilled labour which produced the manufactures of the towns in the Sudanic zone. This balance was seriously disturbed by the colonial conquests and by the harsh exploitation of the concessionary companies. A region with sparse human and natural resources, it underwent progressive impoverishment until well into the twentieth century.

EASTERN AFRICA: THE TRADING SPHERE OF THE SWAHILI-ARABS

By the 1870s the Swahili-Arab penetration of East Africa was largely responsible for the major restructuring of much of the region. The focus of this penetration was Zanzibar. From his island capital, Sultan Bargash ibn Sa'īd exercised some sort of political authority over much of the 1,200 km coastline from Brava in the north to Tongui on Cape Delgado in the south.³⁹ He was also attempting to strengthen a tenuous authority over a few centres in the interior. Almost all the external trade of East Africa was funnelled through the port of Zanzibar. American, British, French and German commercial firms dealt in ivory, gum copal, cloves and hides; most of the ivory went to America and India, while the sesame went to France. Foreign goods imported into Zanzibar included cotton cloths, beads, firearms and specie, the last mainly in the form of Maria Theresa dollars and Spanish piastres. The trade in cowries was a form of export of specie. Cowries from the Indian Ocean were transported to West Africa by German firms in a triangular trade between northern Europe and the Indian- and Atlantic-Ocean coasts of Africa.

In the earlier years of European economic activity at Zanzibar, during the rule of Sultan Sa'īd, British trade had been insignificant compared with that of America, France and Germany,

³⁹ C. S. Nicholls, *The Swahili coast: politics, diplomacy and trade on the East African littoral, 1798-1856* (London, 1971), 321.

although the activity of Indian traders, who were already British subjects, was sufficient to warrant the appointment of a British consul from 1844 onwards. After the accession of Sultan Bargash in 1871, and the appointment of Sir John Kirk as British consul the same year, this situation was reversed, and more British shipping used Zanzibar harbour than that of any other state. All shipping companies were able to take advantage of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. In the 1870s British and British-Indian trade was twice that of Germany and almost three times that of America. The sultans of Oman and Zanzibar had signed a number of diplomatic and commercial treaties with America, France and Britain – the last being primarily anti-slave trade treaties. The culmination of these was the treaty of 1873, which formally abolished the export of slaves from Bargash's domains.

Strategically, and to a considerable extent economically, Zanzibar was an enclave of British Indian-Ocean power; the consuls were directly responsible to the Bombay government. But if the island was 'a satellite of Europe's growing power in the Indian Ocean',⁴⁰ it was a client state upon which converged a host of economic endeavours which were only partly dependent upon the European capitalist economic system. One of these quasi-independent economic factors was the role of Indian traders and bankers. The finances of Zanzibar were controlled by Indians, who came originally from Kutch, Surat and Bombay. The controller of Zanzibar's customs – a vital post in the economic life of the island and of much of East Africa – was an Indian. Indian bankers financed the caravan trade to the interior, offering credit at very high rates of interest. Many of the island's clove plantations were mortgaged to Indian money-lenders. The flow of trade to and from India – carried in East African or Arabian ships – amounted to at least two-thirds of that to Europe and America. Another largely independent axis of trade was that between Zanzibar on the one hand, and Oman and the Persian Gulf, the southern coast of Arabia, and the Red Sea on the other. Arab traders brought silk and cotton goods, coffee, dates and salt in exchange for slaves, cloves and timber. These Arab traders benefited from the general economic expansion of the East African coast.

After ivory, the most important of East African exports were

⁴⁰ John Iliffe, *A modern history of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), 40.

cloves, gum copal, hides and cowries. The last three were gathered or collected, and traded, by the coastal Swahili-speaking people and their slaves. They were transported by local ships to Zanzibar, which monopolised the trade of the coast. All these productive and trading activities profited from the overall development of the economy of the region. The increase in the production of cloves on Zanzibar and Pemba islands was particularly marked. These clove plantations were worked by slaves in conditions not dissimilar to those of the American south. Sugar plantations, also worked by slaves, were established by Arab landowners along the Pengani estuary.

The history of the Swahili-Arab penetration of the East African mainland can be summed up in one word: ivory. The collection of wild rubber ousted ivory from its predominant position only in the late 1870s. Until then, the hunting of ivory and its transportation to the coast had brought about an intense transformation of all the major, and most of the smaller societies of East Africa: few people were able to escape its exactions.⁴¹ In the course of the nineteenth century there were a series of ivory frontiers, which advanced ever deeper into the interior of East Africa. By the 1860s most of modern Tanzania and eastern Kenya had been denuded of elephants. The frontier had moved south into northern Mozambique and the Lake Malawi (Lake Nyasa) region, west across Lake Tanganyika into the Manyema region (Zaire), north-east into Bunyoro and Buganda, and north towards lake Turkana, and the Ethiopian borderlands. Here the elephant hunters who had trading connections with Zanzibar came into contact with Oromo and Sidama hunters who sold their ivory into the Ethiopian trading system. In northern Bunyoro the outreach of Zanzibar came into contact with the *jallāba* and other traders who sent their ivory down the Nile to Khartoum and Cairo. In the lands between Lake Malawi and Katanga, the Zanzibar system connected with ivory traders who fed into the Portuguese trading diasporas from Angola and the lower Zambezi. By the 1870s much of Bantu Africa was, or had been in the recent past, the scene of unprecedented slaughter of elephants in the interests of the ivory trade.

The consequences of this predatory economic activity were varied. In what is now Tanzania, the passing of the ivory frontier

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

left something of an economic void, although the manning, feeding and servicing of the trade caravans from the regions beyond was still a considerable enterprise. The withdrawal of the dominant economic factor led to greater political insecurity and uncertainty, especially as the importation of firearms tended to increase. Survival became the dominant theme for the local political leaders and, in the last resort, for their peoples. Some states became conservative and emphasised the unifying force of ritual. Other states opted for the barrel of the gun, and recruited mercenary troops to defend or extend their interests. In practice, the more successful states combined both the old and the new techniques, in desperate attempts at political restructuring in the face of external and internal dangers. Ngoni or Ngoni-like states still dominated Songea and the southern highlands of Tanzania. The new Hehe state reached the peak of its power in the 1870s, and was remarkable for its reliance on spears rather than guns. Among the Nyamwezi there was two outstandingly successful war-lords, Mirambo and Nyungu ya Mawe, who incorporated many formerly independent small kingdoms. Both employed mercenary troops, called *rugaruga*; both were politically conservative and administratively attenuated. In the north-eastern Tanzania and in southern Kenya, the power of the strife-torn Masai had greatly declined, to the advantage of the Chaga chiefdoms and of the stateless Kikuyu. The Kikuyu were expanding territorially from the mountain pastures of Mount Kenya and the Nyandarua range; they kept Arab traders at bay, having transactions only through Kamba intermediaries. In the western highlands of Kenya, the Nandi had risen in power as the Masai declined. A new kind of leader emerged, borrowed from the Masai and called the *orkoiyot*, who predicted the future, read the omens, and enabled the Nandi to reach military and economic decisions. Under the inspiration of their *orkoiyot*, the Nandi became the dominant people between the Rift Valley and Lake Victoria.

Whereas the old-established interlacustrine kingdoms of Rwanda and Burundi remained largely unaffected by the ivory-based Arab trading system, Buganda and Bunyoro reacted vigorously to it. As in Tanzania, there was an acceleration in the incidence of violence. Bunyoro, under Mukama Kamurasi (d. 1869) and his successor Kabarega, greatly revived in power,

and entered upon a further period of conflict with Buganda. Both sides equipped themselves with firearms, obtained from the Swahili-Arabs of Tabora in exchange for ivory. Kabarega employed Khartoumers to train and lead his newly armed regiments. Sir Samuel Baker, the agent of Khedive Ismā'īl, reached Bunyoro at the head of an armed expedition in 1872. Mutesa's response was to turn to Zanzibar for support. Stanley's arrival in Buganda in 1874 via the Swahili-Arab caravan route led the way to the advent of British Anglican missionaries at the capital in 1877. Buganda was potentially the stronger of the two kingdoms. The processes of bureaucratisation and centralisation were as marked in Buganda as in any East African polity. The *kabaka* was at the head of the twin hierarchies into which the society was divided, the territorial chiefs and the clan heads. Furthermore, the ruler was able to appoint his own men to most of the major military and administrative offices of state. The *kabaka* personally dominated the kingdom of Buganda.

The partially arabised and islamised region of Manyema to the west of Lake Tanganyika was likewise personally dominated by the Swahili-Arab trader, Tippu Tip. Like other Arabs and Swahili operating in the interior of East Africa, Tippu's aims were primarily commercial, but when he commenced operating in the forests of Manyema, among mainly stateless and politically unstable peoples, he was forced to exercise a kind of suzerainty, with a Swahili-Arab bureaucracy and with slave armies, so as to procure ivory. The centre of Manyema, around Tippu Tip's headquarters at Kasongo, was well-ordered and productive, but the ivory frontier, which reached well to the west of the Lomami river and north down the Lualaba towards the future Stanley Falls, was lawless and violent. It was with Tippu Tip's approval and support that Stanley started his journey down the Lualaba in 1876, a journey which was 'decisive in opening the whole Congo basin to European influence, and indeed in transforming the central belt of Africa into a paper playground for European politicians.'⁴²

In the wake of the ivory trade came the internal trade in slaves, and the spread of domestic slavery as an institution among the agricultural peoples of the East African interior. By the 1870s, in spite of Zanzibari prohibitions, some slaves continued to be exported from Africa to the Arabian peninsula and surrounding

⁴² Ruth Slade, *King Leopold's Congo* (London, 1962), 23-4.

lands. But most slaves were used inside East Africa. Many laboured on the clove plantations of Zanzibar and Pemba, or on the new sugar and cereal estates on the Swahili coast. The majority were involved in agricultural production, in a region where traditional rural economies were coming increasingly under strain. Slaves were used for portage and as soldiers. There was some local slavery – people losing their liberty for a variety of reasons, but staying put. There was also long-distance slave trading, mainly from the Lake Malawi region, Katanga, and what is now north-eastern Zambia. Here Yao (to the east and south of Lake Malawi), Nyamwezi and Swahili-Arabs had penetrated the lands of the Maravi, Chewa, Bemba and other peoples west of Lake Malawi and north of the Zambezi river.

In the mid-century there were three main Yao chiefs who competed against each other for control of the lucrative slave and ivory trade routes to Kilwa. 'Their towns became bustling centres of population far larger than any previously known in that part of East Africa.' By about 1880 'their successors realised that their long term interests dictated a greater need for co-operation than for competition... [they] were attempting to deal more efficiently with their coastal trading partners and with the Sultan of Zanzibar by encouraging the development of literacy in Arabic script'.⁴³ The Yao were reacting to changes in the East-African/Indian-Ocean trading system that were only very indirectly, if at all, influenced by European activities.

The area south of Manyema and Lake Tanganyika, and west of Lake Malawi, had been penetrated by Swahili-Arab and Nyamwezi traders since the beginning of the century. By 1870 the Nyamwezi, known locally as Yeke, under the leadership of a trading chief known as Msiri, 'the mosquito', had built up a large area of political patronage in Katanga. This region, called Garenganze, threatened the economic livelihood and political stability of the western Lunda kingdom of the Mwata Kazembe and, to a lesser extent, of the eastern Lunda kingdom also. Msiri based his power on ivory hunting, elephants still being plentiful in the borderlands between the two old kingdoms. He also controlled the rich trade of the Copperbelt. Msiri not only used the caravan route to Ujiji and Zanzibar, but also by the 1870s had linked up with Ovimbundu

⁴³ Edward A. Alpers, 'The nineteenth century: prelude to colonialism' in B. A. Ogot (ed.), *Zamani: a survey of East African history* (Nairobi, new edn 1974).

traders travelling from Lovale, and thus had an outlet to Angola. North of Garenzanze the once powerful Luba state, centred on the Lomami river, which had previously benefited from Bisa trade routes to the east and Bihe (Ovimbundu) traders from the west, was also succumbing to east coast pressure. Tippu Tip conquered the northern parts of the kingdom, while Msiri encroached from the south. The rapidly expanding Bemba polity, on the plateau between the Luapula and Luangwa valleys, owed much of its political and military success to links with Swahili-Arab and Nyamwezi traders, notably Tippu Tip. Bembaland, which was poor country agriculturally, became another great reservoir for ivory and slaves.⁴⁴

It must be stressed that alongside, and supporting, the non-productive ivory and slave trades went a great amount of local and regional trade, in copper, iron and ironware and, in particular, food. In 1872 Stanley described the vigorous mingling of regional and long-distance trade at Ujiji market:

There were the agricultural and pastoral Wajiji, with their flocks and herds; there were the fishermen from Ukaranga and Kaole, from beyond Bangwe, and even from Urundi, with their whitebait, which they call *dogara*... there were the palm-oil merchants, principally from Ujiji and Urundi, with great five-gallon pots full of reddish oil, of the consistency of butter; there were the salt merchants from the salt plains of Uvinza and Uhha; there were the ivory merchants from Uvira and Usowa; there were the canoe-makers from Ugoma and Urundi; there were the cheap-Jack pedlars from Zanzibar, selling flimsy prints, and brokers exchanging blue mutunda beads for sami-sami, and sungomazzi, and sofi.⁴⁵

By the 1870s maize, which in 1800 had been confined to the coast where it had been introduced by the Portuguese, was grown extensively throughout East Africa. Yet even if people had the means to feed themselves better, there was undoubtedly a widespread economic and political crisis in the area. A few rulers, notably Mutesa, Mirambo and Tippu Tip, responded to the crisis by attempting to increase the scale of their various relationships and dealings. Most, however, merely struggled for survival. Sultan Bargash himself, egged on by Consul Kirk, attempted for the first time to assert his authority in the interior. The crisis was basically associated with the international trading system, a system

⁴⁴ A. D. Roberts, *A history of the Bemba: political growth and change in north-eastern Zambia before 1900* (London, 1973), 6, 'Politics and trade'.

⁴⁵ H. M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone* (London, new edn 1895), 387-8.

FROM ANGOLA TO MOZAMBIQUE

which was experiencing 'rising prices, falling profits, and growing competition for trade. Zanzibar had preferred the cheapness of informal empire but now found it no longer worked.'⁴⁶

The island of Madagascar had economic ties with south-eastern Africa of long duration, but more significant were its growing links with French commercial expansion. Those went hand in hand with a remarkable religious and cultural revolution experienced by the Hova of the dominant state of Merina. Many of the Hova accepted Christianity in a more radical manner than did the majority of societies exposed to the alien religion on the continental mainland at that time. The dilemma facing the Hova was that this was a Protestant version of Christianity, propagated by British missionaries.

FROM ANGOLA TO MOZAMBIQUE: PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND THEIR OUTREACH

The whole of a wide belt across Bantu Africa, from between the Dande and Cunene rivers in the west to Cape Delgado and Lourenço Marques in the east, was influenced, to a greater or lesser extent, by economic activities generated by the presence of Portuguese mercantile endeavours on the Atlantic and Indian Ocean coasts. The influence was largely indirect; the Portuguese offered the opportunity, the gateway to the world overseas, but initiatives remained largely in African hands. Even within the colony of Angola, African chiefdoms were often powerful enough to be able to control trade and production.

In the 1860s the boundaries of the Portuguese colony of Angola were receding and its economy was passing through a deep recession. The trade in and status of slaves were abolished officially between 1858 and 1878 (formal abolition took place in all Portuguese colonies in 1875), and these measures caused considerable disruption. The colony experienced a minor cotton boom during the American Civil War, but this soon collapsed, and was followed by a severe financial crisis. Furthermore, the Portuguese conducted a series of disastrous wars, against the outlying Kongo people in the north and against the ruler of Kasanje in the east. In 1863 Kasanje was abandoned for the second time, and Malange, some 50 km from the Kwanza valley, became

⁴⁶ Iliffe, *A modern history of Tanganyika*, 48.

the staple market, or *feira*, for northern Angola; Bihe, in Ovimbundu country, was its southern counterpart. By this time, however, Kasanje had lost much of its economic importance. By 1866 the Portuguese had withdrawn from most of the centres north of the Dande river, in the old territory of the Kongo kingdom, which had been painfully reoccupied in the previous decade. The ancient kingdom of Kongo had long disintegrated into three or more separate chiefdoms, although the royal dynasty, which had religious significance for the Kongo people, still reigned in São Salvador, which had been reduced by the latter part of the eighteenth century to no more than a village.

There was also a withdrawal in the south from Humbe on the Cunene river, to Huila, the only Portuguese settlement on the plateau inland from the fishing port of Moçamedes. Only about 2,000 of the colony's 400,000 inhabitants were white Portuguese, and most of these lived in Luanda, the capital. The descendants of mixed marriages settled and traded beyond the frontiers of the colony, some as *pombeiros* (agents of Portuguese merchants) or *sertanejos* (backwoodsmen). Coffee was grown in the Kwanza valley, the heartland of the colony, by African farmers and by Portuguese or Brazilian plantation owners, both groups using slave (or servile) labour. It was not until the 1890s that the plantation owners achieved a dominant position, to become the coffee barons of Angola.⁴⁷ Sugar was also grown in small plantations near the coast. Vine rubber, gathered by the Chokwe, was first exported in 1869, and in time came to rival ivory as the commercial alternative to the trade in slaves in providing a foundation to the precarious economy of the colony.

Portuguese control over Mozambique was even more tenuous than that over Angola. Their rule comprised footholds – or toeholds – on some of the coastal islets or harbours, from Mozambique Island in the north to Lourenço Marques (the modern Maputo) in the south. Lourenço Marques was rapidly growing in importance as the chief outlet from the Afrikaner South African Republic (Transvaal) in its hinterland, but the development of its port and commercial facilities was largely in British, Dutch and German hands. In 1875 the Portuguese undertook to construct a railway from Lourenço Marques to

⁴⁷ David Birmingham, 'The coffee barons of Cazengo', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1978, 19, 4, 523–38.

Pretoria. The older pattern of trade was breaking down, with the Tsonga people acting as middlemen in an ivory-dominated economic zone covering northern Zulu country, the eastern Transvaal and Gaza country in southern Mozambique. The most significant feature of this breakdown was the collapse of the Afrikaner republic of Zoutpansberg in 1867, after two decades of intensive elephant hunting.⁴⁸ The Portuguese trader and free booter, Albasini, played a dominant role in the affairs of this hunting state and continued to operate in the north-eastern Transvaal into the 1880s. By this time, southern Mozambique was already intertwined with the growth of the mining economy of South Africa.

The ports north of the mouth of the Zambesi were an extension of the East African coastal system. Even where the Portuguese maintained their toeholds – on Moçambique island, Angoche island and Quelimane – the commerce of the coast was dominated by Muslim Africans. These traded with Yao and Makua middlemen for ivory and slaves from the interior. Slaves continued to be transported in considerable numbers to the Hova and Sakalava kingdoms on Madagascar until the beginning of the twentieth century. The only really significant Portuguese presence in the interior of Mozambique consisted of the immense estates called *prazos da coroa* (grants of crown land). The coastal *prazos*, which produced coconuts and sugar, were amenable to some governmental control. The inland *prazos*, up the Zambezi valley, were to all intents independent African chiefdoms. By the 1870s these had coalesced into four conquest states, each ruled by a dynastic clan which had become to a large extent Africanised. Three were in the Zambezi valley, between the Shire confluence and Zumbo; the fourth was in Manicaland, south of the river. This was ruled by the da Sousa family, and acted as a buffer between the Gaza Ngoni and the Zambezi *prazos*. The *prazo* chiefs entered into close relations with neighbouring states and peoples, north and south of the river. They traded in slaves, gold and ivory, often employing aggressive and violent methods. By the end of the 1870s Manuel Antonio da Sousa was extending his power amongst the eastern Shona peoples, who continued to trade with Portuguese agents.

⁴⁸ Roger Wagner, 'Zoutpansberg: the dynamics of a hunting frontier, 1848–67', in Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore (eds.), *Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa* (London, 1980), 313–49.

The Shona chiefdoms occupying the central and western areas of the Zimbabwean plateau were subject to varying degrees of tribute relationship to, and at times cattle raiding from, Ndebele kingdom. This had settled down from being a predominantly militaristic and raiding state into one based on pastoralism and agriculture. Ndebele and Shona lands were being increasingly penetrated by white ivory-hunters and their agents from the colonies and republics of South Africa. By the end of the 1870s the demand for labour in the developing diamond-mining industry of Kimberley was making its impact on these societies. The Ndebele continued to raid periodically in all directions; one such raid north of the Zambezi was defeated decisively in the late 1860s or early 1870s by a combined force of Tonga, Shona and Chikunda, and the Ndebele did not venture in that direction again for twenty years. The slave armies of the *praxeros*, known as Chikunda, became a distinctive socio-economic group, who traded for ivory far up the Zambezi, beyond the *feira* of Zumbo, which was reopened by the Portuguese in 1862, into what is now southern Zambia and, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as far north as the Luapula homelands of the Lunda king, Kazembe. Chikunda founded marauding settlements in the middle Zambezi valley, up the Luangwa valley and in southern Malawi; these represented scattered and far-flung enclaves of an outreach that was in its remote origins Portuguese.

The main trading group north of the Zambezi were the Bisa, who sometimes competed with the Chikunda, and at other times co-operated with them. In the eighteenth century the Bisa had established trading links between Kazembe's kingdom and the Portuguese on the Zambezi, involving copper and other goods for African consumption, as well as the usual slaves and ivory. At Kazembe's capital the Bisa came into contact with caravans which had started their journeys in Angola. But this long-distance trade was seriously disrupted by the Ngoni invasions and migrations of the second quarter of the nineteenth century; it had never been a route of major importance. In the 1860s and 1870s the more northerly Bisa traded from Kazembe to Lake Malawi, where they handed over their goods to Yao, who transported them to Kilwa; this was despite interruptions by the Ngoni and the Bemba. But most of the trade of Kazembe, the rich Katanga (Shaba) region, and the expanding Bemba polity, had been

absorbed into the Arab-Swahili East African trading zone. Other Bisa were trading, mainly for ivory, well to the south of the Luapula basin, amongst the peoples in what is now western Malawi and central Zambia. They exchanged ivory and slaves with Portuguese merchants at Zumbo and Tete, and also with the *prazeros*.

One of the largest and also one of the most stable states in Bantu Africa was the eastern Lunda kingdom ruled by the *mwata yamvo*. This kingdom was at the centre of a series of conquest states which had been spread by Lunda lineages across much of the central savanna south of the Congo basin. The savanna, which was traversed from north to south by the wooded valleys of the southern tributaries of the Congo, was rich agricultural and hunting country. The kingdom of the *mwata yamvo* reached the peak of its power and prosperity in the middle of the nineteenth century, and remained fairly stable for the next fifteen or so years. The eastern Lunda had trading links with the Portuguese in Angola, exchanging slaves and later ivory for various luxury goods, and textiles, but not firearms. The main traders were Imbangala people, based on Kasanje.

In the earlier nineteenth century the Ovimbundu kingdoms of southern Angola expanded politically and economically, and by the second half of the century had eclipsed the Imbangala. Ovimbundu expansion coincided with shifts in the economic exploitation of the hinterland of Angola. European demand was for ivory rather than for slaves. In their search for sources of ivory, Ovimbundu caravans ranged far and wide. Some were royal caravans, organised by the rulers of the Ovimbundu kingdoms, of which Bihe was the largest. Others were organised by rich commoners, sometimes with Portuguese or mulatto participation. The ivory trade was largely diverted from the former east-west route of the Imbangala, running via Kasanje to Luanda, to a more southerly route which passed through the Ovimbundu lands to reach the coast at Benguela. Some trade still went through Dondo, on the Kwanza river, into the old regions of the Angola colony; but even Dondo, only some 100 km from Luanda, was controlled by a local chiefdom, only nominally under Portuguese rule. Initiative in the ivory trade was firmly in African hands.

Ovimbundu caravans penetrated to the Luba Lomami empire and the Kuba kingdom to the north-east on the fringes of the

tropical rain forest, to Lovale and Bulozhi to the west, and to the Ovambo and Okavango regions to the south. In Ovamboland the Ovimbundu traders competed in the early 1870s with Portuguese from Moçamedes and African and white South African traders from Namibia. Similarly, the riverain Lozi kingdom felt the pressure of competition for ivory of traders linked both to the Portuguese and to the South African economic systems. The death of Sekeletu, the second and last king of the Kololo (Sotho) conquerers of the Lozi in 1864, ushered in a long period of strife. Kololo rule was overthrown, but this was followed by factionalism among the Lozi princely lineages, in which traders based in Angola and South Africa played their parts. It was not until 1878 that Lewanika had managed to consolidate his authority.

Like the Nyamwezi of East Africa, the Ovimbundu were migrant traders rather than the settler hunters. Outside their homelands, the Ovimbundu presence was commercial and peaceful. But the warlike Chokwe, like the Fang to the north of the Congo basin, became the great elephant-hunting specialists of the Angolan savanna. In the 1850s the Chokwe occupied a small sandy, infertile country, called Quiboco, on the headwaters of the Kwilu and Kasai rivers. They had for several decades participated in the trade in wax, slaves and ivory with Imbangala and Ovimbundu. They then began to expand dramatically.

Chokwe values and their social system supplied the key factors in giving Chokwe expansion its unique migratory character... With them, it acquired slave-raiders and thousands of migrants. The pawnship system allowed the Chokwe to integrate enough alien women to create over-population in Quiboco, and lineage headmen easily converted their normal village-moving techniques into methods of migration.⁴⁹

Chokwe expansion brought a train of violence and disorder into a previously relatively stable region. Chokwe raiding and hunting parties were armed with guns; most of their neighbours were not. By the late 1870s, the collection of wild rubber rivalled the hunting of elephants in the Chokwe political economy, but methods remained much the same. Not until the late 1880s and early 1890s was this expansion at its height, but already in 1874–5, the Chokwe were intervening in the succession dispute after the

⁴⁹ Joseph C. Miller, 'Chokwe trade and conquest in the nineteenth century', in Richard Gray and David Birmingham, *Pre-colonial Africa trade: essays on trade in central and eastern Africa before 1900* (London, 1970), 201.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

death of the Lunda *mwata yamvo*. The stage was set by the Chokwe in the west and by Msiri in the east for the collapse of old Lunda-based order in the southern savanna.

Economically, the ivory trade of Bantu Africa was not totally disruptive. Nor indeed was the concomitant trade in and use of slaves. Both trades were exploitative, but both could support economically productive systems, albeit on a limited scale. But the political and long-term economic effects of enslavement and elephant hunting tended towards instability and insecurity, and this tendency was undoubtedly increasing by the 1870s. There was much more competition, which resulted in an increase in the violent methods by which trade was accompanied. Many African societies in Bantu Africa were undergoing a period of rapid and unpleasant change; they needed relief from the violence which surrounded them and which threatened to submerge them. When direct European involvement came, it largely followed the well-worn lines of approach of the African, Swahili-Arab and African-Portuguese traders. In East Africa this was from the coast westwards; but in southern central Africa it was on the north-south axes pioneered by the Kololo and the Chokwe rather than the older east-west routes of the Bisa and Ovimbundu.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

By 1870 the processes of historical change and elaboration in southern Africa had produced societies which were markedly different from those in tropical Bantu Africa, and indeed, in the rest of Africa north of the Limpopo. The only areas that were comparable were Algeria and especially Egypt. Algeria had become a French colony of settlement, and in Egypt the infusion of European capital had resulted in considerable economic and social change. South Africa contained large areas of European settlement and was beginning to receive inflows of capital, mainly at this stage from Britain. South Africa – the region south of the Limpopo river and the Kalahari desert – comprised four European areas (and a number of more ephemeral smaller ones) and several African kingdoms and chiefdoms which were still politically independent. The European areas were the British colonies of the Cape and Natal and the Afrikaner (Boer) republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal (the South African

Republic). The larger independent African states included the Zulu and Swazi kingdoms, the Tswana kingdoms, and most of the chiefdoms of the Africans living in the Transkei. Although the 1860s were a fairly muted decade in South African history, European territorial expansion continued. The Ciskei, which as British Kaffraria had become a British territory in 1847, was taken over by the Cape in 1866. In 1868 Lesotho was annexed by the British, and three years later was handed over to the Cape to administer. In 1871 the newly discovered diamond fields of Griqualand West were annexed as a British crown colony. The Portuguese foothold of Lourenço Marques had become meshed into the evolving South African political economy. There were living in South Africa and neighbouring European colonies and states, some 250,000 whites, well over one million Africans, as well as several tens of thousands of people of mixed descent, who lived in the Cape, and people from Asia, mainly in Natal. There were perhaps another million Africans living within the region but outside the European-ruled lands. White settlers were thus outnumbered by some eight to one, but this large numerical disadvantage did not prevent them from dominating much of the region. The natural environment, however, still imposed constraints upon effective total domination by either white or black people.

Apart from the short line built from the harbour to the tiny town of Durban in Natal in 1859–60, the first railways constructed in South Africa were from Cape Town to Wynberg and Wellington in 1863. This 70 km line served the wine and grain farms of the European settlers of the Western Cape; its track was laid down on the expensive standard gauge of European countries. When construction was resumed in the 1870s the lines were built on a cheaper, narrow gauge of 3 ft 6 in. There were short telegraph lines in the Cape and Natal, but generally all communications were poor. Roads, when they had been constructed at all, were bad. Most routes were mere tracks. There was some horse-drawn transport, but most of it was by ox-drawn wagon. Economically, ox wagon transport was much more effective than the head portage of Bantu Africa, and somewhat more efficient than the ox, donkey and camel transport of the lands of the Sudan and West Africa. But it still meant that the passage of goods and people was slow, expensive and difficult. Societies and peoples of southern

Africa were isolated one from another. Social and economic integration, where it occurred, was small and localised. If this region later became much more integrated as the political economy evolved and expanded, during the 1860s it was still a region of societies greatly differentiated by particular circumstances, including isolation. This differentiation did not necessarily follow the racial categories of 'African' and 'European'. While poor communications emphasised isolation, the business of transport riding provided opportunities to break out of this. Africans were much employed in the laborious transport system. Some Africans owned both wagons and oxen; some African groups, such as the Sotho, possessed large numbers of horses.

Nearly all peoples in southern Africa in the late 1860s gained their livelihood from farming. Industries, such as tanneries, wool-washing plants, and sugar refineries in the European areas, and iron forging in African areas, were small in size and organisation, although the distribution of their products could be quite extensive. The scale of commercial operations had always outstripped local production, and many of the goods sold in South Africa were imported from Europe. Most Africans and many Europeans were subsistence farmers, in the sense that they grew their own food and could provide many of the other necessities. There was usually some surplus in these rural societies, which was appropriated politically or socially (in the form of taxes or marriage dowries) or was used to purchase consumer goods such as textiles and coffee. The units of production were families or segments of lineages, often with the help of servants. Where markets influenced production, their range and impact was circumscribed. This type of agricultural production was pre-capitalist, while the modes of production were varied. Many European farmers, and some Africans, were however wholly or partly market oriented. These markets might be confined to South Africa, with the cycle of production and consumption being local or regional, or else they might be the outposts of overseas, mainly British, trading networks. The two agricultural systems existed side by side, uneasily, their divergencies apparent but not yet overwhelming.

Superimposed on these rather different agricultural systems, and closely connected with them, were political and commercial factors. The political systems of the British colonies, Afrikaner

republics and African kingdoms, in varying degrees, exploited the agricultural systems. Ulundi (the Zulu capital) and Cape Town had to be fed, and government officials had to be remunerated. Capitalist and pre-capitalist states lived in uncomfortable proximity, the actions of the one affecting the other; the colony of Natal and the Zulu kingdom are a pair of several possible examples. Commerce was the means by which agriculture became capitalist, but it had also, by 1870, deeply penetrated the areas of pre-capitalist productivity, and this had resulted in further dimensions of change. Many Africans were already responding to European political and, more frequently, commercial pressure, by making available the one item that was in continuous demand by Europeans, namely their labour. Labour migrancy had been a feature of some parts of southern Africa for a century, if not longer.

At the end of the 1860s the Cape Colony had the most developed economy in South Africa. It had three to five times the white population of all the other states and colonies in South Africa put together, and a similar proportion of the foreign trade. Indeed, this imbalance rather than the precise extent of the capitalist mode of production was, in the 1870s and 1880s, perhaps the crucial factor in the historical development of white South Africa. In 1870 the Cape's exports were valued at £2,569,000, and the imports were £2,352,000. The amounts for the colony of Natal were £382,000 and £429,000 respectively. Wool had outstripped wine as the Cape's principal export, in an overwhelming manner, as these figures reveal:

	Wine (£)	Wool (£)
1826	98,000	545
1842	43,000	72,000
1861	34,000	1,460,000

Merino sheep, which were the main source of wool, had been introduced to the eastern districts of the colony in 1827, and wool farmers, many of them of British origin, had taken the place of the cattle farmers who trekked north across the Orange river onto the high veld. Wool production spread from the northern Cape districts into the Orange Free State. The eastern districts were

more prosperous than the western areas of old European settlement around Cape Town, which nevertheless remained the capital of the colony. Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown and other towns were growing quite rapidly in size.

This economic imbalance was reflected in the political friction between the two parts of the colony. The Cape was governed under a constitution which had been in operation since 1853. This provided for a legislative assembly, the members of which were elected on a limited franchise, based on property qualifications. Political power was firmly in the hands of the European settlers. A mainly white electorate voted for white members of parliament. However, under this representative government system, ministers were responsible to the British governor, not to parliament. The settlers in the eastern districts agitated sporadically for a separate political identity, but these internal differences were overshadowed by the conflict which dominated most of the 1860s, between settler politicians and the British governor. In a period of recession, Britain was concerned to cut down its financial commitments in the Cape by making the colony economically self-sufficient. The settlers (or their representatives) consistently refused to accept the financial implications, notably in the field of defence, of the British plans for responsible government. There was a complete impasse. Elections held in 1868 and 1869 failed to return parliaments which were acceptable to the British government. Only the economic recovery of the 1870s, and a change of governors at the Cape, produced a way out of the doldrums of Cape politics. Responsible government was achieved in 1872. Combined with the Cape's great economic and demographic preponderance, this enabled the colony to assert itself very effectively both against the other South African states and against pressure exerted by the British imperial government.

The settlers in the eastern Cape were mainly of recent British descent, whereas those in the western districts traced their origins to the Dutch, French and German settlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The majority of the non-European people of the western Cape were landless labourers working on the European-owned farms; some, especially those living in Cape Town, were skilled artisans. The African inhabitants of British Kaffraria/Ciskei retained some of their land. They, and their neighbours beyond the river Kei, had recovered from the

disasters of the 1850s, in particular the cattle killing of 1857. Some Africans living in the colony were already responding to economic pressures and opportunities by changing their farming practices and producing food and materials for local markets, such as King Williams Town (the main town in British Kaffraria), or wool for the export trade. African agricultural production greatly increased in the last three decades of the century, spreading from the more fragmented African groups living in the Ciskei (the Fengu) to the larger Xhosa, Thembu and Mpondo chiefdoms of the Transkei. North of the Orange river frontier of the Cape, many Sotho farmers had also started to grow maize and other crops, and to produce wool, for the European markets, inside South Africa and overseas. Economic ties between Basutoland and the eastern Cape were close. Concern by Port Elizabeth merchants was one of the factors which led the British government to intervene in the war between Basutoland and the Orange Free State, which had broken out in 1865, by annexing the kingdom in 1868.

The republics of Afrikaner farmers on the high veld had been formally recognised by conventions with the British, those in the Transvaal in 1852, and in the Orange Free State in 1854. As the result of its war with the Sotho, and its occupation of the old Griqua state on the Orange river in the 1860s, the Orange Free State extended over most of the high veld between that river and the Vaal. The Afrikaner lands in the Transvaal were not united (on paper) until 1860, and even then the ivory hunters' state in the Zoutpansberg remained a practically independent polity until its destruction in 1867. In the northern parts of South Africa there was still an ivory frontier. In the eighteenth century, European elephant hunters had found an outlet for their ivory at Cape Town, while their African counterparts traded at Lourenço Marques. By the middle of the nineteenth century this ivory frontier had moved to the northern Transvaal and the fringes of the Kalahari desert. European hunters and traders from South Africa, and their African agents operated deep into Matabeleland and Ovamboland in northern Namibia. This was a hunting system similar to those of Bantu Africa. Zoutpansberg, the small Afrikaner republic in the mountains south of the Limpopo river, was an elephant-hunting state with many similarities to that of Tippu Tip in the eastern part of present-day Zaïre. Hand in hand with ivory hunting and trading went the spread of firearms. Indeed firearms,

of models which had become obsolete in Europe, were one of the largest imports to southern Africa, and by the 1870s nearly all African peoples were heavily armed with guns.

The Transvaal was ringed by still effective African states – the Venda and Gaza kingdoms to the north and north-east; the Pedi and Swazi states to the east, and the Tswana kingdoms, of which the Ngwato kingdom was the largest, to the west. The Free State exported some wool to the Cape ports, but the majority of the Afrikaner farmers were subsistence pastoralists. They shared the occupation of this land with African farmers who, in return for the right to ‘squat’, looked after the herds of the white men. North of the Vaal river the miscellany of Afrikaner and African states exported some hides and much ivory. In 1864, 85 per cent of the ivory came from Zoutpansberg, much of it exported through Lourenço Marques. But most of the people in the Transvaal were cattle farmers.

The British colony of Natal was sparsely populated by Europeans and heavily populated by Africans. Some of these Africans lived on reserves, but many were farmers on European-owned land. The 1850s were a decade of intense speculation in land by European companies and individuals in Natal and on the high veld. In consequence, much of the land was in the hands of absentee companies, which were paid rents by the African occupiers (a practice known as Kaffir farming), and a shortage of available land was felt by Africans and Europeans alike. After Natal became a British colony in 1843, many of the Afrikaner cattle farmers withdrew to the high veld; the sprinkling of British settlers then experimented with various export crops. Sugar, which had been introduced from Mauritius in 1847, survived with difficulty until in 1860 Indian labourers were imported to work on the estates. The Natal authorities could not persuade Africans, from within the colony or beyond, to engage in plantation labour. Apart from sugar, customs dues on the export of ivory from the interior and taxes collected from the colony’s African population, were the chief sources of revenue. A large proportion of Natal’s trade was with African people living throughout south-east Africa, so much so that it was, in the scathing words of the Cape politician John X. Merriman, ‘a white forwarding agency in [an African] territory’.

To the north-east of Natal was the Zulu kingdom, militarily

perhaps the most powerful African state in southern and central Africa. In 1870 the kingdom was still ruled by Mpande, brother of Shaka. The main external pressure on the kingdom was from Afrikaner farmers in the Transvaal. There was some internal friction in the 1860s between factions led by Mpande's eldest sons, one of whom, Cetshwayo, succeeded him in 1872. The Zulu economy was both socially complex and materially self-sufficient; it was based on cattle, access to which was according to age and rank. The activities of traders from neighbouring territories seem to have had only a superficial effect on the way of life of the people of Zululand. The mainstay of this trade was the importation of firearms, and the most successful European trader, John Dunn, significantly adopted Zulu culture, and became a quasi-Zulu chief. After forty or more years of contact with Europeans, the Zulu political economy remained largely intact.

The majority of the Zulu were still held firmly in the different production communities of the kingdom, moving from one type to another as they grew older and their status altered... throughout the reigns of the kings Zulu labour expanded within the commoners' homesteads, continued to support the bulk of the population, and the surplus which was drawn from them by the king through the military system created the basis for his material power and authority, together with that of the officials with and through whom he ruled.⁵⁰

Although there were some obvious similarities between agricultural systems operating in the same environment, the contrast between the political economy of the Zulu kingdom and that of the colony of Natal was potentially a source of severe conflict.

The 1850s had been a decade of moderate prosperity for many of the communities in South Africa, one of the major exceptions being Africans living in the Transkei. As far as the Europeans were concerned, more immigration took place during this period than in any previous one. In contrast, the 1860s were a period of acute depression. In 1862 much of South Africa was afflicted with drought, which persisted season after season without much interruption until 1870. Some parts of the high veld and Basutoland had had poor rains for much of the previous decade, but the climatic situation in 1862–3 was exceptionally bad. As well as food supplies, a wide range of economic activities were

⁵⁰ Jeff Guy, *The destruction of the Zulu kingdom* (London, 1979), 15, 18.

adversely affected. A French missionary in Basutoland wrote in 1863:

There is not a trace of vegetation left; cattle, horses, and sheep are dying by the thousand. The sand has accumulated in drifts... Hunger is beginning to make itself felt everywhere. Basutoland [Lesotho] which... is the granary of the Free State and part of the [Cape] Colony, has been completely drained. The Dutch farmers continue to go there with wagons full of sheep on the hoof which they transport in this way because the latter are no longer in fit condition to attempt to walk. They also have ploughs and merchandise of every description with which they hope to induce the Basuto to part with their remaining corn. Provisions can no longer reach them from the seaports for lack of transport. Laden wagons are stranded on the highway because the teams have died.⁵¹

Naturally, severe economic recession followed in the wake of this drought, a recession exacerbated by a number of external factors. As a result of technological changes, the Yorkshire cloth manufacturers switched from short-staple (the wool produced in South Africa) to long-staple wools. During the American civil war shippers found it difficult to penetrate the American market, and after the war the wool market collapsed; sheep farmers in South Africa faced lean times. The nascent banking system found itself with too many creditors and too little money, and imported goods could not be sold. The British Indian government placed a ban on the flow of Indian workers to Natal. Europeans migrated from South Africa to the United States and Australia. Within South Africa, whites left the coastal colonies for the high veld. The amorphous South African Republic in the Transvaal was in particularly bad shape. Its government, which was divided by internal dissensions, could find no ready cash and paid its few employees with credit notes. The recession was also one of the main factors in the political instability of the Cape.

There seemed to be no end to the drought and depression. As the Suez Canal approached completion in 1869, some people in South Africa considered that there would be even graver effects on the economy of the region, with the diversion of the valuable shipping trade. But the commercial infrastructure of South Africa in general, and of the Cape in particular, did not entirely lack resources and enterprise. South Africa was able to participate in

⁵¹ F. Dumas, February 1863, published in F. C. Germond, *Chronicles of Basutoland* (Morija, 1967), 459.

the improvement of the international economy in the early 1870s. The price of wool rose again. Many Cape farmers prospered during the ostrich-feather boom of the 1870s, as did their counterparts in the western and central Sudan. But above all, the South African political economy was able to react positively (if not efficiently or humanely) to the discovery of diamonds in 1868. Diamonds – and later gold – had the most profound effect on the course of South African history, and were to accentuate the differences between it and the other regions of the continent.

CONCLUSION

What can be said to draw some distinctive strands out of this tangle of human activities and aspirations that make up an overview of Africa on the eve of partition, an overview that is of necessity discursive and fragmentary? The dominant factor in the history of the continent at that time was the growing relationship between Africa and the wider world, in particular Europe. This relationship of course varied immensely from one part of Africa to another. There is no doubt that some European commodities had penetrated to almost every part of the continent by the 1870s: historians have only to look hard enough, and they will find. This commodity penetration, however, did not necessarily imply that an alien capitalist economy had gained the upper hand. Even on the West African coast, where features of the European economy were an integral part of the economic system, the balance between African and European – between indigenous and alien – was still finely poised, down to the early 1880s. Nor was European economic penetration yet a preponderant political factor among the societies of Lower and Upper Guinea. The forces making for state building and for state disintegration were basically still those that had been operating for the previous two or three centuries, and perhaps even for a millennium or so. Certain elements of European (or Middle Eastern) political technology had been introduced, notably firearms, but these had been easily incorporated into existing political structures.

In certain areas of the continent there was already European political control. In South Africa and Algeria this was quite open: in Egypt it was more veiled. In these countries the European

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capitalist system had made major and disruptive inroads into the indigenous political economies, and was already a powerful influence on the remote peripheries of these centres – over much of south-central Africa, the hinterland of Algeria and, as far as Egypt was concerned, the upper Nile. In the Swahili-Arab zone of East Africa some elements of the European capitalist economy had intruded quite drastically, but with little in the way of serious political control. It can be argued that Zanzibar was already an enclave of European capitalism, and that East Africa was an enormous economic periphery of this enclave. But in East Africa the special demands of the European economy went hand in hand with the special demands of Middle Eastern slave-using economies. These dual, often conflicting demands, were one of the main reasons for the scale and the violence of the ensuing disturbances. The situation was not dissimilar on the upper Nile, where European methods and ideologies of economic exploitation clashed with those of the Turco-Egyptian ruling élite and with the practices of local Muslim entrepreneurs and merchant princes.

Another obvious point that emerges from this overview of Africa on the eve of partition is the kaleidoscopic variety of African political societies. The ‘political world’ seen by different African polities (or, to be more precise, by their leaders) differed vastly in size and shape. The ‘political world’ of the Sultan of Sokoto was enormous. It extended from the Senegal to Istanbul and Mecca, from the Mediterranean to the Guinean forest zone, possibly even to the coast of West Africa. Europeans were certainly a part of this world, but in the 1870s only a very remote and peripheral part. Ideologically, the *Weltanschauung* of the sultan of Sokoto comprised the faith of Islam, from which Christians, while not quite infidels, were excluded as inferiors. At the other end of the scale, and of the continent, it is doubtful whether the world of Cetshwayo extended beyond his Zulu kingdom and those black and white South African groups who were his immediate neighbours. The cosmology of the Zulu was self-contained; there was no place in it for aliens such as Europeans. But for Cetshwayo these very Europeans in South Africa were a major – perhaps the major – political and economic problem. This exercise of considering different variations of what constituted the ‘political world’ can be applied almost endlessly: a short list of examples might include Yohannes IV of Ethiopia,

Tippu Tip, Sultan Bargash of Zanzibar, the king of Dahomey and the *asantebene*, the merchant princes of the Niger delta trading states, Msiri and Mirambo, Kabaka Mutesa of Buganda, Lewanika of Bulozhi, the *reth* of the Shilluk, a Zande chief.

Of course this is only an historiographical game, which should not be pushed too far. Serious studies of ‘political worlds’, *Weltanschauungen* and cosmologies require very precise analysis of complex and often obtuse data. A study of the early colonial experience of the Lozi provides an illuminating insight of how a considerable proportion of the processes and boundaries of Lozi history and society were deliberately hidden from alien investigation:

The most important result of Lewanika sanctioning an official version of Lozi history was to strengthen the shutters behind which lay much of the propulsive force of Lozi society, for the *litaba za sichaba* (history of the nation) set limits upon what the Lozi élite were prepared to allow whites to be interested in through its very subject matter.⁵²

But to return to the more straightforward concept of size and shape, it does seem that, although some of these ‘worlds’ were very large and extended well beyond Africa – to Europe, the Middle East, even to India – none of them embraced the whole of Africa, or saw ‘Africa as a whole’. Perhaps some members of the Turco-Egyptian ruling élite (almost certainly Ismā‘il) could see political geography in this way. This group, however, were not really ‘African’ any more than South African whites were ‘Africans’ in this context. And very few whites in South Africa thought in this way.

This kind of approach leads to at least one tentative conclusion, namely that the partition occurred, when it did, so quickly and completely, because Europeans (rather than Africans) were the first to develop the idea of ‘Africa as a whole’. Jules Ferry, Bismarck, Lord Salisbury, King Leopold, Rhodes – all these – were able to conceive of the whole of Africa in the context of the wider strategies of imperialism. Menelik II of Ethiopia, the one African ruler to resist the Europeans with complete success was also the only one, it appears, to see the local conflict in Ethiopia

⁵² Gwyn Prins, *The hidden hippopotamus: reappraisal in African history: the early colonial experience in western Zambia* (Cambridge, 1980), 29.

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as part of a universal struggle of 'the Europeans' against 'the Africans'.

It is noticeable that the size and shape of African-perceived worlds seems to narrow quite sharply below latitude 10°N and again, still further, below about latitude 10°S . Southern Africa in the 1860s had the same 'end of the world' quality, though not in such an extreme form, as places like Tasmania or Patagonia. It was certainly so considered by most British governors of the Cape Colony. Even the whites tended to narrow their horizons. The trekboers had more or less deliberately chosen to cut their links with the wider world, and the whites of Natal had an outlook hardly less parochial than that of the Zulu. The limited nature of African perceptions of their political world in the southern part of the continent when compared to the north might explain some of the different consequences of the colonial experience in the major areas of Africa.

Long-term effects of the relationships between Africa and the outside world were discernible by the beginning of the last third of the nineteenth century. Widespread ideological and cultural changes had already taken place as a result of African experiences of the Muslim Near East and Christian Europe. The introduction of new food crops, such as maize and cassava from the New World, was producing beneficial changes in the performances of African population groups. Nonetheless, there is epidemiological and some cultural evidence which suggests that the population of many of the peoples of tropical Africa was declining by the middle of the century, a pattern that the early decades of colonial rule does not seem to have greatly altered.

Finally, why did the partition take place? The overall evidence suggests that the reasons were results of shifts in the international balance of power and of trade amongst the European capitalist states rather than changes within Africa itself. Trying to look at the world as it must have appeared from within Africa in the early 1870s, one can see few signs to suggest that alien partition was inevitable a decade later.

CHAPTER 2

THE EUROPEAN PARTITION OF AFRICA: ORIGINS AND DYNAMICS

SEEING AFRICA WHOLE

In 1873 Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* celebrated the spectacular conquest of distance, especially since about 1860, by the adaptation of the steam-engine to trans-continental and trans-oceanic transport. To the suggestion that the world was still 'assez vaste', Verne's hero retorted laconically: 'Il l'était autrefois' ('It used to be'). The terrestrial globe had indeed suddenly contracted; and its finite dimensions had now become of practical, and not merely of 'philosophical', interest to the industrialised societies of the West. The planetary stock of markets and resources was evidently none too large; it seemed already possible in principle to foresee the day when its saturation and exhaustion might impose an absolute limit upon the growth of industrial economies. This ultimate catastrophe seemed indeed to be foreshadowed by the onset in the early 1870s of the so-called 'Great Depression', essentially the effect of the failure of domestic and foreign demand to keep pace with the productive capacity of increasingly mechanised industries. Existing markets seemed to be satiated. Prices, profits and interest-rates fell, apparently inexorably, until the mid-1890s. The overall effect was a sharp retardation in the growth-rate of the industrial economies after some twenty-five years of unprecedented acceleration, and, for some of these economies, an especially severe recession between 1878 and 1884. Moreover, the existing overseas outlets for European capital now no longer seemed sufficiently safe or remunerative. British capital export between 1875 and 1879 was negligible by comparison with the previous five-year period; and from 1880 to 1904 the average annual export of British capital was little more than half that of the period 1870-4.¹

¹ H. Feis, *Europe: the world's banker, 1870-1914* (New Haven, 1930; reprinted New York, 1965), 10-23.

In France, where retardation of the growth-rate had already set in during the 1860s, industrial growth remained slow and hesitant until the later 1890s. The more dynamic German economy resumed a high rate of growth during the 1880s. But even in Germany the phase of comparative stagnation initiated by the 'great crash' of 1873 did not fully bottom out until 1879-80; in the early 1880s recovery was still hardly perceptible, and the crisis of confidence persisted. Moreover the depression had overtaken both the French and the German economies before either had developed sufficiently to offer an effective challenge to the world-wide economic preponderance of Britain. British manufacturers and merchants, thanks to their half-century lead in industrialisation and their expert knowledge of the requirements and functioning of overseas markets, were in the 1870s still able in most commodities to out-trade and undersell their continental competitors; and this not only in Britain's vast overseas possessions, but in the markets of Latin America, East Asia and coastal Africa – in fact, wherever free trade prevailed, or could be caused to prevail by the guns of British warships. Only in the comparatively limited colonial holdings of other powers could the keen edge of British competition be blunted by discriminatory tariffs and other restrictions. The obvious solution for these powers was to add to their colonial holdings; but after 1815 British naval hegemony was very effectively used (and nowhere more effectively than on the African coasts) to discourage annexations which would create new quasi-monopolistic trading enclaves for other powers. This system of 'informal empire', whereby British sea-power safeguarded and even created the conditions of free trade which guaranteed Britain's economic preponderance, was usually in British eyes clearly preferable to formal possession, with its attendant expense and responsibilities. Until the 1880s, therefore, British policy-makers normally thought, not in terms of 'staking out claims', but of preventing others from doing so. This was particularly true of tropical Africa, where experience throughout the nineteenth century seemed clearly to demonstrate the greater profitability of informal empire.

For other powers, however, formal possession meant the elimination of British competition and the acquisition of a permanent title to a share in a limited market. Moreover, by the later 1870s formal possessions on the coast were acquiring a new

importance for some makers of opinion and even of policy. In the 'consumer famine' of the 1870s the prospect of opening up previously inaccessible and supposedly lucrative interior markets became increasingly attractive, and a coastal establishment might become the base for the penetration of these markets by that potent, almost magical, symbol of the ultimate omnipotence of steam technology – the railway. The long-distance railway already appeared to have wrought economic miracles in North America, and as early as 1867 Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* was in fantasy applying its magic to the African interior, building railways across the Sahara to develop Timbuktu and Bornu and travelling through Ethiopia 'safe in a train to the Upper Nile'. Reality (of a sort) did not lag far behind fantasy. In 1873, the very year of Verne's *Tour du monde* with its 'lyrisme ferroviaire', Khedive Ismā'il was inaugurating at Wadi Halfa a Sudan railway intended to open up his African possessions. In 1879 the French launched in the Senegal hinterland the first deliberate European attempt to create a large territorial empire in tropical Africa. This move was in origin a plan to open up the supposedly rich interior markets of the western Sudan by railway construction on a grandiose scale: the Senegal–Niger line and the celebrated (but still non-existent) *Trans-Saharien*.

Another technological revolution dating from the 1860s, that in the design of small-arms, may also have encouraged ideas of staking out claims by discounting the factor of local resistance. By 1870 the development of an effective breech-loading mechanism had enabled the rifle, with its long-range accuracy and rapid rate of fire, to supersede the muzzle-loading musket, unchanged in essentials since the seventeenth century. By 1889 Hiram Maxim, abandoning the multi-barrelled monstrosities of Gatling and Nordenfeldt, had perfected, in a conveniently portable form, the first truly automatic firearm. Less than a decade later, Hilaire Belloc's 'Modern traveller' could blithely sing:

Whatever happens, we have got
The Maxim gun; and they have not.

These improvements were not of course a necessary condition for the European partition of Africa. Frenchmen had already subjugated Algeria, Turco-Egyptians the Sudan, and Afrikaners and Englishmen South Africa, without benefit of *armes perfection-*

nées. But the small-arms revolution may well have not only encouraged, but accelerated, the scramble – especially by sometimes enabling quite small European expeditions to plant flags and extort ‘treaties’ deep in the African interior.

Before Africa could be partitioned as a whole, it had to be seen as a whole. Until the 1870s, ‘Africa as a whole’ had been a purely geographical concept, of no practical relevance to the European politicians and merchants concerned with the continent. Much of Africa still remained what it had been to the first Europeans who circumnavigated it: a series of ‘coasts’ – Barbary Coast, Windward Coast, Grain Coast... Swahili Coast, Somali Coast – surrounding a vast enigmatic blank. Nor, except in South Africa and to a limited extent in the West African bulge with its trans-Saharan trade, had the precise political and economic contents of this blank usually been relevant to the mainly water’s-edge activities of Europeans. As late as the 1840s, Anglo-French confrontations on African coasts were seen by London and Paris, not as disputes about Africa, but as disputes on the periphery (as it happened, an African periphery) of fields of conflict whose centres lay elsewhere. Disputes on the northern and north-western coasts were a subordinate part of Mediterranean naval strategy. East-coast disputes, and disputes about Madagascar, were similarly related to naval hegemony in the Indian ocean; while from Zanzibar northwards, these disputes were also linked to power-conflicts in the Persian Gulf, on the western approaches to India. Strategically, ‘Africa’ had no existence except on its coasts. Except in South Africa and marginally in West Africa, the interior of Africa was, from the European viewpoint, almost as non-existent economically.

In the early 1840s, with so much of the interior still a blank, ‘Africa as a whole’ was still a concept almost without meaning except in its application to a mere land mass. A generation later, however, increased knowledge of the interior had inspired, in Winwood Reade’s *Martyrdom of man* (1872), a serious attempt – perhaps the first – to consider the past, present and even future of all Africa and its peoples. By 1876 European policy-makers were also beginning to think in terms of ‘Africa as a whole’; and some of them already believed that ‘Africa’ was a prize worth competing for. In February 1876 the *direction des Colonies* at Paris, pressing for more active competition with the British, evidently

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assumed that before long the whole continent, coasts and interior alike, must fall under either British or French domination. By December 1876 the British colonial secretary, Lord Carnarvon, not content with plans for the consolidation of informal British hegemony on both the East and West coasts, was anxious to extend British influence far into the interior, northward along the spine of southern and eastern Africa – to extend it indeed until it reached the African possessions of an Egypt which was already a British client-state. ‘We cannot’, wrote Carnarvon, ‘admit rivals in the East or even the central parts of Africa... To a considerable extent, if not entirely, we must be prepared to apply a sort of Munro [*sic*] doctrine to much of Africa.’²

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Even to the British, the extension of informal control to the interior now seemed a possible way of opening up new markets. Although the water’s-edge trade was still modestly flourishing, especially in the Niger delta, at the Congo mouth and at Zanzibar, its volume depended on the activity of African producers and of African or Arab middlemen. It seemed to ‘go without saying’ that Europeans would be more efficient both in organising production and in marketing the product. The water’s-edge trade, especially in West Africa, was moreover notoriously vulnerable to political conflict in the interior. At Lagos, such conflict had hindered the development of trade for decades; in Sierra Leone, it led to unpredictable fluctuations in the volume of trade and therefore of revenue. European attempts to pacify these conflicts were rarely successful unless, as in the Niger delta, the African belligerents were accessible to gunboats. Informal control in the interior, which would not of course exclude the judicious application of armed force, would in principle solve this problem. In spite of the disappointing results, both political and economic, of earlier small-scale experiments in European control of the tropical interior on the Senegal and the lower Niger, this solution seemed increasingly attractive as economic depression persisted and technological confidence developed. It seemed especially attractive

² Public Record Office (P.R.O.) 30/6/34 (Carnarvon Papers), Carnarvon to Sir Bartle Frere, 12 Dec. 1876: cited N. Etherington, ‘Frederic Elton and the South African factor in the making of Britain’s East African empire’, *J. Imp. C’wealth Hist.*, 1981, 9, 3, 255–74, at 267. The potential rival was King Leopold (see below, p. 27).

where, as on the Guinea coast, the failure of trade to expand in the later 1870s was often attributed to 'unproductive' African middlemen, or to the tolls levied by African states in the interior.

By the later 1870s economic depression and European wishful thinking, reinforced by the reports of explorers who rarely failed to emphasise the supposed economic potential of the lands they had explored, had generated totally mythical El Dorados in tropical Africa: El Dorados of vast, fertile, empty lands, African 'Sleeping Beauties' awaiting the magic kiss of European energy, skill and capital; or, in bewildering contradiction, manufacturers' El Dorados of millions of eager potential customers. Some leading policy-makers, especially in France, saw in the interior of Africa markets and outlets for capital which would not merely palliate but cure the malaise of the industrial economy. This myth neatly complements (and may indeed have helped to generate) the 'Leninist'³ myth that by the late nineteenth century political control of new African markets and outlets for capital had become an ineluctable necessity for the further development – indeed, for the survival – of European capitalism. The statistical evidence gives no support to either myth, except conceivably in South Africa. In the late 1860s, when Britain was by far the most active of tropical Africa's trading partners, this trade probably represented less than 1 per cent of Britain's total extra-European trade. But after partition, and even as late as 1909–13, it still represented only about 2 per cent. Capital export to tropical Africa, whether by Britain, France or Germany, was statistically insignificant before 1914. British capital export even to Egypt represented by 1913 only about 1.3 per cent of her total capital export to non-European regions; as a trading partner for Britain, Egypt under Lord Cromer and his successor was for many years considerably less active than she had been under Khedive Ismā'īl.⁴

Nevertheless, by the 1880s the belief in tropical African markets, if not as El Dorados at least as economic palliatives, seems to have become 'conventional wisdom' in Europe. In

³ 'Leninist' is convenient rather than strictly accurate. For Lenin himself, the age of imperialism as the 'highest stage of capitalism' did not begin until c. 1900; and in his treatise he was concerned to analyse, not the partition of Africa, but the First World War as an imperialist conflict for the re-partition of the world: V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism* (Petrograd, 1917; English-language reprint, Moscow, 1970), 9–10, 79, 85–6, 118–19.

⁴ R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians* (London, 1961), 6–7. Feis, *Europe: the world's banker*, 17–23, 51–7, 73–8.

September 1884 the French diplomatist Alphonse de Courcel, who was certainly no believer in El Dorados, had to decide whether Bismarck's offer of collaboration against Britain in Africa was anything more than a stratagem for embroiling Britain and France. Courcel concluded that the prolonged crisis of 'over-production' had at last constrained Bismarck to acquire African colonies and that his offer was therefore not a mere trap. Nor, considered simply as palliatives, were all the supposed African markets necessarily fantasies. Britain, apparently with the most to lose by the transition from informal to formal empire, did not in fact suffer economically. Her £2.3 million of annual trade with tropical Africa in the late 1860s had by the early 1890s nearly doubled to £4.4 million, in spite of the general fall in prices by about one-third and the loss to other powers of trading outlets previously under informal British control; by 1909–13 it was worth £14 million.⁵ This was of course still only about 2 per cent of Britain's total extra-European trade, and these figures evidently do nothing to rehabilitate Leninist models of capitalist imperialism. But they do suggest that, for Britain at any rate and probably for other economically developed powers, formal empire in tropical Africa brought with it appreciable though modest economic advantages.

The economic advantages actually achieved by formal possession are not however strictly relevant to the problem of motivation. What matters is not the results, but the expectations; nor does it matter whether these expectations are rational or 'mythical', so long as they inspire specific decisions to acquire territory. Two at least of the policy-makers who promoted the French advance into the Niger Sudan in 1879 – Charles de Freycinet, a *polytechnicien* and a railway engineer, and Maurice Rouvier, a Marseilles banker and businessman – were certainly inspired by economic expectations: expectations which turned out to be almost entirely 'mythical' but which as motives to action were thoroughly effective. They were soon followed, both in France and elsewhere, by other economically motivated imperialists: Jules Ferry, Leopold II, George Taubman Goldie, Cecil Rhodes, Eugène Etienne, Joseph Chamberlain, to name only the most prominent. Some of these men, notably Leopold and Rhodes, combined the roles of political policy-maker and great financial

⁵ Robinson and Gallagher, *loc. cit.*

magnate. Even when the financial magnates were not themselves political policy-makers, they were usually well placed to exercise influence over policy. Yet this influence was by no means always crucial; and the actual operations of the capitalists in tropical Africa, though often of course vitally important to the particular interests concerned, were before 1914 never a statistically significant proportion of the capitalist economy as a whole.

The Leninist model does not however exhaust the category of economic theories possibly relevant to the partition of Africa. By the mid-1870s consciousness of a shrinking and all too finite globe, the apparent satiation of existing markets, the temporary absence of new opportunities for safe and remunerative overseas investment, and the evolution of a new map of Africa embodying some determinate interior content, had conspired to present the African interior as the world's last great untapped reservoir of markets, resources and possible investment opportunities. This image developed precisely at the moment when the growth of technological confidence was encouraging the belief that political control and economic exploitation of the interior had at last become feasible operations; within five years or so of the development of this image, the scramble for Africa had begun. This model can also be used to explain, with apparent plausibility, why European annexations of tropical African territory were so trivial and infrequent between 1815 and c.1880. For Britain, down to about 1850 the sole effectively industrialised Power, informal empire sufficed; while France and Germany, even after their rapid industrialisation from about 1850, had until the mid-1870s encountered no problems of economic growth acute enough to act as a spur to African empire. Nor had either the new technology or the new African geography yet inspired the belief that the political control of Africa might become an important factor in the development of European economies. Hence the long standstill, followed by very rapid action after about 1880.

This model is however certainly misleading as an explanation of the standstill. British relations in Africa with other European powers, and especially with France and Portugal, demonstrate very clearly that the crucial factor between 1815 and 1880 was not the mere absence of a strong economic incentive, but the very positive presence of a British deterrent to annexation. Only in 1830, when France seized Algiers, was this deterrent successfully

challenged; thereafter London was determined that there should be no further French North-African acquisitions or hegemonies, with their implied threat to British naval preponderance in the Mediterranean. Palmerston's reaction to the French sponsorship of Muḥammad 'Alī of Egypt is well known; the magnitude of the crisis reflects the fact that the policy of the French Prime Minister, Adolphe Thiers, threatened British preponderance not only in the Mediterranean but throughout the Middle East and the western approaches to India. Less publicly, however, in the 1830s France had been successfully deterred from seizing Tunis, and when in 1844 she became involved in war with Morocco, the naval operations of the French were monitored by the British fleet and London successfully forbade to a victorious France any annexation of Moroccan territory.

Thiers' major challenge to British hegemony in the Mediterranean and the Middle East had been accompanied by subsidiary challenges, prompted above all by the *ministère de la Marine*, to British informal empire on the west and east coasts of Africa. On the Guinea coast, it was hoped to foster French trade, and possibly to develop a naval station, by the annexation of *comptoirs* protected from British competition. On the east coast there was to be an outwork of the planned citadel of French influence in the Middle East, but the *Marine* also hoped to restore the French position in the Indian Ocean by establishing, in Madagascar or on the mainland, a naval base as a replacement for Ile de France (Mauritius), lost to the British in 1815; some senior French naval officers hankered after the whole of Madagascar as a 'substitute India'. François Guizot, who replaced Thiers in October 1840, was anxious on grounds of general European diplomacy to resume cordial relations with Britain. But his withdrawal from these adventures had, for domestic reasons, to be gradual and unobtrusive. It required some British pressure to bring him to 'neutralise' the three new West African *comptoirs* by imposing a régime of complete free trade and to announce in March 1843 a *politique de points d'appui* which abandoned all serious territorial expansion. Had there been in the early 1840s another major power interested in Africa, and willing to support France in these challenges to British informal empire, the coastal partition of Africa would probably not have been delayed until the 1880s. But until 1884 France remained, to her disadvantage, isolated against

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Britain in Africa. Although the *Marine* continued intermittently to look for strategic footholds in East Africa, it was invariably checked when its activities threatened a serious confrontation with London. In 1860 Napoleon III rejected proposals for a major French establishment on the Red Sea and Somali coasts rather than risk such a conflict; and the Anglo-French Agreement of March 1862, guaranteeing the independence of Zanzibar, was in effect an undertaking by France not to challenge Britain's hegemony on the East coast between Cape Guardafui and Mozambique. After 1870, the dangerously weak and isolated position of France in Europe for some years constrained the French Foreign Ministry at the Quai d'Orsay to even greater caution in handling local disputes with England on both the east and west coasts of Africa.

British sea-power, merely displayed against the French, was used with brutal directness against a minor power like Portugal. In 1846 Palmerston, determined to keep the Congo open to British trade, repudiated earlier British acknowledgements of Portuguese sovereignty on both banks of the Congo mouth. In 1856 he warned Lisbon that any attempt to extend Portuguese occupation to this region would be 'opposed by Her Majesty's naval forces';⁶ and in July 1857 the navy expelled a Portuguese military detachment from the north bank of the maritime Congo. In 1857 the industrial economy was non-existent in Portugal; and in the early 1840s it had been rudimentary even in France. Yet the absence of industrialisation did not prevent both these Powers from *attempting* to stake out claims on the coasts of Africa. It was the British naval deterrent which restricted even France to merely derisory acquisitions between 1830 and 1880.

By the later 1870s, nevertheless, Africa had become far more economically interesting to the industrial Powers than it had been a generation earlier. This increased interest was due less to any great increase in the actual volume of trade than to the supposed economic potential, in a period of depression, of an Africa which now consisted not merely of 'coasts' but of a possibly controllable and exploitable interior. Without this development of economically motivated interest, the full-blooded scramble of the 1880s and 1890s is indeed hardly conceivable. But no economic model can

⁶ [P.R.O.], Foreign Office (F.O.) 63/1113, Howard (Lisbon) to F.O., S/T no. 43, 3 June 1856; cited R. Anstey, *Britain and the Congo in the nineteenth century* (Oxford, 1962), 47.

explain, even in the broadest and most general terms, the pattern of partition that actually took place. In 1875, the most likely outcome of increased European economic interest in Africa seemed to be the consolidation by the British of their informal coastal empire and its selective extension into the interior; and between 1875 and 1879 this process was actually taking place, only to be overtaken by the onset of partition. But the mere fact of partition implies the failure of the British deterrent against encroachment upon their informal empire; no economic model seems likely to account for this failure. Partition began as an exclusively Anglo-French contest, which was indeed the only pattern that had seemed even remotely possible in the late 1870s. Apart from the apparently trivial intervention of King Leopold, no other power was involved until in 1884 partition suddenly developed into an entirely unforeseen multi-power scramble – in which, by a crowning paradox, the non-power Leopold II carried off one of the major prizes. Even if each individual act of annexation had been economically motivated, explanations of a different kind would still be needed to account for this remarkable *pattern* of partition.

Moreover, the demonstration that economic incentives existed, and that they stimulated the kind of interest that led to annexation, does not necessarily imply that economic motives were crucial, or even that they existed at all, in any particular act of territorial acquisition. And for some of the partitioning powers, the economic model does not work even as a generator of interest. In the 1870s Portugal, still virtually a pre-industrial power, was presiding listlessly over the last shrinking relics of an African empire ruined by the final suppression of the transatlantic slave trade. Yet in the 1880s she reasserted her control over very extensive territories which for long remained a crippling burden upon her underdeveloped economy – although they may of course have enriched particular interests within it. Italy, a very sketchily industrialised country of whose many economic problems industrial overproduction was surely the least, nevertheless had genuine economic interests and prospects in Tunisia. But she failed to make good her position there; instead, she acquired in the Horn of Africa an empire which offered prospects not of markets or profits but of a military commitment so heavy as to be a political danger as well as an economic burden.

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The revival of effective Portuguese imperialism in the 1880s was mainly a response to the contemptuous arrogance with which other powers, especially Britain, brushed aside Portugal's 'historic claims' in Africa. Politically conscious Portuguese reacted to this affront by treating the maintenance of the Lusitanian imperial heritage as crucial to national self-esteem and indeed to the Portuguese national identity. Italy had no 'historic claims' in Africa – or at least, none more recent than those of imperial Rome. But when in the 1880s African imperialism became fashionable among the great powers, the Italian foreign minister, Francesco Crispi, in particular seems to have felt that Italy would look more like a great power if she followed the fashion. As Crispi's political rival, di Rudinì, remarked, Italy's African empire was acquired 'in a spirit of imitation...for pure *snobisme*'.⁷ 'Prestige' is an uncomfortably nebulous concept; but it is impossible to discuss Portuguese and Italian imperial motivations without using it as a convenient shorthand.

'Prestige' also seems the most appropriate category in which to discuss Khedive Ismā'il's African empire, which was no fortuitous agglomeration of territories, but the first of the consciously-planned African empires of the later nineteenth century. Ismā'il intended it to embrace the entire north-east quadrant of the continent, including Ethiopia, eastwards to the Indian Ocean and southwards to the equator – he optimistically called his southernmost Sudanese territories the 'Equatorial province'. This grandiose plan suffered a mortal blow when in 1875 and 1876 the khedive's attempts to subjugate Ethiopia were ignominiously routed. Soon after Ismā'il's deposition in 1879, his empire in most of the Sudan was destroyed by the Mahdist insurrection and by local risings of the southern Sudanese peoples; and by 1888 the surviving remnants had been dismantled as a measure of retrenchment by the British in Egypt. Ismā'il, like Leopold II and Rhodes, expatiated on his 'civilising mission': he claimed for Egypt 'the position of the head of civilisation in North Africa'.⁸ Although the khedive sometimes attempted to promote economic development, even so blindly optimistic a financier as Ismā'il can hardly have hoped to recover much of his enormous

⁷ Cited W. L. Langer, *The diplomacy of imperialism* (2nd edn, New York, 1951), 281.

⁸ F.O. 84/1371, Granville to Stanton (Alexandria), no. 6, 2 Apr. 1873; cited M. F. Shukry, *Equatoria under Egyptian rule* (Cairo, 1953), 25.

outlay. He created his empire, not in serious hope of gain, but to the greater glory of himself, his dynasty and his adopted country, Egypt. Like the Cairo opera house, African empire was a symbol of Egypt's claim, as a modernised, civilised and 'civilising' power, to equality of status with the great historic nations of Europe.

The imperialism of prestige would have been comparatively unimportant had it been confined to decayed powers like Portugal or over-ambitious *parvenus* like Egypt. But it was not. During the later nineteenth century the great powers (and *a fortiori* a doubtfully great power like Italy) lived in a ruthlessly competitive world of constantly fluctuating antagonisms and alignments. The system was so complex and so delicately balanced that diplomatic setbacks even on quite minor issues could sometimes jeopardise a power's perceived effectiveness and general international standing. Hence the constant and anxious concern for 'prestige' – a concern which became almost obsessive when a previously preponderant power like France was struggling to avoid relegation to second-class status, or when a powerful and ambitious newcomer like Wilhelmine Germany was striving to assert itself far outside Prussia's traditional political arena. Until the mid-1880s the British were usually confident enough of their metropolitan security and oceanic hegemony to accept minor setbacks without great anxiety, and to treat with ironic condescension the excessive 'touchiness' of lesser breeds. But this supercilious detachment did not survive the steady erosion after c.1884, by rivals both old and new, of Britain's former easy preponderance. By 1898 Britain too had become intensely concerned for her 'prestige' – for her credibility as a great power; and when that credibility appeared to be at stake, even in African conflicts over territory of little or no intrinsic value, she was prepared to risk or even to threaten European war in order to reassert it.

In the early 1840s the French challenges to Britain on African coasts had been prompted far less by real or supposed economic necessity than by the determination of French statesmen and French admirals to restore France to her rightful status as *la grande nation*, especially by reducing British preponderance in the Indian Ocean. Forty years later, the necessity for France to vindicate her claim to great-power status had become even more acute; and the crucial factor in the French decision to occupy Tunisia in 1881

was not pressure from financial interests, influential though these were, but the intolerable prospect of being elbowed out of an established unofficial hegemony by Italian collusion with the Bey. It was the diplomatists, not the businessmen, who nerved Ferry and his strong ally, Léon Gambetta, to act in spite of their fears of unpopularity at home and complications abroad. The diplomatists insisted that failure to meet the challenge from a *parvenu* power like Italy would be seen by a watchful and critical Europe as evidence that France was 'sinking to the level of Spain': a disaster all the more deplorable in that 'one single act of firmness, of will and of determination' could restore France to her 'rightful place in the eyes of other nations'.⁹ In the later 1880s and the 1890s, French bitterness at the continued British occupation of Egypt was prompted less by considerations of the Mediterranean power-balance than by the British usurpation of France's traditional role, which she had reasserted with considerable success in the later 1870s, as the preponderant European influence in Egypt itself. It was the determination to wipe out this affront, not the pursuit of strategic advantage in the Mediterranean, that in July 1898 brought Marchand to Fashoda in order to challenge the British occupation of Egypt by an implicit threat to the Nile waters.

German expansion, and attempted expansion, in Africa was also strongly driven by motives of prestige. Bismarck's bid for colonies was complex in origin and motivation. Economic motives were certainly present; but by May 1884 his strongest single motive seems to have been to force London to abandon a doctrine of 'paramountcy' which purported to exclude German political influence from African territory which Britain neither occupied nor claimed by legal right. This 'Monroe doctrine for Africa' (as Bismarck called it, unconsciously echoing Carnarvon's words of December 1876) was less an economic injury to Germany than, in Bismarck's own words, 'an affront to our national self-esteem'.¹⁰ The later German pressure for repartition in Africa, maintained fairly steadily from about 1895 to 1914, was

⁹ J. Ganiage, *Les origines du protectorat français en Tunisie* (Paris, 1959) 632, 634–5, citing: St-Vallier to Barthélemy St-Hilaire, 26 Jan. 1881; Roustan to Noailles, 23 Feb.; St-Vallier to Noailles, 21 Mar. 1881.

¹⁰ *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871–1914*, IV, no. 742, Bismarck, minute on Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, 24 May 1884; no. 743, Bismarck to Münster (London), 1 June 1884.

driven not by economic necessity but by the conviction that German prestige was being impaired by Bismarck's failure in the 1880s to acquire an overseas empire of dimensions more in keeping with Germany's new status as a world power.

Although during the 1890s the Egyptian question became for France a matter of prestige rather than of strategy, Egypt was nevertheless a crucial region strategically. In 1882 the real or supposed need to defend the Suez Canal against 'Urābī and the Egyptian nationalists was one of several considerations which gradually overcame Gladstone's shrinking from armed intervention. Another quasi-strategic motive was the fear that by mid-1882 French policy under Freycinet was moving towards active diplomatic support for 'Urābī – a development which might well have inhibited British intervention and have established France as the patron of Egypt's new rulers. For some six years after 1882, however, British policy-makers did not see Egypt as an imperial acquisition. They still looked forward to military withdrawal as soon as they had, by financial and other reforms, restored Egyptian solvency and political stability, thereby removing pretexts for intervention by other powers. Lest maintenance of the débris of Ismā'īl's African empire should hinder reform in Egypt, the British hastened to liquidate these remnants, ignoring the possible long-term threat to the Nile waters implicit in the vacuum of power they were creating.

In the course of 1888 the British decided to remain in Egypt indefinitely – a development fundamentally more important than their spectacular armed intervention of 1882. Maintenance of the British position in Egypt was henceforth seen as an imperative strategic necessity. Turkey seemed to have become, in Lord Salisbury's words, merely 'the janitor of Russia' at the Straits; defence of the Mediterranean balance by supporting Turkey against Russia at Constantinople was therefore, at best, an obsolescent strategy. Russian influence in Turkey was expected to increase steadily, and with it Russian naval strength in the eastern Mediterranean; sooner or later a strong naval base in Egypt would become indispensable to Britain. Once the British had decided to remain, they could no longer ignore the potential threat to Egypt's water-supply entailed by the vacuum of power on the upper Nile; and by 1889 the strategic defence of the upper-Nile waters had become 'a separate and dominating factor' in Lord Salisbury's

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diplomacy.¹¹ After 1889 this strategy usually dominated British policy not only towards the upper Nile itself but also towards all those very extensive regions of Africa which could be regarded as 'approaches' to the Nile basin. After 1893, when the French were attempting, in pursuit of a goal dictated by prestige, to establish a strategic *prise de possession* on the upper Nile, strategy similarly dominated French policy towards this region.

Strategy therefore appears, in the Nile valley at least, as yet another category of motive driving on the partition. This is not to say, however, that 'from start to finish the partition of tropical Africa was driven by the persistent crisis in Egypt'.¹² By 1882 the partition of tropical Africa was already in full swing in the Niger Sudan, on the Guinea coast, on the Congo, and in Madagascar. Moreover, for nearly two years after September 1882 the 'Egyptian crisis', as an Anglo-French confrontation, was hardly a crisis at all. Paris still believed that London would ultimately conclude that French friendship was worth the continued sharing of financial control in Egypt. To assist the British to see reason, until 1884 the French refrained from local obstruction in Egypt; the French consul in Cairo was even instructed to co-operate actively with his British colleague.¹³ Elsewhere in Africa however, and especially in Guinea and Madagascar, France had already become more than usually combative towards England at least eighteen months *before* the British occupation of Egypt. Immediately after September 1882 there was little if any perceptible increase in this combativeness; and until the final collapse of Anglo-French negotiations on Egyptian finance in summer 1884, there is no convincing evidence that French forward policies in Africa were prompted by the desire to 'retaliate' for Egypt.

Only in August 1884 did Jules Ferry begin cautiously to respond to Bismarck's proposal, first put forward in May, for a Franco-German alignment against Britain on African questions. This alignment, while it lasted, certainly produced some spectacular results in Africa. But it did not long survive the fall and disgrace of Ferry in March 1885; and its demise was followed, in the later

¹¹ Cecil, (Lady) G., *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, iv (London, 1932), 48, citing Salisbury to A. Austin, 3 July 1887; to Lord Lyons, 20 July 1887. *Ibid.*, 139-40.

¹² Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, 465.

¹³ For French policy towards Britain in Egypt from Sept. 1882 to Aug. 1884, see: *Documents Diplomatiques Français, le série*, iv (Paris, 1932), nos. 525-97, *passim*; v (Paris, 1933), nos. 26-402 *passim*.

1880s, by a marked improvement in Anglo-German relations. By 1890 the Quai d'Orsay saw little prospect of progress on the Egyptian question until the return to office of the Liberals. But when the Liberals came back in 1892, Lord Rosebery at the Foreign Office proved no less intransigent than his predecessor Salisbury. French overtures were rebuffed, with no excess of courtesy; and thereupon in February 1893 Théophile Delcassé, then at the *Colonies*, launched on his own responsibility the first French attempt (the abortive Monteil mission) to enforce evacuation by a threat to the upper Nile waters. As a propellant of partition in the Nile basin and its approaches, the 'Egyptian crisis' evidently had a very long fuse. The British had seen no threat to the Nile waters from anyone until 1889, and none from the French until mid-1892, when the possibility of an advance to the upper Nile was first discussed in the French Chamber. To the partition of West Africa, at any rate down to 1894, 'the persistent crisis in Egypt' had no relevance at all. Between 1879 and 1883, when there was as yet no serious quarrel over Egypt, the French had advanced very rapidly in West Africa. Precisely when the Egyptian dispute became embittered, in 1884-5, there was a pause in this advance; and when the advance was resumed in 1889-90 it was directed exclusively to the creation of a large territorial empire centred on Lake Chad – a project which tended, until 1894, to distract the attention of French colonialists from the Nile valley.

The 'Egyptian crisis' – not that of 1882 but the open Anglo-French quarrel of 1884 – did indeed isolate Britain diplomatically; and the short-lived Franco-German alignment in Africa enabled Bismarck to help himself, with a minimum of risk, to African territories which had previously formed part of Britain's informal empire. These African acquisitions have been seen as purely a move in Bismarck's European policy, a means of picking a quarrel with Britain so as to make his desire for a Franco-German rapprochement more credible to Paris. But it was never very clear why, on purely European grounds, Bismarck should have preferred a rapprochement with France to the renewed isolation into which France had been driven by her Egyptian quarrel with Britain; and it is now well established that by 1884 Bismarck had concluded, albeit rather reluctantly, that Germany needed to acquire, if not formal colonies, at least 'spheres' of her own in Africa. He

therefore needed, as he himself told the French, a Franco-German alignment in African disputes in order to create an 'equilibrium on the seas'¹⁴ against Britain's massive naval preponderance over Germany alone.

Advances or acquisitions in Africa undertaken primarily to secure a diplomatic advantage in Europe are not however quite unknown. The most striking is the Anglo-Egyptian advance into the Sudan in March 1896. This move was not originally intended to destroy the Mahdist state, still less to solve the strategic problem on the upper Nile. It began as little more than a token military demonstration undertaken, at Italy's request, in order to distract the Mahdists from attacking Italian outposts in Eritrea and the eastern Sudan after Italy's catastrophic defeat at Adowa by Menelik of Ethiopia. The British solicitude for Italian interests was prompted by the more important consideration of Britain's relations with Germany, which had for some two years been severely strained, both in Africa and elsewhere. But these conflicts had brought Germany no significant advantage; on the contrary, they had recently led to a marked and disquieting improvement in Anglo-French relations, while the Italian catastrophe had shaken the Triple Alliance. The Germans were therefore now willing to improve their relations with Britain; but only if London would reciprocate by supporting the Triple Alliance and breaking off the flirtation with Paris. A gesture of military assistance to Italy in Africa would be a public demonstration of support for the Triplice; and Berlin correctly calculated that an advance into the Sudan would destroy the tentative British rapprochement with France. Berlin therefore saw in London's response to Italy a crucial test of the entire orientation of British foreign policy, which was in effect being constrained to 'choose' between France and Germany. Salisbury decided to satisfy the Germans. He feared that a negative response would leave Britain dangerously isolated against an unfriendly Germany; the conversion of the Anglo-French rapprochement into a full entente seemed impossible so long as the two countries were still divided by the Egyptian question. On 12 March 1896 Salisbury therefore ordered the token Anglo-Egyptian advance that was during the next two years gradually to develop into the total reconquest of the Sudan (below, pp. 149–50).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, v, no. 407, Courcel (Berlin) to Ferry, 23 Sept. 1884.

Examples of 'negative' diplomatic motives – the renunciation of African territory in order to gain a diplomatic advantage in Europe – are of course not uncommon. Salisbury's comparative generosity towards Italy in Africa between 1889 and 1891 reflects his recognition that his relations with Germany would suffer if Anglo-Italian quarrels in Africa became so acute as to jeopardise Britain's support for Italy, and therefore for the Triple Alliance, in the Mediterranean. When in 1893 Lord Rosebery, foreign secretary in the Liberal government, failed to convince Berlin that British support for Italy would be forthcoming in a crisis, Anglo-German relations did promptly deteriorate: notably in Africa, where Germany became stiffer towards Britain and more generous towards France – especially where such generosity would tend to embroil Anglo-French relations. Although 'diplomatic' motives of this kind are of course motives for abstention rather than acquisition, they are nevertheless important for the detailed pattern of partition.

So too, and not merely for the detailed pattern, are motives generated by the immediate pressures of domestic politics. Such motives in fact usually boil down either to economics or prestige; but the type of domestic motivation known as 'manipulated social imperialism' perhaps deserves a category to itself. It has been succinctly defined by its leading practitioner, Bernhard von Bülow: 'To direct the gaze from petty party disputes and subordinate internal affairs...on to world-shaking and decisive problems'.¹⁵ This motive, as well as the desire visibly to assert Germany's greatness as a world power, certainly underlies the German pressure for repartition between 1895 and 1914 – a period when the Social Democrats were capturing a rapidly increasing proportion of the Reich electorate. Crispi's imperialism, too, had a distinct Bülovian streak: he hoped that the grandeurs and burdens of empire would distract Italians from their all too intense preoccupation with their multiple internal divisions and conflicts. On the whole, however, 'manipulated social imperialism' does not seem to have been a very effective propellant of the scramble. It seems to have played only a minor part in initiating partition: it is in particular doubtful how far theorising of this kind influenced Bismarck. 'Manipulated social imperialism' seems

¹⁵ Bülow, cited P. M. Kennedy, 'German colonial expansion: has the "Manipulated Social Imperialism" been ante-dated?', *Past and Present*, 1972, 54, 134–41.

indeed to be a phenomenon of the 1890s and after rather than of the 1880s. But even in this later period its practical effects were meagre: the German pressure for repartition was, after all, almost entirely unsuccessful.

Two further factors – hardly ‘motives’ – are sometimes seen as influential, or even crucial, in promoting territorial acquisition. ‘Missionary influence’ is sometimes regarded as having instigated the partition; but although the flag did very often follow the Gospel into Africa, only exceptionally was this flag the national flag of its missionary precursors. In Madagascar and Cameroun, British Congregationalists and Baptists ultimately found themselves not under the Union Jack, but under the French Tricolour and the flag of Bismarck’s Reich. British Baptists on the Congo found themselves in King Leopold’s empire. French White Fathers and Holy Ghost Fathers ended up respectively in British Uganda and in German East Africa. Perhaps only in Nyasaland is there a clear and direct causal link between missionary influence and colonial annexation. Salisbury was anxious to avoid assuming political responsibility for this awkwardly situated Scottish mission field, which was then virtually inaccessible except through Portuguese Mozambique; but his hand was forced by the fear of losing Presbyterian votes in Scotland if he permitted a Catholic Portuguese takeover. In general, missionary influence was probably a less important factor in partition than the career ambitions of French military officers who, especially but not exclusively in the Niger Sudan, often initiated advances and offensives in order to accelerate by *faits de guerre* the snail’s pace of routine promotion.

More interesting is the situation summed up in the phrase ‘the local crisis’. Here annexation is seen as virtually forced upon the imperial power by the breakdown of a previous informal control operated through a collaborating local élite; and this breakdown is often the result of a successful challenge to this élite by a popular or traditionalist opposition. This model works excellently in Egypt (not surprisingly, as it was originally generated by an analysis of the Egyptian situation); and well enough in Tunisia and Zanzibar. In South Africa, although applicable to some aspects of Anglo-Afrikaner relations between c.1870 and 1899, it is clearly inadequate. An attempt has been made to apply it to French expansion in the Niger Sudan by interpreting the French conquest as an enforced response to Muslim militancy provoked

by resentment of informal French influence. In fact, the Muslim states usually went to considerable lengths to avoid war; and the French campaigns were not 'involuntary imbroglios' but deliberate aggression, 'a determined European bid for territory'.¹⁶ As a covering theory for the partition as a whole, the local crisis is not even superficially plausible. What local crisis, of the type specified in the theory, brought Leopold or Brazza to the Congo? – or Italy to Eritrea or Somalia? – or Bismarck to his curiously distributed set of colonies, in most of which the previous informal influence had been not German but British? – or France to Madagascar, where the previous collaborative relationship had again been with the British, and was deliberately destroyed by the French? Nor does the local crisis, even where it works, represent a separate category of motivation. In handling any local crisis, and in finally resolving it by annexation, European policy-makers were defending interests – economic, strategic, or other – falling within the five categories already established.

These five categories – expected economic gain, prestige, strategy, diplomatic advantage and 'manipulated social imperialism' – do however seem to be exhaustive, or very nearly so. Missionary influence and military careerism can perhaps be treated as merely local and exceptional phenomena; or else subsumed as varieties of 'prestige'. Indeed, who can draw the line between military careerism and 'the honour of the flag', especially in the minds of the military officers themselves? An analysis with five variables is necessarily complex; but in this labyrinth of motivations there is one sure clue. None of these motives, and no combination of them, could have generated a general multi-power partition of Africa if the British had continued successfully to deter other powers from encroaching upon their informal African empire. The collapse of British hegemony is the great negative factor which alone enabled the 'positive' motivations of other powers to achieve practical results. If this factor is neglected, the partition seems on detailed analysis to arise from mere coincidence: from the fortuitous 'convergence of many forces', embarrassing in their multiplicity and diversity, which just happened to 'converge', suddenly and inexplicably, in the early 1880s. Seen in this way,

¹⁶ Cf. R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, 'The partition of Africa', *New Cambridge modern history*, xi (Cambridge, 1962), at 609, 619–20; and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, 'Myths and realities of African resistance', Canadian Historical Association, *Historical papers*, 1969, 185–98.

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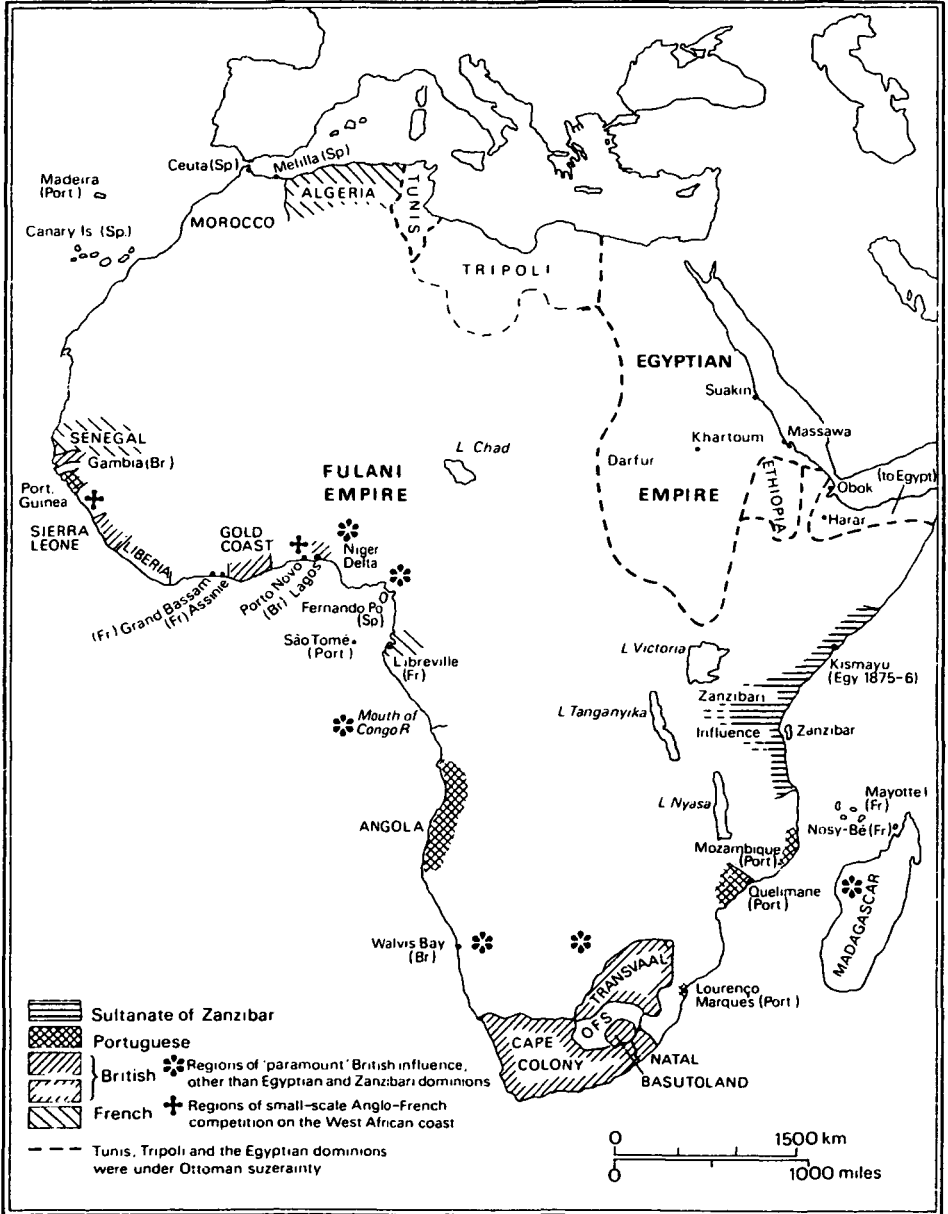
the scramble is simply incomprehensible as a historical process. Rather, 'c'est une histoire idiote... Si tu la regardes de loin, elle se tient à peu près; mais si tu te rapproches, tout fuit le camp'.¹⁷ The concept of partition as a consequence of the collapse of an almost exclusive British hegemony, at a time when both Britain and other powers were beginning to see significant economic advantage in the extension and consolidation of their formal or informal control over African territory, permits the ordering of an otherwise unmanageable variety of phenomena. However, emphasis on the 'background' of growing economic interest does not imply that all annexationist decisions were somehow, 'in the last analysis', economically motivated. On the contrary. The collapse of British hegemony created a very complex and fluctuating pattern of conflicts and alignments in both Africa and Europe. Amid this complexity, policy-makers often simply could not afford to handle African questions by giving economic interests absolute priority over the demands of diplomacy and strategy, or even of prestige.

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British hegemony had never seemed more powerful and complete than in the mid-1870s, on the very eve of partition. It extended, virtually unbroken apart from Algeria and Senegal, around the entire African coastline. Other than Britain and France, the only African coastal 'powers' were Egypt, Zanzibar and Portugal. Egypt and Zanzibar were by now British client-states; and in 1875–6 their subordinate position was emphasised when a clash on the Somali coast between an Egyptian naval expedition (commanded by a Scotsman) and the Zanzibari forces (soon to be commanded by an Englishman) was settled by the fiat of the Foreign Office. Portugal was not quite a client-state; but she held her African territories virtually on British sufferance, as her expulsion from the maritime Congo in 1857 had demonstrated – a demonstration repeated two years later on the Guinea coast, when the forcible 'removal' of Portuguese residents from Bulama island was followed by its annexation as British territory. By 1876,

¹⁷ L. H. Gann and P. Duignan, 'Reflections on imperialism and the scramble for Africa', in Gann and Duignan (ed.), *Colonialism in Africa*, 1 (Cambridge, 1969), 127–8. J.-P. Sartre, *Les mains sales*, premier tableau, scène IV (Hugo).

THE EUROPEAN PARTITION OF AFRICA



3 The climax of British unofficial empire: Africa on the eve of partition, c. 1878

moreover, certain British policy-makers were consciously working to extend and consolidate informal hegemony, notably by the application of the doctrine of 'paramountcy'. In the many regions where Britain exercised exclusive influence without having acquired formal possession, she was increasingly ready to claim, as 'paramount power', a quasi-legal right of objection to any encroachment by other powers.

In West Africa, 'paramountcy' seems to have originated simply as an administrative expedient, a solution to the difficult problem of exercising control in the interior in order to protect the internal trade of small coastal possessions. Paramountcy permitted total flexibility in the extension and application of control while avoiding the unwelcome legal and financial consequences of formal sovereignty – consequences so unacceptable that abandonment of the coastal possession itself had sometimes been seriously considered as the preferable alternative. The concept was also used to cover situations like that in the Niger delta, where Britain enjoyed 'paramount influence' backed by a preponderance of armed force, but had no formal possessions at all. Paramountcy of this kind could hardly be deployed unless no other European power exercised significant influence in the region concerned; but from 'paramountcy' as an expedient applicable only where other powers were absent, it was an easy if illogical step to the doctrine that where paramountcy existed no other power was entitled to intrude its presence. By 1875 this was the Foreign Office position on the Niger delta. In the same year, the Colonial Office was deliberately refraining from piecemeal annexations in the Pacific lest these, by alerting other powers, should 'defeat the object and prevent us from quietly acquiring paramount influence among the Islands';¹⁸ and in 1875–6 Lord Carnarvon was hoping to obtain French recognition of British paramountcy along the whole West African coastline, excepting only Senegal, from Morocco to Gabon.

By 1876–7 some British policy-makers were extending the concept of paramountcy to cover not merely African 'coasts' and their immediate hinterlands, but enormous areas of the accessible or potentially accessible interior. In southern Africa British paramount influence, alike over British colonies, Afrikaner

¹⁸ R. Herbert (P.U.S., Colonial Office), 5 May 1875, cited W. D. McIntyre, *The imperial frontier in the tropics* (London, 1967), 356.

republics and African polities, had been regarded as axiomatic at least since 1860. This paramountcy had never had any fixed northern limit; but in December 1876 Carnarvon wanted to extend it until it met, at the Great Lakes, another sphere of paramount British influence – that over ‘Egypt and the country that belongs to Egypt’.¹⁹ In April 1877 the Transvaal was annexed. In February 1877 British influence had been exerted to secure the appointment of Gordon as governor-general of the Egyptian Sudan; and in September Khedive Ismā‘īl bound himself not to dispose of Egypt’s African coastal possessions without British permission. These possessions extended to Cape Guardafui, where they adjoined the northernmost coastal sphere of Britain’s other client, the sultan of Zanzibar. Further south on the Zanzibari mainland, the consul, Sir John Kirk, was in 1877 encouraging the sultan to extend and formalise his influence; at the same time Kirk was pressing him to grant to the Scottish shipowner, Sir William Mackinnon, mainland concessions which would have transferred to Mackinnon the reality of power and profit. In May 1877, Sir Robert Morier, the British ambassador at Lisbon, proposed the enrolment of Portugal as a third British client-state with functions similar to those of Egypt and Zanzibar. In this way, he believed, it would be easy for Britain to acquire paramount influence throughout the whole of Africa. The Foreign Office did not object, but gave Morier little active encouragement. Perhaps an attempt openly to subordinate the proud and sensitive Portuguese hardly seemed worth the trouble: by mid-1877 Britain already seemed well on the way to imposing the ‘Munro doctrine [for] much of Africa’ which Carnarvon had demanded in December 1876.

The aggressive and enterprising behaviour of Britain in Africa during the mid-1870s did not pass unnoticed at Paris. For the French, the one redeeming feature of British informal empire was its purely *de facto* existence, devoid of legal warrant and therefore instantly vulnerable should the power-balance ever tilt in favour of France. Any British attempt to formalise informal empire – whether by outright annexation or by expedients such as paramountcy or a ‘Monroe doctrine’ – was therefore a serious threat to France in that it might confine her permanently to her Algerian

¹⁹ Carnarvon to Frere, 12 Dec. 1876, cited Etherington, *J. Imp. C’wealth Hist.*, 1981, 25 n.2.

and Senegalese enclaves. As early as February 1876 this danger had been emphasised by Benoist d'Azy, the *directeur des Colonies*. Benoist, seeing in a recent British blockade of Dahomey an extension to West Africa of the British forward policies in South and East Africa, pressed urgently for more active French competition with the British. But Benoist's pleas fell on deaf ears at the Quai d'Orsay, which saw Africa in a very different perspective from that of the *Colonies*. In February 1876 barely nine months had passed since France had, to all appearances, been saved from a German preventive war only by the diplomatic intervention of Russia and Britain. To the diplomatists, possible colonial opportunities in Africa were not only worthless compared with the security of France in Europe: they were a positive menace, for by generating Anglo-French disputes they might cause France to forfeit British goodwill. Rather than run this risk, the Quai d'Orsay preferred to sacrifice the colonial opportunities *en bloc*. Early in 1876 the French foreign ministry was prepared, in return for the trivial compensation of the Gambia, in effect to recognise British paramountcy over the whole west coast apart from Senegal. The *Marine* and the *Colonies* protested, and so did the firm of Régis Frères at Marseilles; but it was British ministerial incompetence, rather than the strength of the French opposition, which frustrated this remarkable bargain. The Quai d'Orsay, having thus failed to impose its radical solution, was forced to handle with the utmost caution local West Coast disputes, which were now becoming sharper and more frequent as governors of Senegal and of Sierra Leone attempted to increase their depression-starved revenues by planting customs posts in the coastal no-man's-land between the two colonies.

This extreme caution was however no longer necessary after the spectacular improvement in 1878 of the international situation of France. At the Congress of Berlin, France ceased to be an isolated power and almost a diplomatic outcast, and suddenly became the key to the power-balance in the Near East. After the Russian victory over Turkey in 1877–8, it was the refusal of France to align herself with Russia which enabled Austria and Britain to check Russia in the Balkans and at the straits without calling upon overt and active assistance from Germany. Such a call would have forced Bismarck to choose, to his intense embarrassment, between the denial of support to Austria and a

direct confrontation with Russia. At Berlin, therefore, France was courted by Bismarck hardly less ardently than by Salisbury: both suggested that she should take her reward in Tunisia, which neither Bismarck nor Salisbury wished to see fall into Italian hands. But the real reward for France was that, so long as Russia maintained her ambitions in the Balkans and the Levant, the attitude of France remained of crucial importance to no less than three great powers: not only to Britain and Germany, but also to Russia herself. Salisbury, with his acute diplomatic perception, responded instantly to the changed power-balance by striving to restrain all British activity in Africa which might alarm or irritate the French. He sabotaged, by devious means, the proposed Mackinnon concession on the Zanzibari mainland; he frustrated Morier's Portuguese machinations by slow-motion correspondence and ambiguous instructions. With Carnarvon no longer in office, Salisbury was able effectively to preach restraint to his colonial colleague: but the Colonial Office was not always able to restrain its own agents, whether in Zululand, where Bartle Frere's forward policy precipitated military disaster at Isandhlwana, or on the Guinea Coast, where 'insupportable proconsuls' infuriated Salisbury by continuing to quarrel with the French. It was now Britain's turn to be cautious and conciliatory in these local disputes; and Salisbury sometimes carried his 'graceful concessions' to lengths which disconcerted the Colonial Office.

Had France remained as isolated and vulnerable in Europe as she had been between 1871 and 1877, the *Marine* and the *Colonies* would hardly have been permitted by the French Foreign Ministry to launch any significant challenge to Britain in Africa. Even after 1878, the foreign ministry remained for a year or two less than combative in African disputes with Britain. But it was now no longer necessary deliberately to sacrifice all colonial opportunity in Africa for the sake of European security, nor to be so strict in restraining the colonial activists; and in November 1880 the Quai d'Orsay issued a directive to this effect. The year 1879, which in French domestic politics marked the definitive take-over of state power by bourgeois, anti-clerical republicans after a seven-year struggle with aristocratic, ultramontane royalists, had already seen the launching of a plan for large-scale territorial

empire in the Niger Sudan by the minister of Public Works, Freycinet, who originally thought in terms of peaceful penetration by means of railways; and by Admiral Jean Jauréguiberry at the *Marine*, a former Governor of Senegal who did not shrink from outright military conquest.

The Niger Sudan was chosen as a 'substitute India' largely because of its supposed value as a market. Earlier attempts at purely commercial penetration had not been successful; and formal empire was obviously by far the best safeguard against the suspected intention of the British to forestall France by annexations in the upper Niger basin. Moreover, as the upper Niger was accessible from Senegal, the French advance could take place without violating British coastal hegemony; it therefore avoided a direct confrontation with London which would in 1879 still have been unwelcome to the Quai d'Orsay. The Senegal–Niger advance was not indeed an overtly anti-British move. It injured no material British interest, for London had by now abandoned any serious hope of profiting by the trans-Saharan trade. But the advance was nevertheless a resounding announcement that France would not stand idly by while the British extended to West Africa the expansive hegemony which they had already established, and appeared to be consolidating, in southern and eastern Africa.

On the West African coast, Anglo-French competition was by now obvious and explicit: in 1879 Brière de l'Isle, the governor of Senegal, introduced the discriminatory Senegal tariffs and harbour dues into the territories in dispute with Sierra Leone. But Brière believed that the scramble had already begun not only on the coast but in the interior. He was convinced that the British were planning to forestall France in the upper Niger basin. No such project existed; but, in the context of recent British policy elsewhere in Africa, Brière's fears were not unreasonable. Less reasonable was his readiness to credit, as proof of London's machinations, every unconfirmed and implausible rumour of covert British activity in the interior. Against this background the Gouldsbury mission to Futa Jalon in January 1881 was seen, not only in Senegal but also in France, as the first overt and official move in the British plan. In February 1881 Jauréguiberry told the senate: 'We have rivals, implacable rivals, who constantly oppose the influence we exercise in Senegal. They strive to frustrate us

in every possible way'.²⁰ Like many French naval officers, Jauréguiberry was intensely combative towards Britain. In April 1882, after his return to office in January, he established a formal French protectorate at Porto Novo, in an area of particularly acute coastal competition to the west of Lagos. By January 1883, he was planning not only to extend this protectorate westwards to the Gold Coast frontier, but to establish further French protectorates in the Niger delta, on the Benue river and in Cameroun. In these projects he had the strong support of Maurice Rouvier, by then Minister of Commerce, and the full concurrence of the Quai d'Orsay, which had since early 1881 been increasingly combative in the ever-recurring minor coastal disputes.

Although the British attempt to formalise their informal empire, and their adoption of forward policies in East and South Africa had, in principle at least, been halted by Salisbury in 1878–9, Paris continued to fear the supposed British threat; and France had by the end of 1882 responded by a counter-challenge far more effective than that of the early 1840s. This counter-challenge was not confined to West Africa. In 1881 what appears to have been a routine exercise of British informal influence in Madagascar provoked a French response which was at least as combative as that in the Niger Sudan and in Guinea. These French moves were in no way ripostes to the British occupation of Egypt. Both in West Africa and in Madagascar, they had been launched while the two countries were still co-operating quite closely on the Nile; and in Madagascar at least, the 'point of no return', whereafter France could not retreat without visible loss of prestige, had been reached as early as May 1882.

Since the 1860s France had not seriously challenged the British monopoly of informal influence over the dominant Hova dynasty in Madagascar, in spite of pressure from the sugar-planters of Réunion, who saw in the island a potentially valuable source of labour and foodstuffs. Meanwhile, through the conversion of the dynasty by British missionaries, Congregationalism had become virtually the Hova state religion. A British naval visit to Madagascar in July 1881, intended to encourage the Hova to extend and consolidate their rule, was seen in Paris as an indirect

²⁰ Jauréguiberry, 17 Feb. 1881: cited C. W. Newbury and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, 'French policy and the origins of the scramble for West Africa', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1969, 10, 2, 253–76.

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attack upon certain non-Hova (Sakalava) groups with whom France had made treaties in 1859–60 and over whom she still retained some influence, and therefore as a deliberate attempt finally to destroy the ‘historic links’ between France and Madagascar. Jules Ferry promptly recalled his consul Théodore Meyer, whose conciliatory disposition had qualified him for the Madagascar post so long as the Quai d’Orsay had been concerned not to quarrel seriously with London, and replaced him in November 1881 by the notoriously combative Auguste Baudais. In January 1882 Maurice Rouvier offered to Gambetta and Freycinet his full support for positive action in Madagascar, and for energetic opposition to ‘that pretension to rule the waves which the British navy is all too ready to assume’. In March 1882 Freycinet gave Baudais *carte blanche* to engineer a crisis by instructing him that ‘our one and only preoccupation is to secure the defence of our rights and interests’.²¹ Baudais complied by raking up old disputes over French property-rights; by May he had broken off relations with the Hova. In December 1882 a Hova delegation visited Paris and London. In Paris they were offered, and rejected, terms which amounted to a demand for complete French control of Madagascar. In London, they found no effective support; the Foreign Office was unwilling to exacerbate the Anglo-French difference in Egypt by a serious dispute over Madagascar. French naval action against Madagascar was initiated in February 1883 – by a Deputy for Réunion who happened to be acting minister of Marine in a stop-gap ministry; and in December 1885 the Hova queen was constrained to accept a French protectorate.

These French challenges to British informal empire were undoubtedly encouraged by the belief that Britain had overreached herself by her forward policies of the later 1870s. In October 1879 the governor of Réunion had suggested, in a despatch marked by Jauréguiberry for ‘most particular attention’ at the Quai d’Orsay, that ‘the time has come to reassert our rights in Madagascar, now that Britain is engaged in so many disastrous wars all over the world’.²² The Isandhlwana disaster of January 1879 had indeed

²¹ Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (M.A.E.), Madagascar 13, Rouvier to Gambetta, 22 Jan. 1882; Freycinet to Baudais, 2 Mar. 1882. Cited J. S. Swinburne, ‘The influence of Madagascar on international relations, 1878–1904’, M.Phil. thesis, University of London 1969, 118–19.

²² M.A.E. Madagascar 11, Jauréguiberry to Waddington, 15 Nov. 1879, enclosing despatch from governor, Réunion: cited Swinburne, ‘Influence of Madagascar’, 105–6.

been widely regarded in Europe as proof of Britain's military decadence; and in October the British position in Afghanistan collapsed with the massacre at Kabul. British weakness seemed further demonstrated when in 1881 Gladstone failed to restore British control in the Transvaal after the humiliating defeat at Majuba. Moreover, as Admiral Jauréguiberry must have been well aware, the expansion and technical modernisation of the French navy since 1878 had by the early 1880s considerably eroded the British naval preponderance that had been the sure shield of informal empire in all its Protean forms. By 1882 France already had, in commission or approaching completion, almost as many up-to-date capital ships as Britain; at the same time most of the numerically enormous British fleet had become technologically obsolete – 'mere ullage', in the sardonic words of a British admiral.

In 1882 the British found their informal empire under French challenge not only in Guinea and Madagascar, but also at the Congo mouth, where a trade comparable with that of the Niger delta was at stake. The maritime Congo, in spite of the falls and rapids that obstruct the river above it, was nevertheless the main area of convergence for the trade-routes between the Atlantic and the vast interior basin. In the hands of a European power, this bottle-neck might have become a formidable barrier to British trade; but London had kept it open by discouraging, when necessary by force, any Portuguese occupation either at the Congo mouth or on the adjacent ocean coasts. The sudden emergence of French official interest towards the end of 1882 was quite unexpected, even by the French themselves; for this interest was neither the result of a planned search for empire, as in West Africa, nor even in its initial stages a response to a supposed British challenge, as in Madagascar. Its origins were indeed almost fortuitous. Savorgnan de Brazza was hardly 'sent' by the French government to the Congo: he chose his own objective for his almost unofficial, largely self-financed, expeditions. Nor would Brazza's activities necessarily have achieved any political result but for the presence in the Congo basin of the agents of King Leopold II.

Leopold II, king of the Belgians, had for decades been convinced that the future of the Belgian economy depended on its ability to exploit overseas markets and resources. Failing to

convince his subjects that 'Belgium needed a colony', Leopold resolved to acquire, in his personal capacity and by the use of his enormous personal wealth, a privileged sphere overseas for his own economic activities and ultimately for those of Belgium. He had sought, not political sovereignty, but vast monopolistic economic concessions in underdeveloped South American states or in European possessions in South-East Asia. It was only after he had repeatedly failed to obtain a 'colony' of this kind that he at last turned, in 1876, to central Africa. In July 1879, after earlier attempts to reach the Congo basin from the East African coast, he commissioned H. M. Stanley to work upstream from the Congo mouth, founding stations and making treaties with local African rulers which transferred to the king extensive economic concessions and monopolies, but not formal political sovereignty. Leopold of course intended from the outset to exercise 'informal' political control; but the acquisition of formal sovereignty might involve him in politico-legal difficulties in Europe, and possibly in unnecessary administrative expense in Africa.

Leopold's project of creating a personal 'informal empire' in the Congo basin seemed likely to be stillborn once Brazza had (as the king quaintly put it) 'introduced politics into Africa' by concluding in September 1880 treaties with the Teke ruler, Makoko, whereby this chief ceded 'son territoire à la France'.²³ Makoko's territory lay just upstream of the Congo rapids, at the interior terminus of the trade-routes to the Congo mouth and the Atlantic; and French control here might well isolate Leopold's interior stations from the sea. It seemed impossible for Leopold's organisation, the misleadingly-named *Association Internationale du Congo*, even to compete with France. Whatever Leopold's 'non-descript *Association*' was, it was certainly not a state; and at this time it was not even attempting to acquire political sovereignty. Leopold nevertheless exerted his considerable influence in Paris in an attempt to prevent the ratification of Brazza's treaties; and at first his prospects seemed by no means hopeless. Brazza had been given no authority to conclude treaties of any kind. Jauréguiberry, who as minister of Marine was both Brazza's service chief and the minister responsible for colonies, disavowed

²³ M.A.E. Mémoires et Documents Afrique 59, Gabon-Congo 11, Leopold to de Lesseps, 18 Sept. 1882: cited H. Brunshwig, *L'avènement de l'Afrique noire* (Paris, 1963), 159-60. Brazza's treaties of 10 Sept. and 3 Oct. 1880, printed *ibid.*, 147-8.

and disapproved the explorer's activities on the Congo. These he regarded as a mere distraction from his own priority areas on the Guinea coast; and he had no intention of ratifying Brazza's treaties, still less of actually occupying any part of the Congo basin. France had neither 'historic links' with the Congo, nor as yet any serious material interests there. Moreover, it soon became clear that London, disturbed by the increasingly restrictive trading policies adopted in French-controlled Guinea, would strongly oppose the extension of similar restrictions to the Congo.

Brazza's treaties were nevertheless ratified by Charles Duclerc's ministry in November 1882; and not by the usual *décret* but with all the formality and publicity of a *loi* debated in the Chambers. Ratification was not however an anti-British gesture, nor even a sign that after the occupation of Egypt 'Paris did not need to pay the old deference to British susceptibilities'.²⁴ In November 1882 London had still not formally communicated its decision to exclude France from the control of Egyptian finances; and in Paris hopes were high that London would have second thoughts. Duclerc was therefore not looking for yet another quarrel with Britain: he already had on his hands Madagascar, bequeathed to him by Ferry and Freycinet. But the ratification of Brazza's treaties did seem to offer, because of the diplomatically negligible status of Leopold's *Association*, an opportunity of scoring a popular and perfectly safe success overseas after the depressing fiasco in Egypt. The focus of public excitement had swung abruptly from Egypt to the Congo; Brazza had become the social lion and popular hero of Paris. Ratification would be hailed as a 'victory' for France both over Leopold, whose attempts to prevent ratification were deeply resented, and over Stanley, who as an 'Anglo-Saxon' was serving as a convenient lightning-conductor for French anglophobia. Duclerc therefore offered to London assurances both public and private of complete free trade in the future French Congo. This was a painless concession, in view of the absence of French material interests and of Jauréguiberry's flat refusal, which Duclerc did not at that time contest, seriously to involve France in the Congo basin. On 1 December 1882 a British note, evidently in confirmation of earlier verbal exchanges, acknowledged (though without explicitly accepting) these assurances. The note contained no hint of further British objection; indeed, twelve days

²⁴ Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, 170.

earlier Duclerc had felt able to assure the Chamber, very emphatically, that ratification of Brazza's treaties entailed not the slightest danger of 'international complications'.

However, Lord Granville at the Foreign Office had, even before the ratification, decided to seek a more reliable safeguard for British trade on the Congo than the mere assurances of a rather lack-lustre French ministry. Prompted by Morier's earlier schemes for using Portugal as a cat's-paw in Africa, in December 1882 Granville offered to Lisbon recognition of Portugal's 'historic claims' at the Congo mouth, subject to conditions which would guarantee complete freedom of trade. The opening of the Anglo-Portuguese negotiation came as an unpleasant surprise to Duclerc; but it was a challenge that he could not ignore. In January 1883 he countermanded Jauréguiberry's instructions forbidding further French activity on the Congo; and insisted that the *Marine* should at once organise a *prise de possession effective* of coastal areas giving access to the interior.

Granville's expedient might have succeeded if it had led without delay to the conclusion of an Anglo-Portuguese agreement. But the Foreign Office guaranteed slow progress by sitting down 'to think of all the things we can ever want from Portugal in Africa'.²⁵ When the treaty was at last signed on 26 February 1884, it was born into a diplomatic world very different from that in which it had been conceived. Britain was now confronted not only by France but by a Bismarck already affronted by Britain's attempted application to Germany of her 'Monroe doctrine for Africa', and soon to intervene decisively in the general politics of the scramble. However, even before Bismarck's intervention, Gladstone's Liberal government was finding it difficult to adjust to the abrupt decline of an African hegemony which had previously seemed almost as immutable as the laws of nature. The Liberals had been elected in 1880 on a platform of impassioned rejection of Conservative forward policies and annexations, but the continued existence of informal empire had been the unexpressed premise underlying this commitment to imperial self-denial. Even when Granville had begun to understand what was happening (it is doubtful whether Gladstone ever did), he was for some time at a loss for a policy, especially in regions like the

²⁵ J. D. Hargreaves, *Prelude to the partition of West Africa* (London, 1963), 302, citing [Colonial] O[ffice] 147/52, F.O. to C.O., 25 Nov. 1882 and minutes.

Niger delta where it was impossible to interpose a client-state as the caretaker of informal empire. However, as early as June 1883, Percy Anderson, the head of the Foreign Office's Africa department, had drawn the painful, inevitable, conclusion that informal empire was dead and gone, at all events in West Africa: 'Protectorates are unwelcome burdens, but in this case [the Lower Niger] it is... a question between British protectorates, which would be unwelcome, and French protectorates, which would be disastrous.'²⁶ The cabinet seemed to have grasped this point when in November 1883 they authorised the British consul, Edward 'Too-Late' Hewett, to establish protectorates in West Africa. But then, characteristically, Treasury reluctance to finance Hewett delayed his departure until May 1884.

Nevertheless, until the British began to gather the bitter fruit of their mishandling of Bismarck in connection with Africa, their defensive responses were by no means completely ineffective. At the Niger delta, Hewett was not too late. By early 1884 the French Niger companies had been completely discouraged by cut-throat British competition and by the vigorous use of gunboats against Africans who seemed inclined to trade with them. But Hewett and the Foreign Office were alike taken aback to find Germany already installed in Togo and Cameroun. London believed, in spite of mounting recent evidence to the contrary, that Bismarck was still unalterably opposed to colonial acquisition; but by mid-1884 Bismarck had decided that he could not prudently exclude Germany from the African scramble. Already by 1883 Britain and France appeared to be shutting the coastal doors to West Africa at a pace which would soon exclude all other powers; and exclude them commercially as well as politically, for in West Africa British 'free trade' was in practice almost as discriminatory as French protection. British tariffs did not indeed formally discriminate by country of origin. But they fell very lightly on textiles and hardware, in which Britain could out-trade all her competitors; and very heavily on commodities imported from other European countries, such as tobacco and above all spirits, by far the most important German export to West Africa. Once all the doors had been closed, it would be too late for second thoughts on the value of colonies: the world contained only one Africa. Bismarck was

²⁶ F.O. Confidential print, no. 4819, memorandum by H. P. Anderson, 11 June 1883: printed C. W. Newbury, *British policy towards West Africa, select documents 1875-1914* (Oxford, 1971), 179-81.

also under considerable domestic pressure to safeguard German commercial interests in Africa: the Hanse towns (important not merely economically, but politically as constituent states of Bismarck's federal Reich) were complaining bitterly against British and French customs policies; and in July 1883 Hamburg had asked for the acquisition of a 'trade colony'. In 1881 Bismarck had deprived Hamburg of her greatly prized 'customs independence' by coercing her into the *Zollverein*. If a West African colony would now conciliate Hamburg, it would be sensible to find her one, provided that the diplomatic price was not too high. By mid-1884, with Britain isolated by the consummation of her Egyptian dispute with France, this price was at rock-bottom.

Yet Bismarck remained sceptical of the material value of colonies; moreover, colonies under Reich sovereignty would imply an annual colonial budget and therefore an additional opportunity for the Reichstag to interfere in *haute politique*. Had he not been affronted by Britain's 'Monroe doctrine for Africa', it is possible that he would have found other ways of safeguarding Germany's commercial interests. It was British behaviour in the South-West African dispute between January and June 1884 that made decisive and even showy acquisitive action an imperative political necessity for Bismarck. The chancellor had originally asked, in February 1883, for *British* protection for the coastal establishment of the Bremen merchant, Lüderitz, at Angra Pequena. London had replied non-committally: but it was in fact very unlikely that the Cape government, then in acute financial difficulties, would be willing to extend its responsibilities to the north of its Orange river frontier. Receiving no clear answer to his original request, Bismarck then enquired in September 1883 whether Britain claimed sovereignty at Angra Pequena and, if so, on what grounds. Neither the Colonial Office nor the Foreign Office originally saw any political reason to claim such sovereignty, the legal basis for which was in any case non-existent. A reply disclaiming British rights had already been drafted when in November the Cape premier, Sir Thomas Scanlen, then in London in search of a loan, urged the Colonial Office to assert 'a South African Monroe Doctrine, [with] all European powers given to understand that it must be "hands off"'.²⁷ The Colonial Office

²⁷ Merriman Papers, T. Scanlen to J. X. Merriman, 29 Nov. 1883: cited D. M. Schreuder, *The scramble for Southern Africa 1877-1895* (Cambridge, 1980), 121.

thereupon withdrew its approval of the proposed reply to Bismarck; and the Foreign Office began to experience misgivings about the establishment of Germany so close to the nodal point of British imperial communications at the Cape. Bismarck was therefore informed on 21 November that the establishment of a foreign Power in South-West Africa 'would infringe [Britain's] legitimate rights'.²⁸ But he was not told *why* these rights would be infringed; the British reply had carefully refrained from raising the issue of formal sovereignty. On 31 December 1883 Bismarck riposted by asking for further and better particulars of Britain's alleged rights.

The British had played their 'paramountcy' card: Bismarck had promptly trumped it by implicitly refusing to recognise anything but formal sovereignty. Over six months passed without a reply to his enquiry of 31 December. The Foreign Office had of course no convincing reply to make; but Granville, virtually abdicating responsibility, referred the question to Lord Derby at the Colonial Office, who interpreted it as an invitation to annex – a course for which the Cape Government was by now strongly pressing. The question was, of course, who should pay – London or the Cape? Six months were consumed in leisurely discussion of this question: London, still convinced that Bismarck was basically opposed to overseas empire, was evidently far more concerned for its relations with Cape Town than with Berlin. Meanwhile, in April 1884 Bismarck informed the Foreign Office that he had extended German protection to Lüderitz. The precise nature of this 'protection' was obscure, as Bismarck almost certainly intended it to be; but Granville sought no clarification. He merely passed on the information to Derby, who appears to have ignored it. On 16 May Derby publicly stated that while Angra Pequena itself was not 'claimed...as British territory, we had claimed a sort of general right to exclude foreign powers from that coast'.²⁹ On 3 June Bismarck learned that the Cape government was proposing, with Colonial Office approval, to annex the entire coast as far as the existing British enclave of Walvis Bay, to the north of Angra Pequena.

²⁸ F.O. 64/1101, Granville to Münster (London), 21 Nov. 1883; cited W. O. Aydelotte, *Bismarck and British colonial policy: the problem of South West Africa* (Philadelphia, 1937; reprinted Westport, Conn., 1970), 36.

²⁹ Derby to 'a deputation of South African merchants' 16 May 1884; cited (from *The Times*, 17 May 1884) Aydelotte, *Bismarck*, 65. Cf. Derby's speech in the Lords on 19 May, cited *ibid.*, 66.

As early as 14 May Bismarck had approached Paris for assistance in resisting the British 'Monroe doctrine'; but the insult early in June, whereby London had permitted the Cape to take action which had been forbidden to Berlin, demanded instant retaliation. On 7 June Bismarck refused to recognise in any form the Anglo-Portuguese Congo treaty of February, to which France, Germany and other powers had already raised objections of detail. He then drove Granville from his hiding-places behind the Colonial Office and the Cape government; and on 17 June extorted from the foreign secretary a veto on the proposed Cape annexation at Angra Pequena and a verbal admission that London had no right to object to Germany's establishment there. The Colonial Office nevertheless continued, with Granville's approval, to egg on the Cape to make annexations in South West Africa which would have reduced the German holding to a mere enclave. But by May 1884 Bismarck had already become convinced that London was attempting by evasion and deceit to forestall him not only in southern Africa but also in West Africa, for which Hewett at last departed at the end of May; and he had decided to forestall Hewett by sending his own expedition under Nachtigal.

In August 1884, after the final Anglo-French rupture on Egyptian finance, Ferry not only responded to Bismarck's proposal for a Franco-German 'equilibrium on the seas' against Britain, but also accepted Bismarck's suggestion that the whole complex of Congo questions, including the Anglo-Portuguese treaty, should be referred to an international conference. The Berlin West Africa Conference (November 1884 to February 1885) did not of course 'partition Africa'. It did however, strongly prompted by Bismarck, establish the rule that henceforth 'effective occupation' was to be the sole valid title to African coastal territory. 'Effective occupation' sounded the death-knell of paramountcy and informal empire – concepts which had always been indefensible in international law and which the British did not attempt to defend at Berlin. Gone for ever were the halcyon days when (as Lord Salisbury wistfully recalled in 1890) Britain had dominated almost the whole of accessible Africa 'without being put to the inconvenience of protectorates or anything of that sort'.³⁰

³⁰ Salisbury in the Lords, 10 July 1890: cited Cecil, *Life of Salisbury* III (London, 1932), 225–6.

Only in southern Africa, where Bismarck had originally attacked British paramountcy, did a remnant of it survive his onslaught. Bismarck did not wish to incur London's permanent and unappeasable hostility by completely destroying British hegemony in a region where not only ocean strategy but the interests of British settlers were at stake. Once it had become clear that Britain would recognise his West African acquisitions (and his claims in New Guinea), he withdrew the claims he had made on the Zululand coast and in March 1885 undertook in effect to respect local British paramountcy outside his new South-West African colony. He also refrained from extending this colony so far eastwards as to obstruct the Cape's 'road to the north'. No such delicacy marked Bismarck's proceedings in the Anglo-Zanzibari East African sphere. By November 1884 this region was under obvious German threat from the activities of Carl Peters; and Granville now wished to establish a British protectorate over the Zanzibari mainland, including the economically promising Kilimanjaro region. However, Granville emphasised particularly the strategic importance of the mainland coast for the routes to India, especially since the French had become established in Madagascar. But Gladstone, who had never really budged from his Liberal fundamentalism on the wickedness and impolicy of 'annexations designed...to forestall other nations', scornfully rejected Granville's proposal to protect 'the mountain country behind Zanzibar with an unrememberable name',³¹ and simply ignored the strategic argument. Granville then attempted to melt Bismarck's heart by communicating to Berlin a historical account of Britain's special relationship with Zanzibar. This was precisely the kind of pseudo-title that Bismarck was now rejecting on principle. With London distracted by the catastrophic finale of the Sudan crisis and then by a dangerous confrontation with Russia in Afghanistan, he was able almost effortlessly to destroy the Anglo-Zanzibari informal empire, and force London to share the Zanzibari mainland, by ruthless pressure upon Britain's bewildered client, the sultan.

³¹ *The letters of Queen Victoria*, 2, iii (London, 1928), 593-4: Gladstone to the Queen, 23 Jan. 1885. S. Gwynn and G. M. Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Charles Dilke* (London, 1917), II, 83-4: Gladstone to Dilke, 14 Dec. 1884.

Until about 1880 British naval preponderance, by preventing foreign annexations, and by making British annexation unnecessary and therefore apparently unprofitable, had preserved on the coasts of Africa an almost completely stable situation in terms of European political control. This stability was disturbed when, after 1880, France successfully challenged British hegemony in West Africa and Madagascar. Madagascar was written off by Britain, probably in the hope that it would console France for her disappointment in Egypt. On the African mainland, however, the British attempted, by the Anglo-Portuguese treaty over the Congo mouth and by the proposed establishment of protectorates from the Gold Coast to Cameroun, to confine the area of 'competitive instability' to western Guinea and the upper Niger basin. These responses might well have succeeded but for the intervention of Bismarck. By frustrating the British attempt to formalise by protectorates most of their informal West African sphere, by destroying the Anglo-Portuguese treaty, and above all by insisting on the criterion of effective occupation, Bismarck perpetuated the existing area of instability. He then promptly extended it from West to East Africa by destroying the Anglo-Zanzibari hegemony. His East African acquisitions, which included not only German East Africa proper, but Witu on the Somali coast, had hinterlands which could be extended in the south to Rhodes's 'sphere of aspiration' between Lakes Tanganyika and Malawi, and in the north to the newly-created vacuum of power on the upper Nile. Indeed, almost all the coastal annexations since 1882 had hinterlands which clashed if extended far enough, and were therefore an invitation to competition in the interior. Once interior competition had begun, and the criterion of effective occupation had prevailed in the hinterlands as well as on the coast, the scramble became virtually self-propelling almost throughout the continent. No new stable situation could now be reached until the whole continent had been carved up into internationally-recognised European 'spheres'. Even in Morocco, where European annexation encountered very severe constraints arising from the country's key position in Mediterranean and Atlantic strategy, partition was merely postponed, not prevented.

The extension of the scramble to the interior was also stimulated by the emergence of King Leopold's Congo Independent State. Although Leopold had responded to the ratification of Brazza's treaties by claiming sovereignty in his own treaties with Congo chiefs, 'sovereignty' acquired by a non-state recognised by nobody was evidently well-nigh worthless. Leopold owed his success to his brilliantly skilful manoeuvring between Britain and France; and to Bismarck's sponsorship of a Leopoldian Congo State as a neutral solution to the Anglo-French Congo dispute. Leopold's willingness to give (though not to fulfil) any and every assurance of complete free trade in his new state spoke strongly in his favour; for Bismarck wished if possible to avoid admitting French protectionism into the Congo basin as the price of destroying British informal empire at the Congo mouth. But Bismarck could not have imposed the Leopoldian neutral solution against French opposition. Leopold had, however, in April 1884 disarmed this opposition by granting to France a right of first refusal (*droit de préférence*) should he ever wish to dispose of his territories. Jules Ferry, with the reversionary title-deeds in his pocket, now saw no reason to oppose the creation of a 'state' which nobody then expected to survive for long. In November 1884, with French concurrence, Bismarck recognised the flag of Leopold's *Association* as that of 'a friendly state'. London at first refused to follow suit. The Foreign Office was scandalised by a request for recognition of a 'state' which as yet had neither real existence nor known frontiers; and there was intense resentment at Leopold's 'shabby and mischievous trick'³² in granting the *droit de préférence* to France. But Bismarck soon extorted recognition by threatening to withdraw support at the Berlin Conference for the British claim to a commercial monopoly on the lower Niger.

On the lower Congo, the difficulties of adjusting the Portuguese, Leopoldian and French claims are reflected in the curious territorial jigsaw that still survives. In the interior, however, Leopold established with astonishing ease the frontiers of an enormous empire. It was indeed typical of the king that he hastened to stake out these grandiose interior claims while other

³² P.R.O. 30/29/198 (Granville Papers), T. V. Lister, memorandum, 20 May 1884: cited J. Stengers, 'King Leopold and Anglo-French rivalry, 1882-1884' in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, *France and Britain in Africa* (New Haven and London, 1971), 121-66, at 162.

powers were still contemplating, often rather ruefully, the problems of establishing 'effective occupation' in their new coastal possessions. In August 1884 Leopold put forward a claim to a great quadrilateral of territory comprising 'all central Africa, the very core of the continent'.³³ When this claim was opposed by neither Paris nor Berlin, he steadily added to it, especially in the south-east; in February 1885 the frontiers recognised by Belgium were not unlike those which exist today. These frontiers were then submitted to the powers. Britain had every reason to contest frontiers which in the south-east now extended almost to the Zambezi and which were, thanks to the *droit de préférence*, potentially the frontiers of French territory. Yet the Foreign Office accepted them without even a query. It was August; Percy Anderson was on holiday, and Anderson's deputy made the 'stupid blunder' of confusing Leopold's extended frontiers with the boundaries of the Congo Free Trade Area. The stimulus to interior competition created by this vast internal sovereignty, whose frontiers now approached the hinterlands of all the partitioning Powers except Italy, was enhanced by Leopold's apparently insatiable appetite for even more African territory. By 1886-7 he was already reaching out towards Uganda and the upper Nile, and planning to persuade Emin Pasha to transfer his allegiance from Egypt to the Congo State. When this project failed he began in 1890 to despatch expeditions of his own to establish 'effective occupation' in the western basin of the upper Nile, parts of which were in fact occupied, though rather precariously, between 1892 and 1894.

Until the mid-1890s the Congo State brought Leopold no profits, but losses on a scale which threatened to exhaust even the king's immense resources. The motivation of King Leopold's imperialism was nevertheless overwhelmingly economic. As a non-Power, the king could conduct his acquisitive operations undistracted by considerations of prestige; and he played strategic games only in return for tangible territorial rewards. His ultimate objective of ensuring the long-term viability of the Belgian economy was 'Leninist' *avant la lettre*, although he had to play in person the Leninist role which Belgian capitalism for long refused to assume. Leopold was of course not alone as an economic imperialist: in the first stage of partition down to 1885,

³³ Stengers, 'King Leopold', 163, citing Courcel (Berlin) to Ferry, 30 Aug. 1884.

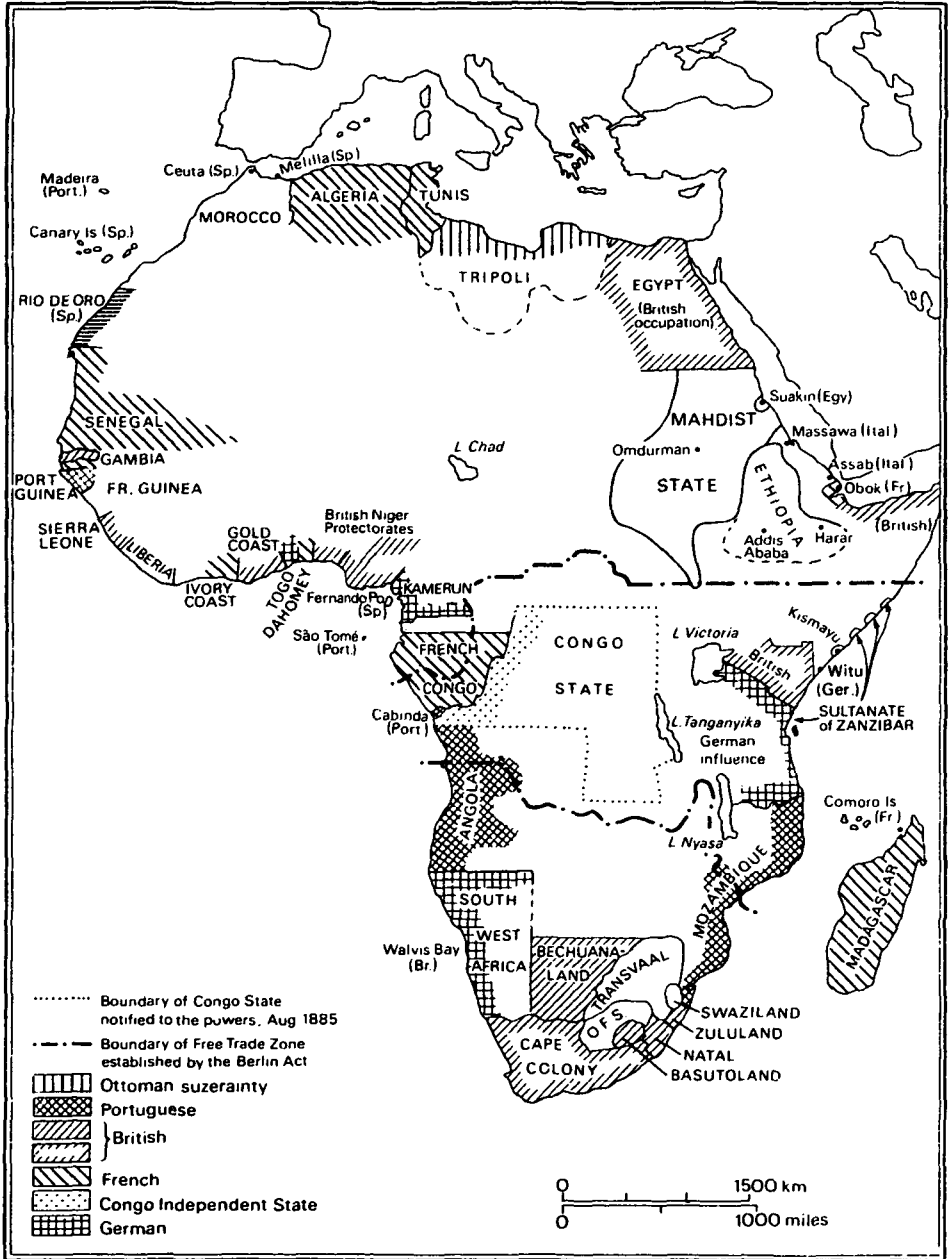
before experience had rubbed some of the gilt off African El Dorados, economic motivation was often preponderant. But the precise nature and strength of this motivation varied greatly from power to power and from region to region; and in the 1880s no other power acted from economic motives so far-sighted and so rationally compelling as those of King Leopold. Some Frenchmen saw in the Niger Sudan an exporters' El Dorado; and there is evidence that in the early 1880s some French policy-makers valued West African coastal acquisitions mainly as gateways to the 'mythically' rich interior. But in this period the British in West Africa were merely attempting to protect their established trading areas, doubtless vital to individual firms but trivial in relation to the overall metropolitan economy. Even more trivial in this context were the customs revenues of French and British colonies; but the urgent need to increase them during the acute depression of 1878–84 was a very sharp spur to local Anglo-French competition on the Guinea Coast. As for Bismarck's economic imperialism, it was in his own eyes little more than the reluctant but unavoidable taking-up of rather dubious options.

Even in the initial stage of the scramble, however, considerations of prestige were often crucial, especially for France. French policy towards Madagascar in 1881–2 was driven almost entirely by prestige: the British naval visit of July 1881 had in no way injured the purely economic interests of France in Madagascar. What stuck in the throat of even so capitalist an imperialist as Maurice Rouvier was the off-hand arrogance with which Britain appeared to be using her naval hegemony to extinguish the last remnants of 'historic' French influence in the island, thereby treating France as a negligible quantity in the Indian Ocean. Again, for the French occupation of Tunisia prestige was even more important than the safeguarding of investments; eviction at the hands of the despised Italians was utterly intolerable to a France still struggling to recover her international standing after the catastrophe of 1870–1. Prestige, too, played its part in Bismarck's colonialism. Bismarck moved from rather hazy projects of informal trading spheres to outright territorial annexation largely in reaction to the affront to German self-esteem (and to his own political reputation) implicit in the apparent arrogance and duplicity with which London treated Germany's claim at the economically negligible site of Angra Pequena.

Strategy was also present, mainly as a British motive. It was certainly relevant to the occupation of Egypt in 1882, and overwhelmingly dominant in the 1888 decision to remain in Egypt. However, the African consequences of this decision – a further wave of strategic imperialism directed to threatening or defending the Nile waters – do not emerge until the second active phase of partition from 1889 onwards. In South and East Africa, British opposition to Bismarck's acquisitions was in part prompted by strategic defence of the routes to India. But the most powerful motive for London's evasive resistance to Bismarck in South Africa was evidently an over-riding anxiety to defer to the wishes and susceptibilities of the Cape government, which was all too often touchy and demanding in its dealings with 'the imperial factor'. With this semi-domestic, semi-diplomatic motivation may perhaps be compared Bismarck's relations with Hamburg. Another type of domestic motivation – perhaps a rather puny specimen of 'manipulated social imperialism' – appears in Duclerc's ratification of Brazza's Congo treaties. Until the British riposte to this ratification injected an element of great-power rivalry which Duclerc felt compelled to take seriously, French 'imperialism' on the Congo had been little more than an exercise in public relations: Duclerc had not originally contemplated, and Jauréguiberry had been determined to prevent, its development into a genuine *prise de possession*.

The political map of Africa in 1886 reflects the extent to which, since 1879, Britain had failed to defend her informal empire. On the western coasts of Africa, from Senegal to the Orange river, complete British informal hegemony had been replaced by new French, German, Leopoldian and (at Cabinda and on the south bank of the maritime Congo) even Portuguese holdings. Only between Lagos and Calabar had Britain succeeded in retaining a remnant of her previous informal empire. In eastern Africa, Madagascar had been irrevocably lost to France; on the mainland Germany had taken a very large bite to the south, and a smaller bite (Witu) to the north, of what she had permitted Britain to retain of the former Anglo-Zanzibari sphere. In the former Egyptian coastal possessions France had in 1884–85 sought to facilitate her communications with Madagascar and Indo-China by reviving and extending a claim in the Obok region which had been dormant since 1862. To forestall France on the northern (Gulf of

THE EUROPEAN PARTITION OF AFRICA



4 The first phase of partition, to c. 1887

Aden) Somali coast, London would have accepted Italy as a substitute for Egypt; but when the Italians hesitated, the British established protectorates of their own. But soon even the cost-free Italians were no longer welcome; by March 1887 Salisbury was regretting that in 1885 they had been permitted to replace Egypt at Massawa on the Red Sea. Nevertheless, in 1889 they acquired the former Egyptian and Zanzibari possessions on the Indian Ocean coast from Cape Guardafui to Kismayu.

However, during the second active phase of partition, from 1889 to 1899, enormous British gains in the interior were to compensate for the coastal losses of the 1880s. By 1900 the political map of Africa had again been transformed. The British positions in Egypt and South Africa had acquired interior extensions so vast that they were now separated only by German East Africa. In West Africa, British diplomacy had indeed proved no match for French military action in the upper Niger basin, and Sierra Leone had lost its potential hinterland; but the Nigerian coastal remnant of informal empire had expanded northwards to the latitude of Sokoto, Bornu and Lake Chad. During the later 1880s the British adjusted to the loss of informal empire and largely abandoned their inhibitions about formal annexation. By the 1890s they had become anything but 'reluctant imperialists'.

In 1885–6, however, British policy-makers did not yet hanker after interior expansion. To Lord Salisbury, the only useful test of the value of African territory was whether British traders were willing to 'go in': where, as in East Africa, they seemed reluctant to 'go in', Salisbury preferred to barter African territory for diplomatic advantages in Europe and the Near East – for Bismarck's 'help in Russia and Turkey and Egypt'.³⁴ In 1886 Nile-waters strategy still of course lay in the future; and in spite of open hinterlands, the collapse of Ismā'il's empire and the rise of King Leopold's, the British, and soon the Germans too, paused for breath in East Africa. There was a similar 'loaded pause' from 1885 to 1889 in West Africa, where the French were temporarily dismayed by the financial and military costs of empire-building. Moreover, the fall and disgrace of Jules Ferry in March 1885 had revealed the intense disquiet of French opinion at the dispersal of military resources overseas – especially when Bismarck

³⁴ Salisbury to Iddesleigh, 24 Aug. 1885: cited Cecil, *Life of Salisbury* III, 230.

appeared to be encouraging the expansionist policies which caused this dispersal.

By 1888, Bismarck too was 'sick and tired of colonies'. They had brought with them the financial losses and domestic political difficulties which he had foreseen; worse still, the clamour from the colonialists for their further extension, largely at Britain's expense, was beginning to compromise Germany's European security. By 1888, Bismarck needed British support to balance the rapprochement between a Russia once more active in the Balkans and a France now apparently dominated by a 'saviour with a sword' and obsessed by bellicose fantasies of *revanche*. He alienated the German colonialists, who were normally among his most reliable political supporters, by refusing to compete with Britain either in Uganda and the upper Nile, or between Lakes Tanganyika and Malawi. So successful was his veto on expansion that by 1889 he found himself quite without territory with which to bargain with London for an African settlement which had now become an urgent European necessity. October 1889 therefore saw the last and oddest of Bismarck's African acquisitions, on the Somali coast from Vitu northwards to Kismayu. The territory itself was almost worthless; but London would be reluctant to leave it in German hands, because its hinterland could be extended to the upper Nile.

After Bismarck's fall in March 1890 his successors, having 'cut the line to Russia' by refusing to renew the Reinsurance treaty, were all the more anxious for an African settlement which would permit close Anglo-German collaboration in Europe; but they were far less able than Bismarck to resist the colonialist demand, now strongly backed by Kaiser Wilhelm II, for massive acquisitions in Africa. Salisbury too was alarmed by the Franco-Russian rapprochement and anxious for an African settlement with Germany; but he was quite unable to make territorial concessions large enough to satisfy the German colonialists. In the Tanganyika-Malawi region, he dared not sacrifice either Rhodes's recent treaties or the interests of the electorally influential Scottish missionaries. In the German hinterland west of Lake Victoria he was under very strong pressure, even within the cabinet, to support extravagant claims which H.M. Stanley had made on behalf of Mackinnon's East Africa Company. Much British opinion, having at last recognised that informal empire was gone beyond recall, was by 1890 in rampantly acquisitive mood; and

for the moment saw Germany as Britain's most dangerous colonial rival. Salisbury, for all his mockery of African El Dorados whose very lakes turned out to be mere 'beds of rushes', could not ignore these pressures; and he was himself determined to retain Zanzibar in the interests of Indian Ocean strategy and to exclude Germany from the upper Nile in the interests of Egyptian security. He risked an open breach in his cabinet by refusing to press the very dubious Stanley–Mackinnon claims, on which indeed Berlin was quite determined not to yield. But he had nothing more to offer to the Germans in Africa; and he achieved an otherwise quite unattainable settlement by throwing Heligoland into the bargain as a bait particularly attractive to the German emperor. Berlin gave way in Zanzibar and the Nyasa hinterland; relinquished Bismarck's new Somali coast protectorate; and recognised a 'British sphere' on the upper Nile – a curiously belated triumph for 'paramountcy', in that Britain, without the slightest claim of historic right or effective occupation, had nevertheless since the mid-1870s regarded herself as paramount over 'the country that belongs to Egypt'.

In the Anglo-German Agreement of 1 July 1890 the more subtle imperatives of diplomacy and strategy had triumphed over unrestricted competition for African territory; and for the next two years or so Anglo-German relations, both in Africa and in Europe, were so cordial that French and Russian diplomatists sometimes suspected that Britain had secretly joined the Triple Alliance. Meanwhile, British naval strength was being reinforced by the building programmes of 1885 and 1889. In 1890 and 1891 Salisbury concluded major African territorial agreements not only with Germany but with France, Italy and Portugal. These agreements secured for Britain much of her lion's share of the interior: Britain's successes in Africa in the early 1890s were, no less than her failures between 1880 and 1885, a direct reflection of her European diplomatic situation and her relative naval strength. By mid-1891 the broad pattern of interior partition had been settled throughout the continent, except for the British and French frontiers with German Kamerun and of course the boundaries between the British Upper Nile sphere and the French and Congolese hinterlands to the west and south-west of it. So long as the Egyptian dispute remained unsettled, France would never willingly recognise the upper Nile sphere. Nevertheless, in

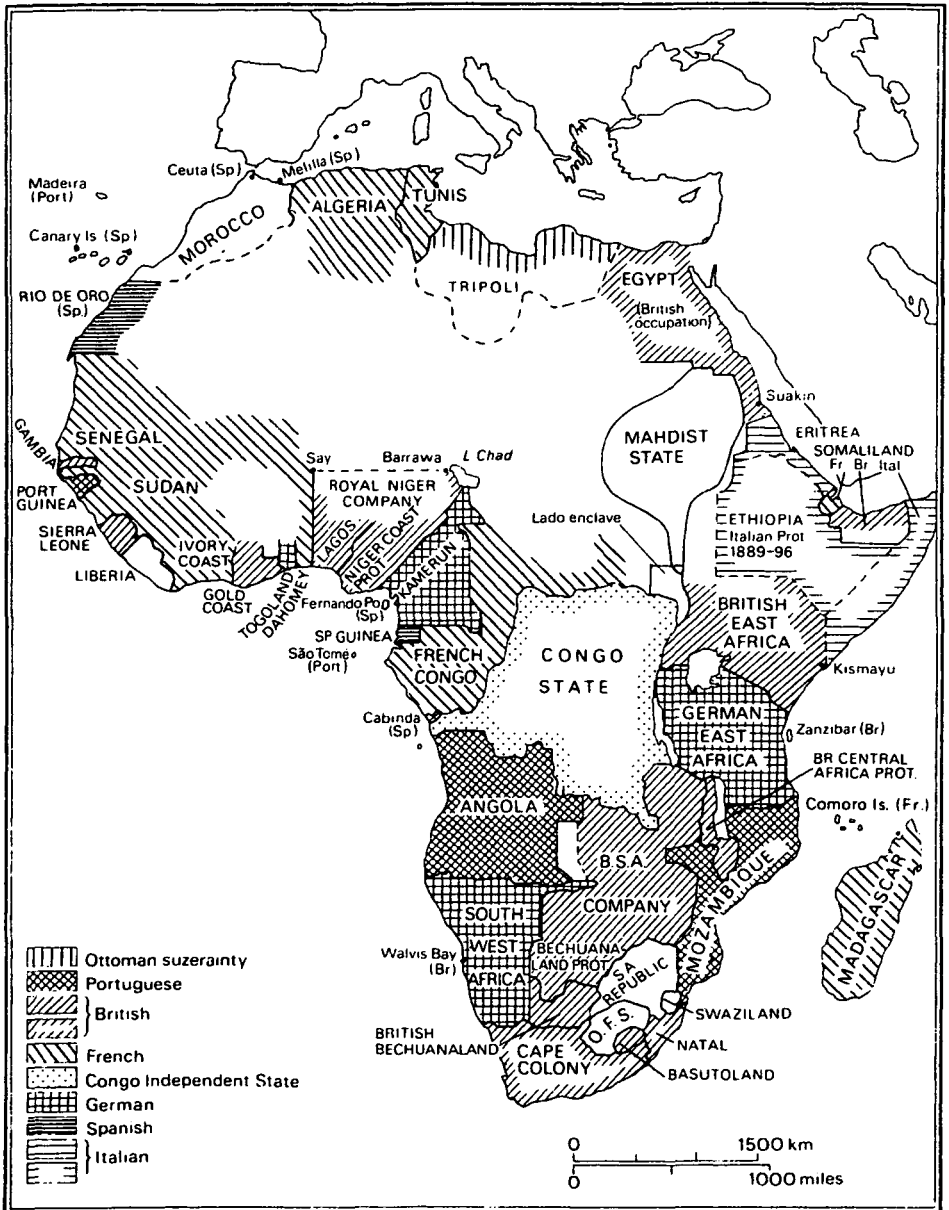
August 1890 Paris was willing to conclude an approximate delimitation of spheres in the Nigerian hinterland – if only as a demonstration that the new Anglo-German friendship was not systematically directed against France. Paris accepted a line from Say on the Niger to Barrawa on Lake Chad as the southern limit of the French ‘Mediterranean possessions’ in Africa; London recognised the French protectorate over Madagascar. This settlement enabled the French ‘Chad plan’ to go forward north of the line without diplomatic complications; it would at the time have seemed not ungenerous but for Salisbury’s notorious quip about the ‘light land’ ceded to France. South of the line, the agreement gave George Goldie’s Niger Company a free hand from Sokoto to Bornu: a free hand of which he had made embarrassingly little use when French expeditions from the west, relying on a very literal interpretation of the words ‘*Mediterranean possessions*’ in the 1890 Agreement, began to appear in these regions a few years later.

Agreements with Italy in March and April 1891 recognised the Italian sphere in the eastern Horn and excluded Italy from the British Nile valley sphere, after a period when Crispi had embarrassed Anglo-Italian, and indirectly Anglo-German relations, by attempting to insist on British recognition of an Italian title in the eastern Sudan. Southern Africa was partitioned by the Anglo-German Agreement of July 1890, which settled the internal frontiers of German South West Africa; and by the Anglo-Portuguese Agreement of June 1891. The friendly relations between London and Berlin enabled Salisbury to impose upon an isolated Portugal a settlement which the Portuguese bitterly resented; for Salisbury used Rhodes’s ‘effective occupation’ to brush aside as ‘archaeological claims’ Portugal’s ‘historic rights’ in south-central Africa. Effective occupation had now triumphed not only over informal empire but also over decayed formal empire. After 1891 it soon became the only title worth having in the interior; and the remaining years of partition are the classic period of ‘steeple-chases’ by rival expeditions racing to establish effective occupation in those West African and Nilotic regions still open to competition.

Until the mid-1890s the European scramble had surprisingly little effect upon Anglo-Afrikaner rivalries in South Africa. The British occupation of Bechuanaland in 1885 was certainly hastened by the fear that Germany might obstruct the Cape's northward expansion. But imperial action against the Transvaal Afrikaners who had recently set up the 'freebooter republics' of Stellaland and Goshen athwart the Cape's road to the north was already being contemplated; and could in any case hardly have been much longer delayed if it was to be effective. In fact, Bismarck interfered neither with the Cape's access to the north nor with Britain's local paramountcy. Until 1894 the crucial new factor was not the German presence but the spectacular gold-nourished rise of Paul Kruger's South African Republic, which challenged the previously overwhelming economic and (white) demographic preponderance of the Cape over all the other South African states and colonies, and could therefore be seen as a potential threat to British paramountcy throughout the sub-continent. From 1891, in the interests alike of British imperialism and Cape sub-imperialism, Cecil Rhodes as Cape premier attempted to harass Kruger into a closer economic (and ultimately political) South African union. But in 1894 his attempt to strike the decisive blow, by acquiring from Portugal Lourenço Marques (Kruger's only rail outlet to the sea not under British control), was frustrated by German diplomatic opposition.

By 1894 Berlin had become deeply suspicious of British policy both in Europe and in Africa. Germany retaliated by attempting to undermine the British position in South Africa through diplomatic support for the Transvaal. Fear of preponderant German influence at Pretoria brought British policy-makers, especially Chamberlain, to connive at the campaign of internal subversion which Rhodes had launched in the Transvaal, and which in December 1895 culminated in the fiasco of the Jameson raid. But the German attempt to exploit this situation by the 'Kruger telegram' was hardly less a fiasco. It provoked a very combative British response and a disquieting improvement in Anglo-French relations. By March 1896, especially after the shock which the Triple Alliance had sustained through the Italian catastrophe at Adowa, Germany was ready to abandon her

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5 The scramble for the interior, to 1895

unfriendly intervention in South Africa and to resume more normal relations with London. But she demanded in return a guarantee of British support for the Triplice; and this Salisbury provided by his token advance in the Sudan (above, p. 113).

The Kruger telegram had been the climax to a deterioration in Anglo-German relations dating from 1893, when Berlin had become convinced that the Liberal government in London was seeking to evade the commitment, undertaken by Salisbury in 1887, to support the Triple Alliance in the Mediterranean, where Italy's situation was now growing more precarious as Franco-Russian naval strength increased. The Germans also believed, not entirely without reason, that in Africa Rosebery tended to treat them as a power of secondary importance. Minor African disputes multiplied and were allowed to fester; by 1894 both powers had adopted a policy of silent retaliation against real or supposed unfriendly acts in Africa. In December 1893 Berlin had construed as deliberate duplicity a minor African move by Rosebery which was in fact no more than clumsy and discourteous. The Germans, then negotiating their Cameroun frontier with France, retaliated by conceding to France access to the Benue and so to the lower Niger, regions where the political activities of the French agent, Lieutenant Mizon, in apparent contravention of the Anglo-French 1890 Agreement, had recently aroused intense resentment in London. Outraged by this German 'treachery', Rosebery in turn retaliated in April 1894, by writing into an agreement with King Leopold a lease to Britain of a 'corridor' of Congolese territory extending from Uganda to Lake Tanganyika, and thus inserted between German East Africa and the Congo State. London was well aware of the strong German objection to such a corridor; what Rosebery had not foreseen was the lengths to which Berlin would go in opposition to it. The Germans threatened Leopold with a refusal henceforth to treat the Congo State as neutral, the British with an international conference on Egypt, and both parties with concerted Franco-German opposition to the entire agreement.

Under this pressure Leopold, lacking effective support from Rosebery, was forced to abandon the 'corridor clause'. Meanwhile, the Germans had been encouraging the efforts of Gabriel Hanotaux at the Quai d'Orsay to frustrate Britain's major objective in concluding the agreement: the obstruction of French

access to the upper Nile by interposing Leopold as the lessee of the entire south-western Sudan, much of which was believed to be already under the king's 'effective occupation'. Leopold's Belgian ministers forced him to abandon almost all the leased territory, thereby restoring French access to the Nile, when Hanotaux threatened to denounce, as a breach of Belgian neutrality, the secondment of Belgian officers to the Congolese *force publique*; against this threat the king and Rosebery were alike powerless. The dispute over the Anglo-Congolese Agreement, and the complete collapse of Leopold's position under German and French pressure, brought England and France for the first time into open and direct diplomatic conflict on the upper Nile. The crisis also alerted the French public to the close connection, both political and hydrological, between the upper Nile and Egypt: Eugène Etienne insisted to the Chamber that 'c'est la question égyptienne qui s'ouvre ainsi devant vous'.³⁵ Finally, it dethroned the 'Chad Plan' from its previous official priority over the upper Nile: in future, French moves on the upper Nile would no longer be the semi-conspiratorial initiatives of individual ministers but formal acts of state carrying cabinet approval.

After the collapse of the Anglo-Congolese Agreement, Rosebery attempted to negotiate an upper Nile settlement directly with Paris. Hanotaux refused to recognise the British sphere; but he was prepared to bind France not to enter the upper Nile basin if Britain would give a similar undertaking and would compensate France generously enough in West Africa. 'Mutual self-denial' on the upper Nile would of course have solved Britain's purely strategic problem; but Rosebery, unlike Salisbury, believed that African territory was worth having for its own sake; and he refused to make, either on the upper Nile or in West Africa, the territorial sacrifices demanded. This failure to give Nile strategy priority over territorial acquisition doomed the negotiation; and Paris thereupon went ahead with its own Nile strategy, despatching a mission under Victor Liotard in November 1894. Liotard's mission provoked the famous 'unfriendly act' declaration by Sir Edward Grey on 28 March 1895, although by that time local difficulties had brought Liotard to a standstill. Later in 1895 a new start was made by the indomitably energetic Captain J.-B. Marchand; but even Marchand was not firmly established in

³⁵ *Journal Officiel, Débats, Chambre*, 7 June 1894.

the Nile basin until November 1897, and did not reach Fashoda until July 1898.

The major objective of these expeditions was to enforce by a potential threat to the Nile waters an early British evacuation of Egypt. To those who promoted and planned these missions – *officiers soudanais* and permanent officials of the *ministère des Colonies* – the importance of Egypt for the Mediterranean strategic balance was a very remote concern. For them, the object of enforcing evacuation was to achieve a spectacular enhancement of French prestige; and between 1896 and 1898 even Hanotaux, as foreign minister, consistently discussed the Egyptian question in terms of prestige rather than of Mediterranean strategy. A subsidiary objective was territorial acquisition in the southern Sudan; but although French diplomatists sometimes talked in terms of access to the navigable Nile for (non-existent) French trade on the upper Ubangi, these ‘economic’ arguments were mere fig-leaves to cover motives less avowable in diplomatic discourse. When in October 1898 the foreign minister, Théophile Delcassé, attempted, at the risk of diplomatic rupture and even war, to extort from Salisbury territorial concessions in the Bahr al-Ghazal, he was well aware that this *triste pays* was depopulated wilderness where it was not a swamp. The mere territory was worthless; not so the demonstration that even if France could not compel the British to evacuate Egypt, she could at least bring them to abandon their pretensions to a total monopoly of the Nile basin.

In the final phase of the upper Nile contest, territorial acquisition became for the British, hardly less than for the French, a matter of pure prestige: as a move in Nile-waters strategy, the acquisition of territory by Britain was a quite unnecessary elaboration. Yet the spectacular Anglo-Egyptian Sudan campaign of 1896–8 was not originally launched for the sake of British territorial acquisition, nor even as a move in upper Nile strategy. Indeed, in March 1896 Salisbury feared that his token advance in the northern Sudan might provoke a genuine French advance in the south, where effective British action was still impossible. The minimal advance undertaken as a move in European policy was soon extended by Kitchener’s pressure for a more ambitious campaign and by warnings from Lord Cromer, the British consul-general in Egypt, that the khedive might publicly denounce a mere military gesture which brought no territorial gain to Egypt. By December 1896

the objective of the campaign was to recover for Egypt as much of her Sudan territory as could be reconquered, without incurring any military risks, by Egyptian troops without British reinforcement. At the first sign of danger the Egyptians were to halt indefinitely. Nevertheless, by the end of 1897 Kitchener had manoeuvred himself into a position apparently so precarious that British reinforcement now seemed the only alternative, at best to a humiliating retreat, at worst to a military catastrophe. But once British troops had been committed, it was quite out of the question to maintain these very scarce resources indefinitely on the defensive. A rapid and of course victorious conclusion to the campaign was now imperative; and any less decisive conclusion than the complete destruction of the Mahdist state would now have seemed a very damaging defeat for London.

After Kitchener's victory on the Atbara in April 1898, it began to seem possible that his advance might after all be in time to forestall, or at least to challenge, the French on the upper Nile. By June 1898 the campaign had, at last, developed into a practical move in upper Nile strategy. Its immediate political objective had also been radically altered: no longer the restoration of the Sudan to Egypt, but the creation of a British title to Sudan territory. On 3 June 1898 Salisbury asserted a joint British and Egyptian right of conquest over 'the whole of the Mahdi State from Halfa to Wadelai',³⁶ thereby extinguishing the exclusive Egyptian right derived from her former possession of the Sudan. The reconciliation of Egypt's share in this joint right of conquest with complete *de facto* control of the Sudan by Britain was treated by Salisbury as a question of mere administrative detail, which was ultimately delegated to Cromer for solution. As a prominent Tory politician put it in October 1898, 'We don't care whether the Nile is called English or Egyptian, or what it is called – but we mean to have it.'³⁷ Yet the protection of the Nile waters did not dictate a British acquisition of the whole Sudan: and even in the southern Sudan, the reinstatement of Egypt would have been a complete *strategic* solution.

At Fashoda Salisbury was defending not merely the Nile waters and Britain's security in Egypt but, as a prescient French

³⁶ F.O. 78/5050, Salisbury to Cromer, tel. no. 47, 3 June 1898.

³⁷ George Wyndham to Wilfrid Blunt in October 1898: W. S. Blunt, *My diaries* (London, 1919; reprinted 1932), 299–300.

diplomatist had predicted in December 1894, 'la grandeur même de l'Angleterre'.³⁸ From the Cabinet down to the popular press, British opinion saw in the Anglo-French confrontation a crucial test of Britain's strength and effectiveness as a power; and so did continental onlookers both official and unofficial. The intensely provocative manner in which the French appeared to have presented their challenge meant that anything less than total success in meeting it would be construed as a defeat. In October 1898 Salisbury was not joking about 'beds of rushes', monstrously prolific though these were in much of the disputed territory. Yet the imperative need to eject the French from the southern Sudan did not entail, any more than the defence of the Nile waters, a virtual British annexation of the whole of the Sudan.

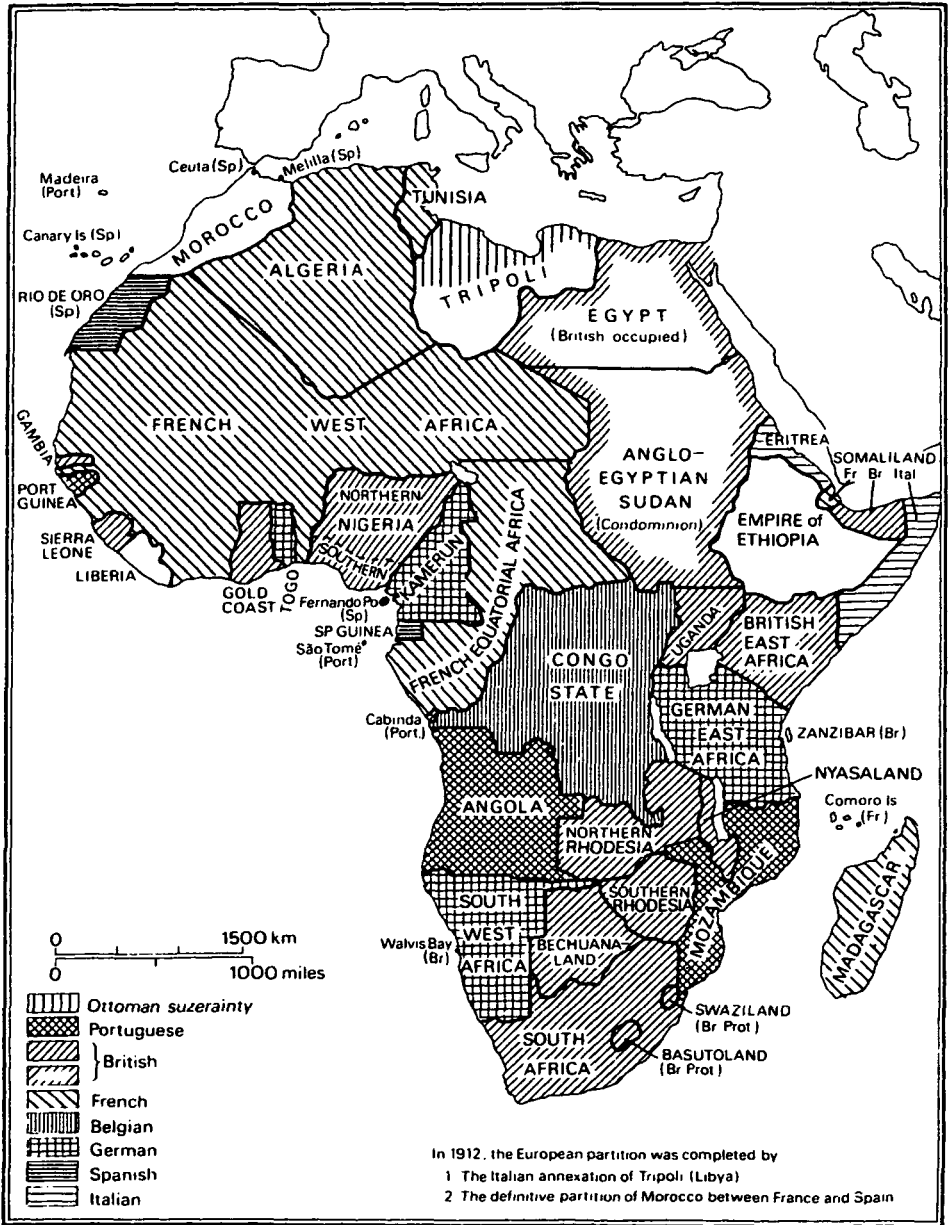
Nor did any conceivable economic motive. British opinion no longer saw El Dorados on the upper Nile; and certainly none in the northern Sudan, which 'picturesque' reporting of the Sudan campaign had presented as a mere inferno of sun, sand, stones and thorns. For Cromer, the southern Sudan was simply 'large tracts of useless territory which it would be difficult and costly to administer properly'; and in October 1898 Salisbury minuted 'wretched stuff' on a military intelligence report describing the alleged wealth of the Bahr al-Ghazal.³⁹ As for the northern Sudan, Cromer predicted, quite correctly, that its economic development would for the foreseeable future be a charge upon government: private capital would not be attracted by the very long-term investment, especially in communications, which would be needed to make it profitable. Yet the clamour for annexation was almost universal in Salisbury's own Tory party, and very widespread even beyond it – not least in many normally non-imperialist circles, which opposed the restoration of the Sudan to Egypt on religious or humanitarian grounds. Especially when Salisbury refused to humiliate France further by declaring a protectorate over Egypt itself, a 'British Sudan' became for the imperialists an indispensable symbol of Britain's imperial hegemony over the Nile – and perhaps indeed of Britain's general imperial greatness.

During the 1890s the theorists of imperialism had emphasised

³⁸ *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, le série, xi (Paris, 1948), no. 303, d'Estournelles de Constant to Hanotaux, 3 Dec. 1894.

³⁹ Salisbury Papers, Cabinet memoranda, Cromer to Salisbury, 5 Nov. 1897. F.O. 78/5051, Salisbury, minute on a report by A. E. W. Gleichen, 20 Oct. 1898.

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6 Africa partitioned, 1902

the economic imperative even more strongly than in the 1880s: the future greatness of any great power was, it seemed, crucially dependent upon its acquisition of exploitable colonial territories. But except in southern Africa economic considerations seem in the 1890s to have played a comparatively minor role in the actual acquisition of territory. In the great upper Nile contest, economic motives were of negligible importance for Britain and France alike; nor had they played any major part in the Anglo-German and Anglo-Italian diplomatic settlements of the early 1890s. Chamberlain seems to have accepted the apocalyptic 'colonial empire or downfall' doctrine; but in West Africa in 1897-8, where some economic advantages were indeed at stake, his bellicose intransigence was apparently aroused less by the possible loss of these advantages than by his sense of affront at French expeditions staking claims all over 'British' hinterlands. 'Cheek' he once minuted on a statement of French claims based upon these exploits:⁴⁰ one word could hardly say more. Chamberlain seemed to regard the loss of obscure West African villages as an intolerable national humiliation; and in mid-1898 he was ready, even eager, to break off negotiations and risk war with France over trivial territorial differences of no conceivable economic importance. It was the rather similar exalted chauvinism (and the career needs) of the *officiers soundanais* which often drove on, by methods which destroyed any rational prospects of economic gain, the French advances to which Chamberlain reacted so violently.

Only in southern Africa were economic motives arguably preponderant during the later phase of the scramble. Between 1870 and 1900 British capital export to South Africa had risen from virtually nil to some £200 million, about as much as to Canada;⁴¹ and the great bulk of this increase had taken place since 1886, after the discovery of the Rand goldfield. Nevertheless, more was at stake in South Africa than the profits of the Rand capitalists and their metropolitan associates. A rich enough and strong enough Transvaal, especially if supported by Germany or some other major power, could have challenged British hegemony throughout the sub-continent, including the British position at the Cape; and the crucial strategic importance of the Cape had

⁴⁰ F.O. 27/3373, Chamberlain, minute of 11 Nov. 1897 on the Niger Commissioners' report of 10 Nov.

⁴¹ Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, 6.

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not disappeared merely because powerful financial interests were now involved in South Africa. Lord Salisbury, who detested the prospect of fighting for the Rand capitalists – ‘people whom we despise’ – was still prepared to face war in order to ‘make the Boers feel that we are & must be the paramount power in S. Africa’. ‘The real point to be made good’, he told the under-secretary for the colonies, Lord Selborne, in July 1899, ‘is that we not the Dutch are Boss.’⁴²

THE PARTITION AND THE IDEOLOGY OF IMPERIALISM

Acquisitive imperialism as an ideology seems not to have been very widespread before the 1890s. Except in Germany, where a vociferous colonialist movement with very strong ‘Establishment’ support was already by the early 1880s influencing public opinion, its dissemination appears to have been a result rather than a cause of the scramble. Imperialism was not however (as has sometimes been suggested) the specific ideology of the so-called ‘nationalist masses’. The ‘masses’ are presumably urban and rural manual workers; and the attitude of these groups to colonial expansion, so far as it is known, was normally a profound indifference – except of course for their socialist minority, which was hostile on principle. Imperialism was essentially the creed of ruling élites and of their professional and white-collar auxiliaries; and not always even of a majority of these. In Britain and Germany, fervent nationalism and colonial imperialism very often coincided; but in France many militant nationalists saw in colonial expansion at best an undesirable distraction from the recovery of the Lost Provinces, and at worst a Bismarckian plot to weaken France in Europe. For this and other reasons, convinced colonialists were never more than a small minority of the French bourgeoisie. They were however a very active and influential minority. They included politicians (often leading politicians) of all parties except those of the extreme Right and Left; and in Parliament these politicians operated as a permanently organised

⁴² Salisbury to Lansdowne, 30 Aug. 1899: cited Lord Newton, *Lord Lansdowne, A biography* (London, 1929), 157. B. M. Add. Ms 48675, Sir E. Hamilton’s Diary, 6 Oct. 1899; Milner MSS, 16, 1, Selborne to Milner, 27 July 1899: cited A. N. Porter, ‘Lord Salisbury, Mr Chamberlain and South Africa, 1895–9’, *J. Imp. Cwealth Hist.*, 1972, 1, 1, 3–26.

groupe colonial. Colonialism was strong among naval and military officers; and among senior public officials. It was backed by important financial and industrial interests which, especially from about 1890, organised 'lobbies' and disseminated propaganda through such organisations as the *Comité de l'Afrique française*. In spite of their comparatively small numbers, French colonialists were therefore often very successful in influencing the course of policy.

In England, the home of Gladstonian principles of international comity and peaceful economic competition, the collapse of informal empire was soon followed by something like the mass conversion of the dominant élites from these principles to an aggressively rapacious imperialism with strong social-Darwinist overtones. By the late 1890s the Liberal Party had rejected the leadership of both Sir William Harcourt and John Morley, who continued to oppose colonial imperialism; and its official policy was hardly less imperialist than that of the Tories. This ideological revolution was not however confined to party politicians. It swept the court, the aristocracy and 'smart society', the 'city', the universities and the great learned societies hardly less powerfully than the armed services, and the manufacturers and merchants represented in the chambers of commerce of the great provincial towns. Its triumphal progress can be followed in the mounting enthusiasm, culminating in extravagant adulation, with which all branches of the Establishment lionised Stanley in 1890, Lugard in 1892–3, Rhodes in 1894–5 and Kitchener in 1898–9.

By the later 1890s emotional commitment to imperial expansion sometimes approached the hysterical in Britain and France alike. After the battle of Omdurman, the British behaved as if they had won a major war, and rewarded Kitchener accordingly. During the Fashoda crisis, many Frenchmen behaved almost as if the national existence of France itself was at stake. Partition had begun as a diplomatic 'game', in which the skilful player won without even a hinted threat of force against *European* adversaries. By the later 1890s some of the issues had become too important to be contained within this convention; and at Fashoda in 1898 French policy was thrown into disarray when the British bluntly refused to observe the conventional rules of the game. As a French publicist ruefully confessed, 'Jamais on ne prévît qu'on pût être

amené à quitter le terrain diplomatique.⁴³ This radical change of attitude was doubtless partly a feed-back from the melodramatic 'steepchases' and 'incidents' which marked the final years of the scramble, and of which the encounter of Marchand and Kitchener at Fashoda is the perfect type. But the influence of the then very fashionable 'scientific' Social-Darwinist approach to politics should not be overlooked. If, as Social Darwinists asserted, the struggle itself is the key mechanism of evolution, the sole source of selection and renewal, 'the fiery crucible out of which comes the finer metal',⁴⁴ then the material value of the actual bone of contention, even though it be as meatless as Chamberlain's West African villages, becomes an almost irrelevant consideration. To shrink from *any* struggle generated by international competition is publicly to advertise irredeemable national decadence.

For a Social Darwinist, the most convincing possible demonstration of his own racial superiority is his ability to crush 'inferior races' by armed force. Although force against Africans had certainly not been spared, especially in southern Africa and by the *officiers soudanais* in West Africa, in the early years of partition, its large-scale use in operations planned by metropolitan policy-makers is mainly a phenomenon of the 1890s. At the outset of partition many Africans, quite unaware of the implications of European control, had greeted with indifference the beginnings of formal empire; or had accepted it hoping 'to deflect the costs of colonialism on to their fellows and appropriate its benefits as their own'.⁴⁵ Some African rulers and groups had indeed positively welcomed European 'protection' as a safeguard against foreign enemies, internal dissidents or the disruptive activities of unofficial Europeans. By the 1890s many of these hopes and calculations had been bitterly disappointed; and the negative effects of colonial rule, upon élites and masses alike, had often become obvious. There was a marked hardening of African opposition to the extension and consolidation of European control. This resistance now seemed intolerable, not merely to local European interest-groups such as white settlers or *officiers*

⁴³ J. Darcy, *France et Angleterre: cent années de rivalité coloniale* (Paris, 1903), 389.

⁴⁴ K. Pearson, *National life from the standpoint of Science* (London, 1900), 26-7: cited Langer, *Diplomacy of imperialism*, 88.

⁴⁵ J. M. Lonsdale, 'The politics of conquest: The British in western Kenya, 1894-1908', *Hist. J.*, 1977, 20, 4, 841-70, at 870.

soudanais, but to 'the chancelleries of Europe'. Especially against the background of social-Darwinist ideology, success in imperial expansion was now seen as an important, even a crucial test of a power's general effectiveness and 'virility'. African resistance was no longer a merely local problem: it had become an issue in which 'prestige' was at stake.

Metropolitan policy-makers were now often prepared to override the financial constraints which had previously restricted, sometimes very severely, the scale of European military action in Africa; and to crush African resistance by a ruthlessly systematic exploitation of the technological gap between European and African weaponry and military organisation. The French successfully sought this solution in Dahomey in 1892, and again in Madagascar in 1895–6. So did the British in the Sudan, especially after January 1898 when the continued existence of the Mahdist state became politically intolerable to London. The Italians failed disastrously in its attempted application to Ethiopia in 1895–6. The scale of these operations deserves emphasis. Kitchener led over 20,000 men to victory at Omdurman, Baratieri about 17,000 to defeat at Adowa. By the later 1890s expeditions of two to three thousand men were commonplace. Even these smaller expeditions represent a far greater deployment of force against Africans than was usual in the early years of partition: in 1882–3 Borgnis-Desbordes had been trying to conquer the upper Niger basin with about 500 men.⁴⁶

At the outset of the scramble the powers had staked out their claims in the hope that African territories could somehow be made to yield a profit with the barest minimum of administrative and military effort. The colonial projects of both Bismarck and Leopold II were in their initial stages designed to avoid direct administrative burdens; they were in effect adaptations of certain features of British informal empire. Even in the Niger Sudan, some at least of the French policy-makers who sought formal empire did not originally contemplate large-scale campaigns of military conquest. But European racial arrogance and competitive national self-assertion soon responded to African resistance by policies of subjugation through the massive deployment of armed force. The motives for these major campaigns of subjugation

⁴⁶ E. Réquin, *Archinard et le Soudan* (Paris, 1946), 13–32.

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differed from region to region and were often multiple. Outside southern Africa, economic motives were rarely preponderant: in the upper Nile basin, they were negligible. But one motive was always present, and was always very important: the desire to demonstrate, in the most crushing possible way, the 'superiority' of the European.

CHAPTER 3

NORTH AFRICA

When the Second Empire succumbed to the Prussian onslaught the French had already been established in North Africa for forty years. Even before the conquest of Algeria had been completed, they had advanced into the Sahara, and occupied the great northern oases. Morocco had managed to preserve its independence by a policy of systematic non-involvement in the outside world, but the two regencies of Tunis and Tripoli, which had hitherto been vassals of the Porte, became the objects of French expansionism. Reconquered by Turkey in 1835, Tripoli had become an Ottoman province. The bey of Tunis had escaped the same fate only by placing himself under French protection. As for the heart of the great desert, a no man's land inhabited by Arab and Tuareg nomads, it was in practice still free from the rival influences of French, Turks and Moroccans.

Ten years later, in 1881, France established a protectorate over the Regency of Tunis. The momentum of European penetration increased as the twentieth century approached. After the conquest of the Algerian Sahara, the French decided to establish a protectorate over Morocco, while the Italians cast their mantle over Tripolitania. The 1904 agreements between France, England and Spain appeared to seal the fate of the Sharifian empire. The intervention of Germany and the start of another international crisis merely delayed by a few years a French conquest that had become inevitable.

ALGERIA

The fall of the Second Empire was greeted with joy by the French in Algeria. Ever since Napoleon III had uttered the words: 'Arab kingdom', they had gone into opposition. They had voted 'No' in the 1870 plebiscite, and had not waited for the September 4th revolution to proclaim themselves republicans. The event in Paris provided the occasion for several weeks of unrest. Officials

appointed under the empire had lost all authority. Committees that were no more than talking shops, such as the one run by the lawyer, Robert Vuillermoz, aimed to take over the administration. But the French Prime Minister, Adolphe Thiers, called a halt by appointing an energetic governor, Admiral de Gueydon, who restored order by putting an end to such committees of chatterers.

The time for speeches was indeed over, for the government was confronted by an insurrection affecting a third of Algeria. This should have been foreseen, especially in the most recently pacified areas. The establishment of a civilian régime had angered the Muslims. The departure of the French garrison, followed by their defeat in Europe, provided an unexpected chance of revenge. For the natives, the establishment of a civilian form of government meant domination by the French settlers. The Arab chiefs feared the loss of their authority and privileges. They also feared land confiscations and tutelage by European municipal councils. The *qādīs* (*cadis*) knew that sooner or later they would be replaced by French judges. The rumour spread that the French were going to force Muslims to convert.

The first measures taken by the Government of National Defence did nothing to dispel these apprehensions. The naturalisation of Algerian-born Jews, the setting up of assize juries and the extension of the area under civilian rule were proclaimed one after another. The news of the French defeats had spread rapidly. The emperor was taken prisoner, and France no longer had a leader. As a final humiliation, France was now governed by a Jew.¹ A letter from Maḥyī al-Dīn (Mahieddine), a son of ‘Abd al-Qādir (el-Kader), called on the faithful to rebel.

On 14 March 1871 the signal for the rising was given by Muḥammad al-Muqrānī (el Mokrani), the *bachaga* of the Medjana, followed shortly by the shaykh of the Raḥmāniyya brotherhood, who proclaimed a holy war. Kabylia obeyed his call, as did most of the tribes of the Constantinois. But the insurrection remained localised, as the tribes of the Oranie and the Algerois took no part in the movement. The rebels attacked European farms and settlements, which were devastated, but they proved incapable of organising concerted operations. The arrival of reinforcements enabled the French troops to regain the initiative. The Raḥmāniyya

¹ This was Crémieux, a member of the Government of National Defence, who had carried through the naturalisation of his fellow Jews.

chiefs were quickly subdued. Al-Muqrānī was killed in battle. There was sporadic fighting for a further seven months, but the struggle was finally brought to an end by raids upon the Saharan frontier regions to which the diehards had fled.

This was followed by severe repressive measures. Fines totalling more than 10 million francs were imposed on the rebel tribes and 446,000 hectares of land confiscated, some of which was used to set up fresh areas for French colonisation. Some of the tribes were ruined; it took others twenty years to recover. At least, the aim of the settlers had been achieved: apart from a few sporadic outbursts around 1880, there were no more armed rebellions of any importance, and Algeria could be considered to be finally pacified.

The defeat of the rebels ensured the political victory of the settlers. The French army, held responsible for the insurrection, was gradually removed from positions of power. Now that they were all-powerful, the French people of Algeria soon tried to make themselves independent of the Governor-General. General Chanzy (1873–9), who succeeded Admiral de Gueydon, had been an officer in the *bureaux arabes*. He favoured a policy of immigration and the settlement of the countryside, sponsoring the creation of new villages. He extended the territory under civilian rule at the expense of the area under military control, and welcomed the increased number of *communes de plein exercice* (responsible local authorities), administered as in France by elected mayors and councillors. However he resisted some of the demands of the settlers: in the areas where the majority of the population was native-born, he extended the institution of *communes mixtes*, districts governed by civilian administrators appointed by the government.

The first civilian governor of Algeria was Albert Grévy (1879–81), the brother of the president of the French Republic. Unfamiliar with the affairs of the country, he allowed himself to be dominated by the Algerian members of the French National Assembly. He satisfied their demands, by doubling the area under civilian rule to almost 105,000 square kilometres. In 1881, these lands were divided into 196 *communes de plein exercice*² and 77 *communes mixtes*. The area under military control, now restricted almost entirely to the near-desert regions of the high plateaux and the fringes of the Sahara, included a mere half-million inhabitants.

² 261 in 1900.

These Algerian communes were strange administrative entities. Although some were comparable to a small European town, others extended over tens of thousands of hectares. Indeed, whole sections of tribes had often been attached to *communes de plein exercice* in order to increase their resources. The French mayors, who, totally unsupervised, levied taxes on the native population, used their budget entirely to profit the European community. In Jules Ferry's phrase, this amounted to the 'blatant exploitation of the natives'.³ The proportion of Muslim municipal councillors was reduced by a decree of April 1884 from a third to a quarter. Moreover these native delegates could no longer participate in the election of the mayor, who had to be a French citizen. But the Algerian members of the National Assembly wanted still more. They demanded administrative assimilation into metropolitan France, the same rights as Frenchmen in France and, as a corollary to this, the subordination of the Governor-General to themselves. Assimilation was achieved with the agreement of Grévy by the decree of 26 August 1881, known as the '*decret des rattachements*', which placed the various Algerian services under the direct authority of the relevant ministers.

The role of the Governor-General was henceforth reduced to that of messenger; he became, in the strong words of Jules Ferry, 'an inspector of colonisation in the palace of a *roi fainéant* [do-nothing] king'.⁴ Henceforth, only Algerian members of the National Assembly, whose numbers were doubled, had the right to deal directly with the civil servants in Paris, who knew nothing of local conditions. Influential deputies such as Gaston Thomson or Eugène Etienne became the real masters of the country under such a mediocre governor as Louis Tirman (1881–91). Despite the criticisms which were soon levelled at the system, it remained in force for more than fifteen years.

After the fall of the Second Empire, the French Government once again adopted a policy of officially supporting European settlement and the state made free grants of land as it had done during the governorships of General Bugeaud and General Randon. One hundred thousand hectares had been promised to Alsatians who settled in Algeria. But those who emigrated were

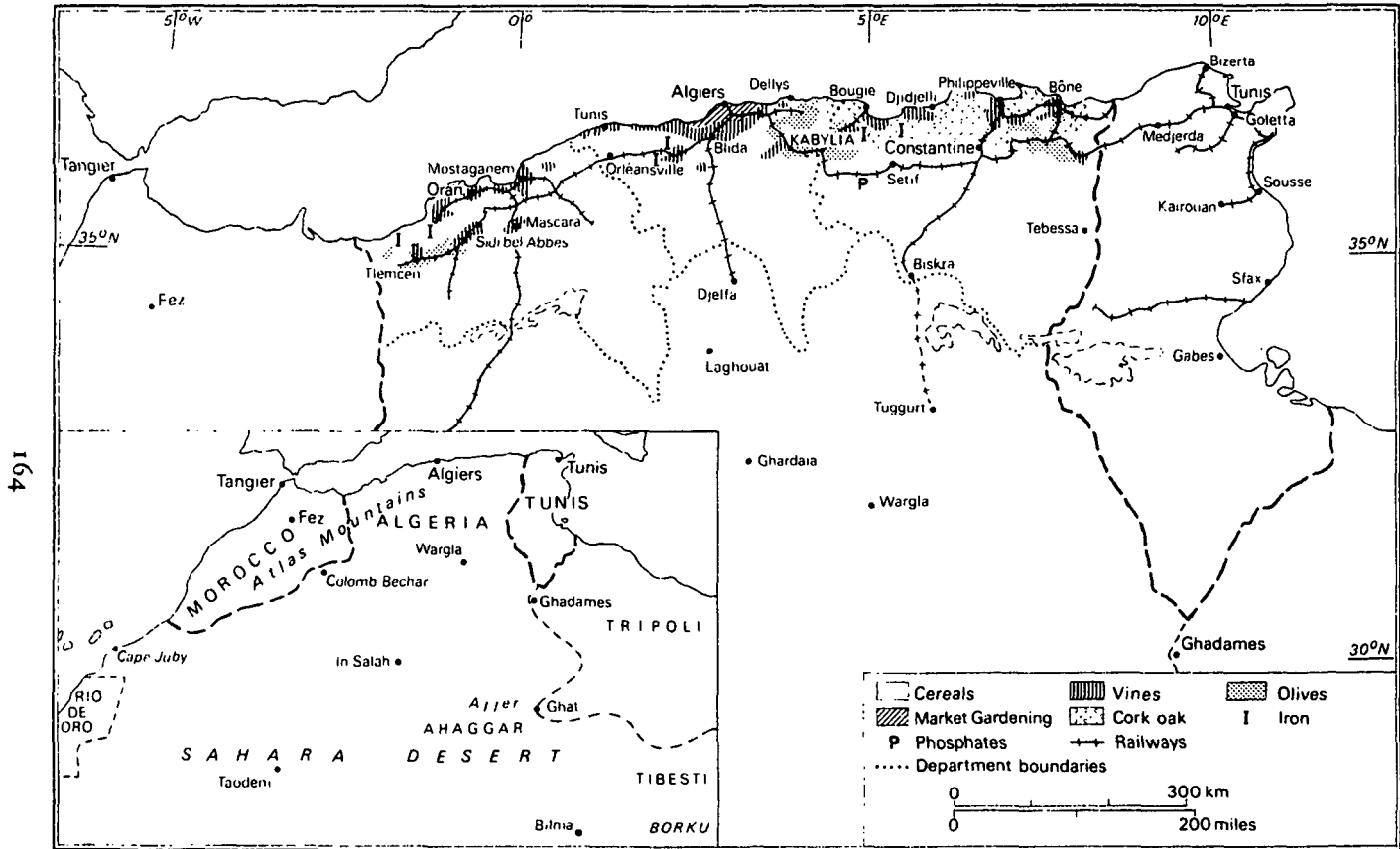
³ 'C'était l'exploitation de l'indigène à ciel ouvert.'

⁴ 'Un inspecteur de la colonisation dans le palais d'un roi fainéant.'

largely manual workers, and out of the 1,183 families settled by the government, two-thirds abandoned their grants. They were more successful with the sons of Algerian settlers, and with the peasants of the Massif Central, Dauphiné and the Provençal Alps. In total, by 1882, four thousand families had arrived from France, free grants of land totally 347,000 hectares had been made, and 197 new settlements founded by the government. Unofficial colonisation also made progress, thanks to the Warnier law, passed in 1873, the provisions of which encouraged the splitting up of lands held collectively by the tribes. Thus the Europeans could acquire common lands that had little value in the eyes of the natives. However this law gave rise to such abuses that in 1890 the government was forced to suspend its application.

The official settlement policy was not without its miscalculations. The National Assembly attacked it on the grounds of expense. It was also the more reluctant to vote the necessary funds, in that Algeria was thriving because of the ruin of the French vineyards, devastated by phylloxera. In December 1881 the Chamber of Deputies refused a request for funds totalling 50 million francs required to found more settlements. Thenceforth official support for settlement gave way to private initiative; Spanish immigration replaced French settlers. The grain harvests had long been a disappointment. Methods used in metropolitan France were not readily transferred to a country where the rainfall was inadequate and irregular. The periodic recurrence of droughts and plagues of locusts discouraged the settlers. It was only after 1890, with increased mechanisation and the introduction of dry farming, that wheat growing became profitable. From then on progress was rapid thanks to the growth in yields. Vineyards benefited from the phylloxera epidemic in France, and from the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Italy, which closed the French market to Italian wines. Therefore Algeria was energetically launched into the establishment of wine-producing industry to replace the loss of French production. The area planted with vines rose from 15,000 hectares in 1878 to 110,000 in 1890 and 167,000 in 1903, with wine production at that time averaging five million hectolitres.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the prosperity of settler agriculture in Algeria showed that the Republic's gamble seemed to have paid off; a class of French peasants, comprising



7 Algeria at the beginning of the twentieth century

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more than a third of the total population, was becoming established in Algeria. At the same time, the towns were increasing rapidly in size, including Oran and, in particular, Algiers, which was taking on the appearance of a large provincial capital.

Owing to immigration and high birth rate, the European population doubled in twenty years, from 245,000 in 1872 to almost half a million in 1891. But foreigners – Spaniards, Italians and Maltese – were more numerous than people of French extraction.⁵ The ‘foreign peril’ was neutralised by the law of 1889, which automatically naturalised the children of foreigners who were born in Algeria and who did not formally reject French citizenship. Military service and mixed marriages ensured the gradual assimilation of those who had been naturalised in with those of French extraction. In 1901, the European community numbered 580,000 (638,000 including the Jews), making up more than 14 per cent of the population of the three departments.

At the end of the Second Empire the Muslim population of Algeria had decreased as a result of famine and epidemics; but owing to a high birth rate it increased rapidly during the closing years of the century. From 2,800,000 in 1881, the numbers rose to 3,500,000 ten years later, and more than 4,000,000 in 1901, with 3,841,000 of these in the three northern departments. This

⁵ The population of Algeria according to the census of 1901:

	Europeans	Jews	Muslim	Total
<i>Algeria</i> (1902 frontiers)				
3 departments	580,590 ¹ (12.9%)	57,538 ² (1.28%)	3,841,298 ³ (85.7%)	4,479,426
Territoires du Sud	3,254	1,423	255,228	259,905
Major towns: Algiers	94,064 (69.4%)	11,356 (8.4%)	30,082 (22.2%)	135,502
Oran	64,839 (72.6%)	11,187 (12.5%)	13,227 (14.8%)	89,253
Constantine	17,909 (36.6%)	7,252 (14.8%)	23,750 (48.6%)	48,911
Bône	26,683 (70.4%)	1,461 (3.8%)	9,740 (25.7%)	37,884
Tlemcen	5,595 (15.8%)	5,201 (14.6%)	24,672 (69.5%)	35,468

Notes: 1 Including 154,693 Spaniards and 38,531 Italians. 2 Divided almost equally between Frenchmen, foreigners and naturalised citizens. 3 Including Tunisians and Moroccans.

population was far from homoeogeneous. There were, on the one hand, the Kabyle who lived in the mountains and had remained faithful to their Berber language and traditions, and on the other hand the arabised tribes of the plains and the plateaux. The French stressed the good qualities of the Kabyle, the 'Auvergnat' of Africa, which provided a sharp contrast with the laziness of the Arab. But though the hill people had preserved their individuality, they were not willing to be assimilated by the French; attempts at conversion failed, and a 'moral conquest' through the schools was not seriously undertaken. By the end of the century, the Kabyle mirage had begun to fade. In February 1895, the governor, Jules Cambon, declared in the Chamber of Deputies that he did not believe that the Kabyle was more easily assimilated than the Arab.

This establishment of the new régime did nothing to improve the status of the native population, for it merely transferred to the civilian authorities the discretionary powers hitherto enjoyed by the military officers. The *Senatus Consultus* of 14 July 1865 had guaranteed for the Muslims the continuation of their personal status. It had also furnished them with the possibility of achieving French citizenship if they were willing to renounce that personal status. But few of them had been tempted to take advantage of this provision; to abandon their religious status seemed apostasy, and only 736 individuals requested naturalisation between 1865 and 1890.

A native code (*code de l'indigénat*), established in 1881, gave the authorities powers to impose fines or terms of imprisonment, individually or collectively, without trial for a certain number of offences. A permit was needed to travel in the interior of the country. In the *communes mixtes*, the native population found itself subject to the civil authorities, and in the *communes de plein exercice* to the mayor, assisted in both cases by appointed officials, the *qā'ids* (*caïds*) or *bachagas*. Islamic justice retained its own organisation: the *qādīs* judged according to custom in all questions involving personal status. But in cases concerning property (the decree of September 1886) or criminal proceedings, Muslims were called before French judges and tribunals.

For taxation purposes, the native population was still subject to a régime dating from the time of the Ottomans, that of the four 'Arab taxes'. The '*ushr* (*achour*), the tithe on the harvest, had

been converted to a fixed tax on the area sown to crops. The *bokor*, only levied in the Constantinois, applied only to collective tribal lands. The *zakāt* was a tax on flocks, and the *lāẓima*, a capitation tax in Grande Kabylie, took the form of a tax on palm trees in the southern Constantinois. Though the system had a long tradition behind it, it nevertheless weighed heavily upon the poor. On average, an individual European paid five or six times more tax than a Muslim, but when their means are taken into account, Europeans were slightly less heavily taxed. The re-organisation of the fiscal system, first proposed in 1912, was carried out only in 1918.

The education legislation of the Third Republic remained for all practical purposes a dead letter as far as the Muslims were concerned. The 1883 and 1887 decrees, which extended the Ferry laws to Algeria, did not in fact include any clause making them obligatory for Muslims. In the towns, the Muslim population had demonstrated so effectively against the plans of the government that, in order to avoid further trouble, the authorities had not insisted upon them. Since funds were in short supply, and the Europeans on their side could scarcely be said to favour the education of the natives, little progress was made.

In the whole of the country, the number of Muslim pupils in primary schools in 1882 was 3,000, in 1890 11,000, and in 1900 24,000, as against 97,000 Europeans and 14,800 Jews. The government's reply to its critics, for example Tirman in 1883, was that one should not be surprised that there were so few Muslims in French schools, but rather 'that there should be as many as there are, given the reservations of the parents'.⁶ In fact, although amongst boys the proportion was one Muslim to two Europeans, in girls' schools the proportion was one to twenty-six. Only in Kabylia was an experiment attempted to enforce attendance, with eight schools established entirely at state expense. It was not followed up, and Jules Ferry himself gathered from his travels in 1892 that the Muslims were opposed to compulsory education. Three *madrasas* (*medersas*) provided an education based on the study of French and Arabic. French secondary education attracted only a few dozen Muslims each year. The Koranic schools

⁶ 'Mais bien de ce qu'il y en eût autant, en raison des réticences manifestées par les parents': K. Vignes, *Le gouverneur général Tirman et le système des rattachements* (Paris, 1958), 149.

continued to survive on the margin of the official education system. Algerian students who wished to acquire a traditional Islamic training went to the great mosques of Tunis and Cairo.

The situation was scarcely better in the economic field. Native agriculture made a poor showing alongside the modernised methods of the European farmers. In the greater part of the country, the Algerian *fallāh*, with his fatalistic attachment to tradition, continued to scratch the soil with primitive wooden ploughshares. Too poor to build up reserves, he was at the mercy of every crisis. Bad harvests and animal epidemics regularly brought poverty to the countryside. To buy seed, the *fallāh* often had to borrow, thus subjecting himself to the Jewish money-lenders, who pitilessly exploited his ignorance and credulity. More than half the *fallāhīn* owned their own land, but most had only a few small plots. In the department of Constantine just before the war, three-quarters of native landowners possessed less than 20 hectares. The large estates were subdivided into farms of about 10 hectares, rented out to tenant farmers. The landless peasants had to hire out their labour, either to European settlers or to other *fallāhīn*. As the years passed, their numbers tended to increase: from 12 per cent in 1900 to 18 per cent in 1930. The increase in the Muslim population intensified the shortage of land and the prevalence of rural poverty.

The Muslims cultivated barley and hard wheat, but their yields were much lower than those of the European farmers—in an average year five to six quintals per hectare for wheat in comparison with eight to ten quintals in an average year for the Europeans. When allowance is made for annual variations in the harvests, cereal production remained stationary, as did that of olive oil. Stock-rearing decreased slightly as a result of the reduction in common land. In broad terms, there were in Algeria about seven or eight million sheep, three to four million goats, and about a million head of cattle. But these animals, undernourished and badly cared for by the natives, were not very productive. Sometimes the herds would be halved by two successive years of poor rains.

It did not take the French in Algeria long to discover the faults of the system inaugurated in 1881. Algerian affairs, divided amongst eight ministries, were settled often after interminable

delays by officials totally ignorant of the country. Having no budget and no revenues of its own, Algeria was obliged to beg for funds that were grudgingly doled out. Having begun in Algeria, the offensive against the system of *rattachements* (direct rule by individual ministries in Paris) was soon being mounted in metropolitan France itself.

In the Chamber of Deputies, in 1891 and 1892, Auguste Burdeau and Charles Jonnart denounced the abuses of centralisation and the errors which had been made in administration and settlement. In 1892 a Senate commission, led by Jules Ferry, undertook a fact-finding mission to Algeria. Ferry's report, a veritable indictment of the system of *rattachements*, concluded that the governor's powers must be reinstated by centralising the higher administration in Algiers.

In spite of the efforts of Tirman's successor, Jules Cambon (1891–7), it took three more years for the reforms to be completed. Finally, the French government, under Félix-Jules Méline, promulgated the decree of 31 December 1896, which brought the policy of *rattachements* to an end. But the reform was not yet complete. It did not satisfy the demands of the French in Algeria, who hoped for the granting of new freedoms, the establishment of their own budget controlled by a local assembly – this being in their eyes the only way to bring about the modernisation and development of the country. Now, neither Jonnart nor Ferry had considered granting an elected assembly to Algeria, on the grounds that the inhabitants were lacking in political maturity. It was in these circumstances that there occurred the anti-Semitic crisis of 1898.

The Jewish question had become politically important since the Crémieux decree of 24 October 1870 had naturalised *en bloc* the entire Jewish population. This measure was doubtless premature, since the majority of Algerian Jews, crowded into the ghettos of the large towns, were still very oriental. Despised by Europeans and Muslims alike, the Jews were beginning to be envied for their commercial success. Foreign immigrants, in particular the Spaniards, were among the most hostile. From time to time, local assemblies requested that the Crémieux decree be abrogated. But there were ulterior political motives behind these public protests. The fact was that the Jewish electors, voting *en bloc* on the instructions of their consistories, held the balance between two

French groups, the opportunists on the one hand and radicals on the other. The latter accounted for the success of their opponents as being the result of their scandalous collusion with important members of the Jewish community.

From 1895 onwards, anti-Jewish leagues were formed, and their propaganda struck an answering chord amongst the rank and file members of the European community. The radicals used this movement as an electoral springboard. The crisis was triggered off by student demonstrations in March 1897, and soon there were riots in Algiers. A law student, Max Régis, took the lead, producing a violent broadsheet, *l'Antijuif*. Between 20 and 25 January 1898, the mob took over the streets, looting Jewish shops and forcing the governor-general to barricade himself in his palace.

The French National Assembly elections of May 1898 were taking on the appearance of a plebiscite on the Jewish question. The anti-Semites led by Edouard Drumont took four of the six Algerian seats. Only two opportunists, Etienne and Thomson, managed to hold on to their fiefs at Oran and Bône. In order to force the government to abrogate the Crémieux decree, the Algerian deputies invoked the spectre of separatism. Méline compromised by offering administrative concessions.

The decree of 23 August 1898, drawn up by the new governor, the lawyer Edouard Laferrière, in effect set up in Algeria a new assembly, the *délégations financières*. Subject to the ultimate control of the National Assembly in Paris, this had the right to approve a local budget. In this way, Algeria won financial autonomy, almost a sort of local self-government, as a strange, not to say unforeseen, result of the anti-Jewish riots. Thenceforth the shape of the régime was fixed. The law of 19 December 1900 granting a special budget to Algeria, and the separation of the Territoires du Sud in 1902, were merely finishing touches. The governor-general had completely regained the whole of his former powers. He had however to take into account the new assembly, whose authority was superimposed on that of the *conseils généraux*. To fulfil their role of representing the various economic interests, the *délégations financières* were divided into four sections. The French *colons* (settlers) were entitled to twenty-four delegates, as were the

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'*non-colons*'. The Arabs and the Kabyles had respectively fifteen and six representatives.

The system appeared to be a compromise, but it continued to function satisfactorily until the outbreak of the First World War. The administration, luckily, was led by capable individuals. After Laferrière, there were Paul Révoil (1901–3), Charles Lutaud and especially Jonnart, who governed the country from 1900 to 1901 and from 1903 to 1911, and who returned in 1918. Thanks to these men, the authority of the office of governor-general was respected, and wise management of the finances gave Algeria a balanced budget. Stagnation had been replaced by prosperity. Gradually society was pacified. The failure of the anti-Semitic candidates in the 1902 elections demonstrated that the anti-Jewish crisis was over. 'It was the triumph of the practical good sense of country-dwellers over the agitation of the turbulent populace of the large towns'.⁷

TUNISIA

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the regency of Tunis was a small principality, whose international status would be hard to define. Since it was not completely outside the authority of the Ottoman empire, it was halfway between autonomy and complete independence; a very vague status which allowed the European powers to treat the beys as their interests dictated, either as independent princes or as vassals of the Porte. Since the sixteenth century, the bonds which linked Tunisia to the Ottoman empire had become looser and looser. After the expulsion of the Spaniards in 1574, the country had become a Turkish province ruled by a pasha, supported by a corps of janissaries recruited in the east. But the pasha had been rapidly stripped of his powers by the dey, the commander of the militia, who in his turn was replaced by a civilian official, the bey. The sultan had recognised these changes by granting the bey the title of pasha and the right to hand on his office to his heirs. But the first dynasty of beys, the Muradids, failed to take root in the country. In 1705 the commander of the militia, Husayn b. 'Alī, a soldier of Greek extraction, seized power during the disturbances which at that time were troubling the regency. He was recognised by the Porte,

⁷ C. Martin, *Histoire de l'Algérie française, 1830–1962* (Paris, 1963), 243.

and founded a dynasty that lasted for two and a half centuries. Despite princely quarrels and assassinations, a rule of succession by seniority of birth had emerged by the mid-eighteenth century. Thus Muḥammad Bey succeeded his cousin Aḥmad in 1855, and left the throne to his younger brother Muḥammad al-Šādiq (es-Sadok) (1859–82).

On the accession of Muḥammad al-Šādiq in 1859, the Husaynist dynasty possessed both the strength built up over 150 years' hereditary transmission of power and the traditions of independence which gave the beys the authority of sovereign princes. They had complete autonomy; they legislated as they wished; they governed with the help of councillors chosen by themselves. But the beys had possessed even more extensive prerogatives that provided them with the apparatus of sovereignty. They had their army and their own navy, they minted coins, maintained diplomatic relations, declared war and signed treaties. Although they had neither legations nor consulates abroad, they could, in Tunis, discuss political matters with the consuls of the major European powers. These were indeed the attributes of sovereignty, emphasised even more by the existence of a Tunisian flag, recognised by the Porte itself.

However, these hereditary princes continued to bear the titles of pasha and bey, which ranked them with the governors of the larger provinces of the Ottoman empire. At Tunis, the Friday prayer was still said in the name of the sultan; at their accession, the beys sent an embassy to Constantinople to inform the sultan and obtain the *firman*, his confirmation of their investiture and the mark of their dependence. Thus for many years no foreign power had questioned the, at least nominal, suzerainty the sultan claimed to exercise over the regency, and the beys were treated by the European courts as vassal princes of the Porte.

Now, by a strange paradox, the conquest of Algeria caused a *rapprochement* between France and Tunisia, and increased the latter's separation from the Porte. The French expedition had been welcomed by the regency, which rejoiced in the fall of a detested rival. No doubt the extension of the conquest to the Constantinois posed a delicate problem in regard to the western frontier of Tunisia, but the danger from France was negligible compared with the threat of an Ottoman reconquest. Indeed, in 1835 the Porte had taken advantage of a civil war in Tripoli between rival

princes of the Karamanli family to intervene in that Regency and replace it by direct rule. Tunis feared the same fate as Tripoli, and the bey realised that he would scarcely be in a better position than his neighbour to resist the intervention of an Ottoman force. The consciousness of his own weakness forced him to seek support from the neighbour who seemed least dangerous in the immediate future. He appealed to France, whose protection might discourage the Turks from any attempt at offensive tactics. In the long run, Tunisia became a principality in a semi-vassal relationship to France, a buffer state protecting the eastern frontier of Algeria.

At this time, the sovereign was still Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, who had acceded to the throne in 1859, a weak ruler depicted by a contemporary in these terms:

The Bey has no intelligence, and he is addicted to the most shameful vices. His hareem contains only small boys... of which he is not in the least ashamed. He never concerns himself with affairs of state except when obliged to by the consuls, and then merely parrots the words taught him in advance by his minister. Twice a week he holds a court session. There, smoking his pipe, he listens to the plaintiffs, and pronounces very brief judgements whispered to him by one of his officials. Apart from these occasions, he remains shut up in his hareem, where his life is nothing but one long orgy.

Politically, the only person of any account in the Bardo palace was the prime minister, the all-powerful Muṣṭafā Khaznadar, a *mamlūk* of Greek extraction, who had managed to remain in power, under three beys, since 1837. The *khaznadar*, intelligent and cunning, maintained at court a careful balance between France and England, but his own sympathies were on the side of Great Britain on account of his connections with Wood, the British consul. At the palace, he alone exercised influence over the feeble spirit of the bey.

The bey's powers were delegated to about sixty *qā'ids*, assisted by *khalifas* and shaykhs, whose task was to keep order and collect taxes. The palace dignitaries competed for the administration of districts with sedentary populations, lands considered peaceful, where the office provided a good living. On the other hand, they were eager to hand over the government of the tribes to native notables. Amongst the nomads, indeed, the *qā'id* in particular had become the representative of authority, a task that had grown very difficult in the troubled circumstances of the regency at the time.

The sedentary cultivators numbered about half the population, half a million or so out of approximately 1,100,000 in the country as a whole. Apart from the mountain dwellers, they were grouped mainly on the plains and in the hills of eastern Tunisia, forming an almost continuously populated strip from the northern coast to the Gulf of Gabes. In the Tell, the *fallāhīn* mainly grew wheat and barley; those of Cape Bon cultivated fruit and olives as well as cereals. The olive tree was the main source of wealth in the Sahel, considered to be the regency's richest and most densely populated area. In the south, from Gabes to the Djerid, the peoples of the oases all depended on their date-palms.

The hard-working, resigned inhabitants bore the full weight of beylical taxation. The northern *fallāhīn* were mostly reduced to the status of sharecroppers on the great estates of the dignitaries of the bey's court circle. The sedentary inhabitants of the oases were preyed upon by the nomads. On the other hand, the villagers of the Sahel had for many years escaped relatively lightly. In 1864, however, they took part in a large-scale insurrection against increased taxation. After the revolt had been crushed, the Sahel, pillaged by the military, was burdened with taxes and requisitions. The *fallāhīn*, at the end of their resources, had become the prey of the money-lenders of Sousse.

The town dwellers were less downtrodden than the rural population, but the towns suffered from the decline of the traditional industries, which at both Tunis and Kairouan provided a living for more than a third of the Muslim population. The craft guilds could not compete with English and French manufactured products. The *chechia* (headgear) industry, which had for many years been the pride of the capital, was a mere shadow of its former self. In the face of competition from fezzes manufactured in Europe, exports from Tunis fell by 75 per cent in ten years.

The economic and financial crisis that adversely affected the native artisans and shopkeepers, however, favoured the rise of a Jewish colony oriented for the most part towards financial dealing. Having only recently been emancipated, the Tunisian Jews were striving to free themselves from the authority and the taxation of the bey by obtaining some protection from abroad. It is true that there were no more than 30,000 Jews in the regency, but half of them lived in Tunis and its suburbs. The Europeans, who were nearly all Maltese or Sicilian, numbered more than

11,000 in 1870, and it was not without anxiety that the bey viewed the development in his capital of foreign colonies over which he had no jurisdiction.⁸

The interior was a zone of transhumance for the nomadic tribes, in which the descendants of the Arabs who had invaded the country from the eleventh century onwards mingled with those of Berber origin who had been arabised to a greater or lesser extent. All these tribes moved fairly regularly according to the season. On the high plateau which stretched to the north of the Tunisian Dorsal, the migrations were on a minor scale: small tribes, fragmented by ancient rivalries, had only small areas at their disposal. On the other hand, on the dry, bare steppe, migrations were on a much larger scale.

The tribes of the High Tell were amongst the most mobile. They were constantly quarrelling with each other, and their reconciliations were only in order to mount a raid into Algerian territory or to resist paying taxes. Their misdeeds kept the frontier zone very insecure and periodically gave rise to difficulties with the French in Algeria. The southern slopes of the Dorsal were the domain of powerful tribes, the Majeur and the Frechich, who were habitually at enmity with their neighbours the Zlass, who camped in the region of Kairouan, and the Hammama, who nomadised in the territory from the centre of Tunisia to the borders of the Djerid.

Opportunities for strife among all these tribes were not infrequent. Raids on herds and arguments about pasture kept alive ancient enmities, which became keener in times of drought. From alliances to coalitions, they were grouped into two *soffs*, Husaynists against Pashists, two factions whose names perpetuated the memory of the civil wars of the eighteenth century.⁹ The hostility of the *soffs* dictated the political geography of the steppe, but this hostility maintained a relative stability in the area, since the two forces were of approximately equal strength.

The bey and his agents played on these rivalries to keep the most turbulent tribes under control, normally supporting the Husaynist faction. Although there was permanent insecurity on

⁸ Tunis at that time had less than 90,000 inhabitants, Kairouan about 15,000, Sousse just over 8,000. In 1870, there were 15,000 Europeans in the Regency, of whom 7,000 were Maltese, nearly 7,000 Italian, 800 French and 300 Greeks.

⁹ The struggle between the bey Ḥusayn, the founder of the dynasty, and his nephew, 'Alī Pasha.

the steppe, at least revolts were infrequent, and usually localised. In Tunisia, there was no dissident area (*bilād al-sibā*) as there was in the mountains of Morocco. The only ungovernable cantons were in the mountain massifs of the Tell, where several Berber confederations, such as the Moghods and the Khrumirs, lived completely independently, ruled by their elected councils.

In the spring of 1864, the bey had been faced with a general insurrection, in which nomads and sedentaries alike arose against the doubling of the *majbā*, poll-tax. The fate of the dynasty had for the moment hung in the balance, but the rebels had not dared to march on the capital. Making use of the traditional enmity between Husaynists and Pashists, the *khaẓnadar* had managed to divide the movement, which had never been very closely knit. The submission of the Zlass and Hammama gave him his chance to crush the insurrection in the early autumn.

With the constitution suspended, Muṣṭafā had returned to traditional methods of government, but the authority of the bey had been greatly undermined by the crisis. Impoverished by the revolt and the subsequent repressive measures, the country groaned beneath the expedients of the prime minister. Bankruptcy was followed in 1867 by the results of a catastrophic harvest: famine and epidemics, with their train of disorder and destitution. After the ravages of cholera, the year 1868 opened with a typhus epidemic which carried off thousands of people.

The *khaẓnadar*, at bay, kept his office only by repeated concessions, finding means of dividing enemies whom he was unable to confront. In the interior, the Zlass and the Hammama took advantage of the toleration of the Bardo, the beylical government, to bring to a triumphant conclusion their old struggles with their enemies. In the capital, Muṣṭafā negotiated with the creditors of the state, trying to play off the Jews against the Europeans, the Italians and the English against the French. He managed to gain two years' grace by his skilful delaying tactics. But confronted by the trenchant attitude of the French government, supported by England, he had to resign himself to the imposition of international supervision of the finances, underlining the bankruptcy of the policies which he had been pursuing for a decade.

Although the *khaẓnadar* was mainly responsible for the crisis, the financial difficulties of the regency could not be laid entirely

at his door. Since the middle of the century, the country had suffered from the effects of European competition, with which it had difficulty in coping. The steady increase in imports from France and England, not paralleled by a similar growth in exports, had necessarily been the cause of a progressive worsening in the balance of payments and a fall in the purchasing power of the currency. The first difficulties had made themselves felt when, following Egypt's example, Aḥmad Bey wanted to equip his army in the European fashion. The upkeep of 10,000 regular soldiers was all the more costly for the bey's treasury, in that all the orders were the object of shameless acts of embezzlement.

The resources of the state were indeed strictly limited: on average it had an annual revenue of 17 to 18 million piastres, the equivalent of 11 million francs. Moreover, this revenue varied from year to year according to the state of the harvest and the degree of success in gathering taxes from the tribes. The principal taxes were the *'ushr* (*achour*), a tithe in kind on cereal production, the *qānūn*, on olive trees and date palms, and the *majbā*, a qualified poll-tax; there were also various other indirect duties and taxes.

It is true that the state had few needs. It left the few services, such as looking after the poor and education, in the hands of the pious foundations, the *ḥabūs* (*habous*). As for roads and bridges, there were virtually none. The taxes were used for the upkeep of the court and the beylical army. The financial administration was periodically thrown into confusion by the flight of some high official, fleeing to Europe with his ill-gotten gains. In 1864, it was the Jew Nessim Samama, the director of finance, who left for France with nearly 20 million piastres. Nine years later, it was the turn of his nephew and successor, who found refuge in Corfu. The prime minister set the tone; he was tolerant of any malversation as long as he was the first to profit from it. However, on the death of Muḥammad Bey in 1859, the national debt did not amount to more than 19 million piastres.

All-powerful during the reign of Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, Muṣṭafā had used this power to play the role of a reforming minister. With the overt aim of modernising the country, he encouraged a policy of public works. Telegraphs were installed, the aqueduct of Carthage was restored. Many orders were placed for equipment to modernise the ill-furnished army. The national debt had risen to about 28 million francs at the beginning of 1862, and the

khaznadar had the idea of raising a loan in Europe. Sharing half the commission with Erlanger, a swindler from Frankfurt recently settled in Paris, in 1863 he floated a loan of 35 million francs on the Paris Bourse, and then another in 1865. On the pretext of paying for government purchases, the money of the Parisian subscribers was soon dissipated in brokerage fees in greasing the palms of intermediaries. Ships, guns, uniforms – all reject stock invoiced at the highest price – uselessly cluttered up the bey's arsenals. But no order was so famous as that for guns 'rifled on the outside', which caused so much merriment among contemporaries.

When the amount produced by the two loans had been squandered, they naturally thought of raising a third loan. In an effort to repay the local debt, immeasurably swollen by innumerable *teskeres* (treasury bonds) that the *khaznadar* issued daily to pay for current expenditure, they decided on a large-scale operation, a loan of 100 million francs which was put in hand by Erlanger in May 1867. But the French investors held aloof from the new operation. The result was bankruptcy.

The intervention of the French government, followed soon after by Great Britain and Italy, resulted in a compromise between the three powers, which imposed a tripartite control of the bey's finances. A nine-member international commission was set up by the beylical decree of 5 July 1869. Its chairman was General Khayr al-Dīn (Khérédine), a Circassian *mamlūk*, the son-in-law of the *khaznadar*, but on bad terms with him. The driving spirit was the French Treasury inspector, Victor Villet, who held the position of vice-chairman. Thanks to the good understanding between Villet and Khayr al-Dīn, the Financial Commission was able to draw up the balance sheet of the Tunisian bankruptcy. The debt had been estimated at 160 million francs, but after all the evidence had been assembled, this was reduced to 125 million francs, and the interest was cut back to 5 per cent per annum. In return, the bey had to yield half his revenue to his creditors until the debt had been completely paid off.

The financial control in effect established a three-fold protectorate over the regency, but the presence of a French official in a key position in the commission underlined the privileged position of France. The personality of the man who came to be called Villet Bey, and his friendly relations with Khayr al-Dīn, did

still more. Thanks to his exceptional authority, France after 1870 kept her credit at the court of Tunis, which, following her defeat in Europe, would otherwise have been impossible.

The war of 1870 dealt a very severe blow to French influence throughout North Africa. Italy, a new power with numerous settlers in the Regency, attempted to take advantage of the war to substitute her own influence for that of her neighbour, but the clumsiness of the Italian representatives played into the hands of the English, represented by Richard Wood, who had been in Tunis for nearly fifteen years.

Helped by his good relations with the *khaznadar*, Wood tried to ensure that the policy that he had always advocated prevailed at the Bardo. In order to put a stop to French ambitions, the bey was to re-establish his former relationship with the Ottoman empire and to recognise the sultan as his overlord, provided that the traditional liberties of the regency were recognised. A mission led by Khayr al-Dīn was sent to Constantinople, and in November 1871 it brought back a *firman* which expressed in legal terms the connection between Tunisia and Turkey. Of its own volition, the Regency of Tunis reverted to the status of a vassal province of the Ottoman empire, but a province whose autonomy was formally guaranteed by the *firman*.

In the interior, Wood tried to increase his country's influence by attracting British companies to the Regency. In 1872, a British company commenced a railway line to Goletta, soon known as the TGM (Tunis–Goulette–Marsa). It also obtained an option for the construction of railway lines in the interior. At the same time, a British bank established itself in Tunis. Unfortunately for Wood, none of these undertakings was successful. The bank closed its doors after three years; a gas company went bankrupt. As for the TGM, it contrived with difficulty to run a railway which was always in deficit. The fall of the *khaznadar* from power in 1873 struck a further blow at the influence that Wood had for so long exercised at the court of the Bardo.

For several years, Muṣṭafā ibn Ismā'īl, whom the *khaznadar* had not succeeded in ousting, had exercised an increasing influence over the mind of the senile ruler. In order to get rid of the prime minister, whose corruption was hindering financial recovery, Villet and Khayr al-Dīn set the favourite against him. Having lost

power, the *kbaznadar* was imprisoned and his goods confiscated. He died five years later in 1878.

His successor was none other than General Khayr al-Dīn, who governed the Regency for four years from October 1873 to July 1877. Owing to his tactful and restorative administration, helped by the return of good years for agriculture, Tunisia experienced a relatively prosperous period. Khayr al-Dīn was anxious to pursue a policy of the 'middle way'. He considered that Tunisian autonomy was guaranteed by the *firman* of 1871: 'the vassalage of Tunisia', he said, 'is a guarantee of its independence. As long as the Turkish empire endures, the tributary or vassal states will have nothing to fear.' In the interior his policy was one of balance: 'The English already have concessions and privileges; let them now be given to the French and the Italians.' Thus, in 1877, he granted a French company the concession for the Medjerda line, a railway line between Tunis and the Algerian frontier. This was a result of the efforts of Théodore Roustan, who had been consul in Tunis since the end of 1874.

Khayr al-Dīn was not popular with the bey, and his policies gave rise to many criticisms. Overthrown in his turn by an intrigue of the favourite, he resigned in July 1877, and retired to Constantinople. The new prime minister, Muṣṭafā ibn Ismā'īl, revived the wasteful and corrupt policies which were the hallmark of the Bardo court.

This situation could have lasted even longer, had not the fate of the regency been decided behind the scenes at the Congress of Berlin in 1877, which brought to a close the three-year-old Balkan crisis, which had begun in 1885. The British, who had secretly arranged for Cyprus to be ceded to them by the sultan, proposed some compensation to the French, so that the balance of power in the Mediterranean could be preserved. 'Prenez Tunis si vous voulez', Salisbury suggested to William Waddington, the French foreign minister, 'Do what you like there. You will be obliged to take it, you cannot leave Carthage in the hands of the barbarians.' These words were soon confirmed by Disraeli, and Bismarck shortly afterwards gave Germany's support.

The British were certainly hoping to kill two birds with one stone, for they hoped that this initiative would ensure France's goodwill in an Egyptian settlement that they had in mind. As for Bismarck, his main aim was to make the French forget the loss

of Alsace–Lorraine. On the other hand, a few months earlier Italy had failed to take advantage of her opportunity by refusing to make common cause with Great Britain in opposing Russian ambitions in the Balkans. In this way, Italy had deeply disappointed Disraeli and helped to bring about a *rapprochement* between Britain and France.

France had thus been given *carte blanche* in Tunisia. But it took her nearly three years to make up her mind to act, three years of hesitation and half-measures before launching herself almost reluctantly into the expedition which obliged the bey to accept the Protectorate treaty. Public opinion in France at that time tended to be hostile to colonial enterprises. People could see no reason for once more resuming the overseas expansionist policies of the Second Empire. There were neither commercial nor demographic reasons for such a course. Moreover, the republican régime was not yet firmly established, so that there was little encouragement to embark on bold enterprises. Even the most ardent hoped to avoid the expense of a military expedition by establishing a protectorate over Tunisia by peaceful means. On two separate occasions Waddington presented proposals to the bey, but they were rejected. In December 1879, Waddington was replaced at the Quai d'Orsay by Charles de Freycinet. These prevarications took up months and even years, while rivalry with Italy was becoming more and more acute.

At Tunis, the French and Italian consuls, Roustan and Macciò, were at daggers drawn over the pursuit of economic concessions. The Italians were helped by the sheer numbers of their settlers; the French had on their side money and the support of Muṣṭafā ibn Ismā'īl, now the power behind the throne at the Bardo. In July 1880, the Italians seemed to win a point by buying out the British TGM company. But a month later, thanks to Muṣṭafā, Roustan obtained from the bey the right for a French company to construct a harbour at Tunis, and also the concession for an entire railway network in the regency. A French bank, the Société Marseillaise de Crédit, bought up the property of General Khayr al-Dīn, and thus became the owner of the domain of Enfida, a province of 96,000 hectares between Sousse and Tunis.

The French policy of economic penetration seemed to be succeeding, but Muṣṭafā, who had hoped to get his hands on Enfida without loosening his purse-strings, quarrelled with

Roustan. Having reconciled himself with Macciò, he made it his business to obstruct all the designs of the French: he prevented the Société Marseillaise from taking possession of Enfida, and delayed the construction of the railway lines for various specious reasons. At Tunis, as in Europe, the situation was getting gradually worse. In Britain, the defeat of the Conservatives in the 1880 elections had once more put the Liberals in office. The Quai d'Orsay was soon made bitterly aware that the Gladstone cabinet was much less well disposed towards France than Disraeli and Salisbury had been.

Nevertheless, in the spring of 1881 the French government decided to act. Brought on by the Enfida crisis and by Italian provocation, the decision taken by the Ferry cabinet was the result of a long campaign waged by Baron de Courcel, the director of political affairs at the Quai d'Orsay. Courcel had long attempted to influence the minister for Foreign Affairs, but Freycinet had resigned without doing anything. Courcel succeeded in convincing his successor, Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, a minister in the Ferry cabinet. But the ministry had no intention of engaging upon an expedition far from home, and Jules Ferry was entirely taken up with educational matters. The date of the elections was approaching, while in the National Assembly the opportunist majority was indifferent or even hostile. But Courcel approached Léon Gambetta and convinced the president of the Chamber of his case. The interview was decisive. With Gambetta's support, Ferry was covered on his left; he therefore made up his mind and acted energetically.

All that remained was to find some pretext for intervention, certainly not a difficult task. For months past, Roustan had been striving to demonstrate this fact. 'Do not doubt that every week we have a *casus belli* on the frontier,' he wrote to Courcel in September 1880; 'it is up to us to make use of it.' At this juncture, a group of Khrumirs appeared on the Algerian frontier. An engagement between French troops and Tunisian tribesmen on 30 and 31 March 1881 gave Roustan the pretext he was waiting for. A last survey of diplomatic opinion showed that Germany was still favourable, Britain hesitant, and Italy isolated and powerless. France was thus free to act as she wished.

On 4 April, Ferry informed the National Assembly of the Tunisian incident. After demonstrating the necessity for a punitive

expedition, he obtained from the Chamber of Deputies a unanimous vote for the military credits of 5 million francs that he had requested. At the end of April 30,000 men invaded the Regency from the west, while a naval squadron landed 8,000 men at Bizerta. As the bey made no attempt at resistance, the Tunisian campaign was merely a military progress. Three weeks' march took the French troops to the gates of Tunis without a fight. In consultation with General Bréard, Roustan presented the bey with a draft protectorate treaty, which was signed at the Bardo on 12 May. Twelve days later, the treaty was unanimously ratified by the Chamber of Deputies.

But even while the expeditionary force was being withdrawn, the French military command was surprised by an insurrection in central and southern Tunisia, which occurred at the end of June. Sfax and Gabes rebelled, and the tribes of the interior took up arms. The Hammama, the Zlass, the Methellith, the Swassi and the Beni Zid gathered under the leadership of the *qa'id* of the Neffat, 'Alī ibn Khalīfa, who was relying on Turkish intervention. To the west, the Majeur, the Frechich and the Oulad Ayar were also on a war footing. The French were forced to campaign during the summer, sending reinforcements of 50,000 men taken from garrisons in France and Algeria. Sfax was bombarded from the sea before being taken by storm by the marines on 26 July.

Finally, Kairouan was occupied without a struggle on 26 October by three military columns converging from Tebessa, Tunis and Sousse. Gabes and Gafsa were taken in November. In their flight from the French, more than 100,000 nomads sought refuge in the Tripolitanian borderlands, placing themselves under the protection of the sultan. Most of them returned very soon, making an act of submission, but there were some groups which held out for nearly three years, and their attack kept that disputed frontier in a state of permanent insecurity.

The Bardo treaty was a copy of previous similar ones. It dealt with the military occupation of the Regency, and the establishment of a resident who would act as intermediary between the French government and the Tunisian authorities, at the same time acting as the bey's foreign minister. In addition to the reorganisation of the country's finances, the supervision by French officials of local administration was also provided for. In the event nothing was

spelt out in detail; the word 'protectorate' did not even appear in the treaty.

After the bey died in 1882, the fate of the Regency immediately became a major concern of French opinion. Was Tunisia to remain a protectorate, or was it to be joined to Algeria as a fourth department? Jules Ferry's point of view prevailed. He preferred to keep the protectorate formula, and France signed the convention of La Marsa on 8 June 1883, which regulated the status with the new bey, 'Alī.

The form the protectorate was to take was determined by Paul Cambon, the resident from 1882 to 1886. The régime rested on the fiction of the absolute power of the bey, a convenient shield concealing the real power of the resident-general. In practice, the bey reigned but did not govern. The resident was not merely the foreign minister, he was by right of office the chairman of the council of ministers. All the administrative services in the Protectorate were under his control, as were the commanders of the land and sea forces. No decree could be promulgated by the bey without his seal of approval. The central government was reduced to its simplest form: a prime minister assisted by a sort of secretary-general adorned with the romantic title of minister of the Pen. Alongside this traditional administration, Cambon created autonomous departments of state, which were entrusted to French officials. At the local level the hierarchy of beylical officials was not altered, but the number of *qā'ids* was reduced to about forty, and their administration was supervised by thirteen *contrôleurs civils* (*district commissioners*). The treaty had not specified representative institutions, but under pressure from the French colony the successors of Cambon from 1891 onwards instituted a consultative assembly based on the example of the Algerian *délégations*.

The important public services in the Regency were organised according to the same principles of economy and respect for tradition. The reform of Muslim justice was an undertaking that would take some time, but as early as 1883 French courts of law were set up for the Europeans. The reorganisation of finance was one of the most urgent tasks, but, before that could be done, the International Commission had to be wound up. This was achieved in 1884, when the old debts were consolidated at 5 per cent and

a new loan at 4 per cent was guaranteed by the French Government. The former taxes were maintained, but the reduction in the rate of interest on the debt, and the establishment of strict control of revenue collection, made it possible to balance the budget. Surplus revenues, which became a regular occurrence, were to be used for a large-scale programme of public works.

State education was organised on the lines then in force in metropolitan France, but private education still attracted many adherents. The Italians provided their own schools, officially recognised by the conventions of 1896. On the other hand, it proved impossible to reform traditional education to any great extent: in the Koranic schools, children still intoned the innumerable suras of the Koran under the rod of the *mu'addab*. Despite its reputation in the Muslim world, the education dispensed by the Great Mosque of the Zituna consisted mainly of learning by rote.

The provision of health care throughout the country was also a long-term project. Doctors and nurses began the struggle against malaria, trachoma and syphilis, and against epidemics such as cholera, typhoid and smallpox, which periodically attacked the native population. With their open drains, and with heaps of rubbish piled up at the gates in their walls, all the towns were permanent breeding-grounds for infection, the capital most of all. In 1910, Tunis had five hospitals and one *institut Pasteur*, but in the interior, health services were still rudimentary. The administration tried to remedy this by providing mobile dispensaries, which made their rounds in the countryside at regular intervals.

There was much to be done in Tunisia in the agricultural domain, but the authorities had no intention of taking this upon themselves. Deliberately eschewing the Algerian policy of official colonisation, they opened the way for individual initiative. But in order to encourage the acquisition of land by Europeans, the extremely complex system of land tenure had to be clarified. Cambon instituted a programme of land registration on the lines of the Torrens Act in Australia. This was the object of the Land Law of 1885, which rendered a general survey unnecessary. Land was cheap. Companies and individuals bought vast estates from the impoverished Tunisian notables. In 1892, in the Sfax area, the

government put up for sale 150,000 hectares of uncultivated land which had become state property. New groves of olive trees were soon planted by the French and Tunisian buyers.

At the end of the century, under pressure from the settlers, who demanded the same advantages as in Algeria, the residency embarked upon a policy of settlement, which until then it had always opposed. Between 1895 and 1900, several settlements were founded in the area round Tunis, a new departure which was soon to arouse the wrath of the local bourgeoisie. As the land under cultivation by French and Italian settlers increased, the production of cereal crops made rapid progress. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was estimated that production had increased by 50 per cent since the establishment of the Protectorate. A vine-growing area had been planted near Tunis, while, the number of olive trees increased from 8 million to 12 million between 1881 and 1913, as a result of the development of plantations in the Sfax region.

The exploitation of the mineral wealth of Tunisia depended on the development of communications. The establishment of a rail network and the development of the ports of Tunis, Sfax and Sousse at the end of the century made it possible to exploit the phosphate deposits. Beginning in 1899, by 1905 the production of phosphates reached 521,000 tonnes. But it was not until 1907 that the iron ore deposits on the Algerian border began to be exploited.

On the eve of the 1914–18 war, Tunisia seemed a prosperous country, and the French could with reason congratulate themselves on their achievements. But this success did not eliminate other difficulties: the problems posed by the presence of a larger Italian community and, in addition, after 1906, the political demands of the Tunisian nationalist movement.

From 1896 on, the Italian community suffered under a French slogan which depicted them as the 'Italian peril', a peril, to speak the truth, as old as the protectorate itself, but of which the French in Tunisia had only become properly aware after the signing of the agreements defining the status of Italians under the regency. For reasons connected with its European policies, the French government, desiring closer relations with Italy, was prepared to extend the privileges granted to Italian subjects settled in the

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Regency by a treaty dating from 1868 which was about to expire. This resulted in the conventions of September 1896, signed by the French foreign minister, Gabriel Hanotaux, and the Italian ambassador in Paris, Count Guiseppe Tornielli. The French refrained from automatically naturalising settlers of Italian extraction as they had done in Algeria since 1889. The Italians could engage in any occupation in Tunisia, including the liberal professions, and Italian diplomas were recognised as the equivalent of French qualifications. Italians had the right to acquire property, to form associations, to provide schools and a grammar school. Hanotaux had paid a high price for the official recognition of the French protectorate by Italy.

These privileges were all the more dangerous in that the Italian community in the regency was a large one. From 15,000 in 1881, its numbers had risen to 71,000 in 1901, three times the size of the French community. The danger would not have been great, had it merely been a question of a mass of Sicilian immigrants driven out of their overpopulated island by poverty and unemployment. But a Jewish bourgeoisie, which had originated in settlement from Leghorn, and which had become wealthy as a result of the financial crisis just before the protectorate was established, offered considerable resistance to gallicisation.

The 1896 agreements gave the Italians in Tunisia the means to create a state within a state. With their primary schools, their grammar school, their hospital, their clubs and their newspapers, they could lead an entirely independent existence without ever departing from their Italian way of life. Some of them had not given up hope of seeing the kingdom of Italy occupy both shores of the straits. For two more generations the Italian question, at times dormant, at times fiercely active, was to remain an insoluble and irritating problem for the French.

MOROCCO

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, Morocco was the only country in Africa, apart from Ethiopia, to preserve its independence. Protected by its mountains, it had remained resolutely closed to foreign influence, despite the proximity of Algeria. The battle of Isly (when, in 1844, in pursuit of 'Abd al-Qādir, a force of 11,000 Frenchmen had routed a Moroccan

army of 30,000) had destroyed the myth of the sultan's military strength, but the country, protected by its isolation and by the rivalries of the great powers, still appeared to foreigners as a mysterious, hostile world.

In many respects the Sharifian empire could be seen as a medieval survival at the gates of a rapidly expanding Europe. A theocratic monarchy, set in its archaic traditions, was trying to maintain its authority over a country one and a half times the size of the British Isles by means as rudimentary as those employed by the first Norman kings. Ever since the time of the Sa'ids, the sultan, both temporal ruler and high priest of Islam, had necessarily to be chosen from a Sharifian family, among the real or supposed descendants of the Prophet. Even more than a sovereign by 'divine right', he was the intercessor between his people and the divinity, sacrosanct in his person, with the gift of *baraka*, the benediction bequeathed to him by his ancestors. As Commander of the Faithful, it was in his name that the prayer was recited in the mosques. For townsfolk and tribesmen alike, he was *sidna*, a revered being whose name could not be invoked without respect and awe.

Since the eighteenth century, power had continued in the hands of the 'Alawid dynasty, whose origins were in Tafilelt. The founder of the dynasty was Rashīd, but it was Ismā'īl, a contemporary of the later Stuarts, to whom it owed its renown. Following him, the dynasty spent years exhausting itself in fratricidal quarrels that occurred periodically as a result of uncertainty in the succession. This danger had not entirely disappeared in the nineteenth century, but by designating their successors during their lifetime, the later sultans managed to avoid the worst troubles. Muḥammad had no difficulty in succeeding his father 'Abd al-Raḥmān in 1859. In 1873, his eldest son, Ḥasan, succeeded to the throne without being seriously challenged. But it was not enough merely to accede to the throne. A sultan could not survive without periodically campaigning in the frontier regions of an empire whose greater part was in a permanent state of dissidence. Although the low-lying area posed fewer problems, the sultan had only a primitive organisation to administer it, the *makhzin*, the result of centuries-old traditions.

The *makhzin*, the central administrative body and the personal household of the sultan, concerned itself equally with the affairs

of the empire and of the ruler, with religious as well as civil or judicial matters. This small administrative body did not even have a fixed seat, since it followed the sovereign about in all his travels. Active sultans were by definition nomadic, and the government was sometimes to be found in a tent, sometimes in one of the imperial cities of Fez, Meknes, Rabat or Marrakesh. However in the nineteenth century, Fez as the usual residence of the sultan, seemed to have achieved the status of the capital city of the empire.

In spite of ideas of modernisation, the *makhzin's* organisation still displayed all the characteristic features of a medieval institution. The council was restricted to about half a dozen people who had the ear of the sultan, court dignitaries whose areas of responsibility were never clearly defined. Their authority was wholly dependent on the pleasure of the sultan who, according to circumstances, could entrust them at will with the most diverse tasks.

The grand vizier acted as head of the central administration, and was the person who worked most closely with the sultan. He was in charge of all matters of state, but was more particularly concerned with relations with the tribes. In this respect, he could be thought of as a minister of the interior. Relations with foreign powers were the province of the vizier of the sea, who thus filled the role of a foreign minister. But the vizier, when not accompanying the sultan on his travels throughout the land, resided at Fez. Therefore, in order to maintain permanent contact with the diplomatic representatives, who were quartered at Tangier, he was represented there by an agent or *nā'ib* who often combined this office with that of *pasha*. Beneath an archaic system of titles, there were also the equivalents of ministers of finance, war and justice. The commander of the sultan's guard and the chamberlain were also highly placed officials in the *makhzin*. The chamberlain was in charge of the internal administration of the palace and held the official seal of the sultan. Since he was in constant touch with the sultan, controlling access to him, he came to play the part of confidant, or even adviser, though he was often of very humble origin, a eunuch or a freed slave.

The ministers had their offices at the palace. But these offices merely consisted of a single room, with rudimentary furnishings, the *banīqa*, which opened off the courtyard of the *mashwar*. There the ministers held audience or dictated their correspondence to

a handful of secretaries. The archives did not amount to more than one or two boxes. When travelling, the entire correspondence of the state was wrapped up in a few handkerchiefs. Apart from one or two traditional gratifications, the remuneration of the ministers was purely symbolic. The grand vizier was given seven doursos a month. Since the office had to support its holder, corruption was the norm in the Sharifian administration. Servants and dignitaries of the palace laid hands on what they wanted, and frequently importuned the visitor by openly begging.

The sultan chose his councillors from rich bourgeois families of Fez, as well as from the leaders of the *makhzin* tribes. But slaves and freed slaves could equally well rise to the highest positions, as was the case with the famous Ba Ahmad, son of a chamberlain, and chamberlain himself, before becoming grand vizier of Sultan 'Abd al-'Azīz. The favour of the prince was unreliable; the rise of a favourite might be rapid, but his fall still more abrupt. Dismissal or summary execution was quite normal at the palace. However, a few important families, the 'Ashrīn, the Gharnit, the Bargash and the Jamā'ī, had managed to stay in power. As so often in despotic régimes, the great offices of state tended to become hereditary. The Gharnit and the Jamā'ī were viziers from father to son, while two families of black slaves monopolised the offices of chamberlain and *qā'id al-mashwar*. At the death of Mawlāy al-Hasan, three of his ministers were Jamā'ī; ten years later, they had been replaced in the favour of 'Abd al-'Azīz by the Gharnit.

The revenues of the Sharifian government came from direct taxation collected by the *qā'ids*: the *'ushr* (*achour*), or tithe on cereals, the *zakāt*, a tax on herds, and a war tax that became permanent, the *nā'iba*, collected either in cash or in kind. The Jews of the interior had to pay a tribute called *jizya*. These regular taxes were periodically augmented by offerings called *hadīya*, which towns and tribes had to grant to the sultan when they acted as hosts during his travels, and also on the occasion of religious and family festivals.

In addition to the demands of the *makhzin*, there were the exactions of those who collected the taxes. The pashas and *qā'ids* who did not receive a regular salary, lived largely at the expense of those they administered. Almost everywhere, a flogging was considered the best method of making the *fallāhīn* pay. These taxes were all the heavier in that they bore unequally on the various

parts of the country. By definition, the dissidents of the mountain areas did not pay taxes to the sultan, but even in *makhzin* territory it was difficult to find anything to tax. Apart from the officially exempt *gish* (*jaysh*) tribes, the *makhzin* personnel, the *shurafā'* (*chorfa*),¹⁰ the *zawiyas* and the majority of the notables found some means or other to be exempt. In fact, the apportionment of taxation followed a feudal system, in which the subjects of the prince were taxed in inverse proportion to their ability to resist. Whereas the weakest and most faithful tribes had to make regular contributions, the *makhzin* had to fight or negotiate every year with the great tented nomads. Although generally speaking the *makhzin* managed in the end to extract a *hadiya* in money or in kind, this periodic tribute was an acknowledgement of a somewhat remote overlordship rather than the payment of a proper tax. From time to time, the sultan despatched a military expedition (*harka*, *haraka*) to the centre or south of the country with the task of gathering in the outstanding amount. The success of the *harka* depended mainly on its military strength, but the nomads knew how to disappear when it suited them. In general, the system was both burdensome and of doubtful utility.

For military matters, the sultans had for long been content with employing irregular forces, whose organisation and equipment had altered little with time. The standing army consisted of no more than 20,000 men supported as necessary by contingents of cavalry sent by the *makhzin* tribes.

The black guards (*abid*) of the Bawākhir (Bouakhar) perpetuated traditions founded in the seventeenth century by Ismā'il but at the end of the nineteenth century, their numbers had fallen to less than four thousand. The most numerous elements in the standing army were taken from the bedouin *gish*, military tribes who in exchange for the services of their men had received concessions of land and exemption from taxation. Having been reorganised many times, the *gish* consisted of the three tribes of the Udaya, the Sheraga and Sherarda. In addition, there were contingents from the large *makhzin* tribes of the south, the Abda, the Uled Ahmar, the Rehamna, the Harbil and the Menabha. The soldiers that they supplied, the *makhzimis*, received their equipment and their horses from the sultan. The more technical tasks, such

¹⁰ Plural of *sharif* (*cherif*).

as the command of the corps of engineers, or the artillery, were entrusted to Christian renegades, who had for the most part escaped from Spanish penal servitude.

These forces had for a long time been adequate to protect Morocco from foreign invasion, but their reputation collapsed at Isly. In 1860, the army was once more cut to pieces by the Spaniards at Castillejos. Following Egypt's example, two sultans, 'Abd al-Rahmān and Muḥammad, undertook the reorganisation of the army on European lines. Ḥasan in his turn developed the *tabors*, regular infantry battalions created after the defeat at Isly. Troops were levied in the main cities of the empire, and arms were bought in Belgium, Germany and England. To officer these forces, which now numbered seven thousand, the sultan could no longer rely on renegades. He sent recruits to be trained in Gibraltar, invited military missions from Europe, and took into his service foreign officers, like the famous Harry Maclean, a Scot who rapidly gained considerable influence at court. In order to lessen his dependence upon supplies from abroad, the sultan had decided to build modern factories supervised by European engineers: at Marrakesh, a cartridge factory founded by Mawlāy Muḥammad; near the imperial palace of Fez, the arms factory of the Makina was founded in 1890. Meanwhile, the traditional contingents from *gish*, increasingly neglected, were gradually restricted to the role of garrison troops in Tangier, Larache, and the four imperial cities.

But the upkeep of a modern army proved a heavy burden for the Sharifan treasury. Rates of pay had to be cut and the level of equipment reduced; worn-out equipment was not replaced. Soldiers began to desert or to sell their arms. Uncared for, the cannons which had been the sultan's pride fell into disrepair. However, there were a few field guns, the equivalent of five or six batteries, which were still maintained to some extent. Every year a detachment of regular troops took them on tour with the *harka*. Despite the proverbial ineptitude of the gunners, they were an indispensable auxiliary in reducing the mud-brick walls of *kasbahs* and *ksurs*.

From time to time, to collect the taxes or to restore order among rebel tribes, a *harka* of several thousand men gathered at the gates of Fez. Normally, the sultan would strengthen the numbers of the irregular troops by adding a few *tabors* and one or two field

batteries. Weighed down by its baggage, the expedition moved slowly, leaving deserters and laggards in its wake. In difficult terrain, lack of order rendered manoeuvres impossible. If they were taken by surprise, the troops had to abandon everything to the enemy. Fortunately, the dissidents normally avoided pitched battles. Military operations consisted of sudden sorties, clashes between groups of foragers, and ambushes laid for isolated groups. But the warfare was pitiless on both sides. The soldiers gave no quarter, and the heads of the victims brought back as trophies were set to rot on the gates of the imperial cities.

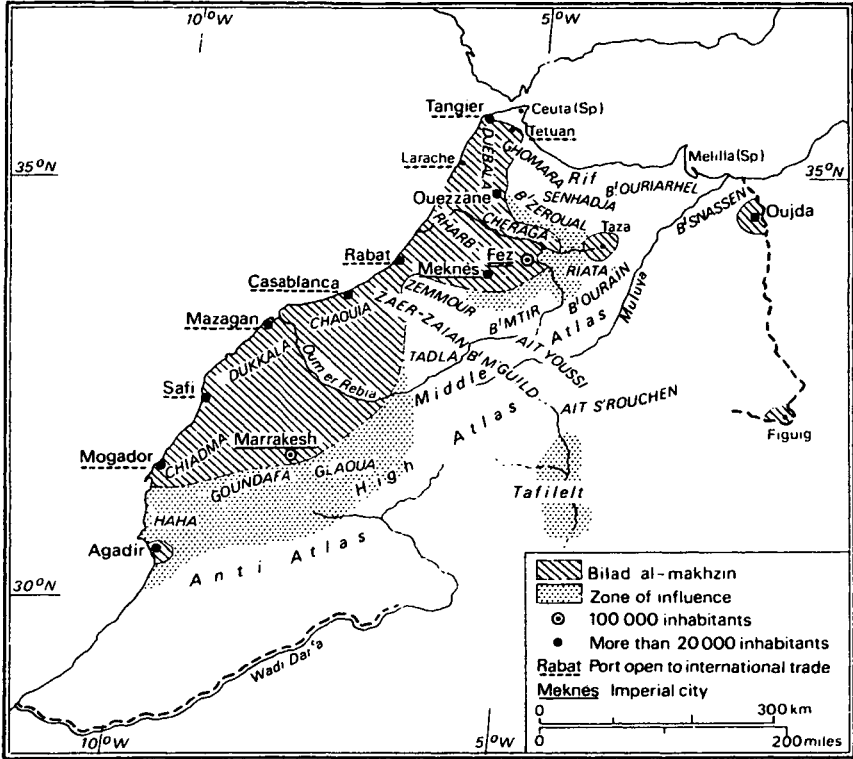
On most occasions, the leader of the expedition tried to negotiate. On the plain, the army lived off the country. Requisitions and raids weakened the tribes, who preferred to make a bargain. For many years the *barka* had not dared to venture into mountainous Berber territory. His artillery notwithstanding, the sultan was in no position to undertake the pacification of the *bilād al-sibā*. But since the dissidents proved incapable of uniting in order to take the offensive, this derisory force succeeded in keeping some sort of order among the tribes of the plains and, helped by fortifications, it was sufficient to secure the *makhzin* against surprise attack.

Bilād al-makhzin and *bilād al-sibā*, the pacified region and the dissident – this was the traditional division in Morocco on which the whole internal organisation of the empire reposed; it had existed since the time of the Saadians, and was to last throughout the 'Alawid dynasty. The boundaries might vary slightly from one year to the next, according to the fortune of a campaign or the success of a rebellion, but in its main lines the division of the country had remained astonishingly stable since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Broadly speaking, the *bilād al-makhzin* corresponded to the region of the plains, the cities, and the areas more or less profoundly arabised. The mountain area was *bilād al-sibā*, a place of refuge where Berber language and tradition were kept alive. The *bilād al-makhzin* covered about a third of the country's area and roughly half of the population (2.5 million out of 5 million), since it covered the most densely populated area.

In the north, between the Rif and the Atlas mountains, were the plains of the Sebou, a vast triangle of land facing the Atlantic from Tangier to Rabat. In this area, the dynasty had its capital,

NORTH AFRICA



8 The Sharifian empire at the beginning of the twentieth century

Fez (with a population of 100,000), which had replaced Meknes, founded by Mawlāy Ismā'il and deserted by his successors. Fez was not just a political and religious centre; with its businessmen and its handicrafts, it was also the economic centre of the empire.

The Atlantic plains, which stretched for more than 400 km between Rabat and Mogador (Chaouia, Dukkala, Abda and Chiadma), were lands that were properly pacified. The development of commercial relations with Europe had favoured the birth or rebirth of Casablanca and Mazagan, encouraged and then discouraged the development of Mogador. The Jews arrived in large numbers, leaving Marrakesh and the *mullabs* of the interior. At the close of the century, they formed almost 25 per cent of the population of the Atlantic ports. At Mogador, they numbered 9,000 out of the 20,000 or so inhabitants at that time.

Thanks to the fidelity of large tribes like the Rehamna, the

interior plateaux as far as the fringes of the Tadla, and the lower slopes of the Atlas, were also *bilād al-makhzin*. In the south, Marrakesh was still the second capital of the empire, even though the dynasty had deserted it in favour of Fez. Owing to the regular trade with the Sahara, it was an important commercial centre, with very active artisanal industries that provided a livelihood for a population estimated at 100,000. The sultan had a palace in Marrakesh, and was normally represented there by one of his sons, who administered the region with the far-reaching powers of a viceroy.

Links between north and south were difficult. Not far from the coast, the Zaer-Zaïan massif and the Zemmour territory were *bilād al-sibā*. The stronghold of Rabat, the strategic position of which was of major importance, was a necessary staging-post for messengers, caravans, and the sultan's armies. Everywhere else the authority of the *makhzin* was uncertain or shaky. The Tafilet was obedient, but its communications with the capital were irregular. The Sousse was still not stable. The great chiefly families of the south, the Mtugga, Gundafa and Glawa, who controlled the passes through the High Atlas, were allies rather than vassals. Since he had been unable to foresee or to prevent the growth of their power, the sultan had granted each of them the title of *qā'id*, which attached them legally to the *makhzin*. But in these areas his authority was theoretical rather than real. As the sultan himself admitted, a new power was emerging, a Berber feudal state which was independent of the *makhzin*, but no longer part of the anonymous dissidence of the *bilād al-sibā*.

The sultan had merely a rudimentary administrative network to keep the country under control. The large towns were subject to the authority of a governor, usually with the title of pasha. The tribes and smaller towns were administered by *qā'ids*, of whom there were about three hundred. Under the *qā'ids* were the shaykhs, district or village chiefs; amongst the nomads, they ruled one or two *douars*, sometimes a whole section of a tribe.

In the most obedient regions, the *qā'ids* were not normally members of the tribes. The sultan chose them from the dignitaries of the *makhzin*. Many of them did not take up residence there, but delegated their powers to a *khalīfa*, whose task was to represent them. In other cases, the sultan granted the appointment either to representatives of important families, or to local chiefs

who had gained some authority. Everywhere administration consisted only of the most elementary tasks. The duty of the *qā'id* was to maintain order and to collect taxes, and if need be to take command of a contingent of cavalry raised in the tribe. Often these offices were sold to the highest bidder, since the appointment was always accompanied by a more or less voluntary distribution of gifts. Moreover, the *qā'ids* saw their functions mainly as a source of revenue, enabling them to live as befitted their rank and to maintain their households. Their greed made all the heavier the load of taxation borne by those whom they administered.

Owing to the extent of their powers, some *qā'ids* became influential figures, but this authority was tempered by the caprice or mistrust of a ruler, who could appoint them or dismiss them at will. Fortunes made too rapidly, or too independent an attitude, could arouse jealousy or suspicion. This was followed by sudden dismissal, often accompanied by prison and the confiscation of goods. Sometimes there was a revolt of a tribe or a section of a tribe that had been too harshly exploited. The *qā'id* was then confined to his *kasbah*, while the rebels pillaged his barns and stole his flocks.

From time to time, the sultan had to move his *qā'ids* around, dividing or deporting rebellious tribes. The brutality of the system was only equalled by its instability. In the event of troubles, or at a time of dynastic crisis, the fidelity of the tribes was as unreliable as the devotion of the *qā'ids*.

Beyond the *bilād al-makhzin*, the *bilād al-sibā* seemed a hostile world, difficult to penetrate, with an area twice as great as that of the pacified territories, an outer Morocco which was totally outside the sultan's authority. Although the boundaries were often fluid, in general they corresponded to linguistic divisions. The *bilād al-sibā* was mainly traditional Berber country: in the north the range of the Rif, with its Mediterranean coastline, and in the south, from the Bou Regreg to Cape Rhir, the vast crescent of high land enclosing the Atlantic plains and plateaux. But although, geographically, the dissident area formed a compact bloc, politically it was completely broken up. Being incapable of forming any kind of federation, the Berbers in their mountains were not able to challenge seriously the central power. Despite its faults, the *makhzin* was the only organised state in the country.

From north to south, three main groups could be distinguished, the people of the Rif, the Beraber and the Chleulis, differing in their origins, their dialects and their traditions. The Rif was inhabited by about thirty tribes who lived in the eastern part of the mountain range. Connected with them were the Trifa and the Banū Snassen on the borders of the Algerian Oranie. A threat to shipping in difficulty along their coasts, these mountain peoples were even more of a threat to the caravans venturing to pass through the Taza gap. On the other hand, the Djebala, to the west between Ouezzane and Tetuan, heavily arabised, had no great difficulty in accepting the authority of the sultan.

The Beraber of the Middle Atlas, settled or semi-nomadic, were the most dangerous of all. Their hostility, which closed the Tadla to the movements of the sultan and his agents, forced the monarch to make lengthy detours along the coast whenever he visited Marrakesh. The tribes were spread over a vast area where they nomadised with their flocks. The Banū Ouaraïn, the Aït Youssi and the Banū M'guild were among the largest, as were the scattered sections of the Aït S'rhoushen. To the west on the plateaux overlooking the Rharb and the Atlantic plain, the Zaer, the Zaïan and the Zemmour were a constant menace. The plain of Meknes did not escape their incursions. Brigands, who made the routes impassable, carried on their activities with impunity right up to the gates of Rabat, where the Zaer regularly came to exact tolls.

The Chleuhs of the south were no readier to submit than the Beraber, but they were less troublesome, as they generally remained on the defensive. Sedentary for the most part, they rarely ventured down to the plain. Withdrawn in their valleys, they were grouped in fortress villages frequently dominated by the fortifications of their *agadirs* or granaries. The Anti-Atlas was totally impenetrable. The oases of the Dar'a and the Dades, populated by Negroes and half-castes, the *haratin*, had fallen under the domination of the Aït Atta, who forced them to pay tribute. On the other hand, in the central part of the High Atlas, the sultan had managed to gain a few advantages. Favours granted to important Berber *qā'ids* enabled him to cross the mountains without fighting. The Gundafa opened the way to Taroudant through the N'fiss valley and the Tizi n'Test; the Glawa did the same for the Dar'a and the Tafilelt via the Tizi n'Telouet. The

Glawi had been rewarded for his good will with the gift of a Krupp cannon from Mawlāy al-Ḥasan. But the progress made by the great chieftains did more to encourage their aspirations towards independence, and nothing to strengthen the authority of the *makhzin*.

The organisation of the Berber tribes perpetuated ancient traditions found from the north to the south of the country under various names, and also in Kabylia. Starting with the *douar* or the village, each social unit also constituted a political unit, organised on more or less democratic lines. *Douars* and villages, cantons and tribes, each had their assembly, the *djemaa*, consisting of the heads of the most important families. Important decisions were taken in council, and their execution was entrusted to an *amghar*, normally elected for one year. But the system naturally tended towards oligarchy, with the most influential families agreeing amongst themselves to run the assembly. From time to time, an ambitious character gained power through cunning and violence. Once he was *amghar* for life, he had merely to fill the *djemaa* with his protégés to wield undivided power. But such despotism was under constant threat from the vengeance of enemies or the betrayal of disappointed supporters.

The *djemaa* governed, or meted out justice, according to custom. When danger threatened, the tribe would occasionally elect a war leader, and if necessary form alliances with neighbouring tribes. But these confederations lacked stability. There was too much rivalry between the tribes for them to bring themselves to form a united front to oppose the schemes of the *makhzin*. The sultan played upon their disagreements to try to win supporters. Tours of pacification were also diplomatic campaigns in the *bilād al-sibā*. But in order to make efficacious use of the short-lived alliances that resulted, the sultan would have required a stronger force, and above all more continuity of action. In vain the army periodically went on campaign in the same regions; the authority of the *makhzin* dissolved as it left the plains, and faded out completely on the lowest mountain slopes.

The Moroccan question suddenly became of vital importance in 1900, because of an internal crisis which arose from a change of régime, and which created a state of anarchy giving the great powers an opportunity to intervene in the country's affairs.

Suddenly dragged out of its ancient isolation, Morocco at once became the object of international greed; a new source of discord for a divided Europe, and a pretext for repeated trials of strength which endangered world peace.

In spite of the country's weakness, the prestige of the 'Alawid dynasty had been maintained as long as Mawlāy al-Ḥasan had lived. Right up to the close of his reign, the old sultan had waged war on the frontiers of his empire. Death took him in 1894, on the way back from an expedition to the Tafilelt. To avoid rebellion, the chamberlain, Ba Aḥmad, prudently concealed the death of the monarch. 'For five days on end, a litter conveyed the imperial corpse, which arrived at Fez in a dreadful state of decomposition.'¹¹ But Ba Aḥmad had already proclaimed one of the sultan's younger sons, 'Abd al-'Azīz, whom his father had designated as his successor. 'Abd al-'Azīz, son of a Circassian slave, Lalla Rekia, had always been one of the sultan's favourite sons, but was only thirteen years old, so that his entourage was left free to act as it thought fit.

With the connivance of Lalla Rekia, Ba Aḥmad in fact seized power. As soon as the sultan was proclaimed, he had himself appointed grand vizier, and cast into prison the Jamā'ī brothers, the ministers of Mawlāy al-Ḥasan, on the pretext that they were plotting against the régime. To replace them, he called in two of his own brothers; one became minister of war and the other took over his old office of chamberlain. This made Ba Aḥmad master of Morocco. He governed as Ḥasan had done, with a mixture of harshness and negotiation, and kept reasonable order in the country. Although he made sure of his own fortune and that of his family he left a well-filled treasury when he died in 1900.

'Abd al-'Azīz was then almost twenty years old. He was old enough to govern, but although he showed a vague desire in that direction, he quickly made it clear how little interest he took in his role as ruler. He did not lack intelligence or willingness, but he was careless and erratic. He was shy in public, and he enjoyed being in a small company of familiars. His entourage took advantage of this weakness to bend him to their will.

On the advice of his mother, 'Abd al-'Azīz took as his vizier the secretary of Ba Aḥmad, Al-Ḥājj Mukhtār, and as his minister for war one of his *mukbaziis*, Mahdī al-Manabhī. The latter

¹¹ Ch.-A. Julien, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1931), 728.

quickly made his mark. In 1901, he engineered the appointment of a vizier who could not stand in his way, Fāḍil Gharnit, a witty, sceptical old man from a great Fez family. From then on, Maḥdī al-Manabhī became 'the all-powerful favourite who flattered and amused his master'.¹²

As 'Abd al-'Azīz had developed a childish fad for all the novelties of Europe, Maḥdī became the sultan's major supplier. He attracted to the court middlemen and commission agents, an entire fauna of adventurers who came to the palace to proclaim the merits of a varied array of shoddy goods. Every afternoon, the sultan received friends and visitors. Among the ranks of the entertainers the foremost place soon went to the *qā'id* Maclean, the Scottish military instructor who had now spent twenty years in the sultan's service. The palace became a vast bazaar in which all sorts of trash piled up at enormous expense: mechanical toys, billiard tables, gramophones, cameras, often thrown away before they had been used. 'The sultan's wives put on silk dresses and plumed hats. Some even had to wear wigs, and on Thursdays, which were rest days for the imperial harem, the younger members began to learn to ride bicycles.'¹³

The whims of the sultan and the liberties he took with the customs of the court soon aroused public opinion against him. At Fez, a way of life so alien to tradition caused indignation. Before long, the sultan was accused of impiety, of despising Muslims and living with Christians. Disquieting rumours spread through the land. Everywhere the tribes, no longer curbed by fear, began to stir. After two years of waste and muddle, money was in short supply at the palace. In order to obtain more, 'Abd al-'Azīz had the idea of replacing the traditional taxes, the *zakāt* and the *'ushr* whose collection gave rise to innumerable abuses, with a new tax, the *tartīb* (*tertīb*), which would be levied on all agricultural resources without exception, arable land, orchards and herds. The introduction and collection of the tax would no longer be the responsibility of the *qā'ids*, but would be entrusted to a special body of *umanā'* (fiscal agents). In exchange, pashas and *qā'ids* would henceforth receive regular salaries.

It was difficult to change long-standing habits. Although excellent in principle, the reform damaged too many vested

¹² E. Aubin, *Le Maroc d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1905), 146.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 167.

interests to be accepted without recrimination. Notables, religious dignitaries, and in general all those who to some degree or other enjoyed exemptions, protested loud and long against fiscal innovations thought to violate the tenets of the Koran. The *qā'ids* and their followers fanned the flames of resentment by attacking the European demands, and accusing the sultan of selling himself to the Christians. To get the reform accepted, an exceptionally energetic sultan would have been needed. But as usual, 'Abd al-'Azīz had already found a new interest. Unconcerned by the news reaching him from the tribes, he allowed the agitation to grow throughout the country.

A marabout from the Zerhoun, Jilālī ibn Idrīs, better known by the soubriquet of Bū Ḥimāra, 'the man with a donkey', took advantage of the circumstances to raise the standard of rebellion. As secretary to one of the sultan's brothers, Jilālī had a few years previously been involved in some rather shady business and been imprisoned for two years. Ever since then he had travelled the country, gaining a reputation for holiness by using his talents as a conjurer. The agitation provoked by the introduction of the *tartīb* was a godsend to him. He preached against the new tax, passing himself off as an elder brother of the sultan, who had been denied the throne. The Riata of the Innaouen accepted his claim, and acclaimed him as *sharif*. Everywhere in the country, tribes were in a state of revolt or refusing to pay the tax. The Berbers took advantage of the inactivity of the *makhzin*, and descended upon the plains. The Aīt Youssi pillaged the *kasbah* at Sefrou, while the Zemmour attacked the *sūq* (market) at Meknes. Meanwhile Bū Ḥimāra, fortified by the adherence of the Riata, settled in Taza, making it his capital. At his call, the whole of eastern Morocco rebelled. Oujda came over to his side in 1903, together with all the tribes of the lower Muluya.

'Abd al-'Azīz finally made up his mind to leave Marrakesh, which had been his residence for several years. He sent Maḥdī al-Manabhī to fight Bū Ḥimāra, but the imperial army scattered ignominiously. This failure caused the fall of the favourite, and he had to resign and go into exile. With bolder tactics, Bū Ḥimāra could have taken Fez, but he was not capable of organising a proper army. The disparate bands of soldiers that followed him were good for nothing but pillaging and fighting among themselves. Neither side was strong enough to win a victory. As the

civil war dragged on, it degenerated into a monotonous series of razzias, while the little authority that the *makhzin* still enjoyed was gradually dissipated.

The disaggregation of the Moroccan empire made it an easy prey for the foreigner. In France, as in Algeria, it awakened long-standing ambitions aimed at the southern Sahara. As in the case of Tunisia, twenty years earlier, the increasing number of incidents along an ill-defined frontier provided France with a pretext for intervention. In 1901 and 1902, the French foreign minister, Théophile Delcassé, forced the sultan to sign agreements concerning the boundaries between Algeria and Morocco. Apart from delineating the frontier, these agreements made provision for the setting-up by France of an administration to police the border and set up customs posts. The pacification of the area was entrusted to Colonel Lyautey, who soon extended French influence to the banks of the Muluya.

‘Abd al-‘Azīz was obliged to seek foreign loans. Faced by the worsening financial situation, he would sooner or later have to make political concessions. But the Quai d’Orsay could not remain indifferent to the rival ambitions of the other Great Powers. Great Britain was keeping a close watch on the area around the Straits of Gibraltar. Spain, with a toehold in the *presidios* of Ceuta and Melilla, was intent on having her share of the Sharifian empire. Germany, which was carving out a place for itself in the Moroccan market, had recently begun to cast envious glances at the Atlantic coast.

The diplomatic campaign waged by Delcassé achieved its aim in 1904. The agreements of 8 April, which brought to an end many long years of colonial rivalry with England, settled the Moroccan question by means of a *quid pro quo* arrangement between the two powers. France would not stand in the way of British supremacy in Egypt, as long as England gave France a free hand in Morocco, with certain reservations about commercial concessions and the neutralisation of the zone of Tangier.

Six months later, Delcassé made a treaty with Spain, based on the partition of the country. In addition to a Saharan zone south of the Dar‘a, the agreements of 6 October 1904 recognised as Spanish a narrow coastal strip stretching from the Atlantic to the mouth of the Muluya, together with Tetuan and Larache. But,

as a concession to England, Tangier was to be given the status of an international city.

The dénouement seemed imminent. In January 1905, Delcassé sent a diplomatic mission to Fez, with the task of inviting the sultan to 'restore order in his empire with the help of France'. It is true that the question of a protectorate was not formally raised in the French proposals. But 'Abd al-'Azīz could have no illusions on that score. If he accepted, that was the end of his independence. The overt intervention of Germany, added to the Russian defeat in the Far East, brought about an international crisis. The Tangier *coup*, William II's visit to Morocco on 31 March 1905 forced the French to negotiate. After the resignation of Delcassé, who was blamed for the crisis, the government agreed to participate in the international conference that Morocco and Germany had proposed, and which met in the small Spanish town of Algeciras on 16 January 1906. For three months, the discussions concentrated on the policing of the Sharifian empire. It was the aim of France to obtain a 'mandate' from Europe, a mandate which she would share with Spain. On the other hand, Germany preferred the idea of an international police force run by Belgian, Swiss or Dutch officers. But the United States and Italy accepted the French proposal, which was also supported by England and Russia. Germany was isolated, with Austria as her only ally, and even Austria advised compromise. Finally the German foreign minister, Prince von Bülow, had to yield.

The final act of the conference, on 7 April 1906, was to leave to France and Spain the organisation of law and order in the Moroccan ports, with, as a concession to the Germans, the theoretical supervision of a Swiss inspector-general who was to reside in Tangier. The officers of the police force were to be French at Rabat, Mazagan, Safi and Mogador, Spanish in Tetuan and Larache, and mixed in Casablanca and Tangier. In addition, the procedure for the allocation of contracts for public works was defined; a state bank with the power of issuing money was to be set up, in which the powers would have equal shares. In fact, Germany had been forced to accept the French proposals which she had hoped to defeat. France had obtained *de facto* the predominant influence in Morocco. But this dominant position had strict limits set by the Algeciras agreements. By inter-

nationalising the Moroccan question, Germany had succeeded in putting considerable obstacles in the path of her rival. There could be no question of a protectorate in the immediate future. The Moroccan affair was far from settled, and Germany was still able to intervene at will, should France ever act imprudently.

THE SAHARAN REGIONS

In order to protect their Algerian possessions, the French were gradually led to use the regular troops at their disposal to conquer one by one the oases of the northern Sahara. Mistress of the high plateaux since 1848, the *armée d'Afrique* was confronting the desert from which from time to time devastating raids erupted. Laghouat and Biskra had been occupied first of all, then Ghardaïa, Wargla and Tuggurt in 1853 and 1854. Fortified posts were spread along this frontier, controlling the main water holes. But the system was both costly and disappointing. It immobilised garrisons, which had to be supplied at great expense, and did nothing to prevent the incursions of the nomads.

The massacre of the mission led by Colonel Flatters by the Tuareg in 1881 had put an end to hopes of any peaceful penetration of the Saharan heartland. Plans for a railway line from Algiers to Timbuktu, which had fascinated French opinion for some years, were adjourned *sine die*. In the west, the French were held back by the Bou Amama uprising in the southern Oranie, and the idea of a punitive expedition against the Tuareg, which had already been indefinitely adjourned, was finally abandoned. The establishment of a protectorate over the Regency of Tunis did little to alter the main elements of the problem.

The Turks were having the same difficulties in the eastern Sahara. Although the sultan claimed that his sovereignty extended to the shores of Lake Chad, the authority of his governors was restricted almost entirely to a narrow coastal belt in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

For many years, Tripoli had been a semi-independent state, one of the three Barbary regencies governed by the Karamanli dynasty. But in 1835 a Turkish expedition had restored the direct rule of the Sublime Porte. The country had been divided into two provinces or *vilayets* ruled from Constantinople. But the duties of

the *valis* were virtually sinecures. The Ottoman governors confined themselves to the administration of the coastal oases, exercising a distant protectorate over the Fezzan. The great Saharan nomads fought each other unhindered in the desert. Only the main religious brotherhoods had any real authority, particularly the Sanūsiyya, which had grown up since the mid-nineteenth century. In fact, over the greater part of the Sahara, from Borku to the Atlantic, authority was mainly in the hands of the chiefs of tiny tribes scattered over an immense area. Everywhere, the nomads had reduced the population of the oases to a state of semi-slavery.

Although they were all to some extent of mixed blood, Tuareg, Moors and Tubu thought of themselves as white, or *biḍān*. The Tuareg, Berbers who were superficially islamised, dominated the central mountain massifs. They were divided into three confederations, the most powerful being that of the Ahaggar (Hoggar) and the Ajjer. Warriors wearing the *lithām* (veil), armed with poor rifles, they charged the enemy with their barbed iron lances and their shields of antelope hide.

To the west of the Tanezrouft, all the lands which stretched from the Senegal to the Wadi Dar'a were the zone of transhumance of the Moors. The most formidable were the Reguibat, arabised Berbers who had long since given up the rosary of the marabout for the warrior's rifle. Indefatigable pillagers, they were the terror of the whole of Mauretania from Cape Juby to Timbuktu.

The settled peoples of the oases were Negroes or half-castes, the descendants of Sudanese slaves, sometimes of freed slaves, the *haratin*, who were forced to cultivate the land for their masters. The date palm, associated with the production of vegetables, was the only source of wealth of the oases. Reduced to the condition of share-croppers in the over-populated oases, most of the settled population had scarcely enough to provide their most elementary needs. The mining of salt at Taodeni, Bilma and Borku was merely a supplementary source of income, as were the tolls levied on the caravans which still ventured into the great desert. Chronic undernourishment, periodically aggravated by seasonal famines – such was the common lot of the Saharans, whether sedentary or nomadic.

The twentieth century history of the Sahara opened on 29 December 1899 and 2 April 1900 with two events which had been expected for decades, the taking

of In Salah by the Chaamba *goum* of Captain Pein, and the conquest of Chad by the forces of Commandant Lamy, who was killed in the same battle as his adversary Rabah.¹⁴

In fact, after long hesitation, the French in the end made up their minds to undertake the conquest of the Sahara, which was seen as the keystone of their African possessions. The only means by which the French could reach the nomads, and force them to fight a pitched battle, was to enlist native Saharan, traditionally accustomed to exhausting marches through the desert. France was able to recruit such auxiliaries amongst the Chaamba Arabs, the sworn enemies of the Moors and the Tuareg. In a few years, the expedition of the Chaamba, who had been organised by Commandant Laperrine into Saharan companies, gave France a third of the Sahara.

The victory of Tit in May 1902, won by the *goum* of Lieutenant Cottenest, quickly entailed the submission of the Ahaggar Tuareg. The Chaamba then attacked the Ajjer, and their raids then threatened the Turkish oases of Ghat and Ghadames. Only the orders of the French government then prevented the conquest of the Tripolitanian hinterland, an area that had come into the Italian sphere as a result of the 1900 and 1902 agreements.

In April 1904, Laperrine joined up with the forces from French West Africa, which were organised on the same lines as his Saharan companies. There still remained the task of occupying Borku and Tibesti in the east, and above all of subduing the Moorish tribes of the west. Tripolitania was becoming ever smaller as a result of the encroachments of the French and the British, but from now on the Turkish officers put up a resistance which was supported by the Sanūsiyya, who had reconciled themselves with the sultan in the face of the common enemy.

At the beginning of the century, the French Sahara covered more than 4 million square kilometres, taking into account the areas which had not yet been pacified. The greatest part had been divided between Algeria (Territoires du Sud, 2,171,000 sq. km), and French West Africa, but French Equatorial Africa also possessed its Saharan annexes, as did Tunisia. It was still difficult to evaluate the population of recently pacified areas. Nevertheless it was estimated that this population could not amount to more

¹⁴ A. Martel, in *L'Afrique au XXe siècle* by J. Ganiage and H. Deschamps (Paris, 1966), 272.

than a million inhabitants, of whom 450,000 were in the Algerian south.

But in the opinion of the geographers, this kingdom of sand, sun and wind was of virtually no economic value, even as a means of access to the Sudan. The mirage of a great caravan trade had faded. The French had dealt this trade a mortal blow by forbidding the traffic in slaves. Both by value and by weight, the trade between the Maghrib and the Sudan was insignificant, perhaps a thousand tonnes and not much more than 600,000 francs a year. Most of it consisted of loads of sugar, coffee, tea, and a few spices.

Of what use was it to evoke once more the dream of a trans-Saharan railway, that would be the main artery of a unified French Africa? Maybe the military would find a use for it; but from an economic point of view, what was the point of a line laid down at great expense across 1,600 km of desert? Ever since routes into the interior had been pioneered in the direction of the Sudan, it was still Dakar and the ports of the Gulf of Guinea which attracted the major part of the trade of French West Africa.

CHAPTER 4

WESTERN AFRICA, 1870–1886

One may have doubts about the appositeness of treating the fifteen or sixteen years between 1870 and 1886 as a phase in the evolution of West Africa. These dates are significant only in the context of the beginning of the colonial era, by which 90 per cent of the area was still untouched at the end of our period. It could be said that the decline in Saharan trade, the growth in imports of European products and increased production of export crops, foretold the imminent end of free Africa, by making certain areas dependent on the world market. But, as Lord Salisbury pointed out, before 1880 no one in Europe was aware of this, let alone anyone in the savannas of the Sudan. It is only with hindsight that we see these things as premonitory signs.

The same applies to the date of 1870, even in the perspectives of colonisation. It is clear to us today that the upsetting of the balance of power in Europe as a result of the Franco-Prussian war acted as a catalyst of economic and social evolution, impelling Europe to occupy Africa, by taking advantage of its technological superiority. But nobody foresaw this at the time, and in fact 1870 opened a period of colonial retrenchment. It was only after 1875, with the Belgian and French activities on the lower Congo, followed by those of the French on the upper Niger, that the imperialist advance began; and the reluctance of Great Britain in this respect is well known. On the other hand 1885/86 is a much clearer dividing line, coming after the Berlin Conference, which had tried to limit the damage caused by an attack of imperialist fever that nobody had predicted. They did not yet realise that the whole of Africa was about to be engulfed in colonialism, but a sort of truce had been initiated – Hargreaves' 'loaded pause', which would be followed after 1890 by the final stage of the scramble for Africa.

The object of this chapter is not however to study the dynamics of the partition of Africa, but rather those of African societies still

FROM SENEGAMBIA TO THE RIVERS OF GUINEA

in control of their own fate, at least in appearance. And here it must be admitted that it is difficult to deal with so vast an area for such a short period. Indigenous African history, which still dominated most of the arena, moved at a slower rhythm than the history of the colonial advance. It is only in Senegambia, on the upper Niger, and among the Asante and the Yoruba, that major developments can be seen as the direct or indirect result of growing European pressure. Elsewhere, the balance brought about by the revolutions of the preceding period was either stable or else changing only slowly.

In an area stretching from the Atlantic to the central Sudan and from the Gulf of Guinea to the fringes of the Sahara, it is hard to find a single general direction before the colonial partition, which occurred ten or fifteen years later. In this vast area, with its huge diversity of environment and cultural traditions, a thematic study is precluded, so each section of the area will be dealt with in turn. Since the fundamental unity of the effects of European economic and political action is to be treated in other chapters, we can here only study its unequal effects, sector by sector, on societies which were then subject to a range of different historical processes. Some coastal areas apart, these sectors must be determined in line with the organic realities of traditional Africa; they must not be shaped to fit the arbitrary frontiers that colonialism was about to draw across the continent. We shall therefore look first at the zone of acculturation, stretching around the coast from Senegambia to the Bay of Biafra; next at the immediate hinterland which, from the upper Niger to the Volta, was open to influences from both the coast and the Sudan; and finally at the great belt of the Sudan itself, from the Senegal to Wadai, where events still seemed to move at the traditional pace. Within this framework we shall endeavour to keep within the chronological limits set for the chapter; sometimes, however, if justice is to be done to the natural flow of events, there will have to be excursions beyond these limits.

FROM THE SENEGAMBIA TO THE RIVERS OF GUINEA

Senegambia occupies a unique position in Africa, for it is the only region in which the ancient acculturation zone of the Sahara cuts across the much more recent one of the sea coast, subjected to

the corrosive influence of the Europeans. Here more than elsewhere, this influence was limited by the strong cultural tradition of the Sudan, which included Islam. As an easy outlet from the Sudan, thanks to the two great rivers to which it owes its name, which are blocked by rapids only at a considerable distance from the sea, this area very early attracted firmly based European settlement. The colonies of Senegal and Sierra Leone were at this time the biggest in tropical Africa, with those of the Gold Coast and Lagos coming a poor second. The smaller settlements of Gambia and Portuguese Guinea lay between them. From the time of General Faidherbe, Senegal ceased to be a mere trading station and became a true colony. Walo, annexed in 1855, provided more scope to St Louis, a charming little town like those of the West Indies, clustered on its island around the governor's palace. Along the Senegal river as far as Bakel, French posts were set up to supervise the river traffic and its landing places: It was the route into the Sudan, whose vast cities, described by Barth, had haunted the colonial imagination since the time of Faidherbe.

Further south, opposite Gorée, the port of Dakar was beginning to develop, along with Rufisque, as the main outlet for the groundnuts of Cayor. The annexation of Ndiander together with the outpost of Thies created an unbroken stretch of territory under French control. Further south still, on the Petite Côte and the Salum, only isolated forts protected the landing places of Portudal, Joal and Kaolack. Casamance, cut off by the Gambia, will be dealt with later.

With at least 30,000 inhabitants, Senegal was no ordinary colony. Three towns, St Louis, Gorée and Dakar, had been electing municipal councils since 1872. Rufisque made a fourth, and the inhabitants, the 'originaires', had the status of French citizens. After 1879 the citizens elected a deputy to the French National Assembly and a conseil-général for the colony, which made life difficult for the governor. At first the deputies were former governors or white businessmen, but the celebrated ethnic group of 'mulattoes' of St Louis was, despite its small numbers, already playing a role similar to that of the Creoles in Sierra Leone. Their strength lay in their bilingualism and their acclimatisation.

The annexed territory was divided into cantons, grouped into 'circles', under civilian or military administrators, following the

Algerian system introduced by Faidherbe. Already the economy was dependent largely on the production of groundnuts; the hides and rubber that were brought from up-river were now of little significance. The nuts were exported in their shells, since the French government had put a prohibitive tax on the import of oil into France, thus delaying for half a century the birth of a local industry. Exports in 1882 amounted to 83,000 tons, but the total declined to 21,700 tons in 1886, owing to the slump of 1883 and to competition from India. Camel caravans took the groundnuts to the Petite Côte, where they were delivered to the merchants of four large firms, mostly from Bordeaux: Maurel et Prom, Maurel Frères, Buhon et Tesseire, and CSCO (later CFAO). These firms maintained eighteen trading stations in the territory, the more important being at Rufisque, Joal, Fatick and Foundiaoune, near Kaolack. The river was ceasing to be an economic lifeline, just as it was about to become the axis for the conquest of the Sudan.

The large trading companies controlled the chamber of commerce, and were opposed to territorial expansion, fearing that the trade routes would be upset. Steam navigation, however, had reduced the cost of the import-export trade, thus making it possible for small businessmen, including many mulattoes, to participate. Some of these were also officials, who formed a radical republican group, inspiring lively, critical newspapers. Filled with patriotic fervour, they supported conquest. Although there might be argument about an advance into the Sudan, there was none at all about the conquest of nearby lands. These were the great groundnut-producing areas, which were thus part of the world market, even before they lost their political independence. In order to facilitate their operations the trading companies demanded a railway line from Dakar to St Louis, crossing the very productive area of Cayor.

And yet at the beginning of our period, this extension of the annexed area was not inevitable. Successive military governors respected their instructions, which, after 1870, forbade military adventures. Colonel François-Xavier Valière ruined his reputation by his strict obedience to these orders from 1869 to 1876. The imperialistic atmosphere was such that Louis Brière de l'Isle was able to take the offensive on all fronts from 1876 to 1881, followed less enthusiastically by H. P. Canard, who had once served at St

‘The map which appears here in the printed edition has been removed for ease of use and now appears as an additional resource on the chapter overview page’.

Louis as a simple *spahi* (trooper), and more actively by the first civilian governors, René Servatius (1882–3) and A. Seignac-Lesseps (1884–6). From 1859 onwards, the local commander of Gorée controlled all the southern parts as far as the Rivers of Guinea in the modern Guinea Republic. As the growth of the groundnut trade attracted interest to this coast, this command was extended southwards and became increasingly autonomous. The semi-autonomous territory of Rivières du Sud, established in 1882, now stretched only from Salum (Kaolack) to Benti, and was governed by Dr Jean Bayol. In 1884 it reached no further than Casamance in the north, but in 1886 it was extended to include the trading posts of the Côte d’Or (i.e. the modern Ivory Coast), which had been separated from Gabon.

The period of retrenchment coincided with that in which Senegal was faced with the persistent efforts of militant Tijāni Islam to supplant the old forms of animism, which in places still had some life left in them, but lacked the unity to confront colonisation. In the Wolof and Serer lands from the Senegal to the Gambia, a very productive area for groundnuts, the death of Maabu Jaaxu, who had been killed in the Siin in 1867, had weakened the Tijāni offensive. His Serer conqueror, the *bur Sine* (*mad-i-Sinik*) Kumba Ndofen Juf, tried to control the merchants of Joal, only to be assassinated by one of them, Beccaria, in 1871. He was succeeded by the brutal Sanumon Fay, who in 1887 signed a protectorate treaty with Captain Reybaud, but was killed the following year by Semu Mak Juf (1878–82). The death of this last *mad* was followed by a long civil war, one side being supported by the Tijāni of Nioro and the other by the animists of Salum. The animists won, under Mbake Mak and Mak deb Njay (1887–98), in whose time the French administration was established. The other Serer kingdom, Salum, which had been almost destroyed by Maaba, was rebuilt by Faaxa Fal (1864–71) with the support of the French post at Kaolack. Sajoka Mboj (1874–79) helped Semu Mak to come to power. Subsequently Gedel Mboj (1879–94) breathed new life into animism, and in 1882 started to take the south away from the Tijāni. The Muslims kept only the eastern part of the area.

Pushed back from the Rip to Nioro, the Muslims remained strong as far as the banks of the Gambia. Mamu Ndari, who succeeded his brother Maaba, soon came under the influence of

his nephew Saer Mati (Said Mathi), a fierce warrior, who in 1877 incited him to make war on Biram Sisa, who had been Maaba's lieutenant, but was now becoming too independent. Niany and Wuli, higher up the Gambia, were at this time beyond Mamu's reach, but Fodi Kabba came to the assistance of the Tijāni from Casamance. Having refused Bayol's advances in 1884, Saer Mati entered into negotiations with the Gambia in 1887, but his continual raids as far as the Senegal and a new attack on Salum exhausted the patience of the French, and in 1887 they destroyed Nioro. Saer Mati fled to Bathurst a few months before the occupation of Niani and Wuli on the upper Gambia by Gallieni in his pursuit of Mamadu Lamine.

While the heirs of Maaba were managing to hold their own in the south, his former partisans had seriously upset the Wolof territories, whose importance for the French lay in their position between Dakar and St Louis. In 1869 Lat Dior, the former *damel* of Cayor, had returned to his native land as a district chief with Valière's agreement. At first he allied himself with Amadu Madiyu Ba (Amadu Sheku), a religious warrior who was gaining control of Toro (the downstream part of Futa) on the lower Senegal, and expelled the *bur* of Jolof in 1870.

In 1871 Lat Dior was once more recognised as *damel*. He then turned against Amadu, who was killed with French help in 1875. The *damel* installed his nephew Alhuri N'Diaye the legitimate heir, as *bur*, leaving Bra, the brother of Amadu, to conduct guerrilla warfare until his death in 1881. In 1877 the *damel*, like many of his ancestors, was recognised as *tegne* of Baol. Lat Dior appeared to be collaborating with the French, but in reality he was engaged on a profound transformation of the country, which was being integrated into the world market through the trade in groundnuts. To establish a united front against the Europeans he imposed Tijāni Islam, which abolished the barriers between classes and castes. In his entourage, and then in Alhuri's, was the brother of Aḥmad Bamba who later founded the Mouridiyya brotherhood. In 1879, however, he had to sign a treaty with Brière de l'Isle allowing the Dakar–St Louis railway line to cross Cayor, although in 1882 he opposed the start of the construction. Driven out by the French, he fled to Baol and the puppet *damels* who succeeded him, including his nephew Samba Laobe, allowed the construction to proceed. With the help of Alhuri, however, Lat

Dior continued with guerrilla warfare, and when Samba Laobe was killed by the French in 1886, he returned in force. After his death on 26 October 1886, Cayor was annexed and divided into six cantons. Playing a double game, Alhuri held on in Jolof until 1890, and then went to join Aḥmad b. ‘Umar at Nioro. He went eastwards with him and died on the borders of Sokoto in 1899. The Wolof had thus lost their independence and their warrior aristocracy just when they were entering into Islam and the colonial era. Groundnut cultivation, with its tendency towards monoculture, was to upset completely their economic and social structures. This process was already well under way when the Dakar–St Louis railway was opened on 7 July 1885.

In the north of Senegal, river traffic in 1870 seemed to assure the prosperity of St Louis, even though it may have decreased in relative importance. Though Faidherbe had driven away the Moors, the Tukolor living on the river banks were unaccommodating and impeded the river traffic from Bakel. Walo seemed under control, despite the regrets of the district chief, the heir of the *brak*, and Toro appeared secure after the death of Amadu Madiya, but the upper Futa was now dominated by the powerful figure of a maker of *almamis*, Abdul Bokar Kan. In a land which had lost 20 per cent of its population at the call of al-Ḥājj ‘Umar, and whose young men were still emigrating to Nioro, this aristocrat from Bosea had taken the lead in combating such suicidal mysticism. After eliminating his rival, Tierno Brahin, in 1869, he then had to contend with the Wan family, in particular Ibra Almami, but on the upper reaches of the river his power was now unchallenged. He engaged in ceaseless intrigues with the French, whom he supported against Lat Dior and Mamadu Lamine, but when forced to choose in 1890, he sheltered Alhuri and took to the bush, only to be assassinated the following year by the Moors.

Beyond Futa the Soninke (Sarakule) territory of Bakel – which was already much under French influence, providing many *laptots* (crew men on river boats) – appeared to be well under control. But it was there that Mamadu Lamine, on his return from a long pilgrimage to Mecca followed by imprisonment by Aḥmad at Segou, posed a threat to colonial power by appealing to the young and the uprooted. After getting on good terms with the French, he raised troops on the pretext of fighting the pagans of the

south, seized Bundu, which was allied to the French, and attacked the river port of Bakel in February 1886. Frey then interrupted his campaign against Samory and forced Mamadu Lamine back towards the upper Gambia, where, pursued by Gallieni, he died in November 1887.

To the north of the Senegal, nobody had yet thought of occupying the desert country from which the Moors had fled. The latter's relations with St Louis were defined by the 1868 treaties, and consolidated by subsidies paid to them from there. Their great negotiator, Shaykh Siddya, had died in 1868 at Butilimit and his descendants did not have the same influence. When the Emir of Trarza, Ali Ould Mohammad al-Habib, died in 1886, he was succeeded by Ahmad Fall, who was accused of having designs on Walo. In 1887 with the support of the French, he was killed and replaced by Amar Salum, who was to see the creation of the colony of Mauritania twelve years later.

Thus the territorial extent of Senegal was being determined between 1880 and 1890, at the time when the colony was used as a base for the conquest of the French Sudan. It is within this context, linked to the economic and social transformation of the country, that there spread the Tijāniyya brotherhood, which had been formed to Islamise the pagans still outside the European world. The birth of the Mouridiyya marked the acceptance of this new situation.

The British Gambia, an isolated dependency of Sierra Leone, was not as insignificant as might be thought. Restricted mainly to the islands of Banjul, the site of the capital Bathurst, and MacCarthy Island further up the river, the oldest British colony in Africa was inhabited by a group of Creoles from Sierra Leone, who were motivated by intense patriotism. The opposition to the exchange of the territory for the French trading posts of the Gulf of Guinea, abandoned for the first time in 1876, came from them. But it was then that the country, already an outlet from the Sudan and for the gold from Bambuk, took on fresh importance with the groundnut trade. These were in fact produced on French territory, but the British customs duties favoured the trading companies at Bathurst, some of which were French. Lacking both men and means, however, the British officials were not able even to control the 'ceded mile' on the north bank of the river. Except when a warship was in port, they were unable to intervene in the

marabout wars, the Islamic movement that was destroying the animist structures of Senegambia. On the north bank they were confronted by Maaba's Tijāni and by Saer Mati, whose end in 1887 has been described.

Next door to Bathurst, the pagan Malinke kingdom of Kombo had been in a state of revolution since 1854, as a result of the activities of a reformer of Tukolor origin, Fodi Kabba Ture of Gunjur. His brother Fodi Silla, who succeeded him about 1868, became master of Kombo after taking the capital, Brikama, in 1874. It needed joint action by the British and French to relieve Bathurst by eliminating him in 1894. But in 1870, much higher up on the south bank, another power appeared, the Malinke chief Fodi Kabba Dumbia, whose story can only be studied in relation to that of Casamance. Gray confused these two Fodi Kabbas, who were totally unconnected,¹ and it is strange that all anglophone historians have persisted in this error to this day.

We return to the rhythm of Senegalese history if we now study Casamance, that isolated dependency of Senegal to the south of the Gambia, with a river which, although navigable, cannot be used as an outlet from the Sudan, since its whole course lies within the forest zone. In 1870 the French possessed two posts there: Carabane was established downstream among the Diola (Djola), an animist society of sturdy rice-growers without rulers; Sedhiou, up-river among Malinke who were in the process of islamisation, was separated from Carabane by the old Portuguese *presidio* of Ziguinchor in Banhun territory. Open to some European trade but fiercely independent, it was only slowly and gradually that the Diola were brought under control, particularly between 1888, with the Seliki affair, and 1900, with some resistance continuing as late as 1914.

From 1882, until the Berlin Conference, the Portuguese attempts to consolidate their hold led to increasing clashes with the French. The treaty of 12 May 1886 ceded Ziguinchor to France in exchange for Rio Cassini, further to the south. After the transfer in April 1888, Zinguinchor at first remained a separate village, becoming the capital of Lower Casamance only in the twentieth century.

Up-river all the land as far as the Gambia belonged to Kabu, the centre of which was further south (in Guinea Bissau), and

¹ J. M. Gray, *A history of the Gambia* (Cambridge, 1940).

which had almost entirely absorbed the old *Banhun* population. However this great *Malinke* state had just collapsed as a result of the attacks of *Futa Jalon*, coupled with the revolt of its *Fulani* minority. Its last king had perished in the fall of the capital *Kansala* in 1867. Vanquished and oppressed in the east, the *Malinke* fell back towards the centre, around *Sedhiou*, where the French authorities were trying to control trade and prevent attacks on the pagan *Balante*. *Sunkari Kamara*, chief of *Buje* (in the territory of *Sedhiou*), a brave but brutal man, then organised opposition to the French. On two occasions, in 1872 and 1881–2, he vainly attacked the French post at *Sedhiou*. He was finally crushed by Commandant *Dodds*, sent from *St Louis*, to whom the *Malinke* surrendered. *Sunkari* surrendered in 1887.

Sunkari had obtained assistance from *Fodi Kabba*, a member of a family from *Bundu* settled in *Jimara* on the south bank of the *Gambia*. As an early ally of the *Tijāni* of the *Rip*, *Fodi Kabba* gathered together in the name of Islam the *Malinke* who were threatened with destruction by the *Fulani*. Therefore *Alfa Mollo* captured his residence at *Kerewane* and massacred his family in 1871. *Fodi Kabba* regrouped further to the west in *Pakao* and in 1876, with the help of *Sunkari*, broke the *Fulani* offensive. He then moved to *Kiang*, lower down from the *Gambia*, whence from 1878 onwards he set out to vanquish the *Diola* of *Fonyi* and convert them to Islam. Thus he built up a domain, half *Malinke*, half *Diola*, astride the *Senegal–Gambia* frontier that was to be drawn in 1890. By his cunning he was able to hold out there at *Madina* until eliminated by the French in 1901. Other *Diola*, settled more to the west, in particular the *Jugur* and the *Kalunay*, were to be attacked by *Ibrahim Njay*, a merchant from *St Louis*, between 1884 and 1888. Finally, he was disposed of by the joint efforts of the French and *Fodi Silla*.

However, it was in upper *Casamance* that the most profound changes took place. A *Fulani* of slave origin, *Mollo Ege*, soon to be *Alfa Mollo*, who had been converted to the *Tijāniyya* by *al-Hājj ‘Umar*, took part in the siege of *Kansala* in 1867. On his return home, in *Firdu*, he launched a general revolt of the strong *Fulani* minority, and easily overcame the *Malinke* who now lacked the support of *Kabu*. Cut off in the west by *Fodi Kabba*, he set up a powerful and dynamic new state stretching from the *Gambia* to *Rio Geba* (in *Guinea Bissau*), supported in the south by the

Fulani of Futa Jalon to whom Alfa Mollo remained faithful all his life. From his capital Hamdallahi, the conqueror established an extremely centralised despotic government, striving successfully to ‘fulanise’ the vanquished Malinke. After his death in 1881 his son, Musa Mollo, broke with Futa Jalon, and in order to overcome the opposition aroused by this policy, he allied himself to the French, with whom he signed a protectorate treaty in 1883. In 1887 he crossed the Gambia to help them to eliminate Mamadu Lamine. However, enraged by the cessation of the south of his domain to the Portuguese, he broke with France in 1903 and went to spend the rest of his days in the Gambia. For fifteen years he had enjoyed a semi-independent status, wielding, virtually unchecked, a harsh and at times despotic power.

The colony of Senegal was in the final stages of being constituted between 1885 and 1890, but the same cannot be said of Portuguese Guinea further south. At first there were only a few sleepy trading posts, such as Cacheu and Bissau, with no measure of autonomy, since they were under the direct rule of the governor of the Cape Verde Islands. Moreover the English had occupied Bulama from 1858 to 1868, only handing it back after arbitration by President Grant of the United States. The fact that this territory was inhabited by a long-established population of half-castes, who had made Portuguese creole the lingua-franca all the way from Petite Côte to Sierra Leone, made no difference to its lack of economic and social significance. Worried by the activities of the French, the Portuguese, in March 1879, made Guinea into a colony separate from Cape Verde and moved its capital from Bissau to Bulama. With poor, but relatively numerous troops, the governors, Agostinho Coelho (1879–81), Pedro Ignacio Gouveia (1881–4), and F. Paulo Gomes Barbosa (1884–7), engaged in increasing military activity, usually with disastrous results – in 1881–2 against the Beafades, in 1884 at Cacheu, in 1886 against the Beafades once more. Their only success was in 1886, when Lieutenant Geraldès repulsed Musa Mollo from the Rio Geba. The treaty of 1886, redefined in 1905, fixed the frontiers of the territory, but it took many more difficult years before the Portuguese made themselves masters of it, a process not completed until 1907–15.

From Rio Nunez to the Melakori a series of French trading posts formed the major part of the domain of the Rivières du Sud,

the first nucleus of French Guinea. The French at Boke, first occupied in 1866, had difficulty in controlling the Landuma and especially the Nalu (the wars of Dina Salifu taking place from 1884 onwards). Boffa, occupied at the same date, could not stop the 'war of the half-castes' from laying waste the Rio Pongo from 1865 to 1870. The Koba war was to follow from 1880 to 1888. In Melakori, the post at Benti had been built in 1867 with the aim of blocking the influence of Sierra Leone, which since 1819 had been in possession of the Los islands right in the middle of the area. This explains why the French initially gave up Kalum and Dubreka.

In this region, where a clandestine slave trade had continued for a long time and in which British influence was preponderant, the rapid growth of the groundnut industry attracted Senegalese traders, who thus found themselves in conflict with those of Freetown. In 1878 the occupation of Melakori by Sir Samuel Rowe, governor of Sierra Leone, greatly increased the tension, but the convention of June 1882 provided the basis for the Franco-British frontier. However the coastal minorities, in particular the Baga and Mmani, found it difficult to stand up to the pressure of the Susu, who had been absorbing them for centuries, while Islamic trade from the Upper Niger was slowly eroding the animist traditions. It is impossible to detail here the complex conflicts for power and trade in which, for lack of military means, the French were helpless bystanders. In Melakori two Ture lineages, the Maliguists and the Bukarists, were engaged in endless civil war for the title of *almami* of Morea. This war broke out again from 1878 to 1882, and it was only temporarily checked by the Samorians between 1884 and 1887.

Dr Bayol, the lieutenant-governor of the Rivières du Sud from 1882, was faced in 1884 with the German attempt on Dubreka led by Gustav Nachtigal. Bayol reacted immediately by securing the occupation of Conakry in July 1885, but the following year the death of Bale Demba, the king of Kalum, was to unleash hostilities which lasted until 1888. The colony of the Rivières du Sud was separated from Senegal in August 1889; this led to the delineation of its frontiers in 1890, the British recognising its right to extend its borders to the Niger, encircling Sierra Leone.

The importance attached to the Rivières du Sud was not only due to the known wealth of this troubled coast, but to the

proximity of the important Fulani state of Futa Jalon, for which Boke and Boffa were the outlets, and which France intended to absorb into her sphere at the expense of the over-hesitant British. In Futa Jalon the biennial alternation between the Alfaya and Soraya groups at Timbo was now effected with reasonable regularity. The former were represented by the *almamis* Sori Dara (1841–73) and Amadu (1873–90), the latter by Umaru (1840–72) and Ibrahima Sori Dongol Fella (1872–89). However there were attempted coups d'état in 1875 and 1880. The era of conquest was over, except in Kabu, a domain in the hands of the great lords of the north, the *alfa-mo-labe*. However there was still a threat towards the Upper Niger from the schismatic and revolutionary Hubbu, and it was in attacking their fortress, Boketto, that Ibrahima Sori Dara was killed in 1873. In order to dispose of them Samory had to be called in 1884, following his arrival on the eastern frontier of the country.

Now stabilised, the Fulani aristocracy left religious culture largely in the hands of the Diakhanke minority. Greedy for slaves, this aristocracy procured them by selling livestock to the Samorians, and continued to enrich itself by its control of the trade routes leading to the Rivers Coast and Sierra Leone. Its main aim therefore was to eschew all risks, with the result that it thought it prudent to welcome the Europeans who were now pushing at the gates of its country, albeit without trusting them entirely. In June 1880 the *almami* signed a treaty of friendship with Dr V. S. Gouldsbury, the administrator of the Gambia. He thought he was doing the same in June 1881 with Dr Bayol, but the text of this treaty was skilfully worded to justify French claims to a protectorate, which was recognised by the British in the treaty of 1890. The fate of the Fulani state was thus sealed without its knowledge, a fate very easily confirmed by arms in 1896.

FROM SIERRA LEONE TO THE BANDAMA

The cautious policies imposed from London had lost for the British the priority which was theirs as a result of the powerful colony of Sierra Leone at the southern end of the Rivières du Sud. Together with neighbouring Liberia, it was the cradle of anglophone culture in West Africa, which was to play a decisive role not only in the establishment of British colonialism, but also

in the birth of African nationalism. Repatriates from America and slaves liberated by the British fleet had already fused to form the ethnic group known as Creoles, with only the Aku still speaking Yoruba and at times practising Islam. By this time, after three generations, a vernacular, Krio, had developed, together with a culture founded on Victorian respectability as viewed by the main Protestant denominations. The Creoles sent their children to Britain for further education, and had already produced remarkable intellectuals, doctors, lawyers or churchmen, of whom the most famous were J. Africanus Horton, Sir Samuel Lewis and Bishop Crowther. In the 'white man's grave' that Sierra Leone then was, they soon filled the highest positions around the small European staff surrounding the governor. They were filled with loyalty to the Crown and wanted British domination extended to bring civilisation to their 'barbarian' brothers. They expected to be the means whereby this would be achieved, and it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the quinine and the racialism which accompanied the setting up of the colonial era showed them their error. It was through their agency that the first modern intellectuals were to arise in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, and through them that links were established with the American Negroes, then only just emancipated, thus preparing the way for the great Pan-African movement.

They were less racially mixed than the 'mulattoes' of St Louis and more numerous, and even the poorest of them had the trading instinct. Since the northern routes running from Freetown and Futa Jalon to the upper Niger were in the hands of the Malinke (Mande), the Diakhanke or the Dyula, it was the forests of the south, the lands of the Mende, as far as the Liberian frontier, that were opened up to European products by small-scale Creole traders. On the border between the groundnut and palm-oil areas, the colony was also open towards the upper Niger, from which came the cattle and the ivory and the gold from Bure. The effect of the world depression was very severe in 1875 and 1883, when palm-oil and groundnut prices collapsed.

Freetown and St Louis, clustered around their Christian cathedrals, were the only modern towns in West Africa. As a base for the British fleet, a coaling station, a telegraph post and a port of call on the regular Elder Dempster line from Liverpool, Freetown was after 1866 the seat of the governor in charge of

all the British West African territories from the Gambia to Lagos. Military and civilian governors alternated: the authoritarian Major A. Kennedy from 1868 to 1872 was unpopular with the Creoles, who however adored the Irishman, J. Pope Hennessy (1872-73). G. H. Kortwright (1875-7) was succeeded from 1887 to 1881, and again from 1885 to 1888, by an activist military doctor, the formidable Sir Samuel Rowe, whose two terms of office were separated by that of Captain A. E. Havelock (1881-4).

These governors never at any time took measures for the evacuation of West Africa, as recommended by the parliamentary commission of 1865. Egged on by the Creoles, they dreamed of extending the colony by further annexations along the coast, so that its financial problems could be ended by the establishment of a single customs régime, and then extending it towards the Niger to open up the Sudan to its trade. But their ambitions were not realised, for during this period London was opposed to any expansion. The main lines of the frontier with French territory were drawn up in 1882. In the same year the frontier with Liberia was also determined, when, despite the protests of Monrovia, Havelock occupied Sulima on the river Mano. Thus, juridically, the country consisted only of the peninsula and a few coastal stations. The former British sphere of influence in the Rivières du Sud had been abandoned to the French. Beyond the peninsula, the British acted only by diplomatic means, the garrison having recourse to arms only as a last resort, never occupying the territory of those whom they had defeated in battle.

As in the case of the Guinea rivers, there is no space here to consider the complex struggles between the Susu, Loko, Bulom, Temne and Mende people. These derived from the expansive tendencies of some ethnic groups, such as that of the Temne at the expense of the Loko, or that of the Mende, whose vanguard, the Kpa, only reached the area around the Colony after 1850, or from attempts to control Freetown's trade routes, or from struggles for power. From 1875 onwards Gbanya, the powerful chief of the Kpa, intervened in the civil war between the Caulkers, the half-caste chiefs of the Bulom of Shenge. Rowe had Gbanya flogged and his Caulker ally hanged. Further to the north, other Mende, the Yoni, were attempting from 1878 to advance to the

Rokel. Later they attacked Koya near the Colony and made an alliance with the Caulkers. The Freetown garrison forced them to make peace in 1887, by force of arms. From 1880 until the end of the century, Gbanya's widow, the famous Madam Yoko, ruled the Kpa in close collaboration with the governor.

But the Sudanese dream directed men's minds towards the north, an area which experienced great upheavals at the end of the period. It was in 1884 that Langaman Fali, the leader of the Samorian army in the west, captured Falaba in Sulimana and conquered the Limba, while Dauda's mission appeared in Freetown in January 1885. Close commercial relations, based on the sale of modern arms, were established between Freetown and the Samorians, which were to last until 1887, when the great revolt of the Dyula empire divided the two parties. Then the Samorians led astray the Creoles with their dreams of a Sudanese empire for the British. This explains the mission of Major Festing, who died in 1888 on his return from Sikasso, wrongly convinced that Samory had not pledged himself to the French.

In spite of the failure of its wider ambitions on account of pressure from London, the colony of Sierra Leone enjoyed considerable prestige, whereas neighbouring Liberia had a bad reputation even though it was independent. This however, is to reflect back into the past the sorry situation of the Liberian Republic at the beginning of the twentieth century, for it must be admitted that the first generations of Liberians, isolated and with very few means, nevertheless accomplished much. The country at that time consisted of a few coastal enclaves with no more than 30,000 inhabitants (of whom half were Afro-Americans), who participated in the anglophone culture and provided a stimulus for the Pan-African movement. They produced remarkable personalities, such as the educationalist, Edward Wilmot Blyden, who was born in the Danish West Indies and divided his career between Monrovia and Freetown. The Afro-Americans were often traders, but their activity was on a small scale, for the route into the Sudan, from Monrovia and along the St Paul river towards Konyan, was not as easy one. It was to this area, Samory's homeland, that Benjamin Anderson, the secretary of the Treasury, made his way on two occasions, in 1868 and 1874, on the initiative of President James Spriggs Payne

(1868–70) and President Joseph Jenkins Roberts (1848–56 and 1872–8). After him the chapter of Liberian exploration was closed until the twentieth century.

It was at this time that the half-caste element which had brought progress to the colony and expressed itself through the Republican party was definitively ousted from power by the Negroes, who were poorer and supported the True Whig Party. The first Whig President, Ed. James Roye, was however, the richest merchant in the country. Anxious to build a railway line, he floated a loan on the London stock market and was accused of corruption. He was further accused of dictatorial tendencies for having his term of office extended from two to four years, and was deposed and assassinated. The founding father, Roberts, a very light coloured half-caste, restored order. Nevertheless, with Anthony W. Gardiner (1878–83), who resigned following the arbitrary British action on the frontier, and his successor, Hilary R. Johnson, the Whigs ensured the continuation of Negro supremacy.

The Afro-Americans suffered considerably in the 1875 depression and withdrew into themselves in fear in the face of the native population, whom they considered to be barbarians. In 1875 Roberts came into conflict with the Protestant churchmen, whom he accused of giving too much education to the Africans. From 1873 onwards he clashed with the nationalistic opposition of the acculturated native Africans of Maryland (Harper to Cape Palmas) who proclaimed the Grebo Reunited Kingdom, invoking a precedent from 1834. These Christians complained that they had been deprived of their lands and their brokerage rights by the Liberian colonists. They inflicted a crushing defeat on the Liberian militia, and it needed the direct intervention of the *USS Alaska* in 1876 to bring them under the control of the government. Grebo nationalism, which was to produce the prophet Harris, continued to take to arms until 1915.

The treaties of 1886 and 1892 with the British, and 1895 with France, would confirm the Liberian boundaries with Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast, but recognise Monrovia rights over the hinterland as far as Konyan. These rights were ceded to French Guinea in 1911. But the hinterland was not to be occupied until the twentieth century. We cannot here trace the 'Brownian Movement' of the clan groupings which can be discerned at the

FROM THE BANDAMA TO THE VOLTA

end of the nineteenth century. The Kran (Gere) and the Gio (Dan) continued their advances towards the sea from what is now Ivory Coast territory. Near Monrovia the Gola kept their hold on the Malinke enclaves of Kondo and Boporo. However after 1883 Samory was extending his power into Loma territory (Toma) in the north, and his traders visited Monrovia. This military threat was soon to become stronger at the expense of the Gola who looked to the government for support.

At this time the southern coast of Liberia and the western part of the present Ivory Coast were inhabited by the 'Krumen' who went on board ships as deck crew to do the heavy work on merchant shipping during their stay in the tropics. They learned to adapt to steam navigation and were to be found from Freetown to the Congo. Up to the Bandama, Kru-speaking clans had little to do with maritime trade, since the Neyo of Sassandra were insisting on their right to the brokerage on their rivers. Some clans removed up river as far as Soubre. However, in the interior, nearer to the savanna, this inward-looking clan society witnessed the birth of markets. The trade in kola for the Malinke of Seguela was taken over by the Zebouo women from the Daloa region, whose social status was thereby enhanced. Thus this old trade from hand to hand was linked to the long-established Sudanese network.

FROM THE BANDAMA TO THE VOLTA

To the east of the Bandama, the Akan peoples had a tradition of close connections with the outside world, which made them very different from their Kru neighbours. On the Bandama estuary and further to the east, between the lagoon and the sea, two related peoples, the Avikam and the Alagya (Alladians), had set themselves up as brokers for the palm-oil producers of the interior. They maintained regular links with the Liverpool ships that travelled along the coast. A considerable proportion of the population spoke English, and it was at this time that their great men constructed the multi-storied houses, the ruins of which still amaze the visitor. Their monopoly of the middleman trade had been strengthened by the French withdrawal: since 1871 Chief Aby of Grand Jack had been arresting on the lagoon the steamers from Bassam which were attempting to buy their oil directly from the Ajukru.

Of the two rivers, navigable on their lower reaches, which provide a route northwards, the Bandama had been completely blocked by the Baule since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Tiassale, up river from the navigable reach, did not allow middlemen higher upstream, and beyond that point trade was carried on from hand to hand (exchanging salt for gold, ivory or cloth), the only kind of trade which the Baule would tolerate. Although monarchical in theory, in practice their lineages governed themselves. Remarkably prolific and good at assimilating other peoples, they were only now fully populating the wide savanna of the 'Baule reach' that they had first occupied in the eighteenth century. The empty lands to the south had just been occupied by the Aitu, and production had started at the gold mines of Kokumbo. Trade was carried on mainly through the barter of luxuries, without any cash changing hands, and markets were unknown. These made their appearance in the extreme north after 1904 to barter yams for the slaves of Samory.

There was considerable traffic on the second river, the Comoe, navigable as far as Bettye, even though it passed through difficult forest country. This was because the Dyula of Kong were keen to develop trade down-river. The area was occupied by organised Akan kingdoms, the Agni of Ndenye, Bettye and Sanwi, the Abure of Bonwa and Moosou, while the estuary of the river belonged in principle to the French stations of the Côte d'Or (i.e. the modern Ivory Coast), whose exchange for the Gambia was under consideration. France withdrew from Grand Bassam and Assinie in January 1871, and henceforth the French presence was limited to the visits of warships and agents of the merchant A. Verdier of La Rochelle, who in 1872 was appointed 'Guardian of the Flag'. In 1878 he obtained the title of 'resident'. This obnoxious character, whose only aim was to use nationalism to further his own affairs, envisaging a monopoly, was less interested in trade than in plantations and the exploitation of timber. After 1878 he neglected Bassam in favour of Assinie and the Abylagoon, planting coffee at Abima. His British rival, Swanzy, stuck to trade and tried to establish direct links with the Asante, but he was hindered by difficulties of navigation on the Comoe, mainly due to the kings of Bonwa. However Dyula caravans did reach the coast, coming from Kong or Bonduku, and thus from the Abron kingdom, and crossing the Ndenye. In Sanwi, the old king

Amon Ndufu (1844–86), was ending his reign at Krinjabo on good terms with Verdier, whose only merit was to represent a French presence that was weak and useless. This period came to an end in February 1885 with the arrival of the resident Charles Bour, who received a cool welcome from Verdier and was quickly replaced by his agent, Treich Laplène, and finally in 1886 with the transfer of the trading stations, which hitherto had been dependent on Gabon, to the Rivières du Sud under Bayol. In 1889, following Binger's journey, this tiny possession was to gain importance as a maritime outlet from the Sudan.

Populated by the same ethnic groups, however, the British colony of Gold Coast was very much more important, even though it was still a dependency of Sierra Leone, whence many Creoles such as Horton had migrated. Under their influence and that of the Protestant missions, the Fante and the Ga from the coastal area, who had been trading with the outside world for centuries, began to modernise. They were soon to produce remarkable intellectuals, such as Mensah Sarbah, make contact with the American Negroes and join the Pan-African movement. As early as the 1860s they were critical of the British government, whom they accused of giving them insufficient protection against the Asante, who in the 1860s were renewing their military efforts to gain direct access to the coast.

One of the British problems was their inability to find revenue from customs duties, the problem being that their coastal forts were interspersed with Dutch ones. In 1867, therefore, they were glad to conclude an agreement with the Dutch whereby forts were to be exchanged so that the Dutch held forts only on the western half of the Gold Coast and the British only on the eastern half. This arrangement broke down, however, because of resistance to the transfer from some of the Fante on whose lands the forts were situated. Two consequences followed. First, the Dutch decided to withdraw altogether from the Gold Coast, and in April 1874 the Dutch forts were taken over by the British. Secondly, Fante intellectuals, objecting to the neglect of their interests by the Europeans and wary of British intentions, attempted to set up a modern state, the so-called Fante Confederation, which, without breaking with Britain, had independence as its eventual aim. With its king-president installed in the religious centre of Mankesim, its three successive constitutions, and its bureaucratic administra-

tion, the confederation ended in failure, due to British intransigence, prompted by hostility to these 'black intellectuals', and the military threat posed by the Asante. In May 1873, with war going on, the confederation was dissolved to make way for the new Colony of the Gold Coast. In 1869 the Ga too, but with less success, had sketched out a constitution for an 'Accra Native Confederation'. In 1873 the *asantebene*, whose forces had been engaged in military excursions on both sides of the Volta since 1869, launched a large army against the Fante. Disraeli's Tory government then decided to respond by sending a strong expedition under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley. The Asante were decisively beaten, and Kumasi was occupied in February 1874. In accordance with instructions, the town was immediately evacuated, and a peace treaty was hastily signed on 12 February at Fomena, on the way back to base.

It was then, from July 1874 onwards, that the Gold Coast was finally separated from Sierra Leone and established as an autonomous colony, controlling Lagos as well until 1886. Now that security had been restored, political stability ensured the rapid development of education and the economy (palm oil and gold mines) under its governors, G. S. Strahan (1874-6), S. Freeling (1876-8), Sir Samuel Rowe (1881-4), and W. Brandford-Griffith (1885-9). The development of the Fante was accelerated. The capital was transferred from Cape Coast to Accra. In this first phase of imperialist advance, men like Rowe and Brandford-Griffith were anxious to extend the territory, as Fante opinion demanded, but were firmly prevented from doing so by London. This explains the ambiguity of their policy as regards the Asante. Since they were not allowed to annex the country, they feared that the weakened Asante Confederation might regain its strength, and so they spent their efforts in dividing it. But this created serious disturbances harmful to trade, creating the wish that the Asante might be strong enough to maintain order in the interior. In 1874 their confederation was in ruins. All their Brong allies to the east and north had defected, as had their vassals in Gonja, Dagomba, Abron (Bonduku), and Ndenye. Even one of the member states, Juaben, had seceded. Kofi Karikari, *asantebene* since 1867, was destooled and replaced in September by Mensa Bonsu. Juaben was recaptured, followed by Adansi in 1879, and to calm the fears of the British, the *asantebene* sent the golden axe to Accra in 1881.

FROM THE VOLTA TO THE NIGER

Captain Lonsdale's visit to Kumasi the following year did not prevent another outbreak of trouble. Mensa Bonsu was overthrown in 1883, but his successor Kwaku Dua died immediately. The Asante chiefs were then unable to agree on a successor and an interregnum of four years followed before the election of Prempeh in March 1888.

FROM THE VOLTA TO THE NIGER

To the east of the Volta, the domain of the Aja was not homogeneous, for despite a deeper unity of culture, the great kingdoms of the east (Dahomey, Porto Novo) differed from the petty chieftancies in the west, in Ewe territory. However in this area bigger political units had emerged, notably on the coast, the Anlo along the Volta and the Gē (Mina) kingdom of Glididji, overshadowed by the commercial towns of Porto Seguro, Agwe and especially Anecho, dominated by the very acculturated dynasty of the Lawsons. When in 1874 the British occupied Keta to the east of the Volta, they had established control over the Anlo, whose alliance with the Asante was a cause for concern. In their estimation they had natural rights over the other Ewe further to the east, but once more their priority was to be eliminated by prohibitions from London.

Since 1860, and especially since 1868, French and German establishments (Régis and Fabre from Marseilles, Vietor from Bremen) had had trading stations at Bey (Lome), Porto Seguro, and Grand Popo. Khadjovi, the chief of Anecho beach, had in 1882 signed a commercial treaty with the Germans. This treaty was endangered the following year, when the death of the king caused a serious crisis. The struggle was won by the ally of the British, William Lawson, who had one of his relatives proclaimed king, but the German ship *Sophia* immediately arrested him, confirmed the treaty and carried away hostages to Germany. These hostages asked the Kaiser to establish a protectorate over the country. Returning on the *Möwe* in the company of Consul Nachtigal, the hostages arrived at Anecho on 2 July 1884, just when the British district commissioner at Keta had incited Lawson to drive the Germans out. The protectorate was proclaimed that very day, then at Lome on the 5th, where it was recognised by Mlapa, the chief of the Togo community. Lawson

adhered to it, and the German merchant, Henri Randad, was appointed provisional consul. He installed himself at Baguida. However the colony was not properly organised until after the Berlin Conference, when Ernst von Falkenthal, the imperial commissioner, negotiated the Togo frontiers with Great Britain and France. By this unforeseen intrusion Germany had inserted its presence between the British Gold Coast and Dahomey, long the object of French attention. In response to Nachtigal's action, the latter had in July 1883 proclaimed their protectorate from Grand Popo to Porto Seguro, of which after Berlin they kept only Grand Popo and Agwe, arbitrarily split off from Anecho. The major aim of these isolated positions was to keep the Germans away from Dahomey. They only became important after the fall of Abomey, whose territory separated them from Porto Novo, the main area of interest for the French.

The small kingdom of Porto Novo (Hogbonu) had rejected French protection in 1864, but Régis had considerable economic interests there. However the influence of Lagos was preponderant, and was strengthened by the presence of the Revd T. J. Marshall, a Yoruba pastor. The British could not easily surrender this position at the end of the Lagos lagoon, since it would permit the Egba of Abeokuta to trade outside their control, as the Asante did at Assinie. Mekpon (king of Porto Novo 1864–72), although hostile to France, had nevertheless persecuted the Protestants, so that he was deported and exiled to Abeokuta. His successor, Mesi (1872–4), was on the other hand pro-British, persecuting the Yoruba. On his death the French party took control with Tofa (1874–1908). He immediately expelled Marshall, but was soon confronted by British intervention. In 1879 the coastal part of the kingdom seceded, and the British occupied Ketonou and the channels leading to Cotonou. Threatened with a blockade, Porto Novo recalled the French, who installed a guardian of the flag at Cotonou in 1882, and re-established their protectorate over the kingdom on 25 July 1883. It was to be administered under Gabon until 1886, then under the Rivières du Sud. Colonel Dorat, the resident, then took energetic measures against the friends of the British, and at the beginning of 1885, following the Berlin Act, Lagos evacuated all its positions, in return for the renunciation by Porto Novo of its claims in the east. The Franco-British frontier was drawn in 1889. Porto Novo was a nuisance to Lagos,

but the principal aim of the French was to surround the powerful kingdom of Abomey, and force it to surrender Cotonu, the only means of access to Porto Novo apart from Lagos.

Dahomey (Danhome), which had reached its peak in the time of Gezo, had difficulty in adapting to the suppression of the slave trade, which ended about 1865, and during the reign of Glele (1859–89) withdrew into conservative policies. After 1875 the ageing king yielded the reality of power to his son, the *vidabo* Kondo, the future Behanzin. The latter was ambitious and energetic, and immediately provoked a crisis by arresting the agent of Swazzy at Whydah, thus causing the British fleet to blockade the port in 1877. After Régis's agent had agreed to pay the fine, the grateful Kondo permitted the signing in 1878 of the Treaty of Whydah, apparently renewing the 1868 cession of Cotonu. This was certainly a misunderstanding, as Dahomey merely intended to cede a commercial depot, without yielding sovereignty as the French claimed. As the only convenient outlet for Porto Novo, Cotonu was effectively occupied in 1882, but the agents of Dahomey were not expelled, so that this difference of interpretation was not immediately obvious.

Whydah (Glehove), the residence of the *chacha* and the *yevogan*, 'the minister for the white man', was the only centre of European activity, with French and British firms, Catholic missionaries and a Portuguese fort. The Governor of São Tomé, J. de Souza, anxious to establish the rights of Portugal in the follow-up to Berlin, obtained in August 1885 – with the complicity of the *chacha* – the signature of a treaty setting up what he saw as a Portuguese protectorate over Dahomey. When, as a result of French protests, Kondo realised what was happening, he had the *chacha* arrested, and presumably executed, and in March 1887 broke off relations with the Portuguese envoy. In December Lisbon officially renounced its claims.

Once it had been deprived of the slave trade, this military state tried to turn its energies to the export of palm oil, with the result that the use of European goods became more widespread. The king maintained his superiority by working vast plantations through the labour of slaves who could no longer be exported, but who continued to be captured each year during the dry season. Military activity did not cease; it was directed year after year against Middle Togo (Atakpame in 1877), the Mahi and especially

the Yoruba. This met with failure at Abeokuta in 1873, but the first destruction of Ketu took place in 1883, and the final one in 1886. Kondo was politically conservative and thus was unable to end the practice of human sacrifice at the annual festivals. However he did try to modernise the army, buying arms and obtaining mercenaries from Togo. In any case he was not the sort of man to give up his sovereignty when the French sooner or later put him to the test, since, following the Berlin Conference, Dahomey was definitely within their sphere.

Along the coast of the future Nigeria, from Porto Novo to Mount Cameroun, the old British preponderance was never seriously challenged, although even here London's opposition to action hampered its agents on the spot. Occupied during the course of the fight against slavery, Lagos (Eko) was at first a dependency of Sierra Leone, and then from 1873 to 1886 of the Gold Coast. When the fight against slavery had ended, the town increased rapidly in size, attracting all the lagoon trade in palm oil and the trade from Hausaland, even though trans-Saharan trade was still flourishing. The Creoles of Sierra Leone contributed to the acculturation of the Yoruba from whom many of them had sprung. Amongst these was Bishop Crowther, in charge of the Niger Mission. In order that the budget might be balanced through the revenue from customs duties, the British at Lagos tried to prevent the export of goods by other routes. This explains their activities at Porto Novo and their policies with regard to the hinterland.

In this area a second centre of acculturation had appeared at an early stage with the 'creolised' Yoruba in the Egba city of Abeokuta. Like Ibadan, this town had sprung from the fall of the empire of Oyo, and Protestants had been active there since 1845. There was a Yoruba language press, and in 1867 a modern style of government was established there, the Egba United Board of Management (EUBM). This was an experiment analogous to that of the Grebo or the Fante, but in this case beyond the control of the colonial power. The product of acculturation, the Egba government had no intention of yielding to anyone. Attacks by Dahomey were three times brilliantly repulsed by the army. In 1867 it set up customs posts to hinder Lagos' relations with the hinterland. This led to a violent conflict with the British and culminated in the expulsion of all the Europeans from Abeokuta.

In fact the Egba were the natural allies of the Ijebu, who occupied the northern shore of the lagoon to the east of Lagos, and strove to prevent the colony from suppressing their middle-man trade by opening up the routes into the hinterland and trading directly with their enemy, Ibadan. The conference called by Sir John Glover, the administrator of Lagos, in July 1871 opened up five routes, but did not put an end to the causes of the crisis. Since the fall of Oyo, the divisions among the Yoruba had not been healed. They had been torn by civil wars since 1810, causing many of them to be sent as slaves to America. The *alafins*, Adelu (1859–75) and Adeyemi (1876–1905), retained only local authority, but it was in their name that the ‘empire’ of Ibadan had arisen since 1845, which had limited the disaster by controlling the entire northern part of the Yoruba lands, and thus blocking the progress in that direction of the Muslims, now masters of Ilorin. To the east Ekiti had been freed from the power of the Muslims of Nupe and the empire of Benin. But to the west and south the stubborn resistance of the Egba and the Ijebu had tried to bar the way to Porto Novo and Lagos. The old religious centre of Ife affected to remain neutral.

Ibadan had stopped the decline of Yoruba society, and had rebuilt it according to a new set of values, those of the military chiefs. But its domination was at times heavy. Momoh Latosisa, who ruled Ibadan with the title of *are-ona-kakanfo* from 1871 to 1885, tried to re-establish Yoruba unity by bringing Egba and Ijebu into line. He ran into the opposition of Oyo and Ife and the revolt of his Ekiti subjects. Following various incidents, during which the Egba closed the road, the *are* attacked them in 1877, thus opening the ‘Sixteen Years’ war’, which was to end in 1893 with the imposition of British rule. In the east he tried to open the route to Ondo, his means of buying gunpowder from Benin, but was soon threatened by the revolt of the Ekiti, supported by the Muslims of Ilorin. The Ekiti–Parapo Confederation, constituted the following year, lasted until 1893. Oyo asked in vain for the arbitration of Lagos, and in 1882 Ife joined the coalition, only to be instantly destroyed, thus leading the Ijebu to make peace. The Egba, however, remained intransigent, and the efforts of the Revd J. B. Wood, the administrator, ended in failure in 1884. Unable to intervene directly, Lagos was thus powerless to end this conflict which closed the trade routes. It

took many years and the circumstances of the ‘scramble for Africa’ before London finally agreed to act. In the interval, despite Abeokuta and the Ekiti, the empire of Ibadan had stood firm, virtually complete and alone against all the rest.

Further to the east, to the north-west of the Niger delta, the old empire of Benin and the kingdom of Itsekiri, were, like the city-states of the Ijo and Old Calabar, within the sphere of the British consuls of the Bight of Benin. Thus it was a region which was not juridically under British sovereignty. Activity was purely diplomatic, carried on through the medium of the ‘courts of equity’, except for the occasional intervention of warships; everything depended on the personality of the consul, the most famous of whom was Beecroft. The residence of these consuls was on the Spanish island of Fernando Po until 1873, when it was transferred to Old Calabar at the mouth of the Cross river. From 1880 to 1885 Consul Edward H. Hewett established British power by means of numerous treaties, and the Protectorate of the Niger Districts was proclaimed on 5 June 1885.

The old empire of Benin had, since the eighteenth century, responded to the slave trade by withdrawing into itself, and it had been weakened by the domination of Ibadan over the Ekiti. During the time of Oba Adoro (1848–88), this isolation and distress in the face of a changing world seem to have encouraged a conservative attitude and the hardening of certain customs such as human sacrifice. This was bound to lead to catastrophe, which came in 1897. The mouth of the Benin river was in the territory of the Itsekiri, with whom the consuls had close links. It was acting-consul Easton who in 1879 appointed Olumu as ‘governor of the river’, preparing the way for his son Nana’s appointment in 1884. While cleverly playing the imperial card, the latter tried to outwit the new order in his opposition to the traders who were ruining the middlemen. He was deported in 1894.

The classic domain of the consuls, however, was the city-states of the Ijo to the east of the delta, a land of uncultivable swamps, which acted as an outlet to the sea for the Ibo country, and in which centuries of the slave trade had transformed village lineage groups into powerful commercial structures, the canoe-houses. Direct access by European commerce to the Niger and the hinterland would have the effect of ruining these houses, and they

opposed it violently. Now it was precisely this policy that the consuls had to defend. After 1875 the depression in world prices resulted in the merchants such as John Holt wishing to rid themselves of the middlemen, and the crisis broke out. In 1875–76 the people of Brass attacked the steamers that wanted to cross the delta. Having become the head of one of the greatest ‘houses’ of Bonny, Jaja, a former Ibo slave, had broken away in 1870 to found the kingdom of Opobo. For opposition to commercial activity in his hinterland, he was deported in 1887 by the consul, H. H. Johnston. At Old Calabar in the fertile soil of the Cross river, a monarchy of royal lineage dominated by secret societies cultivated oil palm plantations with the aid of a large number of slaves, whilst being open to acculturation as a result of the presence of Protestant missions since 1846. Civil war between the Duke and Henshaw factions for the two titles of *obong* and *eyamba* was recurrent (1875, 1880, 1885). All this activity was restricted to the coast. The hinterland was still unknown, especially the huge Ibo population, scattered in independent lineage groups between which links were maintained through the slave-trading network of the Aro Chuku oracle.

The lower course of the Niger was the only easy way into the interior, and this route had been well known since the great explorations of the 1840s. It was thus natural for trade to turn in this direction to break through the screen of middlemen on the coast. Onitsha, the centre of a minor Ibo monarchy, and Bishop Crowther’s base, naturally attracted the merchants. In 1878 there were four British companies there, to which were soon added French and German ones. Faced with the sudden advance of the French, the British firms from 1879 onwards were amalgamated by an enigmatic Manxman, the famous Sir George Taubmann Goldie, whose dreams were of empire rather than trade. His National African Company caused the collapse of the French traders by undercutting them, and he bought them out in 1884. He concluded treaties with dozens of African states and possessed thirty-seven armed ships and a private militia. The Berlin Act had constituted the Niger basin into a free-trade zone and thus posed a threat to his monopoly, but in 1886 he obtained the Royal Charter which transformed his National African Company into the Royal Niger Company, and which made it until 1899 the main agent for British penetration into northern Nigeria.

It has seemed advisable to survey at one go the whole zone of coastal acculturation from the Senegal to Mount Cameroun at the outset of the first imperialist advance. This advance merely confirmed the already high degree of acculturation. The penetration of world market forces popularized European products and ruined the local artisans. The response of the Africans was often very positive, as is shown by the rapid development of the groundnut and palm-oil industries in areas that were still politically independent. Acculturation had already advanced far in Senegal, and especially in the area of anglophone culture, where the first generation of African intellectuals originated. Their influence could already be seen in the rise of the modern nationalism of the Grebo, the Fante and the Egba. In these three examples the modern demand for political independence was fused with the traditional aim of keeping control over one's own destiny. In the circumstances of the time this was not enough to prevent the establishment of the colonial era.

FROM THE UPPER NIGER TO THE UPPER VOLTA

Before tackling the Sudanic zone, which at that time was still intact and orientated towards the Sahara, we should first examine the intermediate zone, which from the upper Niger to the Volta basin was already subjected to strong influences from the coastal zone which were to bring about great upheavals. From the upper Niger to the Bandama, the land of the southern Malinke was plunged in 1870 into the whirlpool of the Dyula revolution, which was to give rise to the empire of Samory. In this long-inhabited region, the Malinke had spread as far as the rain forest, where the trading minority group of the Dyula went in search of kola along the borders of the 'barbarous' Misi, Toma, Kpelle (Guerze), Dan or Guro peoples. The political unit was the small territorial chiefdom (*kafu* or *nyamaana*). Above these, since the eighteenth century, there had been only military hegemonies on a rather small scale and of an ephemeral nature. However this was not a homogeneous area. To the south it fronted the rain forest, which was impenetrable, except to a slight degree in the centre, from Konyan to Monrovia by way of Loma territory. In this cul-de-sac, local trade was linked to the transport of kola towards the valley of the Niger. On the other hand, beyond the upper Niger to the

west, by way of Futa Jalon or Solimana, the Rivers Coast was close at hand, and the Dyula took part energetically in the international trade which, since the abolition of the slave trade, was concerned with gold from Bure and with ivory and cattle. They could be found all along the coast from Boke to Freetown (Kempu) and Monrovia (Dukoro).

Since about 1830 this stable system had been shaken by the refusal of the Dyula, who were traders and Muslims, to accept the place originally assigned to them. This was due to the increased trade with the coast, which made it possible for their numbers to grow and which made them indispensable as traders in arms and cloth. Another factor was the influence of the Fulani revolutions (Futa Jalon, Masina, al-Hājj 'Umar) which had awakened their Muslim consciousness. Large areas were successively laid waste in the upper Toron and Konyan by Mori-Ule Sisse from 1835 onwards, in the lower Toron by the Berete from 1840, and in Nafana (Odiene, in the Ivory Coast), where in 1845 Vakaba Ture founded Kabadugu (Kabasarana). Far to the west these were the examples of Fodi Drami in Sankaran around 1870, and of Mori Sulemani about 1875 among the Kisi. In the east, also in 1875, there was Hedi Mori of Mankoro (Ivory Coast). Animistic society was too divided to be able to resist the aggression of a Muslim minority, open to the outside influences and possessing a wealth of guns and military and military experience. Therefore it accepted reformation when a man was found who was sufficiently acculturated to be effective, but still close enough to traditional society not to have to destroy it. This was the case with the sons of Mori-Ule and with the Berete, to a lesser extent with Vakaba also, but above all it was the case with Samory. He was born about 1830 in lower Konyan (Beyla, Guinea) in a sedentarised Dyula family which had partially abandoned Islam. He was at first an itinerant trader, and then a soldier with the Sisse and the Berete, before putting himself at the disposal of his 'uncles', the Kamara animists, in 1860-1. After helping the Sisse to defeat the Berete, then fleeing from the former to the Loma, he established himself at Sanankoro on the upper Milo from 1867 to 1870.

Samory returned to the Islam of his ancestors, but without passion, and built up a private army owing personal loyalty to himself. It was made up of levies from Konyan, as well as

adventurers from all parts. After crushing the animists of Toron with the consent of the Sisse (1871–4), he responded to the appeal of the great city of Kankan, the ruin of whose Kaba chiefs, adherents of the Tijāniyya, was brought about by the animists of Sankaran. Having conquered the latter, Samory kept their land and extended his power on the upper Niger from Kouroussa to the gold mines of Bure (Siguiri) from 1875 to 1878. Near Dinguiray he was stopped by the Tukolor of Aguibou Tal. The Kaba then refused to support him, and allied instead with the Sisse, who were worried by their isolation. In 1879 the Sisse broke with Samory and advanced into Sankaran. From 1880 to 1881 in a series of brilliant campaigns Samory crushed them, took Kankan, and attracted to his cause his relatives, the Ture of Kabadugu (Odiene).

At this time Samory was unchallenged at the head of a veritable empire, which continued to expand first among the Malinke until, in 1883, Bamako was reached, from which he pushed back the Tukolor towards Segou, then to the south as far as the forest, and finally in 1884–5 westwards, reaching Limba country on the route to Freetown, and eastwards as far as Bagoé where he came up against the forces of Sikasso. The new state did not entirely overturn the ways of the older society, it provided better conditions for the Dyula and the Muslims, and brought peace to a huge area. For the first time the region was managed by a superstructure imposed on the small city states or *kafus*, which however kept their autonomy. The territory was divided up between great armies, largely autonomous in respect of recruitment and provisions, while Samory accumulated supplies at the centre (*furuba*) around Bissandugu, his new capital built in the recently conquered Toron. Since the capture of Kankan, Samory had been surrounded by Muslims, and was now turning towards stricter religious practices. In 1884 he surrendered the title of *farma* (powerful) in favour of that of *almami* in imitation of Futa Jalon. Having been empirical up till then, he allowed ideology to control him for a time. In 1886 he proclaimed his aim of imposing Islam on the entire empire, which combined with the siege of Sikasso (1887–8), led to the catastrophic revolt of Ban-Kele (1888–90).

As a conqueror Samory was harsh but clear-sighted, not particularly savage and no worse a slave trader than his contem-

poraries. The political edifice he constructed was dictated by the crisis in Malinke society, and although the remote influence of Europe had some effect on it, it had been formed according to a properly African model. In 1882 he appeared to have triumphed and his work seemed destined to endure. Yet it was at this moment that his prospects were ruined by the abrupt entry onto the scene of the French on their way to the upper Niger. Borgnis-Desbordes, prevented by yellow fever from reaching Bamako that year, made a raid on the Samorians whom he attacked at Kenyeran. Although this was a decisive failure, he had given Samory a chance to appreciate the military superiority of the white man. The lesson was even more painful at Bamako in 1883. Samory, whose empire continued to increase, even though confronted in the east by the people of Sikasso, tried to avoid conflict. This proved impossible, and in 1885 Col. A. V. A. Combes attacked him in Bure. Samory's rapid and energetic response was the start of one of his most brilliant campaigns, in which the French, badly led, only escaped thanks to their superior weapons. The Samorians besieged Nyagasola and advanced as far as the neighbourhood of Bafoulabe, causing panic in St Louis.

Samory, however, felt that he was surrounded, and decided to turn all his efforts to resolving the problem of Sikasso. To do that he had to treat with the French. So in 1886 he fell back before Frey, who, being anxious to return to Senegal to do battle with Mamadu Lamine, granted him the favourable terms of the treaty of Kenyeba-Kura in May 1885. The terms of peace were made more onerous the following year by M. E. Peroz at Bissandugu in April 1886. In particular, without his being aware of it, Samory signed a clause which would be interpreted as the acceptance of a protectorate. Thus he had mortgaged his independence when he marched on Sikasso, to a major battle that was to have a disastrous outcome. Samory recovered from this catastrophe and struggled on skilfully and courageously in the upper Ivory Coast until 1898. But his achievement had lost its meaning on the day on which, instead of rebuilding his society, his only aim had been to gain a breathing space before the inevitable final defeat.

To the east of the Bagoé and the Bandama, the Senufo, who spoke the most westerly of the Voltaic languages, were solid villagers with a truly stateless tradition. However, in the eighteenth century, swallowed up by the Dyula empire of Kong, and

acculturated as a result, they had begun to form small military states, such as Benge, Korhogo, Sinematyali or Nwele in the Ivory Coast, and Kenedugu, later the kingdom of Sikasso, in Mali. The latter was to arouse a truly nationalist resistance to Samory. After the great reign of Daula (1840–60), who had almost destroyed the Wattara of the Gwiriko, the kingdom had collapsed into a state of complete anarchy and Tieba Traore, elected about 1868, had to reconquer it step by step, starting from his mother's village, Solokaa (Sikasso in the Dyula language).

Nevertheless this conquest was not total, for about 1868 some former *sofas* (slave soldiers) of al-Hājj 'Umar had broken with Segu and constructed Fafadugu, a strong military state on the right bank of the Bani around Kinyan. In the south, on the other hand, Tieba advanced further than Daula. He vanquished Nwele, and with the support of Korhogo attacked Sinematyali, but without success. He had reconquered the country as far as Bagoe in 1883, when to his great annoyance Samory's army made its appearance in a zone which had previously been politically divided. In 1885, therefore, he used a Bambara revolt as the occasion to take the offensive, but his army was crushed at Koroni, and Samory's response was delayed only because his army was engaged by Combes. Tieba however knew what to expect and he used the time to fortify Sikasso as fast as he could in view of the great war which indeed broke out in 1887. This stable state, based on the solid mass of the Senufo peasantry from whom the army was recruited, nevertheless had a Muslim minority, and the Traore family, allied to Segu through their hatred of Fafadugu, were won over to the Tijāniyya. The family moreover proudly considered itself 'Dyula' and thus set in motion a process of alienation which was to develop further in the colonial era.

In the extreme south of Senufo territory, the Tagwana and the Jimini, whose political structure was weak, had within their borders Zerma (Zaberma) and Hausa traders, the forerunners of the warlike migrations into the land within the bend of the Niger from the 1860s onwards. About 1883–5 a young trader from Saxala, Mori Ture, began a systematic series of aggressive inroads, on the pretext of a succession quarrel. He failed, and had to take refuge among the Baule at Marabajaza about 1890, but he had opened the way to the east for the Samorians. Having inherited the vassals of Kong, Sikasso had in the middle of the century

confronted the principal successor states to this famous empire. In the south the Kpong-Kene, in the area round Kong, had been much weakened since the loss of Jimini and the revolt of the Pallaka, stateless Senufo, who blocked the roads and appeared invincible. The main routes however remained open, especially in the south in the direction of Grumaniya and the sea, and in the north towards Bobo-Dioulasso. This town was the capital of Gwiriko, where the authority of the Wattara had survived longer, even to the extent of beating back Daula Traore in 1850. In spite of brutal repressive measures, the *farma*, Ali Jan (1854–78), had lost virtually all his authority over the Sanon, who had control of the town, and his successor, Kokoro Jan, only controlled a few villages. The real masters of the country were henceforth ‘barbarians’, like Amoro, the chief of the Tyefo of Numudaxa, who were once more raising their heads.

Near the Volta, the Abron kingdom, which had been free of Asante domination since 1874, was spending its days relatively peacefully under Agyimani (1855–98). Pape, the chief of the Akiton, had in 1881 destroyed the Banda, a Senufo people who panned for gold, and who had remained loyal to Kumasi. Unaware of the French threat, the Abron were trying to forge links with Accra behind the backs of their former rulers. Lonsdale was to pay them a visit in 1887. Further north the Kulango kingdom of Gbuna (Buna), which was becoming ever weaker, was unable to stem the rising tide of the stateless Lobi, a prolific peasantry advancing from the east.

The Volta basin is dominated by the huge demographic mass of the Mossi-Dagomba states, astride the frontier between the Upper Volta and modern Ghana. Further to the east, the Gurma, very different both in language and culture, were linked to them by certain political traditions. These numerous states, of which the most important were powerful and stable, had for a long time to come to terms with the growth of their Muslim minorities. More recently the aggression of alien groups like the Fulani of Masina or the Zerma had posed a threat. In the far north the kingdom of Wahiguya under Naba Yenda (1851–77) had difficulty in controlling the barbarian Samo and the Fulani of Balobbo, who were engaged in warfare against the Tukolor of Bandiagara, before withdrawing to the land of the Bwamu (Bobo-Ule). Under Naba Baogo (1885–95), a state of anarchy developed which was

to facilitate the occupation of the land by France. In the great empire of Wagadugu the death of Naba Kutu in 1871 had given power to his mediocre and unpopular son, Naba Sanem. Until his death in 1889, Sanem struggled against his exiled younger brother Bokari, the future Naba Wobgho, who would activate resistance to the French. In the south, the state in which the Muslims played the major role was Dagomba, where even members of the royal family had been converted. As early as 1874 Na Abdulay (1867-76) broke off relations with the Asante, at the same time beating off Zerma attacks.

These Zerma had left their country on the middle Niger after it had liberated itself from Sokoto in the 1860s. As horse-dealers and formidable warriors, they hired themselves out as mercenaries from Borgu in north Dahomey to the Comoe. A large detachment, under the orders of Alfa Hanno, from 1874 onwards thus took service, first with the Dagomba and then with the Mamprusi, raiding for slaves especially amongst the Gurunsi, a collection of peasant tribes covering the southern frontiers of the Mossi, and taking in old enclaves of Muslim traders such as the Kantoshi and the small kingdom of Ta (Dagari-speaking). About 1870 Alfa Hanno quarrelled with the Dagomba, and attempted to conquer the Gurunsi on his own account. His successor, Kalare (1874-82), used islamised people such as Musa of Sati in his support. But from 1883 onwards the new leader Babatu, a good soldier but a bad statesman, took over Sati and then Wa, crushing the allies of his predecessor. When he was installed in Sati, he marched westwards against the Boboko-Kirpirsi coalition, which defeated him at Safane in 1885. His military instincts led Babatu on to a chequered career, not lacking in setbacks, until 1897. The Zerma, of whom there were few, despite a constant flow of young recruits from the homeland, had intermarried with the people they had conquered and enrolled them firmly on their side. Around 1890 a generation born in the country, totally ignorant of their native language, swollen by conquered people who had been absorbed, prepared the way for the ruin of this remarkable military hegemony.

Between the Dagomba and the Asante there stretched the vast empty spaces of Gonja, a country that was dominated by the Gbanya aristocracy and long visited by traders, in particular the kola traders going to Kano by way of Sokode and Djougou. In

FROM UPPER SENEGAL TO THE MIDDLE NIGER

the nineteenth century the great commercial centre was Salaga, near to Kpembe, the political capital, through which passed the Kumasi trade. Liberated from the Asante in 1874, Salaga was weakened by the diversion of trade routes, towards Kete Krachi and the lower Volta on the one hand, and towards Kintampo on the other. This impoverishment, which affected mainly the Muslim merchants, aggravated the tensions which were already present in the town, and brought about its destruction in 1892 on the occasion of a succession crisis in Kpembe. Further away, on the road to Hausa territory at Sokode, the most important chiefdom of the Tem (Kotokoli), Uro Jobo II (1860–73), was converted to Islam contrary to the wishes of his warrior aristocracy. He attempted to use a monopoly of the trade in salt and slaves in order to provide the wherewithal for the nucleus of a permanent force of cavalry. The revolt of Bafilo precipitated his downfall, and Uro Jobo III publicly apostasised. In 1888 he was to receive the Germans. At the next stage, at the Djougou (Zugu) caravanserai, the kings of Tyilixa, Nyora III and Kpeytoni IV, were attempting to impose their will from the mountains of the Tangba (Taneka) to Basila, but without much success. Like the Tem, they had problems with the Zerma bands from 1880 to 1890.

Further north at Kwande, the Bangana Seko-Wonkuru (1857–83) waged civil war against the Bariba of Birni, and then intervened at Teme in the direction of Bembereka, frequently raiding the Berba and Betammaribe (Somba) of the Atakora. In this immense underpopulated territory of Borgu, the unruly cavalry of the Wasangari princes now recognised the authority of the king of Nikki only in theory and not at all that of Busa. Their considerable skills as warriors had nevertheless allowed them to keep their independence in the face of the Caliphate of Sokoto.

FROM THE UPPER SENEGAL TO THE MIDDLE NIGER

Apart from Senegambia, the Sudanese zone around 1870 was relatively sheltered from outside influences. Trans-Saharan trade was still very active, and was not to decline until after 1885. The slave trade was still carried on across the desert, albeit at a slightly lower rate, but the goods that were arriving from Tripoli were largely European in origin. For the rest, the influences from the Europeans in Senegal could already be felt in the west and from

those on the Gulf of Guinea in the east by way of the lower Niger and the Benue rivers.

The Tukolor empire, already much weakened after the death of al-Hājj ‘Umar, stretched from the upper Senegal to Masina. On the death of the conqueror, many regions rebelled, and were never to be reconquered. Thus, the empire found itself reduced to four main regions, which had difficulty in communicating with each other: Masina, under the command of Tijāni, the nephew of the conqueror, who was based with the Dogon of Bandiagara, but unable to put down the rebellion of the Fulani incited by the Kunta Abidin and by Balobbo, who in any case often fought each other; the Segu country, the most firmly controlled of the regions despite the hostility of the Bambara, and in which was the residence of Aḥmad b. ‘Umar Tal (Ahmadu Seku), who took the title of *khalīfa* in 1873; Kaarta and Khasso as far as the banks of the Niger, together with Nioro and Koniakari, entrusted in turn to various relatives of the master; and lastly Dinguiray, the cradle of the empire on the boundaries of Futa Jalon.

With Aḥmad, cunning management had replaced prophecy. The constant influx of Tukolor, with their claims to influence, tended to keep the vanquished, for the most part the Manding, in a position of subordination, thus preventing the stabilisation of the empire. The *talibs* (disciples of the Muslim shaykhs) despised the Bambara *sofas* and continued to pursue in Segu the clan conflicts of Futa Toro, between which Aḥmad exercised skilful arbitration. This skill did not ward off repeated crises at the heart of the system itself. Thus it took four years of warfare, from 1870 to 1874, for Aḥmad to defeat his brothers Abibu (Habibu) and Muktar, who had rebelled at Nioro and Koniakari. In 1878 Abibu was sent to Dinguiray, the governor of which had been killed by the Malinke, where he entered into an alliance with the French in 1887. Lastly in 1883, Muntaga rebelled at Nioro in his turn, and Aḥmad, who came to defeat his brother, stayed for fear of the French who had meanwhile occupied Bamako.

In this tottering empire there was no possibility of pursuing a bold policy, and the horizon was clouded by the growing menace of France. Following his father’s example, Aḥmad had sent an embassy to St Louis in 1874, and the governor had signed a reassuring treaty promising arms, in particular a field gun which was never sent. But the crisis became more acute on the upper

Senegal after 1876 with the aggressive Brière de l'Isle. Logo, allied to Ahmad, was destroyed by the French in 1877 (Sabugire). Then with the project for the Niger railway, the eastward advance, which was the forerunner of the great imperialist drive, penetrated into the heart of the Tukolor domain, causing its subjects to rebel along the way. Bafoulabe was occupied in 1879, Kita in 1881, Bamako in 1883. Brière de l'Isle sent Gallieni to Ahmad in an attempt to make him acknowledge these losses. After being rescued just in time from the Bambara who were attacking him, the ambassador had to spend long months at Nango waiting for Ahmad to sign an ambiguous treaty, which was immediately disowned by Paris. Unable to act decisively, and threatened in the south after 1883 by the forces of Samory, Ahmad could only observe bitterly the piecemeal destruction of his empire by the French. On 12 May 1887 he resigned himself to signing the treaty of Gouri, which allowed Gallieni to inform the European powers that the Tukolor empire accepted the protectorate of France. This did not save him. His remaining territories were occupied by General Louis Archinard from 1890 to 1894, and Ahmad, joined by Alhuri N'Diaye, went to Sokoto, his mother's homeland, where he died in 1902.

Beyond Masina, the withdrawal of the Tukolor and the weakened state of the Fulani had left the banks of the Niger open to the Tuareg. In keeping with their traditions, these nomads put pressure on nomads and peasants alike. Thus Timbuktu was in the hands of the Tengerege, distant vassals of the great Iwillimidden (Ullimiden) of Menaka. Before his death in 1885, their chief Fandanguma played an active part in the fight against Tijāni of Bandiagara. From Menaka the *amenokal* al-Insar, who reigned from 1860 to 1890, controlled the Niger bend from Bamba to Gao and Tillabery. Towards the end of his life he had to withstand the vigorous threat of the Ahaggar, who were raiding the Adrar. About 1875 he was forced to accept the secession of the tribes of the Niger bend, who formed an autonomous confederation directed by the *tengeregedesh*.

The eastern Iwillimidden or Kel Dinnik were also retreating in the face of the Ahaggar of the Aïr and the Kel Gress. The *amenokal*, Musa Ag Bedal (1840–72), was killed in Aïr. His successor, Mehamma Ag Alkumati (1872–1905), lost ground to the Aïr and the Kel Gress in the fight which he carried on until

1875 for control of the Hausa territory of the Ader. Under Sultan Mahama al-Bakari (1860-1903), the people of Air frequently raided Damergu, advancing as far as Bornu. But in 1888 they were unable to reassert their authority over the Teda of Kawar who had just liberated themselves.

Within the Niger bend the *tengeregedesh* had gradually taken over the small Songhay states (Gorwol, Kokoro, Dargol, Tera), which they were supporting against the Fulani of Liptako. However, from 1878 to 1885 Tera rebelled against the *amenokal* Elu under the command of Gobelinga, who called for assistance from Tijāni of Bandiagara. After his death, Tera was laid waste and had to yield. The Fulani of Liptako, like those of Say near to Niamey under the command at that time of Emir Abdulwaidu, remained loyal to Sokoto, or more precisely to Gwandu, but they were on the defensive, isolated from the caliphate by the Zerma rebellion of the Kebbi and the Dendi (north Dahomey). The Zerma had in fact liberated themselves under the command of Daud about 1855. Gwandu had made peace with them in 1866. With support from the kings of Tebbi (Toga, 1860-83; Somma, 1883-1915), they could never be conquered. The *zermakoy* of Dosso, Abdula (1870-80) and Alfa Atta (1860-86), were at peace until the invasion of Aḥmad b. 'Umar. This is doubtless the explanation of the exodus of young volunteers, lacking adventure in their own country, to the Niger bend.

THE CENTRAL SUDAN

The vast caliphate of Sokoto was stable and relatively peaceful, but there were hostile enclaves in several regions. These were groups of pagan peasants who had been pitilessly raided, like the Gwari, who had undergone virtual genocide at the hands of Kontagora, or the Birom, Angas and other pagans of the plateau who were subject to the raids of the emir of Bauchi, or hostile Muslims, such as the Hausa emir of Ningi. On the periphery, old Habe states managed to survive after losing part of their territory, and intermittently carried on the struggle; such is the case of Kebbi, which withdrew to Argungu, of Gobir at Tsibiri, of Katsina at Maradi or of Zaria at Abuja. But the entire centre of the empire, particularly the area from Gwandu to Sokoto, Kano and Zaria, enjoyed henceforth remarkable peace and prosperity.

Whether free or captive, the peasants peacefully cultivated the land, and craft workers produced in quantity cloth and leather goods, which were sold as far away as Timbuktu, Mauritania, Tripoli and Wadai.

Contrary to the impression given by Barth, the empire was not decadent. Central authority was still strong, having the last word in the appointment of emirs, and deposing them unhesitatingly. The *wazīrs* travelled endlessly among the emirs to keep control of their administration. However, circumstances had changed; the army was still powerful, but it rarely had to fight. The era of annual campaigns had well and truly passed. The revolutionary nature of social organisation became less clear, and a new aristocracy with a strongly established hierarchy developed. The diffusion of the written language, Arabic, Fulfulde or, increasingly, Hausa, was now an established fact, but no longer were great writers produced like those in the early years of the century. Lastly the new caliphs (*khalifa*) or emirs, the heirs of the conquerors, only acceded to the throne when already advanced in years; thus their reigns were short and they were disinclined to embark on military campaigns.

In the capital, Wurno (since Sokoto was merely the main town), Aḥmad Rufa'ī (1867–73), Abū Bakr b. Bello (1873–7), Mu'ādh (1877–81), and 'Umar b. 'Alī (1881–91) ruled in turn during this period. Apart from a few campaigns against Maradi and Argungu, Mu'adh and 'Umar were mainly concerned with fighting Gobir, which had launched a considerable offensive by taking Sabon Birni. All observers agree that during this period the people with most influence were the *wazīrs*, who were all descendants of Gidado dan Laima, the companion of the Shehu. The *wazīrs* at that time were first Ibrāhīm Khalifu (1859–c.1874) and then 'Abdallāh Bayero (1874–86). Relations with the emirates, appointments or depositions, were essentially their province. At Zaria, the most strictly supervised of the emirates, Emir 'Abdallāh was deposed in 1870 for having engaged in disastrous warfare which had started without authorisation, and Emir Sambo in 1888 for his powerlessness when faced with Ningi and the treason of his *galadima*. At Kano, Muḥammad Bello b. Ibrāhīm, who was to be a great disappointment, was installed following much trouble in 1886. The only emirate outside the control of the *wazīrs* was that of Gwandu, the heritage of

‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad (Abdullahi dan Fodio), which was governed first by Muṣṭafā (1868–75) and then by Maliki (1876–88). But its power, which extended over the whole of the west, collapsed as a result of the Zerma revolt of 1855 and the revival of Kebbi. It was thus reduced to impotence and had to appeal to Sokoto when it needed to intervene on the Niger, for example against Bussa.

Outside the central area which was under the strict control of Sokoto, and in which the Fulani conquerors tended to assimilate the vanquished Hausa, whose Muslim tradition they respected, three groups of emirates deserve closer study. Firstly, in the east, facing Bornu, Hadeija and Gombe were responsible for a frontier which had not changed since the conquest of the Chad empire had been renounced, but there were constant border incidents. The population had been transformed by the influx of Fulani who had left Bornu, but continued to pay respect to their former country. Hammaruwa (Muri), on the other hand, which had split off from Gombe in 1833, looked towards the territory lower down the Benue, where it devoted itself to fighting the pagans. Emir Muḥammad Nya (1874–95) repeatedly attacked the Jukun and the Tiv. But the latter, sturdy peasants with a segmentary society and a Bantoid language, brought him to a halt in no uncertain fashion.

Secondly, to the south, the characteristic of the large states of Nupe and Ilorin was the strength of the autochthonous pagan population, which became only partially islamised and assimilated linguistically the people who had conquered them. The emir of Nupe bore the title of *etsu*, and had to take into account the former royal families which, though vanquished, still wielded influence. During the reigns of the emirs Masaba (1859–81) and ‘Umar (1881–97), several revolts of the indigenous population took place (1872, 1881). In 1881 ‘Umar was supported by the English merchants and his reign was to be dominated by his relations with Goldie, who had him overthrown in 1897. Under Emir Aliyu, Ilorin increasingly developed into a Muslim Yoruba state. Until 1883 Aliyu put his major effort into combating the empire of Ibadan by supporting the Ekiti.

The final example, which merits close study, is that of Adamawa. In this area, the Fulani dispersed in the upper valley of the Benue were dealing with stateless pagan peasants, ethnically very diverse, whom they called by the derogatory term of Kirdi. The Adamawa

Fulani were in conflict with them before the beginning of the jihad, and though they willingly joined the jihad and always recognised the authority of the caliph, their movement remained autonomous. In effect, they had constructed a separate state, Adamawa, covering the whole of northern Cameroun with the exception of Mandara and the Kotoko territory, the ally or vassal of Bornu, which stretched as far as the upper Sangha in what is now the Central African Republic. To the south of the Kirdi, they crushed the Sudanese monarchy of Mbum and subjugated or drove back the Gbaya, whose historic drift towards Ubangi was thereby accelerated. But here, unlike in Hausaland or Nupe, the victorious minority so despised the vanquished that they rejected any assimilation and, far from adopting their language, imposed Fulfulde as the common language. As in certain emirates in the west, this was an unstable frontier *vis-à-vis* the non-Islamic world beyond. Here slave raids played an important part, either at the expense of Kirdi enclaves, which had been only partially subdued, or on the periphery in Gbaya, Tikar or Bamum territory.

Adamawa did not comprise one emirate but several, subordinate theoretically to the emirate of Yola, which was the only one to have direct links with Sokoto. During this period the emirs of Yola were Lawal (1848–72), who so charmed his guest, Barth, and Sanda (1872–90), who, shut up in his harem, was thought to be weak and soft. But there was a dominant militarism, which clearly distinguished Adamawa from Sokoto, and which derived from the front line emirates, which only paid lip-service to the primacy of Yola, even when they had not formally broken with it, like Rei. In the north, Pette and Marwa (Radawa clan) stood guard against Mandara, Bornu and the peoples of the Logone. Under Moharam Sali (1840–96), Marwa continued to subdue pagan enclaves and to contain the Mandara.

The south was to a large extent the domain of the Wollarbe clan which held the important emirates of Tohamba, Tibati, Banyo and Ngaundere. The celebrated *lamido* of Tibati, Mohaman Arnga Nyambula (1851–72), ended peacefully a troubled life noteworthy for violent conflict with Banyo and Ngaundere, which had forced Lawal to come in person to conduct the siege of Tibati. His son, Mohman Buba (1872–88), devoted his energies to extending his domain southwards as far as the Sanaga, at the expense of the Tikar and the Klute, of whom large numbers were

vanquished and enslaved. Under the sons of Mohaman Dandi, Diko, Saso and Usmanu, the emirate of Banyo continued to attack the Tikar, but further south it proved powerless against the important Bamum kingdom. Having assimilated the Mbum, Ngaundere – under Isa (1870–80) and Mohaman Gabdo (1880–5) – devoted its energies to raiding the Gbaya and increasing its hold over the upper Sangha, from Kunde on the Kadie to Berbera (in the modern Central African Republic). From there, they pursued their advance towards Ovesso (now in the Congo Democratic Republic). The Fulani world, so different from of Sokoto, was still expanding, a process that was only to be arrested by the German intervention from 1899 to 1902. It was at this time that the inegalitarian structures were established, dividing pagan peasants from the Fulani nobility, and which were to dominate the society of north Cameroun in the colonial period.

The area near Lake Chad was still the domain of the old empire of Bornu, whose administrative structures had scarcely changed, even though the Shehu dynasty had finally eliminated the Sefawa dynasty in 1846. The new dynasty had largely maintained the hierarchies and the complex system of titles of the previous court, and transferred them to the new capital of Kukawa. Shehu ‘Umar (1835–53 and 1854–80) was a prudent, even timorous man, who allowed effective power to be wielded by his *wazîr*, Laminu Mtjiya, and, when the latter died in 1871, by his favorite son Bukar Kura, an active man with plenty of initiative, who took control of military matters. The western frontier with Sokoto was then stable, and the southern one, covered by the alliance with Mandara, was free from danger. Beyond the Chari, Bagirmi, from where ‘Umar’s mother had come, formed closer ties with Bornu in order to withstand Wadai. Slave-hunting raids took place from this direction and were a cause of great concern, since the export of slaves to Tripoli still continued. To the east of Chad, Kanem was under some degree of control, despite the Awlad Sulayman Arabs who pillaged the area but kept out the influence of Wadai. The hereditary governor of Mao by now wielded only symbolic power.

Bukar automatically succeeded his father in 1880, only to die in 1885, thus opening a grave succession crisis. His younger brother Ibrahim imposed his rule by force. Without power before, he had allied himself to a group of greedy young men who wanted

to supplant the holders of great titles, and began to assassinate them. The nobility then overthrew him, and replaced him with the weak Hashimi, a withdrawn man of religious tendencies, indecisive and miserly. Moreover this was the time when the trans-Saharan trade finally collapsed, a process hastened by the raids of the Tuareg, the Teda and the Awlad Sulayman, who were fighting over Kawar. Having fallen into a state of extreme weakness, Bornu was unable to withstand Rabah in 1893.

The great Hausa kingdom of Damagaram, around Zinder, arose in the nineteenth century among the sub-feudatories of Bornu. Developing from a small eighteenth-century vassal state which had grown at the expense of the older Sosebaki states, Zinder freed itself thanks to the menace of Sokoto. Without breaking with it, Bornu left it completely free, for the existence of this armed power, arising to the north-east of Sokoto, had the effect of making a Fulani offensive towards Chad impossible. This new power was then ruled by Tenimu (1851–84) who built strong fortifications round Zinder and constructed a modern army with guns bought from Tripoli. After 1870 he continued to extend his frontiers, annexing Munio in 1872 and the Tuareg of Kutus in 1873, and then liberating Gumel which had been crushed by the Fulani of Hadeija in 1872. Having subdued the last Sosebaki and Zongo, Tenimu began to raid as far as Kano. His son Seliman (1884–93), who left a reputation for cruelty, carried on the struggle against Kano, the Tuareg of Air, and the Kel Gress, whom he took in the rear in their battle against the Iwillimidden.

On the eastern bank of the Shari, Bagirmi, under Muhammad Abu Sekin (1850–77), had proved unable to reject the rule of Wadai, whose *kolak*, 'Ali, took Masenya by assault in 1871. The people of Bagirmi continued to make their living from slave raiding in the south among the Sara (who spoke the same language), especially between Ouham and Gribingui and into areas now part of the Central African Republic. Some of the Sara collaborated with them in order to reduce the damage, and, imitating the Masenya, some of the Mbang tended to set up petty chieftaincies more capable of resistance. Under Aburahmani Gaurang (1883–1918) Bagirmi continued to enjoy the double sovereignty of Wadai and Bornu, but this was of no help to them when Rabah approached in 1891.

In the east of the territory, Wadai, which had been conquered

by Darfur about 1835–39, had reasserted its power. Its sovereignty over Kanem and Bagirmi had somewhat weakened, but was still total over the Bulala of Lake Fitri and the Daza of the Bahr al-Ghazal, as it was over Borku and Ennedi, where the local sultanate was of Tunjur origin. There were still slave raids between Gribingui and the Kotto, an area that had been reduced to semi-desert by the veritable genocide of the Gala and the Kreish. The base for these raids was Dar al-Kuti, constituted in the south of Aouak around Cha by the Bagirmian prince, Jugultun.

Whilst it imitated the institutions of Bornu, Wadai had been a strongly entrenched Sudanic kingdom, and the sultans of Abeche, the *kolak*, normally spoke the language of the Maba, the mountain peasants who were their supporters. They also drew support from the black Salamat Arabs in the south and the Mahamid in the north. But in the nineteenth century their Islam was influenced by the Sanūsiyya, whose effects could already be felt in the reign of Muḥammad al-Sharif (1835–58), who attempted to make use of the brotherhood in his struggle against Darfur. It was then that the arabisation of the court began, a process that was to continue during the colonial period. ‘Alī (1850–74), the son of Muḥammad and also Nachtigal’s host, fought with the Mahamid Arabs of the north and the Arabs in the east, and succeeded in re-establishing the power of Wadai *vis-à-vis* Darfur. His brother Yusuf (1878–98) pursued policies that were mainly defensive, linked ever more closely with the Sanūsiyya, who with their establishment at Kufra were demonstrating their intention to expand into the Sudan. However Rabah was to capture Dar al-Kuti in 1889, thus initiating the final crisis which ended in 1894 with the occupation of the country by France.

The influence of the Sanūsiyya was then growing rapidly throughout the Saharan and Sahelian zones inhabited by the Teda, Tubu and Daza from Kawar to Ennedi north of Wadai. This situation was to be reinforced in 1895, when the seat of the brotherhood was transferred from Djaghhub to Kufra, out of reach of the Ottomans. The Tomagra sultans of Kawar, who in 1877 had exchanged the sovereignty of Bornu for that of Aïr, succeeded in liberating themselves in about 1870, and the counter-attack by the Tuareg in 1888 was a total failure.

Most of Tibesti recognised the authority of the *derde* of the

Tomagra, formerly a vassal of Bornu, who cleverly made use of Islam and his reputation as a rainmaker to impose his will on the clans. After Tahorti Walli-Mi and Togoi-Kenimi-Mi, Chai-Bogar-Mi came to the throne about 1885. He lived until 1939. This subtle politician, who was skilfully to use his position to play off the Ottomans against the French, began by supporting the Sanūsiyya, thus tending to a more radical islamisation of his compatriots, who were lukewarm Muslims and totally un-arabised.

The main agents for the extension of the Sanūsiyya in the central Sudan were the Awlad Sulayman Arabs, who came from Libya after being driven out by the Ottomans in 1842. Settled in the north of Kanem, and paying mere lip-service to their acceptance of the *shehu* of Kukawa, these formidable pillagers had thrown the Sahelian region into utter confusion, attacking in particular the Daza, a cattle-raising people. After 1870 a certain equilibrium prevailed, however, giving the Daza the opportunity to reoccupy their positions when the colonial era put an end to the Sanūsi episode.

Thus the immense area covered by this chapter was extremely heterogeneous during these fifteen years studied. After the extinction of the illegal slave trade, the whole of the coastal strip, already strongly subject to outside influences, was rapidly integrated into the world market. At the same time, although there was no planned design in this, it was on numerous counts the theatre of the first phase of the imperialist advance. In 1885 this situation was stabilised for a few years following the Berlin Conference, the 'loaded pause', but the first outlines of the colonial boundaries can already be discerned. This is not the case with the immense hinterland, stretching from the upper Senegal to Lake Chad. The commercial influence of Europe was already making an impression, but only spasmodically, and the trans-Saharan trade links were to be weakened only after 1885. It was in the southern zone, in the area nearer to influences from the coast, that long-established societies, so far untouched, came to witness such great upheavals as those of Samory or the Zerma. These upheavals can be interpreted as a reaction to changing conditions, notably the development of long-distance commerce. In the Sudanese savanna zone, the upheavals had already taken place at the beginning of the century, so that the period we have

WESTERN AFRICA, 1870–1886

studied was one of stabilisation and relative tranquility. This state of calm was to be abruptly broken by the colonial boundaries which were completed some fifteen years later, about 1900, but in 1885 nobody could foresee this, least of all those involved. This part of Africa was still living at the centuries-old pace of its own evolution; it could not have imagined that its days were numbered.

CHAPTER 5

WESTERN AFRICA, 1886–1905

THE LINES OF SIEGE, 1886–89

The outlook from the savanna

Although in retrospect the flurry of European diplomacy which attended the Berlin Conference of 1884–5 seems clearly designed to prepare for the European invasion of West Africa, economic and political uncertainties in Europe and indications of stiff resistance in Africa inhibited the formation of aggressive policies. In the immediate aftermath the European siege lines were strengthened, but the scale of the impending threat to African independence was still not generally predictable. Even if in retrospect it appears that external and internal pressures were producing a general crisis of authority, its local manifestations varied greatly in nature and in intensity, and it is not easy to trace this crisis to common causes. Obviously, the impact of the European economy and European power was strongest in coastal regions. Many inland kingdoms of the savanna and *Sabel* still knew Europeans only as isolated and powerless travellers, and they retained the preoccupations and priorities which their historical experience suggested. Bornu, for example, though affected by fluctuations in European demand for ivory and ostrich-feathers, had more urgent problems at home; the challenge which eventually in 1893 overthrew the al-Kānamī dynasty came from Rabah al-Zubayr, a well-armed state-builder from the Nilotic Sudan, who proved capable of mobilising support among over-mighty subjects of Kukawa.¹

‘Umar b. ‘Alī, Caliph of Sokoto, 1881–91, also faced difficulties in maintaining administrative control over the empire founded by Usman dan Fodio and in enforcing the theocratic standards which justified its existence; but these were largely inherent in the attempt to hold together territories which it took four months to

¹ L. Brenner, *The Shebus of Kukawa* (Oxford, 1973), 111–30.

traverse from east to west,² once the capital of charisma accumulated by the founders had become attenuated. This was no archaic monarchy crumbling at the advent of European ‘civilisation’; the basic structures of the *jihadi* state were still intact, even though some of the problems of authority had never been wholly solved. A common system of religion, culture and law was widely accepted; taxes, tribute and military contingents were still rendered by the emirs to the twin capitals of Sokoto and Gwandu; settled agricultural communities continued to sustain the long-distance trade for which Hausaland was so widely known.

Certainly, security problems were posed by contests for power within the emirates (which, as in Kano in 1893, might involve challenges to the ultimate authority of the caliph),³ from the simmering challenge of Mahdism, or from frontier conflicts with non-Muslims continuing since the early period of jihad. Though controllable, these were serious preoccupations; by comparison the activities of the Royal Niger Company and other European visitors still represented not so much a menace as an opportunity to obtain supplies of those (obsolescent) firearms which these foreigners were usually anxious to sell. Even in riverain emirates like Nupe and Adamawa, where armed Europeans now appeared regularly, the Niger Company did not yet appear militarily dangerous, and the occasional French and German reconnaissance simply enlarged the opportunities for manoeuvre. At Sokoto, the arrival in June 1885 of the Scot, Joseph Thomson, cannot have seemed a particularly portentous event. Clearly ‘Umar did *not* assent to the cessation of sovereign rights in the Niger and Benue valley, as appeared in the treaties which Thomson took back to his paymaster, Goldie; but he was willing and even eager to negotiate about the future commercial status of the company, not perceiving how this would ultimately weaken his state.⁴

In Segu, Ahmad b. ‘Umar Tal (Ahmadu Seku), lacking that religious charisma which could partially compensate for defective administrative structures, had more reason to fear a direct European onslaught on the extensive empire which his father had

² D. M. Last, *The Sokoto caliphate* (London, 1967), 63.

³ R. A. Adeleye, *Power and diplomacy in Northern Nigeria, 1840–1906* (London, 1971), 97, 103; Adamu Fika, *The Kano civil war and British over-rule, 1882–1940* (Ibadan, 1978), Ch. 3.

⁴ Adeleye, *Power and diplomacy*, 132–6, J. D. Hargreaves, *West Africa partitioned, 1: The loaded pause* (London 1974), 99–104.

created but not consolidated. The advancing French army had reached Bamako in 1883; although its officers might disagree over methods, their intention to obtain control of the upper Niger valley had been clearly signalled. Nevertheless, Aḥmad found it difficult to establish priorities between dangers from the French and those from his own rebellious subjects and refractory vassals, whom they encouraged. In 1885 Aḥmad, having led an army northwards into Kaarta to subject his half-brother, Muntaga, decided to remain in that less vulnerable province, whence he half-heartedly harassed the French flank. But from the end of that year his feud with the French was suspended to allow both parties to deal with the common threat from al-Hājj Muḥammad al-Amīn (Mamadou Lamine).

When Lamine returned to Khasso in 1885 his religious prestige, greatly heightened by his *ḥājj*, appealed most strongly to the Soninke (Sarakule) of the upper Senegal basin, some of whom resented Tukolor political and religious hegemony. Initially the priority of his preaching was against Aḥmad, not the French, who provided 'powder, shot, guns and munitions of war, as well as paper'.⁵ Yet France's progressive political dominance, with its arbitrary demands for labour, had produced even deeper resentment among many Soninke; officials perceived latent perils in his movement, and in March 1886 Colonel Frey took the offensive against him. This commitment implied a reprieve for the Tukolor empire; in May 1887 Gallieni offered a new protectorate treaty which Aḥmad, judging Lamine's threat more immediate, found it expedient to accept.

Potentially the most formidable West African state was Samory's empire; here, unlike Sokoto and Segou, the 'Dyula revolution' had not exhausted its initial impetus, although it now met increasing African opposition. After his first encounters with the French in 1882, Samory had switched some of his forces southwards, conquering Falaba in 1884 so as to open alternative supply-routes for his armies in Freetown and on neighbouring coasts. Access to the Senegal valley and the Sahel still remained important for him, especially in relation to the supply of horses; his military opposition to the French in 1885–6 was effective

⁵ Muḥammad al-Amīn to Governor, September 1886; D. Nyambarza, 'Le marabout El Hadj Mamadou Lamine d'après les archives françaises', *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 9 (33), 141–2.

enough to secure reasonably equal terms in the Treaty of Kenieba, 28 March 1886. Having made these arrangements with his European neighbours, Samory resumed his primary concerns, the expansion of his empire and the enforcement of stricter Koranic orthodoxy. In November 1886 he proclaimed his intention of prohibiting the consumption of alcohol and the practice of animist religions; at the same time he prepared to move his armies against Tieba, the Senufo ruler of Sikasso, who despite his profession of Islam was encouraging Bambara resistance to Samory in the upper Bagoé valley.⁶ These moves involved relaxing his hold on the gold-bearing province of Bure; on 25 March 1887 Samory tried to buy security in the west by ceding to France the left bank of the Niger up to Siguiri, and by agreeing to recognise their protectorate over his other territories. But even these sacrifices did not secure their objective; the French secretly helped Tieba to defend Sikasso, and in 1888 Samory's growing demands for tribute, supplies and conscripts for this campaign produced widespread revolts among subjects already resentful of forced islamisation.⁷ In this crisis Samory made yet more concessions to France at Nyako in February 1889, hoping vainly to win their support or acquiescence for his policies of Islamic expansion.

During the late 1880s the major issue in the history of the West African interior thus appeared to be how effectively the overstretched structures of Sudanic monarchies could respond to internal challenges, which might take the form either of resistance to islamisation or of Islamic reform movements. Although the French army on the Niger already presented a grave threat to African independence, its magnitude was restrained by political and financial pressures within France. So long as French governments could not afford to engage more than one African state in battle, Muḥammad al-Amīn's resistance reprieved the independence of his neighbours. As for the British, their long-standing intention of 'reaching Hausaland' was still seen in commercial rather than military terms, and the central Sudan still felt secure. In Mossi, and other kingdoms of the Upper Volta, British and German reconnaissances from the south were beginning to

⁶ Y. Person, *Samori: une Revolution Dyula*, 3 vols. (Dakar, 1968, 1970, 1975) is the indispensable work. For the islamisation of the empire, vol. II, 808–18, 887 ff.; for the campaign against Tieba, 747–49.

⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 1049ff.

interact with those of the French, and Binger's epic exploration of routes from the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea foreshadowed dangers to come; but the scale of the European military menace was not yet evident. Only on the frontiers of the existing European coastal settlements could clear connections be demonstrated between internal crisis of authority and those external forces to which an increasing number of African societies were becoming linked.

The outlook from the coasts

European participants in the Berlin Conference of 1884–5 hoped that, by prescribing a code of behaviour for foreigners seeking to control the coasts and rivers which gave access to African commerce, they had stabilised their own imperial responsibilities.⁸ The new procedures for partition of the littoral regulated a process of scrambling for protectorates which was already almost complete; by 1855 only the stretch between the Mano river and France's outposts on the Ivory Coast remained unclaimed by Europeans. But, apart from collecting customs duties at the coast, most Europeans still hoped to expand their influence by moral suasion, to secure African collaboration with a minimum of coercion. Only the French in Senegambia were prepared to penetrate inland by military force. Lat Dior's death in the battle of Dyaqle (26 October 1886) marked the consolidation of French control over Cayor and warned other Africans of the dangers of military resistance. His cousin Alhuri N'Diaye of Jolof, and Abdul Bokar Kan in Futa Toro, tried by astute diplomacy to protect their own lands, revenues and authority, but could secure only temporary reprieves. By 1890 the military rulers of Senegal, worried by the continued migration of Muslims, felt strong enough to eliminate these remaining enclaves of Senegalese autonomy. Abdul Bokar was killed in Mauritania in August 1891;⁹ Alhuri responded to the invasion of Jolof by emigration, to join the fighting remnant of the Tukolor empire in its long retreat.

Other Senegalese Muslims adopted policies of *émigration à l'intérieur*. The marabout Ahmad Bamba rejected the option of continued military resistance after Dyaqle with the words, 'I

⁸ For development of this point, see Hargreaves, *West Africa partitioned*, 1, 40–9.

⁹ D. W. Robinson, *Chiefs and clerics* (Oxford, 1975), ch. 8.

know God sent these foreigners to pacify the country;¹⁰ his rapidly growing band of Wolof disciples became the nucleus of a new *tariqa*, the Mouridiyya, which assumed the role, filled elsewhere by traditional religious cults, of providing a new focus of African identity during the period of adjustment to colonial rule. Aḥmad Bamba's initial persecution by worried administrators only increased his following, and the Mourids were eventually able to carry on by peaceful methods the work of uniting the Wolof peasantry under clerical leadership and expanding their territorial base which had been begun by warriors like Lat Dior.

Yet even where no such threat of European military intervention was apparent during the 1880s, the stability of Afro-European collaboration was illusory. In Europe the 'stabilising factors', which had permitted Britain to maintain a general oversight of Africa's external relationships with a minimum of political commitment, disappeared when other governments came to see in Africa opportunities for resolving socio-economic crises or gratifying political ambitions.¹¹ And within the West African coastal belt many states experienced their own 'crises of authority' when to the eroding influence of new religions and cultures were added sudden dislocations in the external trade. Those who had most successfully adapted their economies to the production of groundnuts or palm products for export found these new staples unreliable sources of income. Tensions arising from the commercialisation of land and labour, which had been growing through the century, became acute when the terms of trade turned against African producers, and when fluctuations in world demand threatened the incomes of producers, traders, exporters and colonial governors.¹²

While some members of the commercial community sought to maintain their profits by restrictive practices, others, both Africans and Europeans, perceived opportunities for innovations in production, which would lead to still deeper involvement in the international economy. It was during the 1880s that the farmers of the Gold Coast first turned to the cultivation of cocoa. A more

¹⁰ Tradition recorded in 1965; V. Monteil, *Esquisses Sénégalaises* (Dakar, 1966), 148. See also D. B. Cruise O'Brien, *The Mourides of Senegal* (Oxford 1971), part 1.

¹¹ See G. N. Sanderson, 'The European partition of Africa: coincidence or conjuncture?' in E. F. Penrose (ed.), *European imperialism and the partition of Africa* (London, 1975).

¹² A. G. Hopkins, *An economic history of West Africa* (London, 1973), ch. 4.

immediately remunerative response to external demand was to increase exports of wild rubber. The consequences were nowhere so terrible as in the Congo basin (although they included the murder of Temne rubber-tappers recruited to work for the Royal Niger Company)¹³ but they could nevertheless have disturbing effects on established relationships. Students of Asante history, for example, see the traders and tappers of that state as reinforcing a small but growing bourgeois middle class with distinct interests and aspirations transcending loyalties and allegiances of a traditional kind.¹⁴

To liberal development theorists of the Buxton school, such social changes should have been welcome, as indications of advancing civilisation. But the impact of the depression on established producers of oil-palm or groundnuts was often more violent. One reaction by the larger producers was to try to increase their labour supply; their 'slave-raiding and plundering expeditions', it has been argued, were at least a contributory cause of the Yoruba wars which had begun in 1877 and – despite the peace negotiated between Ibadan and the Ekiti in 1886 – continued to disrupt commerce until 1893.¹⁵ Similarly, the desire of rulers to eliminate 'middlemen' and obtain more direct access to the sea-coast lay behind many of the wars in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone, which seemed to become more frequent and intense in the 1880s.

Outside Senegambia, European governments still hoped that their African neighbours would resolve their crises of authority in some economically rational way, and resume mutually advantageous collaboration. Military force might occasionally be needed to administer a short sharp shock to a 'savage horde' like the Yoni of Sierra Leone (1887),¹⁶ but conquest and control of the African mainland still seemed prohibitively expensive in

¹³ J. E. Flint, *Sir George Goldie and the making of Nigeria* (London, 1960), 147–9; Hargreaves, *West Africa partitioned*, 1, 104–6.

¹⁴ Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 1975), 703–5; T. J. Lewin, *Asante before the British: the Prempeh years* (Kansas, 1978); E. Dumett, 'The rubber trade of the Gold Coast and Asante in the nineteenth century...', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1971, 12, 79–101.

¹⁵ A. G. Hopkins, 'Economic imperialism in West Africa: Lagos 1880–92', *Econ. Hist. Review*, 1968, 2nd series, 21, 580–606: cf. the rejoinder by R. A. Austen and J. F. Ade Ajayi, *ibid.*, 25, 303–12. The best modern account of the wars is S. A. Akintoye, *Revolution and power politics in Yorubaland, 1840–1893* (London, 1971).

¹⁶ E. A. Ijagbemi, 'The Yoni expedition of 1887...', *J. Hist. Soc. Nigeria*, 1974, 7, 248.

money and lives. At Lagos, Cornelius Moloney still patiently relied on diplomatic suasion to maintain Britain's sphere of influence among the Yoruba; only when Egba chiefs, dissatisfied with their dealings with Lagos, signed a treaty with the French adventurer, Viard, in April 1888 did he suggest providing for even nominal cession of sovereignty in his treaties.¹⁷

In the short run European hesitancy seemed to offer African diplomatists some freedom of manoeuvre. Tofa of Porto Novo, when he accepted France's protectorate in 1883, hoped to use her support to eliminate dynastic rivals and to extend his authority over outlying districts which he claimed for his state. The presence of a French Resident supported by a minuscule garrison emboldened Tofa to respond with provocative defiance to British activities in the Weme valley and southern Egbado, and in 1887 to take the risks of quarrelling with Glele, his 'elder brother' of Dahomey. But in practice the benefits derived from the French presence proved to be limited. The frontier which French diplomatists negotiated with the British in August 1889 left many areas of Egbado claimed by Tofa under the influence of Lagos, and even his capital was not secure against Dahomian power.

During the later years of Glele's reign tension had continued within Dahomey between notables engaged in commerce and those who favoured intransigent defence of territorial sovereignty against all comers.¹⁸ The strength of the latter party was revealed in March 1889, when Dahomian troops advanced down the Weme valley, impelling the whole merchant community, and Tofa himself, to take refuge in the British sphere. Behanzin, who succeeded Glele at the end of 1889, wished to maintain good commercial and political relations with Europeans but only from a base of unconditional independence; taking on himself the symbol of the shark (which had long impeded French connections with Cotonu), he took an intransigent, even patronising, line to Lieutenant-Governor Bayol's clumsy attempts to reassert French prestige:

The King of Dahomey gives his country to no-one. God has given the white men their share; when God gave everyone his share, it was Dahomey which

¹⁷ Hargreaves, *West Africa partitioned*, 1, 55-63; E. A. Ayandele, *The missionary impact on modern Nigeria* (London, 1966), 49-51.

¹⁸ D. A. Ross, 'The autonomous kingdom of Dahomey, 1818-94', Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1967; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, 'De la traite des esclaves à l'exportation de l'huile de palme et des palmistes au Dahomey', in C. Meillassoux, *The development of indigenous trade and markets in West Africa* (1970).

had this place. The man who comes to take the country of Dahomey without the King's permission will die.¹⁹

As a constructive step towards better relations, Behanzin suggested that France might replace the *jeunes gens irréfléchis* who seemed to be in control of the Third Republic by the wiser governance of a restored monarchy.²⁰

Such forthright independence on the part of an African ruler infuriated patriotic French officials; yet France did not become committed to the conquest of Dahomey until 1892. Military expeditions were likely to incur political risks at home, as well as military risks in Africa, which would be acceptable only when an African ruler went beyond traditional boundaries of Afro-European diplomacy (hard bargaining about duties payable by traders, the jurisdiction of his courts, the admission of missionaries to his sovereign territory) and questioned the structures with which the fortunes of his state were becoming involved.

It was his claim to economic autonomy, rather than any prophetic sense of nationalism, that brought Jaja of Opobo into conflict with young vice-consul, Harry Johnston, during the rainy season of 1887. Jaja's commercial strategy had originally been to ship palm-oil directly to Liverpool and so become less dependent upon foreign merchants; but once he discovered that this tied up his working capital for too long he worked with the Glasgow firm of Miller Brothers against the monopolising practices of the African Association. Complaints from the latter body about his wickedness as 'middleman' reflected their desire to force down prices in order to pass on the cost of the depressed palm-oil market, not any real intention of moving their own buying organisation into the producing centres.²¹ But Johnston's vigorous backing of their complaints introduced a new political judgement on 'the inevitable march of events which is causing Africa to be opened up to the white men's enterprise'.

It is no exaggeration [he wrote] to say that, from Benin to Old Calabar, all the native chiefs are watching with interest the long struggle between the

¹⁹ Archives Nationales, S. O. M., Dahomey V/1, enclosure in Bayol to Etienne, 4 Jan. 1890.

²⁰ S.O.M., Dahomey III/1, Bayol to Etienne, 14, 10 Jan. 1890.

²¹ Cherry Gertzel, 'Commercial organisation on the Niger coast, 1852–1891', in Leverhulme Foundation, *Historians in tropical Africa* (Salisbury 1962), 301–3; C. de Cardi, 'A short description of the natives of the Niger Coast Protectorate', App. 1 to Mary Kingsley, *West African studies* (London 1899).

traders and the Trader-King of Opobo. As either side is victorious they will rule their conduct accordingly.²²

In other words, if Europeans were to control the crises of authority which accompanied the growth of commerce, they would increasingly need to substitute force for moral suasion. Jaja's deportation, deplored but not reversed by Lord Salisbury, foreshadowed the end of that 'loaded pause', which in retrospect seems to have marked the last days of West African independence.

THE EUROPEAN OFFENSIVES

The changing military balance and the rise of colonial imperialism

Around 1890, relations between Europe and West Africa changed their character. Hitherto there had been dialogue, though increasingly violent and one-sided, among independent polities. Although Europeans always controlled greatly superior military technology, they had rarely been able to deploy it beyond the coastline. Africans' resources included their superior capacity to survive in a physical environment which Europeans knew to be hostile; a terrain rendered difficult to invaders by dense vegetation, formidable river-crossings, and sheer distance; and military tactics well adapted to that terrain and using indigenous weaponry like spears and bows as well as the inferior firearms which Europeans had been happy to supply. Some nineteenth-century rulers tried to modernise their armies. Al-Ḥājj 'Umar Tal ('Umar b. Sa'īd) used mountain howitzers captured from the French in the 1850s to reduce the fortifications of his African enemies, and both he and his son Aḥmad tried hard to buy additional ones.²³ Modern breach-loading rifles reached West African markets during the 1870s. They were used effectively by Samory's armies and his blacksmiths learned not only to repair but to copy them; after 1890 he imported some six thousand modern Gras rifles through his main supply port of Freetown.²⁴ Behanzin, likewise, after his inconclusive brush with the French, began to supply slaves to Hamburg merchants at Whydah in

²² P. P. 1888, LXXIV, C.5365, Johnston to Salisbury, 20 Aug. 1887. Cf. Hargreaves, *West Africa partitioned*, I, 111–21.

²³ Y. Saint-Martin, 'L'artillerie d'El Hadj Omar et d'Ahmadou', *Bulletin de l'I.F.A.N.*, series B, 1965, 27.

²⁴ Person, *Samori*, II, 1104–9.

return for modern weapons and instruction in their use. During 1891–2 he imported four Krupp cannon, three *mitrailleuses*, and nearly two thousand assorted small arms. He also claimed ‘to have an armament factory where powder is made according to methods learned from Europeans, and firearms likewise’.²⁵ Perception of such rearmament programmes led the Europeans attending an anti-slavery conference at Brussels in 1890 to resolve that ‘all arms for accurate firing’ should become the monopoly of their own colonial forces; although this ban was not fully enforced for another two years, it heralded a period in which military methods of European penetration would become the rule rather than the exception.

Meanwhile Europeans were modernising their own colonial armies by improving their armaments and expanding their establishments of regular African troops, preferably drawn from peoples of ‘martial’ repute like the Hausa or Bambara. In the British colonies local constabularies moved gradually from tasks of ‘moral suasion’ into more active military role in support of the garrisons of the West Indian Regiment. The largest such force was the *tirailleurs sénégalais*, created by Faidherbe in 1857 and progressively expanded during the period of conquest; yet even in 1900 they numbered only 6,600. African regulars provided the shock troops; but they were invariably commanded and stiffened by substantial cadres of European officers, NCOs and specialist engineers or artillerymen, and were often accompanied, not only by an extensive tail of carriers, non-combatant auxiliaries and camp-followers, but by ill-disciplined forces of African allies, hoping to settle old quarrels or to obtain human booty. The force which attacked Segou in April 1890 included only 400 *tirailleurs*, 234 other African regular troops and four African officers; there were 103 European officers and specialists, 545 non-combatant Africans on the official strength, 1,466 African auxiliary troops and 818 porters, *autorisés à suivre* but not directly remunerated.²⁶ The decisive advantage of all the invading armies lay in their fire-power. Gun-boats had always been able to terrorise limited areas accessible from coasts or river-banks, but new weapons

²⁵ Archives de la Marine, Vincennes. BB4 1992, Return of arms and munitions sold by Germans at Whydah, 5 Jan. 1893. Report by Hocquart, 2 April 1891 (J. D. Hargreaves, *France and West Africa*, 1969, 191).

²⁶ J. Méniand, *Les pionniers du Soudan* (Paris, 1931) 1, 450–1; Marc Michel, *L'appel à l'Afrique* (Paris, 1982), 4–5.

were more mobile. The British Ijebu expedition of 1892, though hastily improvised, was equipped with three seven-pounder guns, three rocket-troughs, two Nordenfeldt machine-guns, and one of the first Maxims to be used in Africa; all these contributed to inflicting fatal casualties on the Ijebu of the order of twenty to one.²⁷

By reserving the control of modern military technology to Europeans, the Brussels conference established an essential precondition of conquest; but the problems of logistics, transport and organisation remained formidable, and most European politicians still doubted whether their constituents would be willing to meet the human and financial costs. The necessary additional impetus might be provided by some local crisis of authority, as at Opobo; but after 1890 it increasingly came from the conscious initiatives of imperially-minded groups of Europeans, who found that they could mobilise sympathy or support from fellow-patriots.

The pace of the colonial partition of West Africa was largely set by the French – and specifically by the ambitions of the colonial army. Archinard's attack on Segou in April 1890 was not a response to any local crisis but an act of aggression, inspired by chauvinism and professional ambition, for which preparations had been made as carefully in Paris as in Africa. His attack the following year on Kankan finally committed the French state to difficult and prolonged campaigns to destroy Samory's empire. The aims of these officers often diverged radically from those of civilians interested in doing business with Africans, but to secure domestic support it was expedient to exhibit unity among colonialists. The *Comité de l'Afrique française*, founded in 1890 by 'a certain number of persons inspired by patriotic zeal', adopted the dramatic and grandiose design of the famous 'Chad Plan' as a sort of covering myth, which could lend the appearance of national purpose to the miscellaneous ambitions of speculators, soldiers and commercial adventurers in expanding existing French holdings in Algeria, Senegal and Equatorial Africa.²⁸

During the 1890s other objectives were added. Binger, a military officer turned colonial administrator and publicist,

²⁷ Robert Smith, 'Nigeria-Ijebu' in M. Crowder (ed.), *West African resistance* (London, 1971), 179, 189–90.

²⁸ T. W. Roberts, 'Railway imperialism and French advances towards Lake Chad, 1890–1900'. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1973.

stressed the importance of following up his own explorations of 1887–9 by consolidating French control of the Ivory Coast, establishing new routes through the forest to the Niger and to the populous kingdoms of the Upper Volta. Others worked to link the military empire of the Sudan with the commercial ports on the Guinea coast, thus increasing pressure on the *almamis* of Futa Jalon.

The ambiguities of French relations with Dahomey too were eventually resolved only after the French public was converted to colonialist values. In 1890, as in 1889, France's protectorate over Tofa had threatened to lead to a military confrontation with Dahomey for which public opinion in France was not prepared, and she had to safeguard her hold on Cotonu by a negotiated compromise. Behanzin, while tolerating a French presence at Cotonu as well as Porto Novo, refused to abate his sovereign claims, and increased his purchase of modern firearms. To pay for them by exporting 'indentured labourers' he resumed slave-raiding, and so provided France with a moral charter to override anti-colonial scruples. In April 1892 attitudes had so far changed that an incident on the Porto Novo frontier was made the pretext for a full-scale military expedition, which in November occupied Abomey with a flourish of triumphal colonialism. After Behanzin's surrender in January 1894, French expeditions thrust northwards into Borgu, so reviving the design cherished by a few merchants and imperialists for thirty years of outflanking British trade monopolies by securing a French route to the navigable Niger below Bussa. The *parti colonial*, modest though its resources seem in retrospect to have been,²⁹ had temporarily convinced representatives of the French state that action to extend French political control and build railways would produce returns far surpassing the modest results so far achieved by French merchant capitalism.

In Wilhelmine Germany too, relatively small groups who had acquired material or emotional interests in Africa were increasingly able to call on the political and military resources of the Reich. Where Bismarck had hoped to transfer financial and military

²⁹ C. M. Andrew, 'The French colonialist movement during the Third Republic; the unofficial mind of imperialism', *Transactions, Royal Hist. Soc.*, 5th series 26, 1976, 143–66; C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *France overseas* (London, 1981), Chap. 1; cf. L. Abrams and D. J. Miller, 'Who were the French colonialists: a re-assessment of the *parti colonial*, 1890–1914', *Hist. J.*, 19 (3), 1976, 685–725.

responsibilities to companies of merchants, his successors found themselves launching military expeditions or arguing diplomatic claims on behalf of their traders. Ambitious officers who explored the interior established their own systems of political and commercial collaboration; in the Bamenda grasslands Eugen Zintgraff committed the German government to a treaty with his protégé, Galega of Bali-Nyonga, an astute state-builder.³⁰ Both in Kamerun and Togo, expansion tended to move towards the outlying provinces of the Sokoto caliphate; successive expeditions had established a stake in Adamawa by 1893, and in April 1895 a small but well-armed expedition under Dr Grüner claimed to have secured a treaty from the sultan of Gwandu.³¹ And, as in the other empires, behind the explorers came the administrators, and newly organised police forces, armed to enforce control on those who rejected collaboration on German terms.

The British, too, gradually began to recognise that economic inducements and diplomatic suasion might no longer suffice to protect their interests against European intrusion or African assertiveness. After 1890 they gradually introduced new mechanisms of control. Around Sierra Leone new treaties were made, travelling commissioners appointed, a frontier police force organised; though a formal protectorate was proclaimed only in 1896, its institutions had largely been invented, or improvised, already. In the Niger delta, where foreigners had been told of a British protectorate in 1884, the first plan for 'a paternal government under the direction of the Foreign Office' was prepared by Major Claude Macdonald in 1890; but it still rested largely on moral suasion, with force held in reserve to deal with those who had failed to draw the right conclusion from Jaja's fall. In 1892, contrasts could still be drawn between French military imperialism and Britain's 'policy of advance by commercial enterprise';³² but the differences were more of timing and of style than of principle.

The incentive to adopt more expansionist policies came partly

³⁰ E. M. Chilver, 'Paramountcy and protection in the Cameroons; The Bali and the Germans, 1889-1913', in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, *Britain and Germany in Africa* (New Haven, 1967).

³¹ W. Markov and P. Sebald, 'The treaty between Germany and the sultan of Gwandu', *J. Hist. Soc. Nigeria*, 1967, 4, 141-53.

³² P. P. 1892, LVIII, C 6701, Salisbury to Dufferin, 30 March 1892: cf. J. D. Hargreaves, 'British and French imperialism in West Africa', in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis (ed.), *France and Britain in Africa* (New Haven, 1971).

from fear of European rivals, partly from the intention to impose new demands on African collaborators. Late in 1891 merchants engaged in West African trade united to complain that Salisbury's diplomatic compromises with the protectionist French had sacrificed the future prospects of Sierra Leone and the Gambia.³³ At the same time they became increasingly eager to meet the commercial depression by removing restraints imposed on trade by Africans, and by reducing transport costs through railway construction. With a general election pending, Salisbury agreed to respond. He despatched an able young African, George Ekem Ferguson, to try and raise a treaty barrier to French penetration of the upper Volta basin; and he responded to the desire of Gilbert Carter, Moloney's vigorous successor at Lagos, to coerce the coastal Yoruba kingdoms. Both the Ijebu and the Egba had hitherto strongly defended their interests as commercial intermediaries by restricting through-traffic and imposing tolls; but it was the Ijebu, whose exclusion of foreigners extended to Protestant missionaries, who had made more enemies in the Colony. Already the failure of an ill-planned diplomatic mission had seemed to Sir Augustus Hemming, an expansionist in the Colonial Office, to provide 'a fitting opportunity for breaking down the trade monopoly which the Ijebus arrogate to themselves' and which is extremely prejudicial to the interest of Lagos and prevents the proper development of Yorubaland';³⁴ in the spring of 1892 a new interruption of trade, and new allegations about slavery and human sacrifice, enabled Hemming's friend, Carter, to profit from Salisbury's new disposition. A force of Hausa and West Indian troops overcame determined Ijebu resistance, occupied the capital, and compelled Awujale Tumwase to open his roads; this resolved the crisis of authority within Ijebu and opened the way for rapid expansion of British commerce and western influences.³⁵ An eminent Lagosian later recalled how ... 'the taking of Ijebu sent a shock of surprise and alarm throughout the land. Men felt instinctively that a new Power had

³³ Colonial Office (C.O.) 879/35, C.P. African 421, Proceedings at a Deputation... 8 December, 1891.

³⁴ C.O. 147/80, Minute by Hemming, 9 July 1891.

³⁵ A. A. B. Aderibigbe, 'The Ijebu Expedition 1892', in *Historians in tropical Africa: proceedings of the Leverhulme Inter-collegiate History Conference, held at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, September 1960*; E. A. Ayandele, 'The ideological ferment in Ijebuland, 1892-1943', *African Notes* (University of Ibadan) 1970, 5, 3, 17-40; R. S. Smith, 'Nigeria-Ijebu', in M. Crowder (ed.), *West African resistance*.

entered the arena of Yoruba politics, that a new era was about to dawn on the land...'³⁶

Yet Salisbury had not intended to abandon his 'policy of advance by commercial enterprise' in order to exercise direct control. When the Egba took the message and agreed to modify their control over the passage of trade, they were able to negotiate a treaty formally recognising their independence. Captain R. L. Bower, stationed as resident at Ibadan with a small constabulary force, was not sent to exercise formal control. 'We have neither assumed nor declared a protectorate,' wrote Hemming, 'but we want some one on the spot to watch the movements of the king and chiefs, and to keep us in touch with them and with the people.'³⁷ Yet within two years Bower, unable to reconcile the moral world of the Yoruba with that of a Victorian officer, had bombarded the town of Oyo and reduced the *alafin* to the status of a British client.³⁸

The British had in fact taken the first step which counted; the crises of authority in the frontier zones of empire, which their presence intensified, would only be resolved by the assumption of more direct control. Hence Gladstone's return to prime ministerial office in July 1892, which in Uganda led to hesitation and controversy over British responsibility, had little effect on the advance of the West African empire. The Colonial Office under Lord Ripon proceeded gradually to formalise the ascendancy it had already acquired; in July 1894 Colonel Frederic Cardew drew up comprehensive plans for the administration of the Sierra Leone protectorate, with a government railway as the key to its economic development.³⁹ Gladstone's successor, Lord Rosebery, having failed to extend existing Anglo-French agreements into a comprehensive diplomatic partition, prepared to peg out claims for the future; when Goldie despatched Lugard to confront the French thrust into Borgu, Percy Anderson indicated that the Foreign Office 'was not prepared to take the responsibility of stopping the expedition'.⁴⁰ Nor did the government attempt to stop, or retrospectively censure, the attack which the acting

³⁶ Obadiah Johnson, 'Lagos past': Proceedings of the Lagos Institute, 20 November 1901.

³⁷ C.O. 147/91, minute by Hemming 16 Jan. 1894, in Carter, 260.

³⁸ J. A. Atanda, *The new Oyo empire. Indirect rule and change in western Nigeria, 1894-1934* (London, 1973), Ch. 2.

³⁹ C.O. 267/409, Cardew to Ripon, conf., 45, 9 June 1894.

⁴⁰ F.O. 83/1315, note by Anderson, 19 Sept. 1894.

Consul-General, Sir Ralph Moor, launched on Nana and the Itsekiri trading empire in August 1894. In February 1895 the pacific Ripon seems to have been deterred only by considerations of expediency from approving an immediate expedition against the 'savage and barbarous power' of Asante, now advocated by Hemming on the advice of 'Merchants, Missionaries and other warlike classes'.⁴¹

Once the general arguments were accepted, and successfully put into practice in particular cases, the way was clear for 'Imperialism' to become an effective *credo* for politicians in Great Britain, as it was already proving to be in France, Germany and Italy. Joseph Chamberlain's choice of the Colonial Office in preference to the Treasury in July 1895 showed where one bourgeois radical saw the best chance of building a reputation. His declaration on 22 August, that he was prepared to advocate government participation in West African railway construction and other projects, 'in which by the judicious investment of British money, those estates which belong to the British Crown may be developed for the benefit of their population and for the benefit of the greater population which is outside', provided a manifesto no less effective because it aroused expectations beyond anything that Chamberlain would actually achieve in West Africa. Chamberlain's radical zeal was checked by the older, more sceptical style of imperial statesmanship represented by Salisbury, who saw African colonies in the perspective of a world-wide system of power relationships; but both now operated on the assumption that the exercise of political power in Africa could contribute to solve Britain's long-term economic problems. The increasingly vigorous use of military force was not justified by unctuous appeals to nationalistic sentiment. In September 1895 Chamberlain authorised the ultimatum which led to the deposition of Prempeh the following January. Self-righteously moralistic flourishes accompanied the conquest and looting of Benin in 1897; the following years saw a series of military thrusts into Iboland, of which the Aro expedition of 1901–2 was the most important.

From the point of view of imperial strategy northern Nigeria remained the main objective. Adamawa was partitioned with Germany in 1893 and the threat from Togo never materialised;

⁴¹ C.O. 879/42, C. P. African 486, memo by Hemming, Feb. 1895. Rosebery papers (National Library of Scotland), box 46. Ripon to Rosebery, 20 Feb. 1895.

but the ambitions of the French colonial party proved harder to contain. After a period of tense confrontation in Borgu this challenge was removed by diplomacy in June 1898; and in 1900 the government took over from the Niger Company responsibility for asserting control of Britain's allotted sphere in the Sokoto caliphate. A short period of cold war ended with Lugard's military occupation of Kano and Sokoto in 1903.

Meanwhile the eastward advance of the French military had continued, checked only temporarily by the casualties which the Tuareg inflicted near Timbuktu in January 1894. Late in 1896 they occupied Mossi, Gurunsi and Gurma, thus setting limits to the northern expansion of the Gold Coast and Togo. In May 1898 they occupied Sikasso; in September Samory, their most formidable enemy, who had retired fighting to the northern Ivory Coast, was finally taken prisoner. Other columns, grudgingly observing the restraints imposed by Anglo-French diplomacy, moved towards Chad through the outlying provinces of the Sokoto caliphate; on 22 April 1900 they killed Rabah al-Zubayr, so defeating the last of the *empires combattantes*. The French thus secured their coveted access to the northern and eastern shores of Lake Chad, and cleared the way for the British occupation of Bornu.

Some African responses

Scrutinised through European eyes the process of military occupation, rapidly though it was carried through, appears a somewhat erratic process, its detailed timing regulated by fortuitous combinations of circumstances in Europe and in Africa. So it is hardly surprising that African rulers, responding to drastic changes of behaviour in ignorance both of the underlying causes, and of the diplomatic bargains which the European governments had made among themselves, should show puzzlement and uncertainty. Their individual crises might take the form (as in Mossi) of the sudden appearance of competing white men with well-armed escorts, in areas where they had not been seen before; or (as in Asante) of sudden changes in demands and attitudes of long-familiar strangers; or (as for Samory) of direct aggression. Many of the societies most directly challenged had long been deeply ambivalent in their responses to European civilisation, commerce and Christianity; the European onslaught might

provide occasions to resolve, temporarily at least, long-standing crises of authority or dilemmas of policy.

The French military allowed the Muslim empires of the western Sudan little real choice; Archinard's attack on Kankan finally convinced Samory that they would never accept co-existence on conditions compatible with the preservation of the Dyula revolution; in 1892 Samory decided to displace the whole military structure of his empire eastwards, using the rifles which he was still obtaining from Freetown to harass the French, and leaving them only scorched earth to occupy. This policy, adopted at a time when the region was severely afflicted by cattle disease, imposed new sufferings upon Samory's subjects; but the French conquerors found it difficult to identify and use collaborative authorities among the peoples they claimed to have liberated – largely because of their own ethnocentric attitudes, but also because the Samorian revolution had already levelled structures on which it might have been possible to build.

For the Tukolor rulers of Aḥmad's empire there was likewise little alternative to resistance (much less effective) and *hijra* in face of aggression, although Archinard did utilise his half-brother, Agibu, as collaborator, first at Dinguiray, then at Masina. For a time Archinard also tried to restore Bambara rulers whom the Tukolor had displaced; but his devious tactics and lack of basic confidence in Africans soon led them to reject this clientage, and here too conquest led quickly to a general levelling of historic polities.

For the Sokoto caliphate, more options were open. Under 'Abd al-Raḥmān (1891–1902) there was growing apprehension of gathering storms. Rabeh's conquest of Bornu in 1893 established on the eastern borders a formidable rival (with a special appeal to Mahdist dissidents within the caliphate), just at the time when changing European behaviour elsewhere in Africa sharpened the fear that diplomatic skill in fending off emissaries might not be enough. Goldie's Nupe and Ilorin campaigns of 1897 struck the first direct blows, but as they were not followed by immediate occupation, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, worried about Rabah and the French, was still tempted by Goldie's assurances that British suzerainty would be the lightest and best of the threatened alternatives.⁴² Though the British threat grew rapidly thereafter,

⁴² Goldie to Lugard, 21 Dec. 1897, cited Adeleye, *Power and diplomacy*, 190.

the Caliph doubted his capacity to mobilise the resources of the emirates in opposition; while Sokoto maintained a sort of smouldering hostility, Lugard was able to play upon divisions between and within the southern emirates to subdue them separately. In the final confrontation which Lugard provoked in 1903 the new caliph, Attahiru I, found no alternative to a hopeless battle, followed by a *hijra* which secured much support. Yet those Fulani who remained to collaborate with the conqueror found it possible to preserve the dominance, not only of the Muslim religion but of those conservative social forces in which it had become encapsulated. Had earlier caliphs been more intransigent in resistance, Lugard might well have been less willing to rely on those associated with them for the future framework of British administration.

Coastal peoples with long experience of Europeans perhaps found the new era even harder to understand. Their own responses might have been equally revolutionary, as in the case of the Ijebu. Before 1892 the dominant elements in this area had kept alien cultures, as well as alien traders, at arm's length; but some of the Ijebu who most fiercely resisted the British invasion then became enthusiastic collaborators with the new order. The undermining of traditional institutions unleashed an 'ideological ferment'; conversions to Christianity and Islam increased spectacularly, and the converts began to diffuse the new values more rapidly than in those parts of Yorubaland where the British implantation was more gradual.⁴³

The Fon, too, once diplomacy had failed, saw no alternative to resisting French aggression, and largely united behind Behanzin in defence of their traditional state. But their military tactics, even afforded by modern weapons, could not resist General Dodds's column. After Abomey fell in November 1892 Behanzin tried to secure some autonomy as a tributary of the French; when this was rejected, he organised guerrilla resistance in the north. Only when it became clear that the French would not maintain Behanzin on the throne did his brother, Gucili, agree to collaborate with them, exercising a strictly limited authority within a much circumscribed territory until 1900. While some traditions present this action as betrayal, others suggest that Behanzin had made a secret blood-pact

⁴³ Ayandele, 'The ideological ferment . . .', *passim*; cf. M. O. Abdul, 'Islam in Ijebu-Ode', paper presented to 16th Congress, Historical Society of Nigeria, Dec. 1970.

with his brother, accepting deposition in hope of preserving the continuity of monarchy. Gucili's regnal name of Agoli-Agbo ('the dynasty has not fallen') suggests that there was continuity of purpose behind the apparent switch from resistance to collaboration.⁴⁴

For some peoples, the implications of the new imperialism were slower to dawn, and the establishment of colonial authority might require more than one display of force. Asante, for example, did not seek to avoid participation in the world economy; its politics seem to have turned on alternative methods of doing so. The *asikafo*, or 'rich men', who developed the tapping and export of rubber during the 1880s, together with the *abiafo*, or poor, seem to have favoured a weakening of the control traditionally exercised by Kumasi over the economic activities of individuals, while Agyeman Prempeh, who became *asantehene* in 1888, favoured what has been called 'modernisation under mercantilist direction',⁴⁵ This they thought was their own internal problem. Despite the shock they had experienced in 1873-4, the Asante were well used to dealing with the vacillating and inconsistent representations of British governors, and in 1891 the *asantemanhyiamu* (the Asante national assembly) felt it safe to support Prempeh in rejecting Sir William Brandford Griffith's unauthorized proposal for a British protectorate, declaring that 'Asante must remain independent as of old'.⁴⁶ However, when Governor Maxwell arrived in January 1896 with his Hausa constabulary and proceeded, on rejection of his preemptory ultimatum, to arrest and depose Prempeh and other leading chiefs, this initially had a stupefying effect. The full implications did not dawn until tactless demands by Governor Hodgson triggered the insurrection of 1900, with its demands for an end of the new obligations and a return to pre-colonial freedoms.

A different pattern of delayed reaction to colonial rule came from the Mende of Sierra Leone. During the nineteenth century their political and social structures appear to have been fluid. Individuals could achieve the status of chiefs on the basis of

⁴⁴ L. M. Garcia, 'Archives et tradition orale', *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 1976, 16, 61-2, 189-206.

⁴⁵ I. Wilks, *Asante in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 1975), esp. ch. 15; cf. T. D. Lewin, *Asante before the British: the Prempeh years, 1875-1900* (Laurence, 1978).

⁴⁶ P. P. 1896, LVII, C 7917, 16, Griffith to Knutsford, 3 June 1891, encl. Prempeh to Griffith, 7 May.

personal qualities and skills – religious, commercial, diplomatic, and especially military prowess; but some underlying unity and continuity was maintained through the authority of the Poro, which learned to act as guardian of new commercial interests as well as of Mende traditions. Officials in Freetown knew little of the Poro and distrusted what they knew, but when seeking collaborators they tended to ‘ossif[y] this fluid situation on the basis of what they thought was tradition and custom’.⁴⁷ The establishment of the British protectorate was thus a gradual and insidious process, involving not only the presence of the often oppressive frontier police, increasing British interference in matters like domestic slavery, and eventually the taxation of houses, but also the imposition of ‘paramount chiefs’ amenable to colonial control upon the evolving political order. In 1898 the imposition of house-tax proved the final straw, provoking a widespread rural insurrection in which Sierra Leone Creoles were the chief sufferers. This traumatic event had sobering effects on ‘modernising’ administrators elsewhere in the British empire.

Historians of the colonial occupation have tended to concentrate their attention on politics which ultimately decided on armed resistance; but many did not. Shrewd rulers like Tofa at Porto Novo calculated that their interests, or those of their subjects, could best be served by close collaboration with a foreign power; but this could prove a grave miscalculation. Long before Tofa died in 1908 his hopes had been sadly disappointed, as irascible French officers undermined the authority he had worked to build up in the eyes of his subjects; there was nothing left to hand on to his heirs. Tofa’s funeral effectively marked the end of the Porto Novan monarchy;⁴⁸ thereafter his dynastic enemies began to join other displaced groups in early forms of anti-colonial resistance.⁴⁹ Sometimes, however, there were genuine foundations for the colonialists’ myth that they were received as liberators. In western Yorubaland, a historian native to the area concludes that both French and British were initially welcomed ‘as a godsend to

⁴⁷ A. Abraham, *Topics in Sierra Leone history* (Freetown, 1976), 2; see also his *Mende government and politics under colonial rule* (Freetown, 1978).

⁴⁸ A. Akindele and C. Aguessy, *Contribution à l’étude de l’histoire de l’ancien royaume de Porto Novo*, *Mémoires de l’I.F.A.N.*, no 25 (Dakar 1953), 89; cf. Nathan S. Senkomago, ‘The Kingdom of Porto Novo with special reference to its external relations, 1862–1908’, Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1976.

⁴⁹ J. A. Ballard, ‘The Porto Novo incidents of 1923; politics in the colonial era’, *Odu*, July 1965, 2, 1.

deliver the people from their adversaries', the Egba and the Fon.⁵⁰ Similarly there is no reason to doubt that many Africans were pleased to see Samory or the Tukolor displaced by the French army, even if they soon became disenchanted with the consequences.

Some of the coastal peoples were already so strongly penetrated by western influences, or so firmly articulated into the commercial economy, that no sharp discontinuity was involved in the establishment of colonial rule. In the southern Gold Coast, declared a British colony in 1874, the actual extension of British authority as marked by the activities of commissioners and constabulary had been a gradual process, closely related to internal changes and conflicts arising from the simultaneous spread of commerce, Christianity and literacy. Given the continuing reluctance of the British to assert their undivided sovereignty, those who understood something of the new forces (whether chiefs or commoners) tried to manipulate the emergent colonial administration, for example by invoking its support in the growing number of destoolments and land disputes. In general, educated chiefs were the gainers; by 1910 the Gold Coast government had conceded to them 'a significant degree of judicial authority under weak control in order to enlist their co-operation in administrative matters'.⁵¹ In Akim Abuakwa, chief Amoako Atta II (1888–1911) consolidated a position in the new colonial system which his successor and former secretary, Ofori Atta I (1912–43), would skilfully utilise to extend the jurisdiction of his state, to control the expanding frontiers of gold miners and cocoa-farmers, and so to increase the revenues and patronage available to his stool.

There was clearly great diversity in the manner in which the new colonial order initially presented itself to African rulers and their subjects, and in the ways by which they tried to come to terms with it. But by 1905 – although there were still remote districts in the rain-forest and the desert where no effective 'pacification' had yet taken place – the fact of colonial rule had generally been accepted. Longer-term patterns of co-existence, if not of collaboration, were now in process of establishment.

⁵⁰ A. I. Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland under European rule, 1889–1945: a comparative analysis of French and British colonialism*, Ibadan History Series (London 1976), 53, and chs. 1 and 2 *passim*.

⁵¹ Jarle Simensen, 'Commoners, chiefs and colonial government; British policy and local politics in Akim Abuakwa, Ghana under colonial rule', Ph.D. thesis, University of Trondheim, 1975, 90.

INITIAL PATTERNS OF COLONIAL COLLABORATION

Once the French, British and Germans had acquired their new empires, they had to find methods of governing them. Before the conquest, they had addressed little direct attention to the specific problems of doing this. To maintain their interests hitherto, they had relied upon the more or less voluntary collaboration of Africans; and, given their determination not to provide the resources needed for direct administration, this was what they would still have to do. Imperialist euphoria in Europe did not mean willingness to finance large colonial bureaucracies; in 1901 the entire white staff of the German administration in Kamerun numbered 77, in Togo 23.⁵² Yet the responsibilities which colonial governments now assumed – not merely for governing their enlarged territories but for encouraging a progressively greater involvement in the commercial economy – were vastly more complex than those of the anti-slave trade era. They would need African co-operation in recruiting labour to build railways and feeder roads and administrative stations, to collect taxes, and to judge disputes and maintain order in the increasingly complex conditions created by the spread of commerce. It was therefore necessary to undertake ‘a reconstruction of collaboration’.⁵³

In West Africa it soon became apparent that collaboration would continue to be based on African communities which possessed their own land and organised agricultural production, even though administrative as well as market constraints would direct this towards export markets. Governors eager to expedite the exploitation of mineral and forest resources might experiment with the granting of concessions and monopolies, and even blunder onto the delicate ground of land ownership, but only rarely did they attempt to interfere with the usufructory rights of African cultivators. In the stage which Afro-European relationships had reached in West Africa, this was a matter of enlightened self-interest. Administrators whose revenues depended largely on customs duties naturally gave priority to expanding those modes of production on which the existing export economy was based.

⁵² L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa, 1870–1960*, vol. iv: *The economics of colonialism* (Cambridge, 1975), Introduction, 18.

⁵³ Ronald Robinson, ‘Non-European foundations of imperialism: sketch for a theory of collaboration’, in Robert Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (ed.), *Studies in the theory of imperialism* (London, 1972), 133.

INITIAL PATTERNS OF COLONIAL COLLABORATION

This might nevertheless involve imposing changes in the actual pattern of African production. Whereas in the Gold Coast Akan entrepreneurs were by 1900 already willingly and effectively responding to growing European demands for cocoa, their Baule kinsmen in the Ivory Coast still preferred to concentrate on producing gold and cloth to exchange with their African neighbours. Their French overlords were prepared to tolerate this so long as the country's resources of wild rubber, exploited by a cosmopolitan group of European, African and Asian entrepreneurs, provided an alternative revenue base; but by 1908, with the collapse of the rubber bonanza in sight, official policy regarding taxation, labour, and land tenure was seeking to direct Baule resources towards the cultivation of cotton or cocoa.⁵⁴ This would cause conflict. But – at least until Liberia granted the Firestone concession of 1926 – there was never any serious question of a large-scale plantation economy in West Africa. The self-interested conviction of established European merchant houses, that existing commercial structures were capable of expansion, was powerfully sustained by colonial administrators who, quite apart from the paternalistic ideals which many of them fervently held, knew that their existing revenues derived ultimately from existing patterns of production, and that any threat to African land rights might produce discontent, if not widespread revolt on the Sierra Leone model.

Challenges to this economic policy did develop from Europeans seeking exclusive rights over natural resources, and preferential access to the labour needed to develop them; and they had some successes. It was difficult for impoverished colonial governments (or ambitious African rulers) to resist proposals for mineral concessions; from the late 1890s there was a localised gold boom in the Gold Coast and Asante, and once the mines were established, the colonial authorities found themselves under pressure to assist labour recruitment.⁵⁵ The British Cotton Growing Association, speaking for a key British industry, enjoyed much Colonial Office favour, but less from the men on the spot. In 1904 the Ibadan chiefs succeeded in resisting its demand for a 15,000-acre concession; attempts to increase British cotton supplies had to rely

⁵⁴ T. C. Weiskel, *French colonial rule and the Baule peoples* (Oxford, 1980), 154–60, 172–86.

⁵⁵ R. G. Thomas, 'Forced labour in British West Africa: the case of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1906–1927', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1973, 14, 79–103.

on diverting peasant production from the local weaving industry to Lancashire.⁵⁶ However the British did permit the establishment of a few European plantations, and the French rather more; in the Ivory Coast, where Arthur Verdier had led the way in 1881, these would become serious competitors with African farmers, not least in seeking access to migrant labour from Upper Volta. In Kamerun, the colonial economy began in the 1890s to follow the pattern of equatorial rather than west Africa; force was increasingly used to secure land and labour for German interests, and to restrict the trading privileges of the Duala, their original collaborators. Governor Puttkamer, appointed in 1894, granted substantial concessions for the extraction of rubber and ivory as well as for agricultural plantations; in 1906, however, he was recalled by the reforming colonial secretary, Bernhard Dernberg, and African agriculture began to be taken somewhat more seriously.⁵⁷ In Togo, on the other hand, it was the view of the evangelical Bremen merchant, J. K. Vietor, that the government should collaborate with ‘free peasants, happily and peaceably cultivating their own fields with their wives and children’,⁵⁸ which generally prevailed against those who sought monopolistic concessions. The main reason for the adoption of this form of economic policy was of course that it worked. By 1905 most colonies could feel optimistic about the prospects for increasing the type of commercial exchanges already established between African agriculturists and the capitalist world.

Finding appropriate methods of exercising political control was however still a subject for experiment and improvisation. Whether the new colonial masters arrived as military conquerors or with the implied consent of their new subjects, their initial problem was to identify persons of authority who could provide them with porters, provisions and local intelligence, and assist them in the adjudication of disputes and the maintenance of order. This exercise of ‘finding the chief’, though vital for future relationships in the district, had often to be carried out under the most

⁵⁶ K. D. Nwurah, ‘The West African operations of the British Cotton Growing Association, 1904–1914’, *Afr. Hist. Studies*, 1971, 4, 315–30; Marion Johnson, ‘Cotton imperialism in West Africa’, *African Affairs*, 1974, 73, 178–87.

⁵⁷ K. Hausen, *Deutsche Kolonialherrschaft in Afrika* (Zurich, 1971); M. Michel, ‘Les plantations allemandes du mont Cameroun, 1885–1914’, *Revue française d’histoire d’outre mer*, 1976, 58, 207.

⁵⁸ J. K. Vietor, *Geschichte und kulturelle Entwicklung unserer Schützgebiete* (Berlin, 1913), 143–4.

unfavourable conditions; sometimes there was no evidently available candidate, sometimes there were several, and those who volunteered for the role might thereby discredit themselves with important sections of the community. Colonisers and colonised were mutually ignorant, not only about the authority which individuals might enjoy but about the nature of authority itself in the societies which they were encountering.

In this early phase, less depended on the national culture or colonial doctrine of the colonisers than on their immediate needs; the French were no less ready than the British to work through established hierarchies if this seemed expedient. In Futa Jalon in 1881 Jean Bayol, anxious to secure a treaty to exclude British claims, accepted terms which left the ruling Alfaya and Soriya houses with substantial freedom of diplomatic manoeuvre; unwilling to risk yet another military campaign the French had to rely on moral pressure through existing authorities to keep their imperial option open. This meant acquiescing in attempts by the *almamis* to strengthen their authority within this decentralised state, and even in their readiness to supply firearms to Samory. Not until 1896, when any danger of British intrusion had finally been removed, did the development of long-standing conflicts between Almami Bokar Biro, provincial chiefs, and other elements of the Fulani aristocracy provide the French with opportunities to occupy Timbo militarily and impose a Resident.⁵⁹ By 1900 the new administration was strong enough to break up Futa Jalon into its constituent 'cantons', and to depose troublesome rulers at will. But even these manoeuvres involved finding some elements of the Fulani aristocracy willing to collaborate; they had secured sufficient influence to ensure that their distinctive brand of Islamic conservatism remained a dominant force throughout the colonial period.

Where French officers arrived as conquerors of the Muslim empires, they seemed to have a wider choice of collaborators; Archinard could experiment not only with the use of Agibu and the Bambara dynasties, but with the appointment of Mademba Sy, a former employee of the telegraph service who had done well in the army, as *fama* of the important town of Sansanding. None of these expedients had any lasting success, even from the French

⁵⁹ Winston McGowan, 'Fula resistance to French expansion into Futa Jallon, 1889-1896', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1981, 22, 245-61.

point of view. In Dahomey, on the other hand, the Senegalese General Dodds, anxious to see trade resumed, was more concerned to seek collaborators with genuine authority among their peoples. While accepting the restoration of Agoli-Agbo in the central core of the Abomey kingdom, in dependent provinces like Ketu, he made genuine attempts to restore the authority of Yoruba *obas* who had been conquered by the Fon. Seeking ‘responsible chiefs, sufficiently powerful to exercise real direction over the population’, Dodds signed protectorate treaties providing that their countries would be governed according to their own laws and customs, and their institutions respected.⁶⁰

The British too, in these early years, were groping for viable bases of collaboration according to particular circumstances of time and place. Sometimes they improvised as wildly as Archinard. In 1897 the government of Sierra Leone recognized as chief of Sembehun, Nancy Tucker, a trader who was the mistress of a sergeant in the Frontier Police; she proved a ‘loyal’ collaborator during the collection of house tax, but not an effective one when it came to ensuring the collaboration of her subjects. In the bewildering environment of the Ibo hinterland, it could happen that ‘the whiteman just looked at Anyigo Agwu [or some other striking-looking personage] and called him out to be a chief’.⁶¹ When consultation did take place, Ibo might prefer to protect their true village head by putting forward a person of small standing. The British thus manned their new system of ‘native courts’ by *creating* a set of appointed functionaries – the ‘warrant chiefs’ and ascribing them authority of a sort unknown in Ibo history.⁶²

If the British were in this initial stage more likely than the French or Germans to work through established African rulers, this was due more to pressures upon civilian administrators to economise in the use of force than to any general theory of collaboration. Carter’s reason for retaining the *awujale*, Tumwase, in Ijebu in 1892 were severely practical; ‘although essentially a weak man, he is not wanting in sense, and it is better to deal with a man of that kind, who will be amenable to reason and can easily be managed, than to allow the Jebus to elect another king to be

⁶⁰ Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland*, 85–8.

⁶¹ Quoted in A. E. Afigbo, *The warrant chiefs: Indirect Rule in South-eastern Nigeria, 1891–1929* (London, 1972), 61.

⁶² *Ibid.*, chs 2–3; E. Isichei, *A history of the Igbo people* (London, 1976), ch. 10.

a tool in their own hands'.⁶³ In Abeokuta, Carter, knowing his government's reluctance to sanction further military operations, was equally ready to work through a complicated oligarchy which he hardly understood; once the oligarchs had learned their lesson and agreed to open the roads, Carter did not press those clauses in his draft treaty which would have authorised close political control by the Lagos government over the Egba state, but agreed that 'its independence shall be fully recognized'.⁶⁴ But independence in the age of the railway seemed to require new institutions; British officials encouraged the conflicting authorities to form the Egba United Government, guided from 1902 by a Wesleyan minister who took the name of Adegboyega Edun. By 1909 Abeokuta possessed the rudiments of a modern bureaucratic administration, employing 357 staff in fifteen departments, including European engineers and other specialists.⁶⁵ But – although the United Government looked to Lagos for technical advice, for consent to the raising of revenue, and sometimes for help in maintaining order – there was no consistent policy of encouraging this attempt at self-modernisation. When in 1914 Lugard found a pretext to abrogate Carter's treaty, the Egba discovered that their independence had become purely nominal.

The collaborative structures which Lugard had established after the military conquest of northern Nigeria were of course very different; Sokoto provides the standard example of pre-colonial authority incorporated into a colonial regime, though on the clearly declared basis that 'all these things . . . which the Fulani by conquest took the right to do now pass to the British'.⁶⁶ But even here the British did not, as is sometimes assumed, simply proceed on the basis of preserving existing rulerships with which to collaborate; Lugard at least considered the alternative of restoring Hausa dynasties displaced by the jihad, before deciding to build the new system of colonial autocracy upon the structures created under the caliphate. The northern Nigerian system of 'indirect rule' was a response to local circumstances before it became the basis of colonial dogma.

⁶³ C.O. 879/36, CP African 428, no. 133, Carter to Knutsford, 3 June 1892, 182.

⁶⁴ P.P. 1893–94, LXII, C 7227, Carter to Ripon, 11 Oct. 1893, 4–8, 36.

⁶⁵ Agneta Pallinder-Law, 'Government in Abeokuta, 1830–1914, with special reference to Egba United Government, 1898–1914', Ph.D. University of Göteborg, 1973, 136, 153–59.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Margery Perham, *Lugard: the years of authority, 1898–1945* (London, 1960), 128–9.

Though sometimes the collaborative arrangements improvised during the period of occupation proved remarkably durable, often their weakness became quickly apparent. The testing time came when colonial governments, eager to accelerate the growth of the commercial economy, increased their demands for labour and taxation. Until 1898 Mende and Temne leaders were, with misgivings, prepared to accept the presence of frontier police and district commissioners – on condition that their attempts to exercise a ‘civilising’ influence on the local judicial system, and in particular to interfere with the peculiar institution of domestic slavery, were kept to a very bare minimum. But when Sir Frederick Cardew, anxious to encourage commerce and finance the railway, imposed the house tax, each people resorted to its own style of military resistance. Similarly, the collaborators whom the French had identified among the Baule proved reliable only so long as no great demands were made upon them. In 1894–5 and in 1898–1902 the French military, needing porters and labourers, threatened to erode domestic slavery and deprive the Baule of their labour force, and so provoked localised rebellions; in 1908 Governor Angoulvant sought to undermine the Baule economy by greatly increased demands for labour and taxes, and reacted to their resistance by a still more violent programme of ‘pacification’, intended to inaugurate direct French control.⁶⁷ It was such crises of colonial authority which provided the real incentives to develop more systematic approaches to colonial government.

One possibility, taken more seriously by the British than by French or Germans, was to revive an older style of West African policy. In 1909 the colonial secretary of the Gold Coast, Major Bryan, argued that the jurisdiction of the chiefs should be abridged in favour of the educated African élite, whom he considered ‘far better qualified to administer justice’.⁶⁸ Such men had indeed played distinguished roles, not merely in the administration of the nineteenth-century coastal settlements, but in their expansion. George Ekem Ferguson, not only a trained surveyor but a loyal servant of Queen Victoria, could be sent at minimal risk to health, and minimal expense, to make the treaties which justified British control of the northern territories of the

⁶⁷ Weiskel, *Baule peoples*.

⁶⁸ Memo by Bryan, 13 Sept. 1909 (enclosed in C.O. 96/486, Rodger, 19 Oct.), cited in Simensen, ‘Commoners, chiefs and colonial government’, 85–6.

Gold Coast;⁶⁹ Bou el-Moghdad Seck, assessor to the Muslim tribunal in St Louis, volunteered to promote French influence among Senegambian Muslims; T. G. Lawson pioneered the system of British paramountcy around Sierra Leone, on lines which his successor, Ernest Parkes, believed could have been most constructively developed by the appointment of Creole district commissioners.⁷⁰ Much nineteenth-century experience seemed to encourage the continued employment of western-educated Africans as responsible agents on the expanding frontiers of European influence. But European attitudes and prejudices on this matter had begun to change.

Early Victorians who hoped to train up educated Christians committed to the social and economic values of bourgeois capitalism had succeeded remarkably in this. Creole loyalists, with genuine roots in both African and western cultures, saw themselves as essential intermediaries and natural partners in the creation of West African nationality. Senegalese whose citizen rights had been recognised by the Third Republic had comparable expectations. Edward Blyden, prophesying the partition in 1880, envisaged Afro-Americans from the United States also playing indispensable roles in that 'Providential' event.⁷¹ Europeans anxious to spread the benefits of Christianity and commerce might thus have counted on the continuing co-operation of this population of several hundred Africans, literate in English or French, possessing various relevant technical and commercial skills, in touch (to some extent at least) with the customs and attitudes of fellow Africans, and eager to promote the expansion of western civilisation in return for very modest remuneration. Yet, ironically, the zenith of Euro-American imperialism in the 1890s produced a new orthodoxy of cultural arrogance, coloured by racial prejudice, which set serious restrictions upon the collaboration of educated Africans in the new tasks of empire-building.

During the 1890s (as the supply of young Europeans anxious for appointments in West Africa increased, and medical advances

⁶⁹ Roger G. Thomas, 'George Ekem Ferguson: civil servant extraordinary', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 1972, xiii; Kwame Arhin (ed.), *The papers of George Ekem Ferguson*, African Social Research Documents, 7 (Leiden and Cambridge, 1974).

⁷⁰ Sierra Leone Archives: Minute paper 4602/1892, memo by Parkes 18 Nov. 1892.

⁷¹ E. W. Blyden, 'Ethiopia stretching out her hands unto God; or, Africa's service to the world'. Discourse delivered before the American Colonization Society, May 1880, in *Christianity, Islam and the Negro race* (1887; reprinted Edinburgh, 1967).

made it more likely they would survive) these prejudices issued in a general de-Africanisation of senior posts in the public service. Racial discrimination was not of course new; it had long been applied in cases where Africans might be required to administer justice⁷² or medical treatment⁷³ to white men. But now it became exceptional for Africans to be appointed or retained in responsible posts. In Sierra Leone, Governor Cardew, finding a number of African officials deficient by his austere standards of public rectitude, concluded that ‘none of them are fitted at present by character and habit to hold such responsible positions as heads of departments’, and began to reconstruct his administration accordingly.⁷⁴ In Lagos, where clergy of the Church Missionary Society had led the way by their strictures on the ageing Bishop Crowther, a similar process left Henry Carr the only senior African official by 1900.⁷⁵ In Senegal, the reaction centred on attempts to abridge the rights of citizenship which during the early years of the Third Republic had been accorded to residents of the four *communes* of St Louis, Gorée, Dakar and Rufisque.⁷⁶ In the lower cadres of government, missionary and commercial service the need for literate African collaborators expanded; Europeans could never have extended their control so rapidly without the services – often rendered with genuine empire loyalism – of thousands of clerks, storemen, constables, boatmen, customs officers, medical orderlies, teachers, mechanics and catechists who had been trained in the schools of Freetown or Cape Coast, Lagos or Calabar, St Louis or Porto Novo. But the routes by which such men might have advanced to administrative or political responsibility became increasingly impassable everywhere except Liberia – an unedifying exception which many Europeans regarded as justifying their own new rules.

⁷² E.g., C.O. 267/317, minutes by Holland, Wingfield, Kimberley on Hennessy to Kimberley, 16 Nov. 1872, 143.

⁷³ E.g., C.O. 147/58, Evans to Holland, Conf. 10, 6 April 1887, encl. Grant, 16 March.

⁷⁴ C.O. 267/412, Cardew to Hemming, pte., 28 Nov. 1894; cf. C. H. Fyfe, *A history of Sierra Leone* (Oxford, 1962), 537–38.

⁷⁵ P. D. Cole, *Modern and traditional élites in the politics of Lagos* (Cambridge, 1975), 75–6; J. B. Webster, *The African churches among the Yoruba, 1888–1922* (Oxford, 1964), part I; cf. D. Kimble, *A political history of Ghana, 1850–1928* (Oxford, 1963), 93–8.

⁷⁶ G. W. Johnson, *The emergence of black politics in Senegal: the struggle for power in the four communes, 1900–1920* (Stanford, 1971), 80–2; cf. P. Mille, ‘The black vote in Senegal’, *J. Royal Afr. Soc.*, 1900, 1, 64–79.

EARLY IMPACTS

This self-imposed reluctance to assign educated Africans significant responsibilities in the expanded empire obliged the colonial powers to consider how the working arrangements they had improvised with various 'chiefs' might be converted into regular systems of government. The ultimate results may be more appropriately considered in later volumes, but already by 1905 it was possible to discern signs of developing national styles of 'native administration'. The French, while continuing to accept the expediency of utilising the traditional authority of some rulers, such as the *mogho naba*, were already tending to level out historical institutions in order to incorporate the chiefs into a uniform bureaucratic order. For some of the military commanders the ideal collaborator was a well-disciplined NCO; and that was what some of the men recognised as chiefs actually were. The British on the other hand were in general readier to utilise the authority of powerful rulers like the Fulani emirs when this could prudently be done. Initially, this might be due to calculations of financial expediency; legitimate government was economical government. Captain Ross, the influential district commissioner of Oyo, prosaically estimated the collaboration of the *alafin* to be worth 'a saving in administrative charges of from £3,000 to £5,000 per annum', and Governor Girouard regarded more direct methods of ruling northern Nigeria as 'quite out of the question on financial grounds'.⁷⁷ But gradually British administrators, proud that in their own country much of the work of rural government was still reserved to local notables, began to blend inherited assumptions and operational experience into a working philosophy of 'indirect rule'.

EARLY IMPACTS

The immediate impact of the conquest upon the lives of ordinary Africans varied enormously. Military operations meant a period of violence; but it was rarely protracted, and in any case violence was usually no new experience. Many scholars, reacting against colonialist historiography, emphasise the elements of continuity in African life under colonialism, the extent to which Africans

⁷⁷ Atanda, *The new Oyo Empire*; 110; Colonial report, no. 594, Northern Nigeria, 1907-8, 6.

successfully preserved whole areas of their culture inviolate from their new colonial masters.⁷⁸ For the majority of Africans the real world remained the ‘little platoon’ – an ethnic community defined by tangible connections of family and neighbourhood, by attachment to plot of land intimately associated with the ancestors as well as the living kindred. But these were not the static worlds depicted by romantics as ‘unchanging Africa’; in varying degrees, the peoples of the region were already experiencing inner tensions or conflicts rooted in their earlier history, and responses to colonial rule grew out of these experiences.

Abrupt changes did occur. The little platoons were now under supreme commanders who imposed new disciplines and new fatigues, though their orders had not by 1905 penetrated everywhere. Severe blows began to fall on the religious and cultural foundations of many communities. Colonial governments suppressed traditional rituals which involved ‘barbarous practices’ like human sacrifice, and traditional procedures for punishing wrongdoers or settling disputes; missionaries not only attacked old deities but founded schools, where the young were taught to question established authorities, and to reject traditional family structures. Opportunities to earn wages in railway construction might induce domestic slaves to abandon even the most lenient of households.

Faced with such bewildering upheavals, some Africans turned to traditional religion. As their political leadership was converted into an agency of French tax-collecting, ‘political initiative among the Baule passed largely from the chiefs to the diviners’.⁷⁹ Elsewhere secret societies operating under oath, like the Poro in 1898, sought to reassert old values by organising popular resistance. From that same year, Europeans living among the western Ibo became aware of the *ekumeku*, a ‘secret war cult’ uniting members of local town societies to express hostility to the new order by attacks on mission stations, as well as on establishments of the Niger Company. Later attacks were concentrated on the newly created native courts; prolonged fighting over more than a dozen years was necessary to control the movement. A missionary observer described it as the secret

⁷⁸ Cf. J. F. A. Ajayi, ‘The continuity of African institutions under colonialism’, in T. O. Ranger (ed.), *Emerging themes in African history in Proceedings of the International Historical Conference held at Dar es Salaam, 1965* (Nairobi, 1968).

⁷⁹ Weiskel, *Baule Peoples*, 227–30.

police force of local chiefs weary of the European presence; 'one cannot deny', he added ruefully, 'that the Ekumekus form the pick of the most capable young men'.⁸⁰ Other Ibo used the resources of the *dibia*, traditional diviners and herbalists, as weapons in their prolonged resistance to the foreign insurgents.⁸¹

Yet in general it seems that the resources of African primal religions were less widely used by West African than by East African communities as a means of cultural survival. More commonly they responded by accepting one of the world religions, Islam or Christianity, and making it their own. Missionary agents of both faiths had some spectacular successes. The growth of urban centres provided new mission fields which Muslims generally tapped with greater success than Christians. In Senegal al-Hājj Malik Sy, a learned Tijāniyya marabout, offered such effective leadership to urban populations, and those of certain rural areas, that the French soon found him a more valuable and influential collaborator than any of their chiefs. They were slower to overcome their fears of Islamic resistance in the case of Aḥmad Bamba, whom they twice exiled during the years 1895–1907; yet, as they later realised, the 'organizational and ideological salvation'⁸² which he offered to his Mourid disciples had the effect of easing the adaptation of the Wolof to the new tensions of colonial rule. In Nigeria too, colonial rule provided opportunities to complete the unfinished business of the jihads; already by 1913 Muslims were thought to form 35 per cent of the population of the Ibadan–Ife area.⁸³

Christianity was both helped and handicapped by being identified in African eyes with colonial rule. Its most spectacular advances were in eastern Nigeria; as Catholics and Protestants followed the flag into the Ibo interior, they offered spiritual and practical guidance through new perplexities, and founded schools which could provide avenues to worldly success. By 1921, 284, 835 Ibo out of four million were estimated to be Christians, where in 1900 converts had been numbered in hundreds.⁸⁴ The

⁸⁰ Archives of the *Société des missions africaines*, Rome: SMA 14/80404/1579, Report on 'Ecou-Mecou' by R. P. Straub, cf. Philip A. Igbafe, 'Western Ibo society and its resistance to British rule: the Ekumeku movement, 1898–1911', *Journal African Hist.*, 1971, 12, 441–59.

⁸¹ Isichei, *History of the Igbo People*, 123–4.

⁸² O'Brien, *Mourides of Senegal*, 13.

⁸³ C. G. Elgee, *The evolution of Ibadan* (Ibadan, 1914).

⁸⁴ Isichei, *History of the Igbo People*, 165ff.

‘The map which appears here in the printed edition has been removed for ease of use and now appears as an additional resource on the chapter overview page’.

Ewe offered another example of Christian advance; here, dedicated German missionaries to a certain degree succeeded in distancing their work from that of the colonial administration.⁸⁵ In almost every case the practical services rendered to Africans by mission schools, and to a lesser degree by clinics and hospitals, were essential elements of Christian growth.

The world religions often flourished best where they assumed distinctively African characteristics. Among the Yoruba, where Protestant mission churches were not only deeply rooted among the educated repatriates of Lagos and Abeokuta but increasingly established themselves in the inland states, the period of imperial conquest was also one of schism. Thoughtful African Christians were deeply troubled not only by the political and economic aggression of Christian Europe, but by the increasing rigidity of evangelical missionaries over polygamy and other central features of African culture, and by the strong racial overtones which increasingly marked clashes between European and African churchmen over questions of church order and discipline. First Baptists, then Anglicans and, eventually in 1917, Wesleyans, seceded in strength from the Lagos mission churches.⁸⁶ Their new churches remained in the mainstream of Protestant tradition, but their insistence that 'to render Christianity indigenous to Africa it must be watered by native hands, pruned with the native hatchet, and tended with native earth', often made them more effective as evangelists.⁸⁷ A little later, still more striking successes would be achieved by Christian prophets offering charismatic presentations and interpretations of the Gospel; W. W. Harris, who began his remarkable mission to the southern Ivory Coast in 1913, and Garrick Braide, who began to achieve mass conversions in the Niger delta about 1915, were both working among populations accustomed to religious change.⁸⁸

In 1905 the tide of colonial rule had not completely submerged the West African sub-continent. Although European maps showed the territorial partition as complete, there were still many areas which had yet to see a white man or to feel the impact of

⁸⁵ H. W. Debrunner, *A church between colonial powers* (London, 1965).

⁸⁶ Webster, *African churches*, part 2.

⁸⁷ D. B. Vincent [Mojola Agbebi], *Africa and the Gospel* (Sierra Leone and Lagos, n.d.), Sermon in Bamboo Chapel, Lagos, 7 April 1889, 9.

⁸⁸ G. M. Haliburton, *The prophet Harris* (London, 1971); G. O. M. Tasié, *Christian missionary enterprise in the Niger delta, 1864–1918* (Leiden, 1978).

the new régime; in desert regions of Mauritania, Mali and Niger French military control would not be established until the 1920s. Nearer the colonial capitals, penetration of the lands of the Baule, the Ibo, the Tiv was still very uneven; and even in countries where the French or British had decreed the imposition of direct taxation, the extent to which it could be assessed or collected depended on local conditions. Experience of resistance, like that in Sierra Leone in 1898, made the new rulers reluctant to test their mastery too far.

Economically, the conquest was beginning to show results. Railways designed to channel trade towards the oceanic ports were well advanced in every coastal colony except the Gambia (where the river served the purpose). The French completed the Senegal–Niger link in 1905 (though until 1924 it was connected to the coastal lines only by unreliable river transport); Conakry was linked with Kankan in 1914, Abidjan with Bouake in 1912, Cotonu with Save in 1911. The Germans had begun lines from Lome to both Palime and Atakpame (1913). Kumasi was linked with Sekondi by 1903; the Lagos railway reached Ibadan in 1901 and was extended to Jebba between 1905 and 1909; the Sierra Leone railway was completed to Pendembu, near the Liberian border, in 1908. At the same time port facilities were being improved, and the circulation of modern monetary currencies encouraged; foreign merchant and shipping concerns increased their capital resources by mergers or pooling agreements, and inter-colonial banking systems established for both British (1894) and French (1901) empires.

In partial consequence of such changes, figures for the export of primary produce and the imports of European manufactures had begun to show gratifying expansion. Although to some extent this may have represented the diversion of resources from production for the trans-Saharan trade or the regional exchanges, there seems little doubt that these trade figures reflect increases in Gross Domestic Product. The responsibility of colonial policy for this remains debatable. A stimulating history of the southern Dahomian economy suggests that production was already expanding steadily before the French conquest and that the continued annual growth rate of about 2.5 per cent owed more to ‘domestic and international economic factors’ than to government action; the principal effect of French taxation and labour policies

may have been to remove much of the surplus from private Dahomian hands in order to create the new infrastructure of transport and administration. Otherwise, Dr Manning sees no revolutionary change: ‘The methods of production, the types and quantities of goods produced and consumed and the economic organisation of society all remained much the same on the eve of World War I as they had been on the eve of the French conquest.’⁸⁹ Moreover, although in many colonies (notably Nigeria) African entrepreneurs could find opportunities to profit from the expanding capitalist sector, distributive roles which in the nineteenth century would have been filled by African middlemen, increasingly passed into the hands of European firms or of Lebanese and Syrian immigrants.

Although, within the period of this volume, many West Africans had felt the impact of colonial rule only superficially, imperial apologists were justified in claiming that the conquest was opening a new period of African history. Africans had become subject to new, often remote, authorities whose significance for their lives would inevitably grow. The new colonial unities were defined territorially (except in the case of internal boundaries within the French West African ‘federation’) by European treaties: politically by their subjection to new bodies of laws (still limited in their scope and rudimentarily applied); administratively by the presence of new alien bureaucracies. By 1905 most, though not all, West Africans had experienced colonial government as a force which taxed, demanded labour or military service, and in certain cases judged and punished; some knew it only too well as an armed conqueror. Yet in certain essential respects the conquerors showed some restraint in their demands. In most areas administrators tacitly condoned the continuation of domestic forms of servitude for transitional periods, though their own demands for labour might in some localities be undermining the control which the owners could exercise in practice; and, despite African concern over complex measures of land legislation, relatively few West Africans were forcibly removed from their family lands.

As colonial rule continued, these inchoate new politics would increasingly develop distinctive identities, and with them that

⁸⁹ Patrick Manning, *Slavery, colonialism and economic growth in Dahomey, 1640–1960* (Cambridge, 1982), 217–25.

social cohesion which is 'rooted in the conflicts between men's different allegiances'.⁹⁰ Increasingly, Africans recognised possibilities of realising their own aims and advancing their own interests within and through the new colonial order – not merely the weak who had originally welcomed protection against strong neighbours, but chiefs and aspirants to chiefly office, traders, court-clerks, teachers, letter-writers, and interpreters. Even those whose former hopes and aspirations seemed to have been rejected accepted the new system; despised 'wogs' like Joyce Cary's Mister Johnson, could still take a perverse pride in (besides deriving certain perquisites from) the lowly status which the new empires reserved for them.

But it was not merely collaborators and opportunists who found their activities increasingly focused within the colonial state; the prospect of its reform and ultimate capture provided prophets of African nationality within the petty bourgeoisie with concrete objectives they had previously lacked. Sir Samuel Lewis, a conservative lawyer who had acted as loyal opposition within the narrow compass of the Sierra Leone Colony, turned his formidable powers of criticism upon the administration of the new Protectorate, though with less success. Senegalese *citoyens*, like the letter-writer, Modi Mbaye, and the young Lamine Gueye, could by 1914 create political alliances which secured the election to the French parliament of Blaise Diagne, a black deputy whose connections, like theirs, extended beyond the four *communes*.⁹¹ African lawyers in the Gold Coast not only earned large fees for litigation over development lands in the colony, but began to find wider political roles in championing African land tenure through the Aborigines Rights Protection Society, founded in Cape Coast in 1897 with the explicit aim of interpreting government Bills to those unable to read them.⁹² Thus, at the very time when the vaguer aspirations of the nineteenth-century West African national bourgeoisie were being shattered, new though distant horizons were appearing within the boundaries of the new colonial states.

⁹⁰ M. Gluckman, *Custom and conflict in Africa* (Oxford, 1959), 4; cf. D. A. Low, *Lion rampant* (London, 1973), 25–6.

⁹¹ G. W. Johnson, *Black politics, passim*; Lamine Guèye, *Itinéraire africain* (Paris, 1966), 13–30.

⁹² Kimble, *Political history of Ghana*, chap. 9: 341–2 for public statement of April 1897. For litigation, see, e.g., Simensen, 133–6.

CHAPTER 6

WESTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA

A. FRENCH CONGO AND GABON 1886–1905

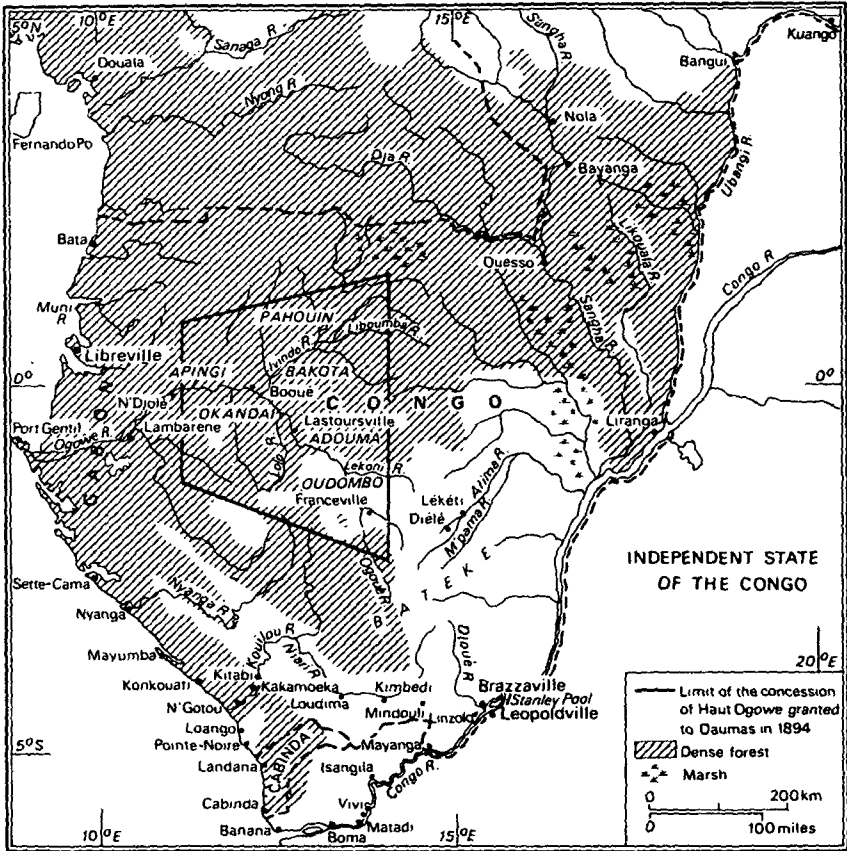
In 1885 the European opening up of Gabon and Congo had only just begun. Following the first two missions of Savorgnan de Brazza (1876–8 and 1879–82), and the ratification of the Makoko treaties, which recognised the French protectorate over the right bank of the river (the county of the Teke), France had entrusted to the explorer the task of effectively taking control of the territory (1883–5). It was not by chance that the attitude of the population, elsewhere at times hostile to the white conquest, here proved to be on the whole favourable; trade had preceded the flag, and the occupation of the hinterland had immediate economic repercussions. The Kande and the Duma, who had in their hands the monopoly of traffic on the Ogowe, the Teke of the plateau and Stanley (Malebo) Pool, and the Bobangi on the Congo river, had long since left behind the stage of economic self-sufficiency in favour of an economy based on long-distance trade. By 1885 the slave trade had been replaced by a varied trade in goods which were expedited towards the Atlantic coast (ivory, dye-woods, and then rubber).¹ These populations with an outward-looking tradition were thus favourably disposed towards the new economic currents which seemed likely to fit in easily with traditional networks. Some groups immediately made an effort to take advantage of the situation, such as the Teke allies of Brazza, or the Fang on the Ogowe, whose first migration had reached this river in 1879.²

However, the calm was short-lived. As soon as the ‘discovery’ phase was completed, the French state undertook the ‘development’ of the country. The intervention of metropolitan France

¹ The slave trade in war captives was still current between tribes. In 1877, Captain Marché visited a camp of shackled slaves. But this trade was merely residual. A. Marché, *Trois voyages dans l’Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1879), 326.

² Noted at Lambarene by Dr Nassau, *My Ogowe* (New York, 1914), 296–7.

FRENCH CONGO AND GABON, 1886-97



11 French Congo and Gabon at the beginning of the twentieth century

in the archaic and brutal form of the *régime concessionnaire* (concessionary grants of land) copied from the Leopoldian model, soon resulted in the upsetting of the fragile pre-colonial balance. The heedlessness of the feeble administration was paralleled by the combined ill effects of ever more demanding and remote military operations, coupled with commercial activities of a dubious nature, the results of which were extremely destructive. In this new context the trading peoples proved the most difficult to integrate into a colonial economy. Whether passive or rebellious, they were rapidly pushed aside as the price paid for intensive yet fruitless exploitation, the worst excesses of which (taxes, military repression and portage) were in fact brought to

an end just at the close of the period under consideration, as a result of the Congo scandals of 1905.

EARLY COLONIAL CONTACTS 1886-97

Our study begins at an ideal moment. For the first time indigenous peoples found themselves face to face with Europe, and modern economic practices were making inroads into traditional society. Only the Mpongwe, along the coast around Libreville (founded in 1849) and a very few other trading posts, were accustomed to acting as middlemen in a system of brokerage based on advance payments in trade goods by the fifty-two commercial establishments spread along the Gabon coast.³ The major drawback of the system was that it placed between the producer and the purchaser a whole series of intermediaries, whose commission sometimes increased the price of the commodities concerned by 50 per cent. Lately the effects of Senegalese competition had made themselves felt. The Senegalese were former *laptots* (boatmen), who, having completed their service, found employment with the largest concerns, whether British (John Holt or Hatton and Cookson), German (Woermann), or, most recently, French (Conquy).⁴ In all, these concerns employed about 600 people.⁵

Upriver from the island of Lambarene, with its enviable situation at the crossroads of routes from the Ogowe, the Ngounie and the lakes, the peoples dwelling along the river (the Kele, Kuta, Pinji, Kande, Duma and others) had up till that time enjoyed virtually exclusive rights along their stretch of the river. The opening up of the Ogowe assisted the progress of the Fang, newcomers encouraged by the administration, of whom Brazza wrote, 'Here as on the coast they are destined to take everything over, for they have on their side vitality, courage, strength and numbers.'⁶ Within a few years the Fang, in their turn, became the indispensable intermediaries, contributing to the three- or four-fold increase in the import trade, particularly over land.⁷

³ Twelve in Ogowe, two in Ngounié, one at Cape Lopez, and the rest at Libreville.

⁴ About eighty Senegalese were trading on the lower river in 1883; Nassau, *My Ogowe*.

⁵ Letter from Dutreuil de Rhins to Maunoir, 28 May 1883, Archives Nationales, S.O.M., M.O.A., iv.

⁶ Brazza, Commercial report, Madiville, 20 Aug. 1885, S.O.M., Mission - 38.

⁷ 200 tonnes (400 Fang canoes), according to Brazza, went up the river each year, for a population estimated at '25-50,000 souls', *ibid*.

Above the Bowe rapids, the country was already being drawn into the sphere of the Congo basin. The Teke group, isolated on a ridge of sand whose meagre resources had long ago forced them to turn to trade and travel, provided the link between the upper Alima and the Congo river. But at the heart of the system were the Bobangi canoe men, then called Likuba, who had arrived scarcely two generations before;⁸ their mastery of the middle Congo and its main tributaries – from the lower Ubangi as far as the approaches to the Pool – enabled them to tap the wealth of the country, and in return to despatch into the interior the goods acquired from the Kongo middlemen on the lower reaches of the river. They combined their international trade with a complementary interregional one, for they furnished themselves with cassava by trading the products of their local industries, mats, pottery, cutlasses, nets and in particular dried fish,⁹ with the landsmen of the Alima, particularly the Mbochi.¹⁰ Hence the numerous prosperous villages of 2,000 to 4,000 inhabitants spread out along innumerable lagoons, in an area that is now deserted as a result of syphilis and sleeping sickness.¹¹

This Bobangi dynamism probably accounts for the haste with which the Teke make themselves allies of the French: they saw in this an opportunity to bring – or bring back – prosperity to the markets of the interior. Even though there was never a ‘Teke empire’ in the Western meaning of the phrase, and the power of the Makoko, the great and famous paramount chief, was never much more than symbolic, it nevertheless seems to be the case that at the time of Brazza’s arrival the country was already in difficulty, excluded from long-distance trade simultaneously by two dynamic forces:¹² upstream by the Bobangi, and downstream by the Kongo, whom the decline of the Teke allowed gradually to settle on the borders of the plateau overlooking the river.¹³

Thus, around Ncuna (on the Pool), the terminus of the immense navigable network of the Congo, the Kongo controlled

⁸ The grandfather of the then reigning Makoko was said to have stopped their invasion: letter from Ponel to Dufourcq, 30 June 1885, S.O.M., M.O.A., vii.

⁹ On the excellent description of this ‘Civilisation of the Rivers’, see G. Sautter, *De l’Atlantique au fleuve Congo* (Paris, 1966), 274–6.

¹⁰ About 40 tonnes a day went down-river in the dry season (between April and September) in convoys of ten to twenty canoes loaded to the gunwales, *ibid.*, 259.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, and see C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Brazza et la prise de possession du Congo* (Paris, 1969), 105–10.

¹² Cf. Jan Vansina, *The Tio kingdom of the Middle Congo* (Oxford, 1973).

¹³ G. Balandier, *Sociologie actuelle de l’Afrique noire* (Paris, 1965), 185.

the great transit markets from the Atlantic at the focal point of the caravan routes on either side of the lower river: to Luanda in the south, and Loango in the north. To be sure, the cohesion of the old Kongo kingdom was but a memory at that time. To the north of the estuary, the roadstead of Loango, the best on the coast, had just been occupied by the French (1883).¹⁴ But the hinterland (the Mayombe massif and the Niari plain), despite the still recent ravages of the slave trade, seemed, in the eyes of the early administrators, rich in foodstuffs, relatively densely populated, and accustomed to commercial dealings with the merchants settled in the villages¹⁵ – the only exception being the mountainous areas peopled by hostile refugees (Yaka and Nsundi on the right bank).

Social and political disintegration took place rapidly following the operations of the conquest, and the rapid proliferation of European commercial enterprises¹⁶ had disrupted the main traditional trade routes. In the area of the townships, former Mpongwe or Vili traders were transformed into ‘boys’, minor employees and shop assistants. On the Congo the numbers of the Likuba, deprived of their monopoly of navigation, fell from 12,000 to 4,000 within a few years. The Kongo and Vili, who had the reputation of being tractable, became a useful source of labour as workers in the first cocoa and coffee plantations and, in particular, as porters along the caravan routes, but were soon decimated by sleeping sickness.

Although as yet relatively unknown, the northern area was nonetheless undergoing a profound change. Distance and the lack of means of transport bore heavily on the system of communications, which had been dealt a grievous blow by the decline of the Bobangi. The brutality used by the occasional expeditions attempting to penetrate further inland than the Bangui rapids were a factor in driving away the population from the river banks. The Sabanga, Mbaya and Ndy farmers, and then, on the interfluvium between the Ubangi and the Gribingi, the Maja people, all of them

¹⁴ Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Brazza...*, 159–61. As far as Pointe Noire, the future terminus of the Congo–Ocean Railway, it was chosen simply ‘to prevent the others [Belgian or Portuguese] from settling there [for in the opinion of everyone] it’s a country with no future’: the Captain of the *Voltigeur* to the Commandant of the Div. Navale, Libreville, 30 June 1883, Arch. Marine, BB 4, 1943.

¹⁵ Cf. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Brazza...*, 167.

¹⁶ On the lower Congo: France: Dumas-Beraud, Belgium: Société Anonyme Belge pour le commerce et l’industrie (S.A.B.). Netherlands: Nieuwe Afrikaansche Handels Vennootschap (N.A.H.V.).

scattered in villages without any central organisation capable of resisting penetration, were thus sacrificed in the cause of imperial objectives on the Bahr al-Ghazal and the Nile.

Beyond all these, the animist peoples – the Ngao, Boubou, etc. – were periodically raided by the sultans from the north-east, who had settled there in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as a result of the political upheavals following the Egyptian conquest of the Upper Nile. Such were the sultans of Bangassou, Rafai (linked to Zubayr) and Semio on the upper Ubangi or, further north, the Sanūsī sultan of Ndele: most of them were of foreign origin and supported themselves by slave raiding and subjugating by military means the indigenous peoples, the Nzakara and the Zande, whom they forced to collect ivory and rubber for the Europeans in exchange for firearms.¹⁷ It was in 1895 that the French administration took over from the early Belgian occupation of the upper Ubangi. But after the junction of French forces at Lake Chad in 1900 (the battle of Kousseri and the death of Rabah), it was not until 1909 that the colonial influence resulted in treaties of protectorate with these ‘allied chiefs’ drawn up in due form. As for the Logone basin, it was still the scene of an active east-west trade in slaves and livestock from the Sudan to the *lamidat* (Fulani chiefdom) of Ngaoundere (Cameroun) and northern Nigeria; at the beginning of the century in these regions approximately ten thousand people still disappeared annually, killed in raids, sold as slaves, or dying on their way into exile.¹⁸ At the end of the century, even though European penetration was still thin on the ground, nevertheless by the very fact of their presence local conditions were profoundly altered.

Apart from a few military expeditions, the element that most changed the internal equilibrium of the country was the interplay of rivalries between the various peoples as a result of European influence. For ‘colonisation’ as such remained very limited for a long time: the administrative presence was virtually nil, and ‘development’ non-existent. In 1885 the administrative establishment, not of a high quality, consisted of thirty-six Europeans and a handful of auxiliaries.¹⁹ On his return to France, Brazza had

¹⁷ Cf., e.g., E. de Dampierre, *Un royaume Bandia du Haut Oubangui* [Bangassou], Paris, 1967.

¹⁸ G. Bruel, ‘Rapport sur l’occupation du Cercle du Moyen-Logone’, 28 Sept. 1903, Arch. de Djamena.

¹⁹ 13 Algerian *tirailleurs*, 60 Senegalese *laptots*, and 45 Kru, plus 500 local workers, of whom 310 were Vili. See Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Brazza...*, 182.

imprudently claimed that he could administer his conquest, with an area bigger than that of France, with a mere million francs a year.²⁰ At a time when the *raison d'être* of a colony was to enrich the mother country, and public opinion had been wooed with the idea of the supposed wealth of the Congo, parliament took him at his word.²¹ By the end of our period the situation was not much better: in 1904 the number of administrators and equivalent ranks had fallen to thirty – a figure which did not improve until after the administrative reform of 1906–7. Two thirds of the budget was taken up with administrative expenses. The lack of skill of the personnel was all the more obvious in that, following the wishes of Brazza, this was the first colony with a civilian government at a time when no colonial administrative training yet existed.²² The spectacular excesses revealed by the Gaud and Toqué scandal²³ – which were the cause of the urgent recall of Brazza for his last mission (1904–5) – laid bare the evils of a cheese-paring system, in which the bulk of the work was left to unsupervised auxiliaries in the shape of a local militia set up in 1897, and organised into ‘veritable assault columns’.²⁴

In 1900 the total strength of the white community (officials, merchants and missionaries, plus a very small number of women and children was merely 800, of whom most were stationed at Brazzaville (248), Pointe Noire and Libreville.²⁵ Religious penetration, restricted to the coasts and the course of the main rivers, scarcely made up for the inadequacies of the health and education services. The French evangelical mission, which in 1875 had taken the place of the American Presbyterians, consisted in 1898 of a mere two stations in Gabon. The Catholic mission of the Holy Ghost fathers played an active political role, with the outstanding personality of Prosper-Philippe Augouard, who had arrived at the Pool almost at the same time as Brazza, and was the apostolic vicar

²⁰ Speech at the Cirque d'Hiver, 21 Jan. 1884, 24.

²¹ For the following years, they allocated 1.5 million francs for the Congo and 600,000 francs to Gabon, of which almost all were absorbed in salaries, supplies and military equipment. Loi du 11 aout 1886.

²² The *École Coloniale* was only established in 1890.

²³ Three administrators of Fort Crampel, the pivot of caravan routes to Chad, were convicted of terrible crimes against Africans. One of them in particular had blown up a native with dynamite to celebrate the Fête National, 14 July 1903. J. Saintoyant, *L'affaire du Congo, 1903* (ed. Ch.-A. Julien, Paris, 1960).

²⁴ Decree of the commissaire général du Gabon-Congo, 30 Nov. 1897, *J. Officiel du Congo Français*, 1 Feb. 1898, 5.

²⁵ 2000 in 1911.

from 1890 to 1919. An ardent nationalist, he was ahead of, rather than in step with, French penetration.²⁶

Lacking money and personnel, the colony finally opted for repressive policies, exercised over scattered and disparate peoples whose stability had been undermined for fifteen years by the arrival of the Europeans. In 1897 Brazza was removed because of his financial negligence. But what could he have done? His departure marked a turning-point. Renouncing officially the dream of 'peaceful colonisation', France wanted to make clear her intention of developing the resources of the country, following the norms which had just been so successful in the neighbouring Belgian colony. But the solution that had been advocated, that of privileged companies, was to prove a worse evil. How gravely and rapidly the expectations of the 'inventors' of the concessionary system were disappointed, we shall see. It is not merely a question of recalling the abuses of the system (excessive portage, camps of hostages virtually exterminated, even massacred). These abuses were not exceptional or isolated, as people liked to say at the time – the activities of evil characters or people suddenly afflicted with madness under the combined effects of the climate, alcohol and solitude. They were the inevitable manifestation of the harmfulness of the system that had been installed.

ECONOMIC EXPERIMENTS 1898–1905

The idea of an economic conquest based on the opening up of great penetration routes with the aim of 'linking the mouth of the Congo to Upper Egypt across Africa'²⁷ went back to Brazza. After witnessing the failure in 1882–3 of a first attempt at opening a railway line in Kouilu, to connect Brazzaville to the coast, he turned his energies to the development of the waterways of the Ogowe and the Niari, trying to interest private companies who might invest in the colony, since the state would not. In 1894 Brazza granted to Dumas-Béraud – the only French concern of any size – a concession covering an immense area in eastern Gabon. The Société du Haut Ogooué received 11 million hectares, in return for a monopoly of trade, and also governmental powers

²⁶ About twenty Fathers ran eleven schools with 750 children in Gabon.

²⁷ Brazza, *Note sur les voies de communication...*, s.d., [1889?], *Arch. Nat.*, S.O.M., *Gabon-Congo*, xii, 90a.

in matters of taxation and policing which were to be withdrawn in 1897. As for the line to Brazzaville, he negotiated for its construction with Crédit Foncier (1889), then with the businessman A. le Chatelier (1893), who finally ceded his rights in 1899 to a Belgian concern with the name of *Compagnie Propriétaire du Kouilou-Niari* (bought out in 1911 by the Lever group).²⁸ But the railway project suffered for many years as a result of the competing Belgian line, opened between 1890 and 1898.

The system advocated by Brazza was organised on a large scale immediately after his removal, at a time when he was himself beginning to appreciate the dangers of this course. The idea had made progress in metropolitan France²⁹ and abroad.³⁰ Given the dreadful state of the finances of the colony, the apparent success of the Leopoldian system after 1896 made the decision inevitable. The military expeditions to Chad swallowed the entire budget. The only means of penetrating a virtually unexplored forest was through difficult rivers, broken up by rapids. How could this underpopulated country whose inhabitants, apart from a few coastal peoples, knew nothing of money, have been capable of self sufficiency? The only source of revenue lay in the tiny customs duties, which were limited by the free trade area of the Congo basin. The development of the colony demanded a considerable investment in men and in capital and every kind of infrastructure. The only perceived solution was to hand the country over to the businessmen and let them make the necessary effort at their own expense.

In the face of parliamentary hesitations, André Lebon, the minister for the Colonies, put the process into effect by decree in 1896. This allowed his successors in 1899–1900 to grant forty concessions, which fragmented the territory. The biggest, the *Compagnie des Sultanats du Haut-Oubangui*, comprised 140,000 sq. km; the smallest, 1,200 sq. km. The only success of the radical opposition was to obtain the rejection of the principle of chartered companies with full governmental powers. Henceforth the term was *entreprises de colonisation*, which were granted a thirty-year monopoly of the products of the soil (mainly ivory

²⁸ Cf. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires 1898–1930* (Paris/The Hague, 1972), ch. 1.

²⁹ Cf. the popular work of the economist Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes* (Paris, 1882, 2nd edn), and the colonial role of politicians with business connections, such as Eugène Etienne and Binger.

³⁰ Great Britain and Germany had just increased the number of chartered companies.

and rubber), in return for a fixed annual payment to the state plus 15 per cent of the profits.

Although only lands actually exploited were to become the absolute property of the company at the end of the period of the contract, a confusion rapidly arose between the ideas of *exploitation* (i.e. utilisation) and *ownership*. The companies were not interested in investment, and their objectives were purely commercial. They refused to pay the producers the value of their produce, and paid them only for their labour in collecting it, thus causing prices to be very low, less than two-thirds of the prices current in the open market. The colonial government tended to take no interest in infrastructural expenses, since the companies were expected to devote part of their profits to public works. As for the Africans, they quickly learned that there was no real distinction between a military commander and a merchant.

In principle, the Africans still retained the property rights of their villages and forest lands, pastures and crops, that were 'reserved' for them, but the boundaries of these reserves, the object of inextricable difficulties, were never properly drawn up. The African, like his produce, rapidly came to be seen by the concessionary companies as a possession. From the earliest days, the specific 'rub' of the system was the lack of both competence and capital. Unlike the Leopoldian concerns, large-scale French investors were not anxious to launch themselves into an enterprise that was considered risky. The concessionaries were either settlers of limited means (such as the five Tréchet brothers of the *Compagnie Française du Haut-Congo*) or, at best, industrialists from sectors of the economy of metropolitan France that had lost their momentum, such as the northern textile industry, who therefore were seeking to unload their unsold stock (such as the Gratre brothers of the *Compagnie de la Mpoko* and the Al-Ké-Lé group). Given the vast extent of the territory, the capital invested remained minimal: from 300,000 francs (*Compagnie Bretonne du Congo*, 3,000 sq. km) to 3 million francs (*Compagnie Française du Congo*, 43,000 sq. km) or, exceptionally, 9 million francs (*Compagnie des Sultanats*). In all, the capital sums effectively employed did not exceed 40 million francs, and the concessionaries refused to invest voluntarily, out of their profits, funds that the state had failed to supply.

The declaration of bankruptcy was made in 1904–5. In 1902 only one company was in a position to pay dividends; there were two in 1903, and seven, the maximum number, in 1905. By 1903 about ten companies were already on the way to extinction, and three of these had been granted land which, as a result of an inadequate survey of the terrain, existed only on paper! As a result of the scandals, the French government tried to restrict the privileges of the concessionaries, but experience demonstrated the complete inadequacy of local control, and the lack of an adequate legal framework. It is true that in theory any serious default could be punished by forfeiture, but since the occasional attempts of the state to do this resulted in the cases being thrown out,³¹ it was decided to deal with the companies by negotiation and compensation.

The only companies that survived were either purely speculative operations, allowing vast territories legally to lie fallow (for example the *Compagnie Ngoko-Sangha*, which for years made a profit from the Franco-German frontier dispute, until a scandal broke out in 1911³²), or concerns that owed their success to the extreme severity of their methods (such as the CFHC, the *Compagnie des Sultanats*, and a group of eleven companies which in 1911 gave birth to the consortium called the *Compagnie Forestière Sangha-Oubangui*).

The concessionary régime, particularly deleterious in that it was based on meanness, encouraged the most archaic practices, showing up, in all its absurdity, the impasse to which French policy was leading in the Congo. But it may be questioned whether a policy of open competition would have done any better, given the specific problems of the country (the climate, the forest, and the sparse population), and in particular the refusal by the government to participate in investment. Probably the only difference would have been a less close association between the administration and the private sector, an association which

³¹ A special government commissioner for the concessionary companies had been appointed in 1902, but for lack of means he vegetated until 1905. In 1906 only six companies had been the object of a summary enquiry. The first attempt at disqualification went back to 1902 (against the *Mobaye* company). See Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, 276–7.

³² M. Violette, *La Ngoko-Sangha* (Paris, 1914), and Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, 315–22.

resulted in the exploitation of the local inhabitants, who were decimated, exhausted, and lastingly affected.

The Africans, deterred by prohibitive prices, by harvesting techniques of which they were totally ignorant, and by their own very limited needs, refused to take part willingly in the new dispensation. Paralysed by the shortage of labour, the concessionaries demanded the institution of forced labour. Although this was denied in principle, it was nevertheless introduced in the form of a poll tax, which was tried out in a restricted area in 1894, properly instituted in 1897 and given a wider scope in 1900.³³ The idea was not new – Gallieni had already made use of it in Madagascar. But nowhere more than in the Congo was it developed as a *colonial principle*, as the only means of forcing the native to ‘produce and make use of the riches of the soil’ by imposing on them ‘regular methods of work, without which there could be no proper exploitation of the concessionary lands’.³⁴ Financially the tax was a failure. At the very least it required a correct estimation of the number of inhabitants;³⁵ but the local people soon recognised the purpose of the administrator’s tax-collecting rounds, and the villages disappeared into the forest. Nevertheless the poll tax, which brought in only 60,000 francs in 1902, almost tripled the following year, and reached 770,000 francs in 1905, before arriving at a ceiling of a million francs, scarcely one-fifth of the total revenue of the colony.³⁶

The administration was driven to make use of coercive methods to mobilise all the country’s resources. Wherever the troops had to be regularly provisioned with foodstuffs and goods, portage took its toll. The nerve centres were the two interfluvial zones: the Lower Congo (from Brazzaville to Loango) and the Upper Chari (towards Chad). On the lower river this effort came to a head in 1896–7, when the passage of the Marchand mission had to be provided with porters for 3,000 loads at a few weeks’ notice.

³³ Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, ch. 5.

³⁴ The Minister for the Colonies to the Commissaire-General Grodet, 14 May 1901, S.O.M., Conc. xiv–B(2).

³⁵ Although wild estimates of population were made between 1900 and 1912 (from 8 to 15 million), the whole of the population of French Equatorial Africa hardly exceeded 2.5 million on the eve of the First World War (Gabon 416,000, Moyen-Congo 805,000, Oubangui-Shari 380,000, Chad 988,500). *Rôle de l’impôt indigène*, 1911–13, Arch. Nat., S.O.M., A.E.F., ix–8.

³⁶ *Rapport de la Commission d’enquête du Congo* (Paris, 1907), 30.

Necessity became law. The revolt of the Basundi was suppressed with all speed.³⁷ And the exhaustion of the Kongo and Vili porters was a factor in the spread of sleeping sickness in Niari, which halved the population between 1900 and 1910. In the area near Chad, the Gentil expedition of 1899 began to affect the country adversely. Since the strategic importance of the region had led to its exclusion from the zone of concessionary partition, it was the administration itself which ravaged the Manja territory by the widespread practice of seizing female hostages and holding them in camps in order to force their menfolk to collaborate in supplying labour. The recruiters had to institute veritable manhunts through empty villages and abandoned plantations: 'The exhausted Manjian can do no more and want no more of it. At present they prefer anything, even death, to portage. It is more than a year now since the scattering of the tribe began...'³⁸ 1903 was the climax: the commander of the Fort Crampel region at that time was Gaud, nicknamed Niama-Gounda, 'the wild beast'. His activities were at the root of a violent insurrection, and caused the recall of Brazza for a mission of inspection. Although the losses suffered are unknown, it is possible, according to the evidence of a local officer of the period, that the population of the Chari region fell by half in two years.³⁹

The construction of a road which was recognised as indispensable was at last begun in 1904, but at first merely increased the unrest in the labour force. In the area of the concessions, these authoritarian methods were all the more deleterious in that they were applied at a local level by isolated commercial agents who lacked the colonial ideology of the government officials, and whose only guiding light was the notion of profit. Unlike the Leopoldian Congo, with its close association of merchants and officials, scandals broke out in two particular sets of circumstances: either when an unscrupulous merchant was left to his own devices beyond the reach of any administrative supervision or, more rarely, when he collaborated with an agent of the administration who had as few scruples as he himself about the methods to be pursued. The Lobaye and Ouhamé-Nana com-

³⁷ M. Michel, *La mission Marchand, 1895-1899* (Paris, 1972).

³⁸ Report of 1 Jan. and 1 Nov. 1901, S.O.M., G.C. XIX-4(b).

³⁹ From 40,000 to 20,000 persons. A Britsch, *Histoire de la dernière mission Brazza* (Paris, n.d.), 27.

panies were early convicted of serious malpractices.⁴⁰ But the most serious matter was hushed up: on the Mpoko concession, near Bangui (one of the few firms to declare a profit from 1904 onwards), the enquiry instituted by a recently appointed young administrator concluded that there had been 1,500 murders between 1903 and 1905, committed by forty Europeans at the head of 400 armed guards whose task was to shoot at sight any African caught not collecting rubber. A devastating dossier resulted in 1907 in the citing of 236 people, of whom seventeen were Europeans. But the whole affair ended two years later with the case dismissed for lack of evidence.⁴¹ Meanwhile the economic results had been conclusive: a comparison of the monthly production of the main station on this concession with the number of shots fired proves the truth of the lapidary formula of one of the men in charge of the concession: 'the more armed men, the more rubber'.⁴² This was not merely a matter of individual shortcomings, but of a systematic method of exploitation.

Contrary to accepted ideas, revolts were incessant. In the first phase, these were mostly insurrections in relatively inaccessible areas, where the inhabitants simply refused to allow the conquerors to settle. Such an area was the Upper Sangha, where a precarious balance existed between the sedentary agriculturalists of the Baya country and their western neighbours, the slave-raiding Fulani pastoralists of Adamawa. It was a zone under considerable stress due to pressures from both north and south: the empire of Rabah in the north and the incoming Europeans in the south.⁴³ Taxation was the cause of the most enduring resistance. Everywhere the peoples reacted against it by passive resistance or emigration. It was a normal consequence of any repressive operation that the village concerned melted into the forest and never returned.

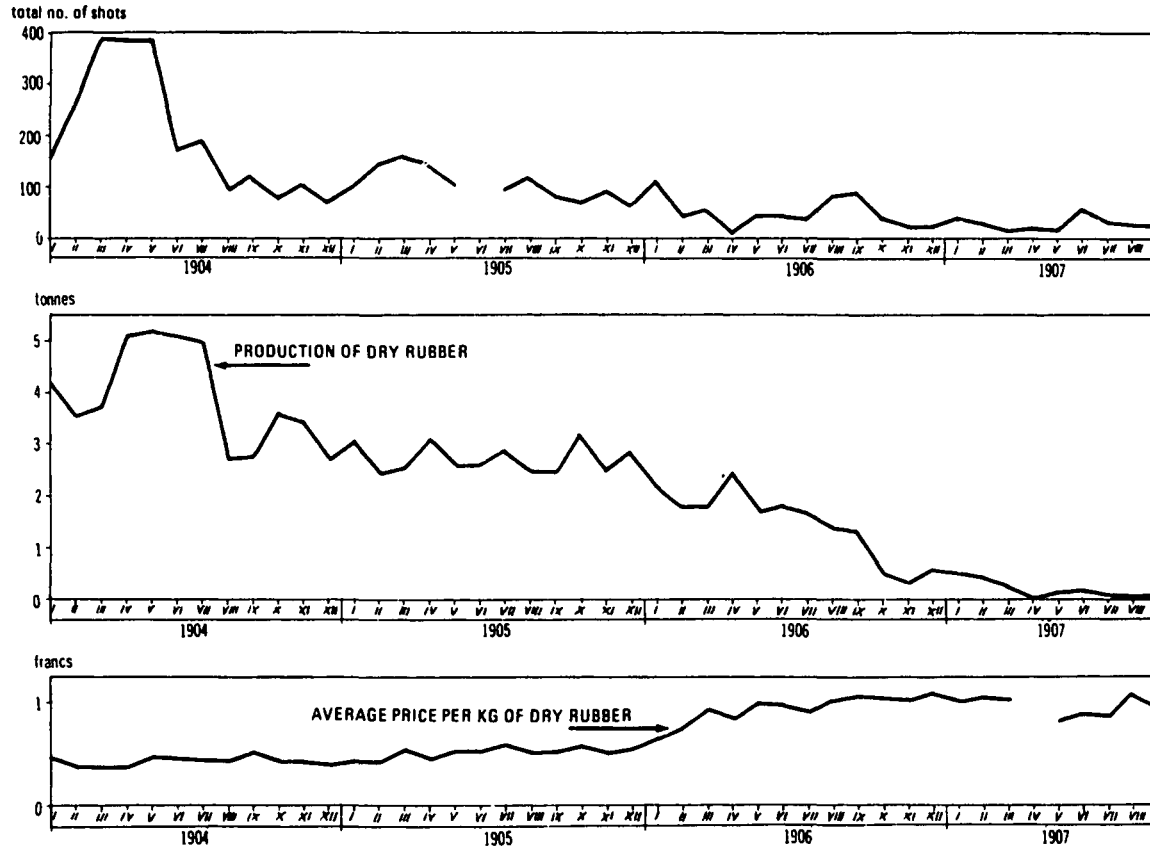
Generally speaking, the revolts were mainly sporadic expressions of the exasperation of the Africans in the face of the most blatant outrages. Following the rising of the Vili on the caravan

⁴⁰ The affairs of the '119 women of Fort Sibut' and of the '60 women of Bangui' (of whom 45 died of hunger in five weeks). Cf. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, ch. 7.

⁴¹ Meanwhile, in order not to aggravate the 'Congo scandals', the administrator in question had given the Minister for the Colonies his word of honour to remain silent. S.O.M., Conc. xxxiii-A(2). Cf. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, 177-84.

⁴² Lünd, *Rapport mensuel*, September 1905, *ibid*.

⁴³ In 1891, the insurrection of the whole of the Bayanda tribe against the first explorer of the region, Fourneau, which was crushed only in 1894. Clozel, *Rapport politique*, 25 Aug. 1895, S.O.M., G.C. III-15. See Coquery-Vidrovitch, 'De Brazza a Gentil. La politique française en Haute-Sangha', *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, 1965, 52, no. 186, 22-40.



Consumption of ammunition and the production of rubber at the Salanga station.

route from 1897 to 1899, one of the next organised revolts was on the middle Ogowe in 1901–2. This was the revolt of the Fang chief, Emane-Tole, who tried to close the river in retaliation for the increase in prices by the Société du Haut Ogooué.⁴⁴ The year 1902 witnessed serious troubles virtually everywhere: pillaged factories, cases of ritual cannibalism, all coinciding with the setting-up of the concessions and the institution of taxation.⁴⁵ Very often these were acts of vengeance, some of the executed agents ‘having, sad to say, merited death not once but ten times, each time [that they themselves had killed] for the pleasure of causing suffering’.⁴⁶ The most murderous outbreak of the period was that of the Manja, who had suffered the ravages of portage on the upper Chari in 1903–4.⁴⁷ What was striking in this normally fragmented country was the unanimity of the movement, since all the villages without exception fled to the bush to engage in guerrilla warfare. Although it is not always easy to discover the sometimes complex causes of these revolts, some of which took on the dimensions of large-scale resistance movements (Ngounie, the Middle Sangha and Manja country up till 1905, Lobaye from 1902 to 1908, and Upper Ngounie from 1903 to 1909), they incontrovertibly represented a response and a challenge to those responsible for the overturning of traditional values.

In 1905 the country was sick, the administration enfeebled, the companies moribund. Scandals broke out in the context of the anti-Congolese campaign directed mainly against the ‘red rubber’ of King Leopold’s Congo.⁴⁸ Henri Brunschwig’s recent studies tend to show that in the beginning the scandal was exploited by the minister for the Colonies himself, in his desire to impose reforms which he judged necessary. But he was rapidly overwhelmed by events. Brazza’s mission revealed that the system was fundamentally pernicious, and that the only means of remedying the situation was precisely what the French government was

⁴⁴ ‘Note d’histoire: Emane Tole de Ndjole’, *Réalités gabonaises*, 1965, no. 26, 46–76.

⁴⁵ Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, 198–9.

⁴⁶ L. Tavernier, 22 Feb. 1905, S.O.M., Fonds Brazza, 1905–11.

⁴⁷ Rapport de Toqué et Pujol, Fort Sibut, 26 Feb. 1904, *ibid.*, 1905–1; Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, 200–1.

⁴⁸ Congo Reform Association of E. D. Morel. Cf. by this author, concerning the French Congo: ‘Les concessions au Congo’, *Questions diplomatiques et coloniales*, 1903, xvi, 426; and ‘La question congolaise’, *ibid.*, 1904, xvii, 433. Cf. also the campaign waged by the Socialist team of the *Cahiers de la quinzaine* (Charles Peguy and Pierre Mille).

KING LEOPOLD'S CONGO: EUROPE

determined not to do, namely to inject technicians and capital in large quantities, in order to develop the country in real terms without making a sparse and over-exploited population bear the burden of an archaic system of pillage. The French government recoiled from the gravity of the diagnosis. In the national interest, the ministry of Foreign Affairs refused to publish the final report, 'Conceived in a spirit of absolute sincerity, but also of implacable severity'.⁴⁹ The document was never published. The result was limited to a few administrative reforms, but the Congolese crisis was not resolved. For this to happen, the monopoly of the concessions had to end: most of the companies disappeared during the 1914–18 war, but some of them survived until 1935.⁵⁰

In 1905, in this poor country, the development of which would have required enormous prior investment (plantations, forestry enterprises and mineral prospecting), the twin obstacles of lack of capital and under-population had not been overcome. Not only the adversaries of the concessionary régime, but also many of those working in the Congo, knew that this was so. Their reports tirelessly denounced this failure. If they were not granted credits, or equipment, or personnel, they would be obliged either to resign or to impose themselves by force. The government also was aware of the facts. However, it persisted in its course to the absolute limit, for reasons such as the conquest of Chad and parliament's refusal of credits, which went far beyond the Congolese problem, since they were matters of general French policy.

B. KING LEOPOLD'S CONGO, 1886–1908

IN EUROPE

The fact that the title of this chapter bears the name of a European monarch is fully significant. The Congo was a political entity brought into being on African soil completely by the will of one man, and that man – who never visited his dominion – governed it from his residence in Europe in a completely autocratic way.

The Congo Independent State (*Etat indépendant du Congo*), under the personal government of King Leopold, lasted from

⁴⁹ Note pour le Ministre des Colonies, confidentiel, Paris, 23 March 1906, S.O.M., G.C. XIX-4(b).

⁵⁰ The *Compagnie Forestière Sangha-Oubangui* kept the monopoly of rubber until that date.

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1885 to 1908. In 1908, it was annexed by Belgium and became a Belgian colony, the 'Belgian Congo'. Well before 1908, however, the term 'Belgian Congo' was very often used by foreign writers. This can readily be understood when one considers the way in which the Independent State appeared to them. The sovereign of the state, they thought, was the King of the Belgians, who was, as everyone knew, ardently devoted to Belgian interests. The central services of the state were located in Brussels, and all its officials were Belgian. As for the Congo itself – in the administration, in the army, and in the courts – the essential role was played by Belgians, particularly by officers of the Belgian army assigned to African service. Even the religious missions – at any rate those of the Catholics, which were most favoured by the state – almost all had a markedly Belgian character. How, in such circumstances, could contemporaries have failed to come to speak naturally of a 'Belgian Congo'? Nevertheless, the usage was quite improper. It was contrary both to the situation in law and – what is much more important – to the situation in fact. In law, before 1908, Belgium and the Congo were two absolutely distinct states without any common organ; their sole link rested on the fact that they had the same sovereign. But Leopold II distinguished very clearly between his rôle as sovereign of the Congo and that as king of the Belgians. In Belgium he was a constitutional monarch and played with perfectly good grace the game of constitutional monarchy in the English fashion. He submitted the texts of his speeches to his ministers beforehand, in accordance with the rules. But the same ministers could only learn by reading the newspapers that the Congo had leased the Upper Nile or concluded a treaty with Portugal: the government of the Congo was something in which they had no say. Belgium had no part in it.

The Congo Independent State was not merely an absolute monarchy in which the sovereign held all powers; it was a state that was in a way fused with its sovereign. Sovereignty was invested in the person of the king, who considered the state his private property. Leopold II called himself the 'proprietor' of the Congo. In his will, which was made public in 1890, he bequeathed to Belgium his 'sovereign rights' over the Congo, just as if he were bequeathing a house or a piece of real property.⁵¹ A jurist

⁵¹ Leopold's will, it should be noted, never came into effect, because the Congo was annexed by Belgium while the king was still alive. He died in 1909, a year after the annexation.

said at the time – and the remark was made in all seriousness – that to find a precedent for such a situation one had to go back in Europe to the time of the Merovingian kings. This does not mean that Leopold was a relic of the past. He was on the contrary quite modern. His spirit was that of a great captain of business. At the price of incessant labour, and at his own expense, he had built up his enterprise; what else could he be than the master of the enterprise? The master he was, not only theoretically, but also in practice. He never delegated power, he exercised it personally. All the great decisions were his. When his advisers did not agree with him, they had to quit. In the daily work, in his office in Brussels, he concerned himself even with details. As a capitalist and as a manager his main concerns were to make his enterprise profitable, and to expand.

Curiously enough, Leopold tried to expand even before the enterprise became self-supporting. In the first years of existence of the Congo State, when only a tiny part of the territory of the state was occupied, Leopold tried to extend his frontiers in all directions. In 1888–9, the points he sought to attain were the upper Zambezi, Lake Nyasa (Malawi), Lake Victoria and the upper Nile. Time was pressing, he explained to his most intimate collaborator, for ‘after next year there will be nothing more to acquire in Africa’. An elaborate policy was devised with these expansionist ends in view. The push toward the east, for instance, would depend on the alliance with the ‘Arabs’; it was hoped to obtain their support in order to extend the influence of the state to Lake Victoria. This vast scheme soon encountered obstacles from almost every direction. The expeditions projected towards the upper Zambezi came to nothing. No agreement was reached with the Arabs; on the contrary, it became necessary to engage in war with them. In the direction of the upper Nile, however, the push persisted until the very end of the Congo Independent State; it was a great chapter in the history of Leopold’s imperialism in Africa. This ‘enormous voracity’, as Stanley had described it, can be best explained by the driving impulse which was also at the root of the creation of the Congo; Leopold was a firm, and one might almost say a religious, believer in the economic profits of colonial exploitation. Hence the simple idea: the more the better. Unlike most other imperialists – with the exception of Cecil Rhodes, who resembled him – Leopold was never guided

either in Africa or anywhere else in the world (for his imperialistic efforts literally spanned the globe) by former entanglements which became enticements to act. He acted from scratch, with only an idea to guide him.

In the Congo, however, profit seemed at first very elusive. During the first ten years of its existence, the young state needed help for its very survival. From 1885 to 1895 its normal revenue remained extremely limited; it could cover only a small part of its expenditure. In 1887–8, receipts still represented only a tenth of the expenses. The king had to cover the deficit from his privy purse. But, although he had a huge fortune, he could not bear the burden. In 1888 he was helped by the yield of a lottery loan, issued in Belgium for the benefit of the Congo, which brought in several millions. This proved still insufficient; in 1890 he had to turn to Belgium itself. When the Belgian parliament had given him the authorisation, which was required by the constitution, to become the sovereign of the Congo State, Leopold had privately promised never to ask for any financial help from Belgium. The Congo, he announced, would be self-supporting. This was certainly a sincere promise. It shows how deliberately and even absurdly sanguine Leopold was about the economic prospects of his colony. Five years later, Belgium had to save him from bankruptcy. The Belgian government agreed to grant the Congo a loan of 25 million francs, spread out over ten years. But given the expansion of the Congo State's expenditure, this gave the king only a temporary respite. In 1895, to avoid a total collapse, a supplementary Belgian loan of nearly 7 million francs was added. The year 1895 marked the turn of the tide. Leopold was saved by a combination of his own deliberate policy, the *régime domanial*, which he had introduced a few years earlier, and a kind of miracle – the miracle of wild rubber.

The *régime domanial* dated from 1891–2. It bore the personal stamp of the king. The logic of the system was implacable. The state had been declared proprietor of all vacant land, which would henceforth constitute its domain. Vacant land, it was decreed, consisted of all the land which was neither occupied nor being exploited by the natives. It happened that almost everywhere in the country the two most remunerative wild products, ivory and wild rubber, came from lands decreed vacant and so might be regarded as products of the state's domain, to be collected by the

state alone. As a consequence of this system, a trader might not buy ivory or wild rubber from the Africans without becoming a receiver of stolen goods – stolen, in effect, from the state. Private commerce was stopped in that way by what amounted to a state monopoly. The state authorities protested that there was no monopoly at all. Everywhere, they said, exchange remained entirely unimpeded. But as the state had laid hands on virtually the only marketable products, a contemporary critic was right when he humorously observed that it had in effect made a law with two articles: ‘*Article 1*, Trade is entirely free; *Article 2*, There is nothing to buy or to sell.’ Leopold imposed this policy against the advice of his best and most faithful collaborators, who were horrified by this violation of the most solemn engagements of a state which was born under the aegis of free trade. The king swept away all objections. He was preoccupied only with financial results.

When Leopold established his régime, his hopes rested mainly on ivory. The wealth of the country in rubber was not yet suspected. But the harvests of rubber increased within a very short period. In 1890 the Congo exported only 100 metric tons of rubber; in 1896, exports reached 1,300 metric tons; in 1898, 2,000 metric tons; and in 1901, 6,000 metric tons. This last figure corresponded approximately to a tenth of the world production of rubber.

The state itself, because of the domanial régime, was the principal beneficiary of this manna from heaven (not the only one, for it had been compelled to make a compromise with some trading companies and to abandon to them the exploitation of the domanial products in some parts of the Congo). Financially speaking, the change was a momentous one. In 1890 the state took from its domain around 150,000 francs; in 1901 the domanial products – with rubber rating first – brought it more than 18 million francs. From that time on, the financial difficulties of the Congo were ended. Indeed, thanks to the domanial resources, and thanks also to the proceeds of loans – for now that its credit was solid, it could raise loans without difficulty – the Congo soon began to have budgetary surpluses. In a developing country, these were badly needed for public investments. Instead the king used the greater part for the advantage of Belgium. Again, this was the result of a personal creed: Leopold saw the direct enrichment of

the metropolitan country as the cardinal advantage to be gained from the well-planned exploitation of an overseas possession. As he had the soul of a builder-king, it was to a policy of public works, urban improvement and grand monumental constructions that the Congo funds were systematically applied. The sovereign of the Congo paid for the construction of the Arcade du Cinquantenaire in Brussels, for the building of the Tervuren Museum, for enlargements to the castle of Laeken, for public works at Ostend. After 1901 the transfer of funds from the Congo to Belgium even took on an institutional form, with the establishment of the Fondation de la Couronne (which was first called *Domaine de la Couronne*). Its mechanism was simple: the Foundation was granted domain lands of enormous extent – around 250,000 sq. m, or more than a tenth of the total area of the state. The products collected from these lands (mainly, of course, wild rubber) brought in a very high annual income. The king, moreover, gave the foundation part of the yield from the state loans. It was these substantial resources that the foundation applied to the programme assigned to it, which had as its almost exclusive object the carrying out of great public works in the metropolitan country. Urban developments were planned that would completely change the face of Brussels. In that way, the king said, the Congo would take its ‘just share in the embellishment of our country’. These words ‘just share’ show that Leopold was profoundly convinced of the rightness of his policy. In his eyes, a nation that endowed a new country with its civilisation, its labour, its capital, had the right to ‘legitimate compensation’. This is what Belgium had done for the Congo; it was only fair that the Congo, in compensation, should participate in the ‘embellishment’ of Belgium.

All the principles of the Congo policy were decided by the king. But in the implementation of these policies, the administration of the state often played its own game. This was particularly true of the domanial régime. Leopold’s will was that the state should extract the maximum profit from its domain. But he was not very much concerned with the way this aim was reached. The system of outright exploitation of the native population which gave, as the figures of production show, such extraordinary results, was mainly devised by the administration, both in Brussels and in Africa. Leopold limited himself to noting that the yield was

satisfactory. However when the first accusers rose up to denounce abuses in the treatment of the Africans, the king was deeply moved. From 1896 to 1900, as his private letters reveal, he passed through several periods of agony. 'We are condemned by civilized opinion', he wrote in September 1896. 'If there are abuses in the Congo, we must make them stop.' 'It is necessary to put down the horrible abuses,' he repeated in January 1899. 'These horrors must end or I will retire from the Congo. I will not allow myself to be spattered with blood and mud.'

On the occasion of each of these crises of anger and disgust, the king reiterated strict orders: cruelty to the natives should be severely punished. The Congo administration just waited for the storm to pass. It had elaborated a system and stuck to it. Altering the system might weaken it. The lessening of pressure on the Africans would naturally bring about a reduction of revenue; and the administration was well aware that, if this occurred, it would have more than royal anger to face. In other words, the administration distinguished between the king's permanent and fundamental desire – to increase the output of the domain – and his occasional crises of conscience. It modelled its action on what was permanent and fundamental. All those linked with the régime, therefore, and desirous of exculpating themselves, tried to convince Leopold II that the accusations against the Congo were unjust or exaggerated and were made in great measure out of ill will. The attitude of Leopold, who, unconsciously no doubt, was ready to be convinced, thus came to undergo profound modification; instead of being affected by the attacks, he began soon to react more and more violently against them. Whereas the king almost always dominated his entourage, it may be said that in this case he allowed himself to be dominated by it.

Negotiations with the private sector always remained in the hands of the king personally. He was interested by business as much as by government. These negotiations took three main forms. First, the king had to attract Belgian and foreign capitalists to the Congo for enterprises which called for heavy capital investment. His task in that respect, especially in the beginning, was extremely difficult. It would have been made much easier if the main Belgian financial company, the *Société Générale*, had been willing to invest. But the *Société Générale* kept aloof; it had no confidence in the Congo. Only in 1906, with the foundation

of the Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, did it enter the field. From then on, it would lose no time in coming to the top. Finding capital for the Congo Railway Company, which was constituted in 1889 to build the line from Matadi to Leopoldville (Kinshasa), was in some ways as much of an epic as the building of the line itself. The key to the success was that the Belgian state accepted to invest in the company for a large part of the capital. Secondly, the king had to meet the opposition of the trading companies, which protested against the establishment of the domanial régime. The conflict ended in 1892 with a compromise: some parts of the Congo, and especially the Kasai, remained open to a real free trade, i.e. to the trade in the so-called 'domanial products'. But by far the greater part of the country was closed under a state monopoly. The companies which were hurt by the domanial régime were practically all of them Belgian companies. In their conflict with the Congo State, they called for the support of the Belgian government. This was one of the cases which led to an exchange between two administrations both situated in Brussels – the Congo and the Belgian administrations. Thirdly, the king had to cope with the problem of Katanga. This was the only region of the Congo where foreign capitalists, with Robert Williams at their head, wanted on their own initiative to develop mining activities. Long and intricate negotiations finally led to a British–Belgian combination, the Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, with the Société Générale as the main Belgian participant.

The fate of the Congo was for long years in the hands of one man. But in spite of the fact that the Congo State was a totally independent state, that fate was actually also in many ways in the hands of Belgium. It was Belgium which helped the Congo State to come into being and to survive. It was Belgium which decided that its life had to end. Belgian help, without which Leopold could not have succeeded, involved the country's name and reputation, its men and money. The first factor was the most subtle of all, but perhaps the most important. All the doors which opened for King Leopold in international circles opened because he was the sovereign of a small but respected country. Otherwise he would have been treated for what he was – an incredible gambler, launching into the most hazardous ventures. But being the king of the Belgians, and having the grand manners of a king, he was taken most seriously. Next, Belgians went to the Congo in all

kinds of capacities but many of them were actually lent to the Congo by Belgium. The Belgian government allowed officers to serve the Congo State while retaining their pay and rank in the Belgian army. Between 1879 and 1908, six hundred Belgian officers were recruited for the Force Publique and for the administration of the state. In 1894–5, one Belgian regiment had no fewer than twelve of its officers serving in the Congo. In 1901, the total number of Belgian officers in the Congo was ninety-five. Moreover there were 278 non-commissioned officers, who did not draw their pay in the Belgian army. Thirty per cent of the Belgian officers – 179 out of 600 – died either in Africa or on the boat bringing them back to Belgium.

Finally Belgian money was vital for the king. The authorisation to issue a lottery loan in 1888, the subscription of Belgium to the capital of the Congo Railway Company in 1889, the two loans of the Belgian state in 1890 and 1895, these were all shots of adrenalin which kept the Independent State alive. But after 1895, the financial help of Belgium would certainly not have continued: the Congo, if it had asked for more, would have been pronounced a desperate case. The miracle of wild rubber occurred just at the right time.

The end of the Congo State, i.e. the annexation of the Congo to Belgium, was the result of a decision, not of the king but of Belgium itself. The story of the annexation begins in 1890. The counterpart of the 1890 loan was that Belgium was given the right to annex the Congo, if it decided to do so, in 1901. At this date it would have a free choice. This prospect generally pleased the parliament and the country; no undertaking was entered into, but after a decade one would be able to judge whether the Congo was worth while or not. Public opinion would certainly have been less happy if it had known in what dire financial straits the Congo was. But one of the characteristics of a state where the sovereign was everything was that it did not bother to publish either budgets or accounts. A few years later, however, the naked truth appeared. At the beginning of 1895 the Belgian public learnt that the Congo was nearly bankrupt. The remedy which both the king and the Belgian government adopted was immediate annexation. A treaty of annexation was signed in February 1895. To come into effect it needed the approval of the Parliament. But that approval never came. A violent campaign was waged against the annexation by

the Socialists, many Liberals and even some Catholics. The opponents had a wonderful case: 'We were promised that we would be free to choose in 1901,' they said, 'We are now asked to take an immediate decision and the only reason for that change is that the Congo State is doomed.' The government felt that they would never have a majority for the treaty. They resorted to another measure: a new loan to the Congo State. The abandonment of the annexation treaty was approved and even encouraged by the king, because the news of better and better rubber harvests, which came in precisely during that period, gave him confidence in the future.

That confidence, as we know, was fully justified. In 1901, when the 1890 convention could normally bear its effects, annexation was proposed only by a handful of members of parliament. That proposal was strongly opposed by the king. Now that the Congo had become profitable and its resources allowed him to realise his dreams, he was not ready to resign his absolute power. Belgian public opinion did not support a change in the Congo régime: the fact that the king no longer asked for Belgian help, the ordinary citizen thought, showed that he had finally succeeded; there was no reason to deprive the Congo of such a successful sovereign. The annexation proposal misfired.

The idea of annexation revived only five years later as a result of the campaign against the Congo abuses. Belgian public opinion at first had received the British denunciations of the abuses with great hostility. The main cause of that reaction was undoubtedly the recollection of the recent Boer war. On the South African question the Belgians had almost deliriously espoused the cause of the valiant little Boers. After their attack upon the Boers, to rob Belgium of its riches, the British were turning their attention to the Congo; was it not obvious that they were doing so in the same spirit of greed? 'The story of the Transvaal is beginning all over again. These are preparations and excuses for a new annexation,' claimed the press. The great liberal leader, Paul Janson, was expressing a widely held opinion when, in a speech to the Chamber in July 1903, he said: 'I cannot admit that the Congo State should be particularly suspect. Above all I cannot associate myself with a campaign whose last words seem to be "Ôte-toi de là que je m'y mette"' E. D. Morel, the head of the Congo Reform Association, was particularly maligned by the

Belgian press. He was described as the instrument of a gang of 'Liverpool merchants' with sinister aims. The Belgian public believed in the 'Liverpool merchants' with the same simple faith as the opponents of Dreyfus in France who believed they were fighting a 'syndicate'. The counter-attack against the British accusations was led by the Congo State itself. Money flowed to many journalist and newspapers to encourage them in their denunciations of Morel. Plenty of articles on the themes of British greed and the 'Liverpool merchants' were furnished to the press by a specialised office of the Congo State in Brussels. The counter-attack extended to foreign countries. It signally failed in Britain, where only a handful of impoverished Irishmen could be bribed. But in America it met with remarkable success. America was important because Morel himself had established a branch of his association there, which received the help of some American missionary organisations. Leopold's counter-attack, waged by a Congo lobby, did not disregard religious arguments; a Catholic country, the defenders of the king said, was being treacherously attacked by Protestants.

The counter-attack was especially needed after the publication in 1904 of the devastating report of the British consul, Roger Casement. Leopold then sent to the Congo a commission of enquiry of three members (a Belgian, a Swiss and an Italian) which, he thought, would refute Casement's allegations. This tends to show that the king did not realise the actual situation. The publication of the commission's report at the end of 1905 was a turning point. On the whole, the commissioners, whose moral stature could not be questioned, confirmed Casement's findings. The report did not make a very big impression on the public because, contrary to Casement's report, it was not a tale of horrors; the horrors were only described in general terms. But in Belgian governing circles, and among all those who could understand a report, the document led to a dramatic reversal of opinion; the Congo system of exploitation appeared as a fundamentally vicious one. One doubted whether the Congo State would be able to reform itself. Reform, it seemed, could come only from Belgium. This meant annexation.

The year 1906 was a year of verbal struggle between the growing number of those who opted for annexation, and Leopold, who resisted the idea. The king however suddenly capitulated in

December 1906. This was the direct result of a *débâcle* which had taken place in the United States. One of Leopold's paid agents had passed to the enemy for mercenary reasons and was beginning to publish his correspondence with the king, a most damaging series of documents indeed. This led to the collapse of the counter-attack in America and the victory of Morel's friends; it also seemed probable that the American government would support the British government in its efforts to initiate international measures, such as the convening of an international conference, to suppress the Congo abuses. The international status of the Congo State was therefore seriously in danger; the king resigned himself to the Belgian solution.

However, instead of the quick decisions that might have been expected, nearly two years were to pass before the annexation was effected. The main stumbling block proved to be the *Fondation de la Couronne*. The foundation was the dearest to his heart of all Leopold's creations. With the foundation, he was sure that his policy of embellishing his country with the resources of the Congo would continue even after the annexation. The programme of great public works which had been laid down for the directors of the foundation, who formed a quite independent body, was sufficiently important to last for decades. To this patriotic dream, Leopold stuck with the utmost tenacity. The foundation, however, met with strong opposition, not only from the Socialists and a great number of Liberals, but even from among the Catholic majority. The use of Congo resources in favour of Belgium was criticised. But the main objection, which made the foundation intolerable, was that it would function under Belgian rule as an independent institution owning a tenth of the territory of the future colony, as a 'state within the state'. Such a restriction upon the sovereignty of Belgium could not be admitted. Parliament, in that respect, was so adamant that, after long and strenuous efforts, the king had to give in; in March 1908, the *Fondation de la Couronne* was suppressed.

Leopold also had to give in as regards the future institutions of the colony. The law organising these institutions was discussed before the annexation, and the king tried to influence it in order to retain as much as possible of his personal power in the colony. But if a majority in parliament had decided to annex the Congo because the abuses of Leopold's régime could no longer be

KING LEOPOLD'S CONGO: OCCUPATION

tolerated, it was also determined not to let the king have any authority which could hamper the reforms. The final version of what was to be called the *Charte coloniale* reduced the king to a role in the colony which was similar to his role in Belgium: that of a purely constitutional monarch. So the way was opened to annexation *and* reforms.

The annexation took place on 15 November 1908. In June 1913, the Congo Reform Association was dissolved; Belgian reforms, abolishing the domanial régime and the exploitation of the Africans, had proved so effective that Morel, a severe judge, saw no reason for maintaining a special watch on the Congo.

OCCUPATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE

When Stanley landed at Banana in 1879 most societies in the vast area of central Africa were no longer isolated one from the other. A network of long-distance trading routes stretched from coast to coast providing an overall spatial organisation for this part of the world, and European commodities were penetrating almost anywhere. One system linked the coast to Stanley (Malebo) Pool, another reached from there along the main river to the vicinity of Basoko and branched out along many affluents, while a third (the Luso-African sphere) tied Luanda and Benguela to points in the Kasai and Katanga (Shaba). From the Indian Ocean, Swahili speakers had reached as far as Katanga and the falls near Stanleyville (Kisangani) on the upper Congo. From the Nile came the *jallāba*, or Nubians, based on Khartoum, who raided as far south as the middle reaches of the Uele. And all these networks were expanding. Europeans had travelled along all of the major routes.

Stanley's first task was to link the lower Congo to the Pool, by building a road to carry a steamer and to launch it on the upper river, and by establishing posts. The first was founded at Vivi before 1880, and the *En Avant* was launched on the Pool on 3 December 1881 in the roadstead of the nascent Leopoldville (Kinshasa) post. By April 1882 Stanley was able to enter the trading sphere of the upper Congo, and posts were founded as far as Nouvelle Anvers (Makanza) by November 1882, and then at the Stanley Falls near the headquarters of Indian Ocean traders

‘The map which appears here in the printed edition has been removed for ease of use and now appears as an additional resource on the chapter overview page’.

by the end of 1883. Three years later these traders forced the state to abandon this outpost.

Meanwhile, expeditions of King Leopold's front organisation, the African International Association, left the Zanzibar coast and settled at Karema (1879) on the eastern side, and then at Mpala (1883) on the western side of Lake Tanganyika. This first round of expansion was completed when Hermann von Wissmann, who had founded the association's station at Luluabourg (Kananga) in 1884, arriving there from Luanda and helped by Luso-Africans, linked the area to the Pool by paddling down the Kasai. The same year Luebo was established on the Lulua and the Luso-African sphere was linked to that of the main river.

This early expansion did not cause major fighting, because the Africans believed the Europeans to be traders. The new posts were welcomed by the local populations as a means to bypass the traditional middlemen. And in the first years this proved to be correct, both along the main river – where the Congo State and France were vying one with the other for the allegiance of the people, so that prices were cheap for plentiful imported goods – and in Kasai, where the state was competing with the overland trade from Luanda. No prosperity came to the Lower Congo. Here it was only by dint of showing superior power that a connection could be made between Vivi, Manianga and the Pool. This had been done with very few soldiers, all recruited from other parts of Africa. The force was not sufficient to prevent the loss of the Falls on the upper Congo river to the East Coast traders, so that by 1887 Tippu Tip, the leading merchant in this sector, was created *vali* (governor) and a resident could return to the Stanley Falls, though on sufferance.

The army, the *force publique*, was organised from 1886 to 1888, when a decree established its basic organisation. It still numbered less than 2,000 men, of whom 875 were concentrated at Boma, the new capital, and only 111 Congolese had been recruited for it. This mercenary force was too expensive, and by 1891 forced recruitment by districts was begun, while in 1900 the term of service was raised from five to seven years. No formal provisions were ever laid down for the use of irregular levies, and yet the major military campaigns involved the presence of large numbers of such troops, especially among the Azande in Uele and the

'Batetela' between the Sankuru and the Lomami. The regular forces grew from 1,487 in 1889 to a peak of 19,028 in 1898, and had fallen to about 13,000 by 1908. One military camp was to be established in each district. More important were the base camps, the number of which varied at different times. The most important ones were at Eambi Luku near Boma, and Irebu and Lisala, both in Lingala-speaking territory. In time Lingala became the language of the army and thus acquired the growing influence it still enjoys in Zaïre. During the whole period there was always a shortage of troops because, until at least 1906, so many were earmarked for the proposed occupation of the Nile regions. But the distinct features of the *force publique* were mostly acquired during the 'Arab campaign' led by Baron Dhanis.

The expansion of territory began again after 1889. Two fortified posts at Basoko and at Lusambo provided the bases, since the Emin Pasha relief expedition of 1887-9 had not created any new posts. In 1892 occurred the inevitable showdown with the Indian Ocean traders, and the war ended in January 1894, when they had been routed. The fighting had been massive, because both sides enlisted the aid of thousands of irregulars. An estimate of 70,000 dead on the Swahili-Arab side is probably exaggerated, while figures for Congo State losses are not available. At all events, tens of thousands died during this campaign. Meanwhile, progress in the north ran into repeated difficulties, so that state forces under Colonel L. N. Chaltin only reoccupied the Uele preparatory to a push to the Nile. This expedition began in 1897. Chaltin defeated the Mahdist forces and took the Lado enclave, while Dhanis, who was to have joined him, suffered utter defeat at the hands of his own troops.

After 1899 no similar major military operations took place. Expansion in the south from the Kasai began with a set of expeditions to Katanga, but for lack of personnel only a token force remained in Katanga to show the flag until renewed expansion could take place here in 1903. State forces penetrated into Kivu only from about 1900 onwards. Indeed, by 1908 resistance in Kivu had prevented the occupation of large stretches of the hinterland, while the Portuguese flag of the Luso-Africans was still fluttering between the Loange and the Kasai. A full history of the territorial expansion in terms of posts founded,

taxes in labour or produce levied, and populations subdued, has still to be written.

After 1885 the occupation met with resistance of different types, just as penetration was helped by the assistance of African allies. Primary resistance occurred especially in Uele, south Kivu, Kwango (Yaka), Kasai (Kaniok) and north Katanga (Kasongo Niembo) districts. In most of these areas pre-colonial states, such as the Zande chiefdoms, the Yaka kingdom or a portion of the Luba kingdom, were involved. In others, such as among the Mamvu, Lugbara or Lendu, chiefless societies resisted with great success. In 1908 some Zande chiefdoms, some Lendu, the Shi states and Kasongo Niembo were still holding out. A second form of resistance was put up by traders of the pre-existing networks. Thus the Luso-Africans did not accept the authority of the new Congo State, while the Chokwe in Kwango and Kasai found allies among the Kasai Luba (Lulua) of Kalamba after 1895, and in Katanga traders coalesced with forces of Kasongo Niembo and army mutineers. By 1908 the Katanga resistance was overcome, but the Chokwe still remained in the field.

Meanwhile other local powers collaborated with the Congo State, in whom they saw an ally. This happened first in Kasai with the Zappo Zap, and later with Lumpungu (Songye) and Ngongo Leteta (Tetela), who abandoned their Swahili-Arab allies in 1892. Even after Ngongo's execution in 1893, other Tetela leaders still helped the penetration of the Congo State in the Upper Tshuapa. In Katanga the son of Msiri, king of the Yeke rallied to the state, even though his father had been killed by one of the expeditions of 1891. His subjects, the Sanga, had risen both against him and the state, and had been supported by the Luso-Africans. Similar patterns of alliances were common among the Zande and Mangbetu in the Uele district.

Yet another form of resistance became common after 1891. It was revolt against taxation, in labour or in commodities, imposed by the state or its concessionary companies. The rebellion of the porters in Manianga (1893), and those against labour requisition among the Ababua (1895, 1900-3, 1906), differed little from those of the Budja, who had resisted penetration in 1891, and then fought the rubber tax imposed by the Anversoise Company from 1898 to 1901, or those of various Mongo groups in the territories of the Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company (ABIR) from 1893

onwards, or against those of other groups further south, on the royal domain. By 1905 the Budja had submitted, but it was 1908 before the Mongo in the ABIR country surrendered, while – along the Lokenye especially – primary resistance, and then resistance to the collection of rubber, continued until well after 1908. Taxation also was the main cause for insurrection in parts of the Kasai, notably among the Kuba in 1904. And even where populations had been subdued, rubber collectors, agents or traders could occasionally still be murdered. The first case dates from Tshumbiri in 1889, and as late as 1907 there were still such incidents in the rubber collecting areas of Kasai.

The last form of outward resistance was by flight. Flight on a massive scale took place in the equatorial forest from about 1895 to 1905 and in all directions. People hid in the forest, moved on further when occupation forces came too near, and stopped only when hemmed in from all sides. Substantial numbers crossed the borders, especially to Angola and, before 1900, even to the French Congo. This form of resistance was barely subsiding by 1908.

The most spectacular upheavals came with the mutiny of portions of the *force publique*. A first mutiny at Luluabourg in 1895 was caused by ill treatment. At first the soldiers swept aside all opposition. Later, after some inconclusive fighting, and lacking any unified leadership, they drifted to Katanga, where they joined the Luso-Africans, until their surrender in 1908 after a prolonged campaign. The second mutiny broke out among the largest force the army had fielded: the Dhanis column which was marching towards the Nile. Hardship again was the main reason for the revolt at Dirfi in early 1897. This time the rebels defeated the loyalist forces and, their numbers swollen to about 3,000 men, turned southwards. One of their columns was defeated on the Lindi in 1898, but their fortunes revived. They occupied the key position of Kabambare only to be defeated on New Year's Eve in 1898. Nevertheless, remnants of their forces held the field until part of them surrendered to the Germans at Usambura in 1900, a portion surrendered near the Luama in 1901 and some may have rejoined the Luluabourg mutineers in Katanga. A third, brief mutiny occurred at the fort of Boma in 1900 and did not lead to prolonged fighting. The conquest of the Congo had been anything but pacific in the end.

Black and white held conflicting opinions about each other. To the whites, the Africans were lazy, cruel children. To the blacks of the Lower Congo and as far as the Kasai, the whites were persons returned from the dead, from the land across the water or under the sea, whence their wealth and power came. Everywhere European technical superiority and wealth was attributed to special, supernatural power; Europeans were sorcerers or magicians. Theirs was an ill-gotten knowledge and wealth. Their prestige was ambivalent. Even the 'good' white man derived his power from some unethical unknown. In practice the Congolese never accepted European superiority. After resistance was broken they still did not accept the new order. When, early in 1908, a river steamer, called the *Ville de Bruges*, overturned near Lisala, all the whites aboard save one were killed by the fishermen attracted to the plunder. At the subsequent trial, one of the latter was reported to have chosen between saving the whites and gaining 'great wealth' or killing them. He did the latter, because that was what he saw as his primary objective. The Mangbetu met the first state column with shouts: 'Turks, Arabs, Whites, men of Semio (Zande), all liars, thieves and dogs!' After years of colonial rule a headman in Mayombe, asked why his village now 'fled the catechist', replied that all whites were bad: they had brought sleeping sickness; they asked for the children to make them pray; and now there were only graves (1908/1909). Already in 1883 the traders on the river had asked: 'Our customs may seem bad to you, but leave us alone. Stay in your country as we stay in ours,' and, after the last revolt in 1908, the Budja queried: 'The rubber is finished. You have no more to do here. Won't you go away now?' Belgium was taking over the Congo State in 1908, and at Boma whites were explaining that a general insurrection was unlikely, not because the Africans did not desire a rebellion, but because they were not unified enough to rebel. Even now the period of the Congo Independent State is remembered in the Equateur Province as 'the wars', and the whiteman as 'the destroyer of the country'. The mass of the population finally submitted, but never forgot.

The implantation of government began with the erection of a district headquarters. Land was acquired, in the early years by negotiation, later often by occupation. Then labour had to be

found to build houses, warehouses and offices and to tend gardens or fields. In most posts the yield was not sufficient to feed the personnel of the post. After 1891 the necessary labour and food was by compulsory work in lieu of taxes. Before that date, services had to be paid for and obtained through the co-operation of neighbouring local chiefs. Income up to then consisted mostly of commercial profits or on occasion the spoils of war. Stanley soon found out that it was not sufficient to support an administrative post. The fortunes of such posts fluctuated according to the personality of the European in charge, and it was not until about 1886 that some stability developed in even the most important of them, as more personnel became available. In the early years the prosperity of the administration depended on the relations between the administrator and the local African authorities, including the balance of physical power. As more soldiers became available, and the law on taxation gave more latitude, force was more and more applied. Still, until the end of the period, newly founded posts simply could not withstand determined local hostility. Furthermore, the first year or two in the life of a post was often vital, since it set the pattern and the reputations by which the state officials and the local populations were to live for a long time.

The administrative structure of the Congo State took shape after its recognition in 1885. The capital was transferred to Boma, where the central administration resided. It consisted of the governor-general, who could legislate in urgent matters but almost always waited for orders from Brussels, and the directors of the four basic services as well as the commander of the *force publique*. The territory was divided into districts, numbering between twelve and fifteen at different times. Districts in turn were sub-divided into posts, of which there were 183 by 1900. The grass roots organisation was provided by the 1891 decree on chiefs. These were appointed by the administration as an area came under occupation. By 1906 they numbered 440, administering about one million people. Even at this date the bulk of the population was still not integrated into the system, and the number of chiefs remained manageable. Each district had its own budget. This gave it a fair degree of decentralisation, especially in the Upper Congo. The district commissioners also had a free hand to settle political affairs, found posts, subdue populations, appoint chiefs and use

the local military detachment for these ends. Their budgetary autonomy implied, though, that they should generate revenues. Before 1891 they traded; later they levied taxes in kind and by *corvée*.

Chiefs were auxiliary agents of the state. They did not need to have any traditional legitimacy, and many veterans from the army or from service in the administration were rewarded with such a post. In many instances, however, a legitimate chief was sought and recognised, if only because of the perceived ease of administration which resulted. Still, it was not until 1906 that legislation prescribed the nomination of persons with hereditary rights. This was still very vague and still allowed larger chiefdoms to be broken up into smaller chieftaincies, while traditional chiefs could still, as among the Pende, have straw men appointed, when they did not want to serve themselves. Any ambitious person still could make a claim, if he was as much as a clan head, and be given 'the medal'. In effect, then, local rule in the district was and remained direct, with rare exceptions.

The Department of Justice, founded in 1886, provided for courts in the Lower Congo, a single court of appeal at Boma and a superior council or supreme court in Brussels. The latter elaborated the Codes of 1886, 1888 and 1895. Upstream of Leopoldville military law prevailed until May 1897. The commissioners, all officers, administered justice. Even later there was but a slow change in the *de facto* system, and in 1905 these officers were still the judges of most 'territorial tribunals', although the Department of Justice had expanded from nine members in 1904 to fifty-three in 1906, and magistrates began to be encountered in the Upper Congo. Only two jails were built: one at Boma for the most serious offenders and one at Stanleyville, although rudimentary detention centres existed in all districts.

The department was headed by a director of Justice and a *procureur d'état*, subordinate to the governor-general. Its autonomy *vis-à-vis* the administration was only relative, and even such freedom of action as existed was limited to areas where magistrates were found, that is, until 1905, mostly to the Lower Congo. During the first years the department did bring the arbitrary meting out of 'justice' by the Boma settlers or by state agents in the Lower Congo under control. It never interfered with African law and local courts save to ban 'barbarous customs', such as the

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poison ordeal, and later by limiting the severity of the sentences such courts could pass. During most of the period, however, each European handled the 'palavers' he created, or which were brought to him, as he saw fit. In the later years of the period, however, tensions rose rapidly between the administrators and the increased number of magistrates who tried to impose the notion of and the respect for law, while also attempting to force the administrators to defer serious cases to the regular courts. This expansion of the role of the magistrature was closely linked to the attempts to counteract charges about lawlessness and atrocities in the Congo. By 1908 the magistrature had succeeded in making its presence felt throughout the State, but was still far from controlling even the administered areas. Throughout its existence this Department of Justice had to struggle for recognition and expansion in the teeth of the indifference and accusations of incompetence raised by both local administrators and critics of the State.

THE ECONOMY

At first the growth of the Congo State was accompanied by the development of traditional commercial companies. By 1891–2 the government had imposed a régime actually limiting free trade to the Lower Congo and, after 1902, to the Kasai. Elsewhere trade was its own monopoly or that of the concessionary companies to which it had leased certain areas. Meanwhile, the necessity of establishing an infrastructure of communications, and later the lure of gold, saw the foundation of other companies as of 1889 and 1891. In short, the state destroyed the previous economic organisation of the Congo basin, primarily the trading networks which have been mentioned but also much of the agricultural and artisanal production. Its policy was founded on the gathering of rubber and ivory by forced labour. The resulting situation led to the reforms of 1906 and the annexation by Belgium in 1908, not long before the substantial revenues the system had produced were about to vanish with the collapse of the rubber price on the world market, and the growing scarcity of ivory and rubber alike. Meanwhile this policy had furnished the means to establish the state and to create its minimal infrastructure.

The first Belgian house came to join a number of companies already operating along the estuary of the Congo river by 1885.

All these companies vied with one another to buy the profitable ivory from African traders, and also bought palm oil, palm kernels, groundnuts and small quantities of other goods such as timber. By 1883 the aggregate value of the trade approximated to that of the Niger delta, and was growing as the agents of the companies followed the penetration into the interior. At the end of 1886 there were 132 stations. However, it was not until the end of 1888 that a major Belgian company, the *Société Anonyme Belge du Haut Congo* (SAB) – a subsidiary of the new *Compagnie du Congo pour le Commerce et l'Industrie* (CCCI) – entered into the arena. Along with a Dutch Company, the AHV, it soon became dominant in the Upper Congo. Major competition from the established African trade collapsed after 1887–90 and the commercial activities of state officials hindered them to a lesser degree. The regulations of 1891 and 1892 were a severe blow to their expansion. Still they did survive.

The commercial station ('factory') both bought and sold. The warehouse, where it stocked European imports and ivory or other commodities for export, was its nerve centre. The company agent, often working on commission, attempted to make the best profit both on buying and selling, and his African counterparts tried to do the same. The African traders wanted to bar agents from dealing directly with producers, near or far, and to prevent them from learning which commodities were prized inland, because these items – such as beads, cowries or brass rods – were used as a form of currency or standard of values. The basis of valuable trade was the exchange of ivory for fabrics, guns and gunpowder. Since the last two products could not be sold or at least not openly, the African trader even in the Lower Congo did manage to compete for years with the companies; because he could provide these items from Angola, ivory was reserved for him rather than for the companies. As the companies penetrated further up the river and launched steamers, the advantages of the African middlemen were eroded, so that on the main river the whole trade in ivory had fallen into European hands by 1890. The African traders, forced out, became sailors on the new ships, still trading on the side in many local commodities destined to be carried for relatively short distances. The canoe trade did not completely die out but came to be restricted also to shorter distances and more local goods. The river people escaped most

of the brunt of forced labour because of their mobility, the closeness of the border, their qualities as seamen and, around Bolobo, because of mission protection. The traditional trading system survived much longer upstream of Luebo, where the companies could not use ships. The competition with the Luso-African trade in southern Kwango, Kasai and Katanga only began to favour the *Compagnie du Kasai* after 1903.

As explained in the previous section, the Congo State claimed ownership of the vacant lands. A strict interpretation of the implications was not given before the secret decree of 12 December 1891 was signed. Vacant land was thereafter held to include all natural products such as ivory or rubber. The collection of these products was to be done by Africans in lieu of paying tax. Implementation of this decree was violently opposed by the commercial companies, so that the Lower Congo was exempt from the system, as was the Kasai until 1902. To collect the rubber and ivory, the government leased two large areas, one in the Mongala basin and one comprising the Lopori-Maringa basin to two new companies: the Anversoise and ABIR. While not transferring sovereign rights to the companies, it gave them the right to collect taxes and keep their own militia. To the south of this area, in the regions of the Lokenye and Lake Ntombo Njale (Lake Leopold II), the state exploited the *Domaine de la Couronne* (Crown domain) itself. Later, as the territory under Congo State control expanded, the system was introduced into new areas. Rubber was even collected in Katanga on the Lomami in 1902 and later. But the bulk of the exports came from the areas cited and from the Aruwimi district.

The fiscal rules had been laid down by law in December 1892, and during the same year commissions began to be paid to state agents according to their 'production', a system later imitated by the commercial companies, ABIR and Anversoise. Since the amount of tax to be paid in labour had not been fixed, the decrees gave the agents a means to exploit the populations at will. Only in 1903 was the limit of forty hours a month decreed, but the appreciation of the time it took to produce a kilogram of rubber was left to the judgement of the agents, and only nominal payment was to be issued for such forced labour.

Atrocities resulted. In the Equateur district a high pitch of violence erupted in 1893, even before concessionnaire firms

operated there. Whereas force had been used before, and even the burning of villages, the new régime attempted to occupy all the villages by settling African auxiliaries, the 'sentries' or *capitas*, in every single one of them. Resistance was forcibly broken, and the populations reacted again and again by insurrection, guerrilla warfare, submission, renewed warfare, and flight. There was not enough time to plant crops, so food shortages became usual and, while people were hiding in the forests, the absence of all amenities favoured the spread of disease. Many died, many others were killed by the sentries. If the atrocities were certainly worst in the Equateur district, the system led to abuses elsewhere as well. Thus in Kasai the pressure exerted by the Compagnie du Kasai brought similar reactions. As late as 1907–8 there were 285 *capitas* in its sector X (Luebo and the Kuba) or one for every two villages. Food was scarce, because not nearly enough time was available for agriculture.

Isolated missionary protests began as the system was put into operation, but no reforms were made. Only after Casement's consular report (1903) became known, and the Congo Reform Association had been founded, did the government set up its own commission of enquiry. Its report substantiated the essential charges, and reforming decrees were issued in 1906, but their enforcement was slow. Meanwhile, after 1904, both ABIR and the Anversoise lost their rights to exploitation but continued to draw income from rubber exports originating in their concessions. By then, at least in the case of the ABIR, the accessible sites for rubber collection were almost exhausted.

A railway to the Pool was the indispensable condition for opening up the Congo river basin, and soon after its foundation the Congo State attempted to attract capital to found a company. Finally a subsidiary of the CCCI was formed, and work began in April 1890. The company received land grants as an incentive. The task proved extremely arduous, because of the topography near Matadi and because all labour had to be imported. All the available local men were engaged in portage, which itself became so onerous that it led to an insurrection in 1893–4. Working conditions were bad and mortality was high. A railway militia soon had to be created to maintain discipline among workers terrified by the mortality and discouraged by the extremely slow rate of progress.

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In four years only 26 miles were built, and at its worst the rate of mortality and desertion ran up to 17 per cent in 75 days at the end of 1891 and the beginning of 1892. The death-toll was given in the end as 1,800 Africans and 132 Europeans, but the labour force comprised about 2,000 Africans and 170 Europeans at any given time. As the work progressed beyond the first thirty miles, the major problems had been overcome and the mortality figures diminished. Once one half of the line had been completed, more local labour became available, but the core remained foreign: Kru, Sierra Leonians and, towards the end, Senegalese rail-laying crews. By March 1898 the job was done.

This railway allowed the launching of five 100-ton steamers on the upper river and the transportation thereby of the equipment needed for further lines of rail. The next company, the *Compagnie des Chemins de Fer du Congo aux Grands Lacs Africains* (CFL) was formed in 1902 and was granted 4 million hectares in concessions, which eventually were mostly converted to mining concessions. The CFL was originally intended to build a railroad to the Nile. With the failure of Leopold's schemes there, it was instructed to link the Stanley Falls with Katanga and Tanganyika. A first section from Stanleyville to Ponthierville (Ubundu) was built at a rather slow rate between 1903 and 1906, and by 1908 work was under way on the next section from Kindu to Kongolo. Labour was recruited in the country, different districts being required to provide a set amount of labour and often using press-gang methods to round up the men. Over the first three years, and for the first section, the mortality was 3.3 per cent annually, much lower than the two-digit figures of the Matadi railroad. The logistics were also much improved. By the time that the first section was completed, a core crew had been trained. Conditions improved so much that by 1907 labour problems eased and forcible recruitment ceased, while the line of rail progressed faster than before.

A third company which was to build a railroad from Katanga to Leopoldville was also founded in 1902, then replaced in 1906 by the *Société du Chemin de Fer du Bas Congo au Katanga* (BCK), which did not start with its construction project until after 1908. When Belgium took over, several human portage routes still existed. The main ones ran from Buta to Rejaf on the Congo–Nile route, from Kasongo to Albertville (Kalemie) and Baraka, and

from Lusambo to Dilolo. Most of the traffic for Katanga already used the Zambezi route and later the railway through Rhodesia.

Katanga was believed to be rich in gold, and a rush was feared. So a *Compagnie du Katanga*, founded in 1891, was to occupy the area and stop all British attempts to take it over. The company received one-third of the land in ownership and held a 99-year lease on the mineral rights in this area; on the other two-thirds they held preferential mineral exploration rights for twenty years. The company sent out expeditions, one of which identified rich copper deposits. Then in 1899 Robert Williams, heading the *Tanganyika Concessions Ltd (TCL)*, a company founded to exploit gold, requested to pursue his search into Katanga from Northern Rhodesia. The *Compagnie du Katanga* and the Congo State then formed the *Comité Spécial du Katanga*, the CSK, to administer the whole of Katanga and to hire Williams's company for prospecting. The CSK had its own police force, and its representative dealt directly with Brussels, bypassing the administration at Boma for many matters. In 1906 the mining company, *Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK)*, was created by the *Compagnie du Katanga*, the CSK and the TCL. The first exploratory trenches were opened in 1903, and by 1906 a pilot plant near Kolwezi processed copper for a while, the main mines then being for gold and tin. By 1908 the prospecting work had been completed, the railhead from South Africa was close to the border and Upper Katanga was on the verge of a profound transformation.

Meanwhile, gold had been found in 1903 in the north-east, near Kilo. The government decided to exploit this itself, and began immediate production from the alluvions. The production was still small in 1905, averaging 15–20 kg a month, but it climbed, reaching 311 kg by 1908. During these years only a small labour force was employed in the exploitation itself, but portorage, the building of a compound at Kilo and the supply of food for the labour force was already producing a drain on the local populations, many of which, such as the Lugbara, Lese and Lendu, were still unadministered.

In 1906 the *Forminière* was created and given the mineral rights on lease for ninety-nine years over one half of the Congo, the rest having already been granted to the UMHK, the BCK and the CFL, excluding only the Kilo–Moto gold-bearing deposits. The

Forminière was to prosper later on, when diamonds were discovered in its concessions.

The Congo State was anxious to promote agriculture, but its economic policies in effect prevented this. Indeed, even the existing exports of groundnuts and palm oil from the Lower Congo declined in value until about 1900. Still, the state was anxious to introduce cash crops. It recommended the planting of trial plots on all stations, and founded the experimental botanical gardens at Eala in 1900. It sent out several important agronomic expeditions, while the Jesuit mission at Kisantu began planting its botanical gardens in 1898. The state was interested in highly priced products such as rubber, cocoa, coffee, cotton and tobacco. Only in Mayombe did some private plantations succeed with cacao, coffee and palm products. And even here most of the income stemmed from palm oil, which did not come from the plantations themselves. The tax law of 1891 envisaged that tax should be paid as required in foodstuffs to different posts. This was especially the case at Leopoldville and Kisantu in the Lower Congo, where cassava in the form of *chikwangue* was imposed. This, together with the development of a system of mission farms, resulted in a growth of production by 1908. From the last years of the Congo State onwards, the area of Madimba easily met the food requirements of the Pool and the railroad. It was then beginning to develop as the only real area growing food as a cash crop for export. The same did not happen in the areas where the Arabs had introduced thriving plantations of rice, coffee and cotton. Rice was still available in excess of needs at Isangi (opposite the later agricultural research station of Yangambi) and at Kasongo and Stanleyville, but after 1900 the surplus fast diminished, in part because of recruitment for the CFL railroad construction, in part because of growing needs for portorage (Kasongo), and in part because of the requisitioning of rubber. Here as elsewhere the state's policy contributed to a lowering of output.

As has been stressed before, the Congo State developed as a result of its income from ivory at first, and from rubber after 1896. Rubber then represented 43 per cent of the value of exports, its share rising quickly to 80 per cent or more after 1900; the total value of exports also increased dramatically. The gatherers of rubber, the workers on the railway and even the Pygmies hunting

elephants thus paid for the creation of a state on the European pattern and in addition for the dividends and other bonuses which found their way to Europe. At the same time the sources for African prosperity from trade, artisanal production and even agriculture had been destroyed or were in disarray. More and more the populations were forced into an agriculture of subsistence in the literal sense of the term.

Up till 1908 the Congo State in effect still refused to introduce money, even at Leopoldville. This would have had two unfavourable results: it would have allowed Africans to pay their taxes in cash and thus gradually have eliminated the forced labour on which so much rested. It would also have allowed them to break the direct bond between selling their produce and buying imports, especially where they had access to competitive trade, as in the Lower Congo or along the main river. The introduction of money would have allowed a partial revival of regional and long-distance trade. All of this did happen when money was introduced. But apart from a small area around the Equateur station in 1893, and for a short while around Boma, money was still in 1908 regularly used only in Katanga, where the president of the CSK had had to beg for its introduction, in part because the TCL paid their labour in currency and in part because the miners, like the sailors in Leopoldville, accumulated too many goods which they could not exchange (or only at ruinous rates) or carry home (because of their bulk) when their contracts ran out. Since the monetary policy not only favoured the state but the traders as well, all put up resistance to its introduction, except in northern Katanga. An effect was the retardation in the unification of the market in the country and consequently the lack of genuine economic development rather than growth.

On the whole, the Congo State had built up only the most elementary infrastructure and plundered the most easily accessible natural resources. In the final analysis the economic dynamics of such a system were not very different from those of the Luso-African or Zanzibar trade. Slave raiding had merely been replaced by forced labour.

KING LEOPOLD'S CONGO: CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND AFRICAN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

European penetration was justified by 'its civilising mission'. In practice this ideology amounted to the justification of Christian missions by all other Europeans. At first the activity of all denominations was encouraged by the state, and their advance was quickened by apostolic zeal, especially from the millenarian groups, and the rivalry between Catholics and Protestants in general. But after about 1891 Protestant advances were discouraged by officials, while from 1906 onwards the Catholics obtained a highly favourable status. The Christian mission teaching constituted a frontal assault on the convictions, rituals and ethics of the Africans. Supposedly, agents of the Congo State were concerned only with the eradication of 'barbarous customs' such as human sacrifice, poison ordeals or the slave trade. The missions were to transform these cultures. Islam, which had enjoyed a modest spread in the east, was to be thwarted after the Swahili-Arab wars by both state and missions. But, just as the occupation of the country met with spirited opposition, so the spread of the Gospel also met determined resistance from the traditional African religions.

The earliest missions were Protestant. In 1878 the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) was at Underhill near Matadi, and moved to Leopoldville when the station was founded. It then founded stations at Lukolela, Upoto, Monsembe and finally, in 1896, at Yakusu. The Livingstone Inland Mission was in the Lower Congo until 1884, when they handed their stations over to the American Baptists and Swedish missionaries. By 1884 they also had a station at Coquilhatville (Mbandaka). In later years some felt that the pace of advance of the BMS was too slow, and founded the Congo Balolo Mission, which went to the Lulonga in 1887. Along the Kasai, a precursor arrived at Luluaburg in 1885, but died in 1888. Here durable activity started with the arrival of the American Presbyterian Christian Mission (APCM) and the foundation of their station at Luebo in 1891. Meanwhile the Plymouth Brethren (Garenganze Evangelical Mission) had founded a post at Msiri's capital in 1886, but spread out only after 1893.

On the Catholic side, the earliest arrivals were the French Holy

Ghost Fathers at Banana and Boma in 1880, and the White Fathers on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, where they took over Mpala in 1885. King Leopold was worried by the presence of French mission orders and, after long negotiations, persuaded the Scheut Fathers to take over the main responsibility. The Vatican then created the Apostolic Vicariate of the Congo in 1888 covering the whole country, save for the eastern borders, which remained in the hands of the White Fathers, who now recruited Belgians for their posts. Their most significant later foundation was Old Kasongo (Tongoni), from where, after 1903, they specifically went to fight Islam. The Scheut Fathers founded a major mission station at Nouvelle Anvers in 1889, one at Luluabourg in Kasai in 1891 and one at Kangu in Mayumbe in 1898. From these nuclei they expanded throughout these areas. The Jesuits took the area between the Inkisi and the Kwilu, making their headquarters at Kisantu (1893). To mention only the main other orders, the Fathers of the Sacred Heart were established at Stanleyville in 1897 and the Premonstratensians along the Uele by 1899.

Unlike the Catholics, the Protestants had no overall plan of occupation. In practice the denominations did not compete with one another, so that the effect in the end was quite similar to the Catholic expansion. By 1908 there was still no mission penetration in Kivu. Elsewhere, both Catholics and Protestants were present, save in Katanga, which had only Protestant stations, and in the east beyond the Falls, which had only Catholic stations. State intervention had affected the situation from the mid-1890s, when it seriously curtailed Protestant expansion because of the criticisms the missionaries voiced against official policies. This forced the state in the end to rely on Catholics for its support, a situation which played a role in the conclusion of a Concordat in May 1906, by which Catholic missions were to receive favoured treatment in the granting of land and the building of schools.

By 1908 the results on paper showed the Catholics to hold 52 stations and about 670 posts, occupied by 268 priests or brothers and 125 nuns. They had roughly 125,000 converts. The Protestants, with 40 mission stations and a personnel of 211, had perhaps 70,000 converts. The number of Christians was still small, ranging from 2 to 3 per cent of the population, but the impact of their religious, ethical and educational views affected the whole population of the country with the exception of Kivu, parts of

Katanga and of Orientale Province. Even where no missionaries were found, news of their faith had spread. Thus at Beni the first missionaries found a small congregation led by a Ugandan catechist. The portrait of the poet Francois Coppée had been mistaken for that of the Pope.

The doctrinal differences between Protestants and Catholics, which mattered so much in European eyes, were not perceived so strongly by the local populations, who were more impressed by the personal antagonism by which it was so often accompanied. Nor did differences in training, background and mode of missionary expansion make much of an impact. Whether persons in outposts were called evangelists or catechists did not affect the rate of expansion nor even its manner. Only the chapel farms of the Jesuits were really different here.

Often the first to rally around a new station were children and liberated slaves. This was especially true for the Catholic stations, which attempted, unlike Free Churchmen, to build up a new community first and convert within it, rather than to gain a personal acceptance of the Christian faith by individuals first and form communities only later, although in several cases, such as at Luanza (Plymouth Brethren), at Bolobo (BMS) or at Luebo (APCM), people flocked of their own accord to settle around the mission. Still, Catholic missions started often with a larger community. Luluabourg had 300 freed slaves for a start, and the Premonstratensians started with 1,600 'abandoned' children at Ibembo and Amadi. After the initial years, these differences in size lessened, as many people sought protection at the mission stations from government soldiers or from raiders. And the tactics used by both confessions to make their first converts were rather similar. They aimed to raise 'liberated' children in the Christian faith, and to convert local chiefs, hoping that the rest of the population would then follow.

The first converts to be baptised were often personal servants and helpers of the missionaries. Conversions at first were very slow. Yakusu, founded in 1896, had its first three baptisms only in June 1902. But then, late in 1903, a flood of applicants arrived. This may bear some relation to the recruitment drive for the CFL railroad construction, which had begun then. In this case, however, a great demand for schools and teachers was observed, and this may also explain the rush to the Christian faith. Still, in

many other cases a very slow start was followed by a temporary boom for conversions. It seems as if the local people looked upon Christianity as another traditional religious movement. Received sceptically at first, the movement then snowballed in the way any local religious movement would do. This certainly seems to have been the case at Mbanza Manteka in the Lower Congo, where the Kongo came to see their missionary as a *ngunza*, a prophet. The other major pattern was a steady growth among those who had sought protection at a station, without any religious revival aspect. In these cases conversions implied choosing sides.

Converts, by accepting baptism, identified with the European order. This could be hard on them, as they might be ostracised, denied marriage partners or be accused of corrupting the traditional order and ethics. Often they left their original villages and tried to settle near the mission. Some Christians, especially teachers, were well received even in their own communities. They could help the village in its dealings with Europeans. But the first converts almost invariably became evangelists or catechists dependent on and protected by the mission. Their help was indispensable to the success of the mission. They had to teach the language to the foreign missionary, interpret the Gospel in that language and thereby transform it into a message understandable to members of their own culture. On the other hand they attempted to explain their culture to the foreign missionary. Invariably they also started the outstations. Great as their impact on the spread of Christianity has been, it remains little studied.

Three general patterns of expansion could be followed. Christians could start an official outpost and remain in a group in a Christian village; individuals could return to their home villages and live there while remaining converts and acting as catechists or evangelists; and young Christians could be grouped in settlements nearby other villages, but subtracted from the authority of the chiefs or elders. This latter device was systematised by the Jesuits in 1895, who called the system chapel farms' (*fermes chapelles*) and recruited so-called 'orphans' for this purpose. By 1902 some 250 chapel farms had been established, and the number was to grow to over 400. Protests resulted. The state-appointed chiefs complained that the settlements did not obey them, paid no taxes in kind or in labour and 'annoyed' practitioners of the traditional religion. The chapel farms began to look as if they were

states within the state. Moreover, too many children were taken, sometimes forcibly, from their homes to the missions. The complaints found an echo in the report of the Commission of Enquiry of 1904, which led to a hot debate about the propriety of chapel farms, which was to last until 1914. Other Catholic missions, such as the White Fathers or those of Scheut, also built Christian villages but not as close to other settlements and they relied much less on converting only children. The main effect of the chapel farms was the spreading of a new style of practical life on a large scale. The emergence of a thriving cassava plantation area in the Madimba region may be linked to this, but the connection has been insufficiently explored.

Too little is known about the spread of Islam during the years after the wars with the Swahili-Arabs to allow any generalisation. All that is known is that sizeable numbers of Africans had become Muslims by 1894 in the Kasongo-Nyangwe area and around Stanleyville. The further fortunes of Islam and especially the acceptance of the Qādiriyya in these communities remains to be studied.

Religious movements existed in central Africa *before* the colonial period. Some were attempts to reorganise the central rituals of a religion, attempts triggered by revelations made in dreams to prophets. A movement began when a prophet was followed. Often a new movement required the destruction of personal or even collective charms which protected against misfortune, and movements were collective: a whole settlement had to accept it to be effective. In the Lower Congo *kiyoka* (the burning), of 1872, was an early case. The *lubuku* movement of Mwamba Mputu in Kasai started some time before 1865 and continued to gather adherents until 1895. The *mani* association of the Zande may have started before the turn of the century and *butwa*, among the Shila and Luba, antedated the colonial period as well. Still other cases can be cited.

The turmoil accompanying the colonial occupation may have favoured the flowering of such movements, although, so far, we lack records about them, perhaps because to contemporary observers many of them may have appeared as 'traditional religion'. This was not the case with the Lugbara *yakan* water cult, the importance of which in this period only appears from the ethnographic record of the 1950s, even though Rembe brought

it to the area about 1890. The cult, while a general religious movement, was closely related also to Lugbara resistance against penetration. It already had the famous feature that 'bullets could be turned into water'. But it was not just a collective war charm, it implied a general reordering of Lugbara society.

A similar movement along the lower Lomami in 1892, and one directed against the Arabs may also have been more than just a war charm. The *tonga tonga* movement, appearing on the Sankuru and in Kuba country by 1904, outlasted the rebellion, even though its core feature was a charm to turn bullets into water, and it was still active in 1908. It had been a general religious movement of which the war magic was just a part. Other movements remain to be retrieved from archives and the collective memory of the populations involved.

A further novel manifestation of traditional religions is recorded in missionary accounts as ill-will or plotting by 'sorcerers'. Often traditional rituals were performed with greater ostentation than before, acquiring symbolic value as a form of spiritual resistance. The traditional Lilwa initiation ceremonies among the Lokele in 1900 and 1902 was an at least temporarily successful attempt to counter the influence of the Baptist mission over the young. Renewed activities of *butwa* in eastern Katanga, and initiation rituals in parts of the Lower Congo, may have been due to similar reactions. In areas where the population was decimated, dispersed or under tight control as a result of the rubber system, religious movements could not develop, nor could the traditional rituals be held. Only where a certain measure of initiative remained with the population could traditional religion be used as a form of protest. And in areas where no missionary activity had penetrated, such religions were not yet under attack. It seems probable that further evidence will document a strong reaction of African traditional religions against the missionary attack as well as the early existence of religious movements inspired by prophets.

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE CONGO STATE

The society emerging from the Congo State was dominated by a new set of vertical cleavages. The top group was formed by the European caste. Then followed the élites, which comprised the following subsets: non-Congolese African agents, Congolese

agents or allies of the Europeans, the legitimate chiefs and patriarchs, and the former commercial élite. All of these groups intermarried, but they were far from being fused into a single class. Most of the population ranked below them. The bottom group comprised the slaves, for slavery had not yet been abolished; it also encompassed many of the *libérés* until they passed into the élite of European auxiliaries. The new society had in effect encapsulated all the more local social groups, promoted interaction between them and began to give rise to horizontal regional sets based on the novel phenomenon of ethnicity. In this whole system, the Europeans formed the reference group for part of the élite, and that part of the élite in turn was the reference group for large numbers of the population. The European labels for ethnic groups were adopted without much question, and this identification of horizontal groups was crucial in creating the 'tribes'.

The whites in the Congo State belonged to many nationalities, especially Belgian, British, Scandinavian, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch and American. Many other nationalities were represented by small numbers. At the onset the Belgians were a minority, but by 1908 they had become a bare majority. All Catholic mission personnel, a few Englishmen excepted, were Belgian, while all Protestant mission personnel, with a single exception, were non-Belgian. More and more Belgians were employed in government service, partly because recruitment at a relatively cheap cost from the ranks of the Belgian army was possible. By 1908 there were 1,700 Belgians out of 3,000 whites. The number of government agents reached 1,500 by 1906 and constituted slightly under 50 per cent of the population. Missionaries accounted for some 20 per cent and commercial agents for the remainder. Most state agents in territorial service were still military men. Few Europeans, with the exception of the magistrates, physicians, engineers, Catholic priests and some Protestant ministers, had university training. And although on the whole the educational level was rather low, few whites stemmed from blue-collar families and even fewer were employed in manual labour. Most among them belonged to the middle classes, and were still in their twenties when they arrived. Turnover ran apparently at a very high rate. The shifting of careers occurred frequently, with state agents being later employed by companies more than the reverse.

But in very many cases, especially at the beginning of the period, Europeans did not often stay for the full length of their terms of contract. For most years mortality rates were over 6 per cent (18 per cent for a typical term) and repatriation for reasons of health was probably higher. An estimate of a 40 per cent loss over the typical three-year contract period for medical reasons is not exaggerated. And this does not include those who broke their contracts for other reasons. With the partial exception of the mission stations, the turnover of personnel, especially in the interior, was high enough to threaten the continuity of local political and economic policies.

Why did whites go to the Congo? It was widely believed that middle-class drop-outs formed the bulk of candidates, except for the missionaries. Debts, women, rebelliousness are most often cited, in ditties of the period. There were other reasons. The dullness of Belgian garrisons bred a spirit of adventure. This was often mixed with a desire for glory, advancement and honours. Except for company agents, the desire for financial gain was not marked, as salaries were low. And then there were the missionary vocations, another form of the spirit of adventure, often born in spiritual garrisons or, especially among Free Churchmen, revealed as a sense of personal destiny. Conrad's *The heart of darkness* paints a portrait that only partially corresponds to the change in behaviour and personality structure that affected lonely agents, and in the interior almost all of them were lonely. His picture is overdrawn. Still, both callousness and a deep sense of mission, developed to levels not reached in Europe, and recurrent illness left its mark on behaviour. A study of the psychological effects of loneliness and disease among the colonisers is as urgently needed as is one dealing with their detailed socio-cultural backgrounds.

The earliest Africans brought to the Congo from outside were Stanley's Zanzibari. In 1883 these were joined by Hausa soldiers from Nigeria. They already found Krumen (Liberians) on the coast, and later numbers of West Africans from Sierra Leone, Ghana, the Lagos area and Senegal joined them. Recruitment for the Matadi railway brought some Jamaicans, some Chinese, labourers from Senegal and Mali; and the army recruited small numbers of Xhosa, Ethiopians, Somali, Egyptians and Dahomians. Most of these left the country, once their terms were

completed, but some, especially Senegalese, Liberians, Sierra Leonians and Hausa remained as skilled blue-collar labour or as traders. A few Zanzibari settled in the 'arabized' communities in the eastern half of the country. Some of the immigrants married in the country and settled; the best known case is the Badjoko family, founded by the son of 'the chief of the Bangala', a renowned sergeant in the army, who married a Senegalese girl. In 1953 we still found a Brazilian Indian mestizo, married to a local African and running a small plantation started before the turn of the century. In the long run the immigrants did not play a major role in Congo. In the short run some among them rose to responsible posts, such as acting officer in the army during campaigns or the equivalent of the later territorial administrators. In the end, the opportunities open to this category of persons were not greater than those open to local collaborators with similar skills.

The new local élites achieved their positions as auxiliaries of the Europeans, and even more as literate auxiliaries. Most had acquired their skills in the country, but a few reached Europe and returned with a solid education. By 1908 one of them, Lusambo, was in charge of the railway station at Leopoldville, the hub for all traffic to the upper Congo. Others had sadder experiences, as resident European sentiment ran higher, as the years progressed, against the 'semi-civilised' and 'the mission-boys'. Of those who had been trained in Europe, most returned to Africa and some landed in jail. Local education was left to the missions. In the first years the population did not appreciate it, but later, when people began to realise that literacy was a passport to advancement, especially in remote districts, missions were urged to build schools or send teachers. Thus in far away Yakusu the Lokele had challenged the Baptist mission as late as 1902, but in 1903-4 a vast movement swept that portion of the Congo river, begging for teachers and crying out for alphabet cards.

The two existing state schools at Nouvelle Anvers and Boma were run by Scheutists. Children 'adopted' by the state were sent there and trained in military fashion for jobs in the army or in the administration. Other schools just taught the three Rs, that is to say, a programme equivalent to the first two elementary grades in Europe. Persevering pupils did learn to read and write. Besides these schools some training was given in the base army

camps and 'on the job' in the railroad construction camps. The villages settled by veterans often benefited from such training and enjoyed a higher standard of living than the 'traditional' settlements nearby, and were envied by them. Apart from anything else, they were exempt from taxes. More advanced schooling was created in 1906, when vocational schools were set up at Boma, Leopoldville and Stanleyville, and then in 1908, when the school for nurses at Boma opened its doors. So the statistics of 'students' do not tell much. It was only in 1907 that each Catholic mission order was asked to establish a training school for teachers, as well as for office workers needed by the state and the companies; this was a result of the 1906 Concordat.

By 1908 there were probably upwards of 30,000 literate Congolese, but very few with more than just bare literacy. They worked for the Europeans at low-skilled operations. The most responsible blue-collar occupation was that of river pilot. Skills such as riveter or mason were typical. The usual white-collar jobs were those of clerks, foremen, warehousemen or mailmen. But the companies hired *capitas* able to keep accounts, and the schools needed teachers. These people mixed with the remnants of the older commercial élite, which in part had become European auxiliaries. But they remained aloof and often antagonistic to the legitimate chiefs. The 'modern' élite was spread everywhere, but took its cues from life in the towns: Boma, Matadi, Leopoldville. The towns remained small. By early 1914 Leopoldville numbered only 12,000–13,000 inhabitants. Between 1895 and 1904 various centres were proclaimed by decree to be urban areas, and in 1892 a decree providing for the registration of educated Africans was enacted. The Congo State thus recognised the existence and some of the aspirations of this élite of auxiliaries, more than the later Belgian Congo would. All in all, the members of this group enjoyed little financial independence, because trade was limited to such a small area, and all other opportunities were linked to roles subordinate to Europeans.

The African élite groups suffered from epidemics, but probably not nearly as much as the general population, which also had to cope with food shortage. No hard demographic data are extant, and the population estimates, which range from 27 million to 12 million, in early years are completely unreliable. At first smallpox was the great killer. It had been present in the Lower Congo for

two centuries at least, and was reported in Katanga before colonisation. Elsewhere it was more recent. A steamer unwittingly carried the disease to Kasai in 1893, where it spread like wildfire. But, so far, there are no reliable data about the frequencies of such epidemics, their morbidity or their mortality. Nor is much known about the epidemic spread of other diseases such as jiggers and some venereal disease. The latter affected reproduction rates and affected the demography perhaps as much as, or even more than, the smallpox losses. The whole subject needs research. Indeed we do not even have a comprehensive list of all the diseases involved in these epidemics. The government created a vaccine centre for smallpox at Boma in 1893, and by 1906 no single epidemic of the affliction was reported in the country. Sleeping sickness may have been endemic in Lower Congo and certainly was so at the Ubangi–Congo confluent. The first reported case came from Leopoldville in 1885, shortly after a physician had settled there. But the epidemic dates only from 1899. From that year onwards it spread to Stanleyville and then across to Lake Tanganyika and beyond. The advance elsewhere was slower. Still by 1908 almost the whole country was affected. Only parts of northern Katanga and of the northern Orientale Province remained immune. All descriptions stress a terrifying mortality, and from data of the 1920s it can be estimated at some 80 per cent of the population in the worst stricken areas. This was the ‘black death’ of the Congo. It must have affected the life-style of every single community in the stricken areas. In 1906 the government registered serious alarm. Sanitary brigades, and a research laboratory at Leopoldville, were created to stop the disease, but by 1908 no lasting successes had been achieved.

In general the health services were poor. From two physicians in 1888, the number rose only to thirty by 1908. Apart from the Lower Congo, hospitals were inadequate. The Commissions of Hygiene set up to fight malaria, in 1892 (Lower Congo) and 1899 (all districts), were ineffective because of incompetence and quarrels over rank. Malaria had always been there and did not upset the population as much as the epidemics. The second major factor in unsettling the rural populations was food shortage, even famine in rubber exploiting areas. This was an effect of the tax system, which lasted beyond the end of the period. By 1908 a few peoples still remained unaffected by the expansion of the new

state; most had submitted and found their way of life profoundly altered. In most places the population was forced back into a bare subsistence agriculture, almost no time being left for the pursuit of customary crafts, so that certain skills (such as metal mining and smelting, the preparation of lye for soap, etc.) were lost. Only in the most remote areas was regional trade still flourishing. Genuine development was arrested, indeed reversed. Often the taxes in kind did not correspond to the pre-existing regional specialisations, but consisted of foodstuffs, and thus along the Congo river, for instance, the whole regional division of labour was largely disrupted, except for the production of pottery and fish.

The country as a whole formed a new economic unit in which populations were assigned production items and goals, while the products of their own specialisations largely came to be replaced by imports, as often as not of inferior quality. This was true for mass products, such as hoes, most textiles, and in part salt, as well as for luxury goods. And given the narrow base on which the export economy of the country rested (in 1908, 90.9 per cent of exports by value were still ivory, rubber and copal), the intricate spatial systems of complementary production were lost.

Major change also occurred in social organisation. Mission action stressed the nuclear family, at the expense not only of the polygynous family but also of the larger kinship structures which lost many of their functions, even though they did survive. Existing patterns of solidarity were seriously hurt by the stress on individuality, whether it was in saving one's soul or making a living. While this may have benefited a few in the emerging élite, it hurt the mass of the population. The foundation on which solidarity rested was eroded, as collaboration in production and exchange, judicial rights, property rights over land and defence were all more or less curtailed, once sovereignty was lost. Village leadership was still flexible and still expressed itself in palavers, but medalled chiefs, whether imposed or legitimate representatives, became agents of the government and were no longer bound by customary checks. Meanwhile, the need first to resist and later to organise against oppression led some acephalous groups to co-operate in larger numbers than ever before. In Equateur province different groups rallied together in the area of Boende to prevent the penetration of the state, and the Budja

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fielded up to 5,000 spearmen during their insurrection, although their 'customary' structure may never have provided for collaboration on this scale. Such coalitions did not survive the conquest, but they helped, as a subsidiary factor, to establish ethnicity.

The awareness of encapsulation within the state, and the labels attached by the Europeans to different regions, helped to formulate an inchoate sense of tribalism. Once the European labels were accepted, ethnicity was under way. Examples of 'new' tribes were the Lulua, the Suku, the Bangala. Rare were the labels which did not give rise to a permanent ethnic group, for example, the Likwangula, although even this term came to designate a quasi-tribe – the villages of veterans. Tribalism was to be greatly fostered by the restrictions on free travel and the linking of every individual to a 'customary chief', which was decreed after 1910 and rigidly enforced in the 1920s. This was to lead to the emergence of strong ethnic groups.

Ethics and patterns of cognition were much less affected by the European impact, especially by the missionary impact, than is often thought. The fundamental constellations of world-views remained unaffected or altered only very slowly. Converts reinterpreted Christianity into the old categories, and traditional religious movements retained almost all of them. But Europeans and their lore added to the available range of symbolic representations and to the phenomena to be explained. Changes in the arts, even the visual arts, have not yet been sufficiently explored. Clearly the demand was altered, new products (dyes, for example) became available, new scenes were depicted (portage, missionaries, etc.) but most artists lost their patrons. Hitherto the continuity of socio-cultural patterns has been over-emphasised in the social, political economic and artistic spheres, while change was over-estimated in the religious sphere, but such a generalisation cannot be substantiated without intensive studies, which are still lacking.

CONCLUSION

The Congo State was unique, in that it constituted a colony without a metropolis, or a state whose capital lay outside it. Contemporary observers rightly sensed that the years from 1890 to 1892 constituted a fundamental turning point, because the

system of exploitation which was to keep the state solvent, was then developed. Because of its inherent abuses and economic limitations, the system began to break down by 1906, but it would not be until 1919–21 that the transitional régime gave way to the main structures of the Belgian Congo. The years 1890–92 constitute a more significant turning point than the date of the foundation of the Congo State, or Stanley's arrival in 1879, as the earlier years still can be seen as an extension of the nineteenth-century dynamics of the European commercial penetration. The structural realisation of European hegemony on the ground was only beginning to be effected between 1890 and 1892. The legacy was to be the constitution of a contemporary state: Zaïre.

CHAPTER 7

SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1867–1886

In 1867, a solitary diamond was picked up by chance near the appropriately named settlement of Hopetown on the Orange river frontier of the northern Cape Colony. It was sent to the nearest magistracy, Colesberg, and from there by post to Grahamstown, where it was identified. When it arrived in Cape Town, Richard Southey, colonial secretary to the Cape government, declared in words both celebrated and prophetic: ‘Gentlemen, this is the rock on which the future success of South Africa will be built.’ New finds were reported daily from alluvial diggings along the Orange and Vaal rivers and their tributaries, and more importantly by 1870 diamonds were also being found in the open veld around the area to become known as Kimberley. Within five years it had become the world’s largest producer of diamonds, outstripping even Brazil. A new era in the history of southern Africa had begun.

In 1870, the political economy of Southern Africa was characterised by tremendous regional diversity. African kingdoms, Afrikaner republics and British colonies co-existed in a rough equilibrium of power, but pursuing widely differing social and economic goals. Although most Africans lived in largely self-sufficient agrarian societies, few were untouched by the coming of the merchant and the missionary. South of the Limpopo, much of the region was dominated by the operations of commercial capital derived from the mercantile enclaves of the coastal Cape Colony and Natal. Trading insinuated itself into the largely pre-capitalist agricultural economies of African peoples and into the proto-capitalist agricultural economies of the Afrikaners on the highveld, while the demands from Cape merchants for cattle and the firearms they brought in exchange profoundly affected the pastoral societies of south-western Africa, transforming the nature of warfare in the region. Nevertheless, unlike the Swahili traders north of the Zambezi, who began in

this period actively to conquer African polities and transform their economies, in South and south-western Africa, merchants were not concerned actually to organise production.

In the Cape, the southern Free State and Natal, there were large pockets of commercially oriented agricultural production – wine, wheat and wool in the west, sugar plantations in the east. Yet even here, where a growing number of Africans were becoming incorporated into the settler-dominated worlds of the Afrikaner republics or the British colonies, the majority of Africans still retained access to land and control over their own labour power. The switch to industrial production which came with the mineral discoveries, first diamonds in Griqualand West, and later gold on the Witwatersrand, led to swift and far-reaching transformations in production and in social and economic relations in the sub-continent. For the first decade, Kimberley was a haphazard and chaotic jumble of miners, merchants and migrants drawn to the arid, sparsely populated diamond fields in the hope of making a quick fortune; with the amalgamation of claims, the formation of large companies and the beginnings of a technologically sophisticated form of underground mining, the drive for international capital investment and a cheap, controlled labour force led to major changes both in the labour process and in the demands being made of the heterogeneous societies of southern Africa. The changes went far beyond the earlier impact of South African societies of merchant capital, settler agriculture or the existing urban centres, which were themselves drawn into and becoming dependent upon the economic hub first of Kimberley, later of the Witwatersrand. Within a dozen years of the establishment of the dry diggings, a new class of industrial capitalists had been created and most of the remaining powerful independent African kingdoms south of the Limpopo had been forcibly conquered, largely by British arms, as a precondition for the region's further capitalist development.

In the early days of the mining industry, capital had not only to transform the weak colonial and republican states; even after conquest, it had also to come to terms with African societies and their ruling classes. Labour migration and commodity production for the colonial markets posed a threat to the gerontocratic order in pre-colonial African societies. Both carried the implication that single households could accumulate property without reference

to the traditional control of wealth exercised by chiefs and headmen, while labour migration enabled young men to bypass the control of elders over bride-wealth. Chiefs and elders attempted to control this threat in a variety of ways, with varying degrees of success: some were able to establish a loose alliance of interest with recruiters, or the colonial agents; others, perhaps more dependent on the labour power of young men than the tribute they could extract from returning migrants, ended up in headlong confrontation with the new expansionist forces.

The creation of a wage labour force was undoubtedly the result of the demand of the colonial economies; that it took the form of migrant labour, however, was related to the complex struggles between and within ruling classes over the labour power of young men. These struggles were extraordinarily diverse, and were shaped by ecology and pre-capitalist forms of production, the power structure in rural societies, the timing of colonial penetration and the influence of Christian missionaries. Structural relations within African societies acted as powerfully on the actions and consciousness of migrants as any 'pull' of market forces, growth of 'new wants', or individual choice on the one hand, or the 'determining role of the South African state' on the other.

In the lands between the Limpopo and the Zambezi, the hunting of elephants for ivory, which flowed to the south as well as to entrepôts on the east and west coast, the trade in gold from the lands of the Shona to the Portuguese at Tete, and quite considerable slave-trading were the major forms of economic enterprise that were geared to production for overseas markets. Increasingly, in this period, however, it was becoming clear that new opportunities and new dangers were to come from the south. Further north and east, the period saw a continuation and intensification of the connections to the east coast. In these regions, where the ivory trade was inextricably linked to the slave trade, the results were shattering. Together with the Ngoni intrusions, the advent of well-organised slave and ivory traders from the east coast transformed the political and social geography of large tracts of what is now Malawi and eastern Zambia.

THE DISCOVERY OF DIAMONDS AND ITS IMPACT

The discovery and subsequent mining of diamonds and gold in southern Africa in the 1870s and 1880s was not fortuitous. Africans in southern Africa had prospected for and exploited the gold, copper and iron of the sub-continent since the first millennium AD. By the mid-nineteenth century, European explorers were aware that minerals existed in abundance in the Transvaal and adjacent territories. What was lacking was the compulsion and the expertise to exploit them. In the bitter economic depression of the 1860s, at a time of increasing international demand for cheaper raw materials, the pace of mining enterprise quickened.

The discovery of the first diamond at Hopetown whetted the appetites of traders and explorers for more. In 1868, Karl Mauch, the German hunter and geologist, reported that he had found gold on the Tati river, to the north-west of the Transvaal and only 150 km from Bulawayo, capital of the Ndebele kingdom. The finds at Tati, followed shortly after by news of discoveries at Lydenburg in the eastern Transvaal, brought hundreds of individual miners to the goldfields from as far afield as Cornwall, California and Ballarat in Australia. Their excitement was short lived. There was little gold, and the transport and other costs were enormous, though the finds in the eastern Transvaal created a new market for agricultural produce and labour.

Despite continued exploration for mineral resources, the first half of the 1870s was dominated by the complex affairs of Griqualand West, as the diamondiferous region came to be known, where a complicated wrangle erupted between the African polities, the northern republics, the Cape Colony and Britain for control. Even prior to the mineral discoveries, the semi-desert territory had been in dispute between the Griqua under Nicholas Waterboer, the southern Tswana (Tlhaping) and Boer contenders. By 1870, both the Free State and the South African Republic had established magistracies in the region, although Griqua claims were being pushed vigorously by a Coloured lawyer, David Arnot, and the Tlhaping chiefs continued to hold their own against the white diggers, who had proclaimed themselves an independent republic at Klipdrift in the heart of the disputed lands, under the presidency of a former British

seaman, Stafford Parker. Without British intervention, the Tswana might well have been able to oust the white diggers, but territorial disputes which were compounded by the schemes of colonial merchants and land speculators in search of land and mineral concessions increased the pressure for British action.¹

As anarchy threatened to spill over into violence and no agreement between the contending parties could be found, the matter was brought before Lieutenant-Governor Keate of Natal, for arbitration, and in October 1871 he awarded the diamondiferous land between the Harts and Vaal rivers to Waterboer's Griqua. Although both the Tlhaping and the Orange Free State vehemently rejected Keate's Award, the British governor at the Cape, Sir Henry Barkly, annexed Griqualand West in the name of Waterboer, proclaimed the Keate Award boundaries, and appointed Richard Southey, colonial secretary at the Cape and an imperial expansionist of long-standing, the first-lieutenant-governor of the new Crown colony.

Barkly's actions caused an instant uproar; they greatly embittered relations between the British and the Afrikaner Orange Free State, which was still smarting from the imperial annexation of Basutoland after the Sotho/Free State war three years before and soured feelings between the governor and the newly independent government of the Cape Colony. A protracted struggle now arose over land rights in Griqualand West itself, where Southey was anxious to broaden the economic base of the new colony, through the development of capitalist agriculture, and to finance the government through the auctioning off of Crown lands. The insecurities of agriculture in an ecologically fragile environment was the first obstacle, but his plans were chiefly thwarted by the claims of the colonial land speculators, who had used the five years before the British annexation to 'build up a mass of rival claims to vast tracts of the most useful land in the territory',² and the extensive occupation by Tlhaping and Griqua peoples of the farms he hoped to dispose of to white settlers.

It was only under Southey's successor, Major W. O. Lanyon,

¹ K. Shillington, 'Land loss, labour and dependence: the impact of colonialism on the southern Tswana, c. 1870-1900', Ph.D. London, 1981, 77-93.

² K. Shillington, 'The impact of diamond discoveries on the Kimberley hinterland: class formation, colonialism and resistance among the Tlhaping of Griqualand West in the 1870s', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone, *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa: African class formation, culture and consciousness 1870-1930* (London, 1982), 108.

that the problem was resolved, with the issue of land title to white claimants and the crushing of African resistance. In 1876 a land commission sat to hear the claims. Although the territory had been annexed originally in Waterboer's name, the commission virtually ignored Griqua title to the land. Moreover, although it revealed conclusively the fraudulent nature of the original Griqua claims to sovereignty over the Tlhaping in the area, to have admitted this would have undermined the very basis of the British annexation. Instead, the Tlhaping were allocated 'native locations', along the lines of those in the eastern Cape.

For the Tlhaping and Griqua rulers in the area Lanyon's policies created a crisis of major proportions. Initially, it is true, some Tlhaping had benefited from the growth of the diamond fields; by increasing their agricultural production and trading wood and dairy products to the new urban centre, they were able to avoid being forced onto the labour market. Yet this economic independence was both limited and short-lived. The rapid shift towards surplus production for the market greatly increased stratification, undermined an already fragile environment and profoundly disrupted the Tlhaping polity of Jantje Mothibi, already weakened by the impact of mission-inspired individualism and the liquor trade. At the same time, white farmers began to compete for the well-watered agricultural lands around the water sources, and the area became denuded of the wood which was in such heavy demand for fuel and heating in Kimberley. Conflict between the Tlhaping chiefs based in and just beyond the colony and the new authorities increased as chiefs attempted to exact tribute from incoming settlers, and refused to respect surveyors' beacons.

For the Griqua, British annexation was even more disastrous. Although Waterboer had requested imperial intervention in the hope of retaining control over the Griqua, while gaining British protection against the incursions of the Boers and the disorders of the diggers, he rapidly discovered that his former rights were totally superseded by the new administration. With annexation, the wealth and authority of the Griqua declined rapidly. By the 1870s, the Griquas' fragile hunting and herding economy was already in decline. Unlike the Tlhaping, they found the only way to earn ready cash was through the sale of land to the ever-ready speculators, and even those with title to land were ignored by the

1876 Land Court. After a history of collaboration with the British, individual Griqua, including Waterboer himself, now found themselves brought before the colonial courts for minor infringements of a new and alien law.

In 1878, encouraged perhaps by the prior uprising of their kin in Griqualand West, the embittered and impoverished Griqua rose against the high-handed administration; they were joined by Jantje Mothibi's son, anxious to restore chiefly hegemony amongst the Tlhaping, and by a scattering of southern Tswana and Kora peoples both within and on the fringes of the new colony, whose lives had been similarly dislocated by alien pressures, wrought by missionaries, traders, settlers and the new government in Griqualand West. Although the resistance was easily put down with the despatch of a British military expedition under Colonel Warren, in the context of the simultaneous uprisings elsewhere it roused widespread fear, and accelerated the decline of the Tlhaping and the western Griqua.³

The apparent end of African opposition, the establishment of locations and the collection of hut tax for the first time now facilitated the incorporation of Griqualand West by the Cape Colony. Although Britain had taken over Griqualand West on the understanding that it would be annexed by the Cape, in the early 1870s the colonial ministry was reluctant to take on the burden of an administration that could not pay its way; it was also unwilling to antagonise its republican neighbours, already incensed at the British annexation, especially in view of the large number of Free State sympathisers amongst Cape Afrikaner voters. With the payment of an indemnity to the Orange Free State by the British government, and the crushing of African opposition in 1878, the Cape government was persuaded to incorporate the Crown Colony, and in 1880 the first four members for Griqualand West took their seats in the Cape parliament. Among them was Cecil Rhodes, who had first made his way to the diamond fields in 1871, and who was already making a name for himself as a leading entrepreneur.

By the time the Cape took over Griqualand West, new patterns

³ The section on the uprisings in Griqualand West is based on I. B. Sutton, 'The 1878 Rebellion in Griqualand West and adjacent territories', Ph.D. London, 1975; for the southern Tswana, see Shillington, 'The impact of the diamond discoveries' in Marks and Rathbone, *Industrialisation and social change* and A. J. Dachs, 'Missionary Imperialism', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1972, 13, 4, 650-2.

of ownership had begun to emerge on the mines, and the question of the form of control over the state had become a matter of great moment to the new men of capital, like Rhodes, who were coming to dominate Kimberley. Between 1867-70, individual prospectors and diggers had worked the alluvial fields, and the vast majority of stones were found by Tlhaping, Kora and Griqua north of the Orange river, and sold to traders at Hopetown, who were already heavily involved in the interior. They were the agents of the Cape merchants, most of them connected with British firms, who handled the gems, which were then sold on the European market. Port Elizabeth firms, being nearest the diamond fields, secured a predominant part in the new business. The merchant houses also supplied the food and materials required by the diggers. Labour was undertaken by the diggers themselves or, once whites made their way to the 'dry' diggings in large numbers after 1870, their servants, many of whom accompanied their masters to the fields. In general, the merchants of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth had been loudest in the clamour for British annexation in 1871, while the majority of white diggers favoured a continuance of the 'diggers' democracy' or annexation by the Orange Free State, which they felt would be more sympathetic to the master-servant relations they wished to see established on the fields.⁴

By the time of the British take-over, there were some 10,000 white diggers in the new colony and about 30,000 black, but estimates vary considerably. Fortune hunters both black and white flocked to Griqualand West from all over the world. About a quarter of the whites were from overseas, the rest from South Africa. Many left the settled districts of the Cape and Natal: Cape Town was said to be denuded of population. Cape Coloured people, Mfengu and Ngqika, set out as prospectors and independent diggers, but the majority of Africans went as labourers, many sent by their chiefs to obtain firearms, the main commodity on which wages were spent. Between 1871 and 1875, some 50,000 Africans came to work on the diamond fields every year. Many of them were migrants from Basutoland, but the majority came from the north-eastern Transvaal and were collectively known as

⁴ Both this section and what follows are heavily based on Shillington, 'The impact of the diamond discoveries on the Kimberley hinterland', and R. Turrell, 'Kimberley: labour and compounds, 1871-1888', both in Marks and Rathbone, *Industrialisation and social change*.

Pedi; both groups were following a tradition of working on Cape farms and public works, which went back a generation.

The 'dry' diggings consisted of four mines, named after the earlier farming properties: De Beers, Dutoitspan, Bultfontein and Colesberg Kopje or Kimberley. Of these Kimberley and De Beers were the rich mines, in both quantity and quality of diamonds products; collectively, the diggings became known as Kimberley. With the rush of individuals to the mines, a myriad of claims were staked out – as many as 3,588 in 1871, some even divided into halves and quarters. Southey, who feared the narrow dependence on a single resource which would follow from floating the mines on the London stock-exchange, limited individual diggers to only two claims, 30 × 30 ft square. In this way, too, he hoped to maintain a large population on the fields. So long as the interests of the small digger remained paramount, small-scale black producers were able to compete with white. Mining methods were crude, based on open-cast quarrying carried out by diggers using picks and shovels, and needed little capital outlay. While white diggers depended on an uneasy supply of African labour, the black digger was able to rely on family labour, and in 1875, when the number of claim-holders had already shrunk dramatically, there were still 120 black claim-owners (out of a total of 135), almost all of them concentrated on the 'poor man's kopje' of Bultfontein.⁵

The success of the black diggers formed the focus of the discontent of the many small white claim-holders and diggers, whose hopes of instant wealth rapidly disappeared when confronted with the difficulties of diamond production and sale. A luxury product, diamonds were also dependent on the state of the international economy and the whims of the wealthy. Over-production could easily flood the limited market, while a slump on the European stock exchanges had immediate repercussions for local diggers.

As crucial for the diggers were the difficulties and dangers of their primitive technology. As the mining operations went deeper and deeper underground, the individual activities of the small digger threatened the prosperity of all; the sides of the closely juxtaposed pits threatened to collapse, and the bottoms filled with

⁵ Turrell, 'Black Flag revolt', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1981, 7, 2.

water. The yellow ground near the surface turned blue, which it was feared marked the exhaustion of the diamond pipes, and many of the small independent diggers and share-workers (miners who worked claims for absentee owners, engaging gangs of labour on their behalf to actually work the claims, and receiving a percentage of the proceeds) now began to be eliminated. Although initially share-working offered some advantages to both sides, enabling men without capital to engage in mining, and diminishing the costs and uncertainties of development for the owners, the relationship was a source of constant conflict. It was becoming clear that there was a need for more expensive and complex mining techniques and methods, and that the day of the individual digger was coming to an end. The more affluent claim-owners attempted to tighten their control over share-workers by contracting them as servants, and clamoured for a lifting of the restriction on the number of claims any individual could hold. Although Southey, with his very different plans for the region, initially resisted the clamour, by 1874 he was forced to concede ten claims per person. This satisfied neither the impoverished small digger, nor the larger claim-holders, who wanted more.

It was Southey's policy on labour which roused the greatest anger, however. Part of the agitation for a British take-over had been in the hope that the creation of a colonial state would give the claim-holders greater control. When Southey failed to accede to their demand that a Vagrancy Law be introduced and the Cape's Masters and Servants laws be more rigorously implemented, a white Diggers' Protection Association was formed. Composed largely of share-workers, and led by struggling claim-owners backed by storekeepers, canteen-keepers and small diamond-buyers, members of the association patrolled African areas, allegedly to keep blacks 'under proper surveillance'.

Small white diggers and share-workers who were being squeezed both by the large claim-holders and cheaper African labour, did not join action with the black small claim-owners and share-workers in their opposition to the process of mutual impoverishment and proletarianisation, as one might have expected, but allied with the more successful claim-owners. From the first, their grievances were couched in a virulently racist discourse. This did not originate *de novo* in Kimberley, although its instrumentality was clear. While the polarities of 'white' equals

'civilised' and 'black' equals 'barbarous' were well established in the European and colonial mind well before the foundations of Kimberley, they were profoundly reinforced in the 1870s by the impact of Social Darwinism and the circumstances on the mines, where white diggers saw little in common with their unskilled African fellows. The latter were accused of every ill, including sole responsibility for the large-scale theft of diamonds on the mines. While IDB (illicit diamond buying) by both black and white was undoubtedly a problem, its importance was grossly inflated both then and later by claim-owners and white diggers for their own purposes.

In 1873-4, as drought followed by floods sent up food and transport costs in southern Africa, the outcry against Southey's rule mounted; at the same time the world price of diamonds plummeted as a result of a slump on the Austrian stock exchange, and the banks began to foreclose on the indebted small diggers. In March 1875 the so-called Black Flag rebellion broke out. Although it was easily put down by a show of force brought up from the Cape, Southey faced a severe crisis; he lacked staff, funds and support from the local community, and in July 1875 was recalled in disgrace.⁶

The Black Flag rebellion marked a major transition on the diamond fields. Southey, with his Cape landed and mercantile allies, was replaced by a lieutenant-governor more amenable to the demands of overseas capital. A commissioner was appointed to enquire into the financial affairs of the Crown colony and his reports 'constituted a virtual invitation to companies to take over the development of the mines'.⁷ The legal framework of the colony was changed to permit the formation of joint-stock companies and all restrictions on claim-holding were removed. After the commercial crisis in mid-1876, when the price of diamonds fell by one-third, international capital began to flow into the mines and by 1881 the number of claims at Kimberley had been reduced to 71, dominated by twelve joint-stock companies with a combined share capital of £2.5 million (a third of the total). Simultaneously, the technology at the fields was transformed with the introduction of horse whims, washing machines to break

⁶ The sections on Kimberley and the Black Flag revolt are deeply indebted to R. Turrell, 'Kimberley: labour and compounds, 51-2; and his 'Black Flag revolt on the Kimberley diamond fields'.

⁷ J. Flint, *Cecil Rhodes* (London, 1976), 44.

down the diamondiferous ground, and steam engines. The new phase of company mining had begun.

The next half-a-dozen years saw these 71 claims further reduced, as the larger companies competed to control the diamond mines, a process which was accelerated by a crisis of over-production on the mines in the early 1880s and by the crash in the share market in 1886 which led to the demise of many of the remaining smaller companies. By 1887, two giants had emerged in the struggle to monopolise both production and output: on Kimberley mine, Barney Barnato, an East End Jew whose life story seemed to epitomise the rags to riches mythology, had bought out most of his opponents; on De Beers mine, all the claims had been taken over by Cecil John Rhodes. By 1887, the issued share capital of his De Beers Mining Company was £2.5 million (compared to £200,000 in 1881).

By this time Rhodes was not only one of the wealthiest men in South Africa, but also a prominent Cape politician. As member for Kimberley, he had played a crucial role in the British annexation of Bechuanaland and was poised to launch his thrust into the interior. Essentially, it was the wealth from the diamond fields which enabled him, and the imperatives of his mineral kingdom which impelled him to do so.⁸

The competition between De Beers and Kimberley Central Mine for the final monopolisation of the diamond fields has been largely personalised as a contest between Barnato and Rhodes; in fact Barnato was relatively easily bought off, although his shareholders and managers held out rather longer. What was really crucial in Rhodes's final success, however, was the support he acquired from powerful financiers in Britain and France, who appreciated the need for monopoly if the industry was to remain profitable. With the formation of De Beers, the amalgamation of the diamond fields was complete; the way was cleared for the centralisation of both production and marketing. In 1899, the first diamond syndicate was formed by the dealers who had been most involved in the creation of De Beers. In just over twenty years the multitude of black and white diggers had given way to a major internationally backed monopoly.⁹

For workers, both black and white, the implications of the

⁸ Refs re Rhodes to: Shillington, 'Land loss', 214–31.

⁹ D. Innes, *Anglo-American and the rise of modern South Africa* (London, 1984), ch. 2.

amalgamation of the diamond fields were immense. In 1888–9, 37 per cent of workers lost their jobs – 2,770 Africans and 240 Whites. At the same time African wages, which had risen to 30 shillings a week in the 1870s, was brought down to between 7s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. a week with food. Between 1889 and 1898 working costs on the diamond fields were reduced by 50 per cent.¹⁰ Even more crucial for the future pattern of industrialisation in southern Africa, and for both the racial and sexual division of labour, was the implementation of a rigorous closed compound system for Africans at Kimberley.

Usually defended as a response to the widespread theft of diamonds, the compound system can be traced to the falling rate of profit on the diamond fields in the early eighties, and the changes in the work process as the new joint companies turned to underground mining. By 1886, De Beers was able to introduce closed compounds for its workers, and this provided the model elsewhere after amalgamation.¹¹

It was of fundamental importance for the future of southern Africa that white workers were able to resist being housed in compounds; in this they were assisted by the opposition of the merchants to any form of compounding which they feared would damage their sales, though they couched their opposition in terms of ‘free trade’ and protecting ‘native interests’. In relation to African workers, the merchants were satisfied by promises that they would provision the compounds, but through their intervention skilled white and Coloured workers escaped the compounds. In fact, both these groups were already in a privileged position in relation to the ‘raw natives from the interior’, from whom they were quick to distinguish themselves. With the formation of companies, independent white diggers were transformed into overseers bought off with higher wages; they collaborated with management in ‘disciplining the African labour force’. They were as carefully, if somewhat more congenially, controlled in the white working-class suburb of Kenilworth, effectively tied to the company and isolated from the African workers. Most of the Coloureds were absorbed as an urban artisanate and petty bourgeoisie, joining the already considerable

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ For a vivid description of the closed compounds by the man who claimed to have established them for Rhodes, see N. Rouillard (ed.), *Matabele Thompson: an autobiography* (Johannesburg, 1957; reprinted Bulawayo, 1977), 82–3, 88.

settled urban black population in Kimberley, or making their way north to the new gold fields.

The compound system was of immense importance to the mining industry; it limited the possibilities of united worker action, prevented desertion and diamond smuggling, and very substantially reduced the costs of reproducing the labour force. Yet the compounded migrant was not something decided upon and simply imposed by De Beers of its own volition. Indeed, the new industrialists epitomised by Rhodes would probably have preferred some form of lengthy indentured servitude, if not outright slavery.¹²

Nevertheless, the imposition of the compound system marked a profound transformation in the position of Africans by the mid-1880s compared to the 1870s, a transformation which can only be understood against the wider socio-political changes of the period. In the 1870s, a major preoccupation of every colonial, republican and imperial interest had been to find and control an adequate supply of labour. In the Cape and Natal, it is true, the earlier wars of dispossession and the process of stratification amongst the peasantry, which had formed around the mission stations from the mid-century, had already created a pool of landless labour. However, with the diamond discoveries, and as local economies began to recover from the depression of the sixties, an insatiable demand for labour – in the greatest possible numbers at the lowest possible cost – came from all sides. In both colonies, new legislation was passed to increase and control local workers, and both began to look beyond their frontiers for additional hands.

At the Cape, self-government led to an ambitious development of railways and harbours; as much for political as for economic reasons, the Cape ministry procured loans through their Agent-General in London, and Molteno's Railway Act of 1874 authorised the construction of no less than four main lines, connecting the main commercial centres of the Cape to Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London. By 1881, the great drive was to reach Griqualand West, where diamonds had overtaken all other Cape exports. Between 1874 and 1885, £20 million had been transferred from London into Cape government securities, most of it for

¹² See, for example, T. Collingwood Kitto cited in R. Turrell, 'Kimberley: labour and compounds'; 62.

expenditure on railways and harbours. The international movement of capital was matched by the mass movement of workers: between 1873 and 1883, some 23,000 European immigrants were brought out as workers to the colony. Most of the railway 'navvies' were from Britain, but there were also Germans and Belgians. At Cape Town docks, black labour was drawn on from as far afield as Mozambique and housed in compounds at the port, while elsewhere strenuous efforts were made to induce eastern Cape Africans to work on the railways and on the farms.

In Natal, indentured labour from India was renewed and an increasing number of Tsonga from southern Mozambique were recruited to meet the rising demand from the sugar plantations and public works. At the same time, Theophilus Shepstone, then Natal's secretary for Native Affairs, began to look longingly at the dense concentrations of people in Basutoland, the eastern Transvaal and even the lands of the Ndebele as fields for Natal expansion.

With the creation of the new market at Kimberley, which had become by 1877 the second largest town in South Africa, Africans found they could earn tax and rent and fulfil their rapidly growing consumer wants through crop production rather than by working for settlers. In Natal, the Eastern Cape and Basutoland, this was the decade of maximum opportunity for African peasant producers, and many households sent their young men to the diamond mines to earn the money for the new ploughs, seed and fertilisers that were beginning to transform the countryside. White farmers too were beginning to respond to the new market, and for the first time Afrikaner farmers in the Cape Colony formed a *Boeren Beschermings Vereeniging* (a Farmers' Protection Union) to do political battle on their behalf in parliament. As undercapitalised farmers, they were most vociferous on the need for cheap black labour. By the early 1880s, under J. H. Hofmeyr, they were beginning to make their presence felt in the Cape Legislative Assembly.

At Griqualand West, mine-owners had blamed Southey for their labour difficulties, but there was in fact little he could do as long as Africans had access to land, were able to supply or withdraw their labour at their own discretion, and had a choice of occupation. Although Crown colony rule had been declared over the immediate environs of the diamond fields, there was still

no overarching state in the region capable of pulling Africans out to work through the imposition of taxation or *corvées*. Labour recruiters were soon ferreting out workers from as far afield as Barotseland and Matabeleland, the eastern Transvaal and Mozambique, but the demand for cheap unskilled labour constantly oustripped the supply.

Such was the bargaining power of workers in Kimberley that through the 1870s wage levels constantly fluctuated in response to the willingness of Africans to offer themselves for labour; wages were higher than anywhere else in southern Africa, and there were bonuses when the haul of stones was good. By 1875, they had gained considerable independence, by insisting that they should feed themselves. This led to an increase in wages and the proliferation of black eating houses and canteens. Many Africans left the informal diggers' 'compounds', and set up their own camps on the outskirts of the townships. The rate of desertion and drunkenness was high and the complaints of employers continuous.

Most important of all was the workers' ability in Griqualand West to purchase guns in exchange for their wages, a powerful symbol of their independence and a potent means of ensuring its continuance. Much of the money earned on the fields was used to purchase guns, which cost from £4 for an old musket to £12 for a modern breech-loader. The trade in guns reached huge proportions by 1875, after which time the authorities tried to clamp down on it. The sale of guns and gunpowder to the workforce constituted the major contradiction on the diamond fields; so long as firearms remained the major way of attracting labour to the mines, neither the claim-holders nor the state could solve the problems of control. Within two or three years of the beginning of mining at the 'dry' diggings, there was hardly an African group from the Transkei to the Limpopo that was not armed with fairly effective guns.

For both black and white this rearming of African peoples, at the very moment that fresh encroachment was being made on their lands, was highly charged with emotion. All over South Africa it was believed that African rulers under the leadership of Cetshwayo, king of the Zulu, were conspiring 'to drive the whites into the sea'. It was in Natal, however, that this conspiracy

theory was most ardently held; there the African possession of guns roused near hysteria.

Ever since its establishment as a British colony in 1845, Natal had been prone to rumours of an imminent African invasion. A tiny group of Whites – some 17,000 in the 1870s – was scattered over a vast area, their settlements surrounded by reserves and huge tracts of absentee-owned lands, occupied by 300,000–350,000 Africans. Most Africans were still ruled by chiefs, though these had been carefully chosen by Shepstone, as secretary for Native Affairs; with only eleven magistrates at his disposal in 1871, he was only too well aware of the limitations imposed by a lack of men and money. Despite the outcry of settlers and missionaries against such practices as *lobola* (bridewealth) and polygeny, Shepstone recognised that to eliminate them would radically transform African daily life. In the late 1860s agricultural competition from the culturally segregated Africans added to Natal settler anxiety. On their borders were the densest African populations in southern Africa, all of them still living in powerful independent kingdoms: Zulu to the north, Sotho to the west, and Mpondo to the south. A variety of measures – taxation, heavy tariffs on imports destined for the African market, the enforcement of European-style dress, fines and fees of court – had failed to push Africans into working on settler farms. The fears and frustrations of the struggling colonial farmers, living cheek by jowl with African neighbours whose land and labour they coveted, were quickly translated into rumours of African disaffection.

In 1873, the Hlubi, an African chiefdom settled in the north-west of Natal, under its chief, Langalibalele, a renowned doctor and rain-maker, refused to register the guns they had earned at Kimberley, lest they be confiscated without compensation. Successful peasant farmers, the Hlubi were also among the first Natal Africans forced to seek work on the diamond fields. As far as the officials were concerned, they were already guilty of a number of offences. When Langalibalele allegedly manhandled the messengers sent to summon him to Pietermaritzburg to account for his peoples' actions, Shepstone was enraged, and sent a small force of white volunteers and African 'scouts' to castigate the chief and his followers.

Langalibalele did not wait for the humiliation. In November

1873 the chief, his large family, and less than a thousand fighting men, together with a great herd of cattle, fled across the Bushman's River Pass into Basutoland, Natal troops in hot pursuit. When the Hlubi rearguard clashed with their pursuers, and three whites and two African scouts were killed, the Natal force panicked and retreated into Natal. News of this minor military episode 'ran through white Natal like sheet lightning, discharging thirty years' store of accumulated hate and fear'.¹³ British reinforcements were sent to Natal and Langalibalele's location was destroyed, as was that of the neighbouring amaNgwe Ngwane people thought to have been his allies. Two hundred people were killed, the remaining women and children driven into settler service, their lands and goods confiscated. At the same time, Langalibalele and his followers were hunted out in Basutoland by a large armed force from the Cape and Natal, and the chief was returned to a highly irregular trial in Natal. Far exceeding its powers, the court sentenced Langalibalele to life-long banishment on Robben Island.

In London, Lord Carnarvon, the recently appointed secretary of state for the Colonies in Disraeli's Conservative cabinet, recalled the lieutenant-governor, Sir Benjamin Pine, mitigated Langalibalele's sentence to exile outside Cape Town, granted compensation to the amaNgwe people, and despatched Sir Garnet Wolseley, hero of British India and of the Asante war of 1873, to Natal as special commissioner. For Carnarvon the affair highlighted the complexity of affairs in southern Africa and reinforced his conviction that the only solution to its problems lay in some form of confederation.

CONFEDERATION AND THE ANNEXATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

The merits of a confederation policy to the man who had piloted the successful federation of Canada in 1867 seemed self-evident: the creation of a self-governing, united South Africa within the British empire was seen as the cheapest and most effective way of securing metropolitan and colonial interests. A unified

¹³ N. A. Etherington, 'Labour supply and the genesis of South African Confederation in the 1870s', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1979, 20, 2, 246.

administrative structure, communications system and defence policy would encourage both colonial and overseas investors. Confederation would resolve local political and financial problems, such as the continued tension over the Free State's claim to the diamond fields, the chaotic finances and increasing civil disorder in Griqualand West, and the refusal of the Cape to take the colony over; and it would also create a more effective state in the region, capable of taking concerted measures to deal with relationships between black and white.

All over South Africa, growing competition for African lands, itself a product of the rise in land prices and commercialisation of agriculture which followed in the wake of the diamond discoveries, threatened to black-white confrontations. At the same time, the continued independence of powerful and self-sufficient African kingdoms posed an obstacle to the transformation of their people into a cheap, controlled and self-perpetuating labour force for the rapidly evolving capitalist economy of the sub-continent. The proliferation of firearms in African hands and the inability of the republican governments to ensure 'a free flow of labour' to the diamond fields and to other commercial enterprises in the region could only be dealt with by a form of organisation transcending existing frontiers and parochialisms.

The imperial problem, which proved insoluble in this period, was how to persuade or cajole the settler polities to agree to submerge their local sovereignties. Ever since the annexation of Griqualand West, imperial officials had hoped the Cape Colony would take the initiative in such a policy. By the 1870s, it was the largest and most populous of the settler states in South Africa, with a white population of some 237,000 (compared to a total of less than 100,000 elsewhere in South Africa) and an internal black population of about half a million. Much of the rest of South Africa was an extension of the Cape's commercial economy. The spate of railway building and public works in the 1870s had greatly increased the colony's dependence on British capital and credit, and major British interests had become involved in the economic and political changes in the region. They were as anxious to see the continued viability of the Cape economy, in the context of expanded opportunities for capitalist development in the region as a whole. No policy of federation could succeed without the support of the Cape Colony, and it was hoped that

the grant of responsible government would enable it to join with the Orange Free State as a first step towards such a federation.

Despite the misgivings of Western Cape conservatives and the continued agitation of easterners for some form of separatism, in 1872 the first self-governing ministry under Sir John Molteno was elected at the Cape. Reluctant to give up their new independence and unwilling to shoulder the financial and defence burdens of the region, however, from the outset the new cabinet was hostile to the idea of federation. Carnarvon's appointment of the historian, J. A. Froude, as his personal emissary to South Africa (over the head of the high commissioner and the Cape ministry), Froude's encouragement of eastern Cape separatism and the publication of Carnarvon's first despatch on Confederation in May 1875, which signalled renewed imperial assertiveness in the sub-continent – all these actions simply rendered the Cape ministry more suspicious of imperial intervention.

The Langalibalele affair appeared to offer Carnarvon a way out of this stalemate. In the hope that it could then be coerced into a confederation with Griqualand West, Wolseley was instructed to reduce Natal to Crown colony status, and in six months he had succeeded through a mixture of flattery, bribery and cajolery. More importantly, he convinced Carnarvon that he could achieve his ends in South Africa by direct and forceful means more readily than through endless discussions with responsible ministries. The colonial secretary was further encouraged in this view by Natal's highly respected and influential secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, who represented the views of Natal's expansionists.¹⁴

After two abortive attempts to call a conference on confederation in South Africa, Carnarvon summoned colonial representatives to a conference in London in August 1876. By this time, he was even more concerned to push forward with his plans, because the 1875 Macmahon Award of Delagoa Bay to Portugal had given the Republic independent access to the sea, which would enable it to outflank the hold of the Cape and Natal ports. At the same time, the attempt by President Burgers to raise money in Europe to build a railway to Delagoa Bay increased Carnarvon's apprehension that the republic would soon be beyond his reach. The conference achieved little, however; neither President Brand

¹⁴ Etherington, 'Labour supply', 248.

of the Orange Free State nor the Cape prime minister, Molteno, was ready to discuss federation. Through an oversight, President Burgers of the Transvaal had not been invited, and Griqualand West was not directly represented.

In the midst of this, news arrived of the humiliation of the South African Republic at the hands of the Pedi. This gave Carnarvon a fresh opportunity for assertive action. The Pedi defeat of President Burgers and his troops revived the spectre of a general African uprising, bankrupted the Transvaal treasury and increased internal dissensions. Having failed to convince or coerce the Cape or the Free State, Carnarvon now secretly instructed Shepstone to go to the Transvaal and annex the republic, if possible with local consent.

In January 1877, Shepstone proceeded to the republic and by April had annexed it to Britain, despite the protests of the Volksraad and the president. He was urged on by the English-speaking community and the republic's creditors, bankers and traders, as well as by mercantile interests in the Cape and Natal, who feared Transvaal independence and looked forward to a boom in land prices under British rule.

The British annexation of the Transvaal is frequently regarded as the outcome of Carnarvon's impatient, personal response to a 'crisis' on the 'periphery of empire'. In fact, however, it came after almost a decade of renewed imperial intervention in South Africa, which began with the annexation of Basutoland in 1868 and of Griqualand West in 1871. The chronology confirms the recent contention that for Britain the 'new imperialism' was signalled by Disraeli's speeches and policies between 1866 and 1868.¹⁵ Behind immediate local exigencies broader economic considerations impelled imperial advance in southern Africa in the 1870s and 1880s; by then, Britain's relative industrial decline, falling profits, and the growing competition amongst the great powers, had led 'industrial interests in Britain... into decisive support for the acquisition of new markets in Asia and Africa'.¹⁶

The initial response of the Afrikaners of the South African Republic to imperial annexation was muted, perhaps because of

¹⁵ F. Harcourt, 'Disraeli's imperialism, 1868-1888: a question of timing', *Hist. J.*, 1980, 23, 1.

¹⁶ P. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, 'The political economy of British expansion overseas, 1750-1914', *Econ. Hist. Review*, 2nd series, 1980, 33, 4, 485

Burgers' inability to cope with the underlying tensions of Transvaal society. Despite the known abundance of its mineral resources – copper, lead, cobalt, iron and coal were all known to be present – and its sparse white population in an apparently vast territory (an estimated 30,000 settlers dispersed over 120,000 sq. miles), the Transvaal state was bankrupt and suffering from an acute shortage of land. By the mid-1870s, speculation and land shortage had sent up prices, and the setting aside of 3 million acres as security for the railway loan precipitated a major crisis. By the beginning of 1876, the sale of public land had virtually ceased.¹⁷

In the Transvaal there was a traditional solution to land shortage: expansion into the African domain. With the mineral discoveries in the Transvaal and Griqualand West there was an added incentive as the market for agricultural produce expanded. On every frontier between Boer and African, there were uneasy murmurings, as settlers translated informal grazing arrangements into land concessions and private title. The resurgence on the highveld of African power in the 1860s, as African societies recovered from the demographic effects of the *mfecane* and were able to arm themselves still further through working on the diamond fields, made the labour shortage particularly intractable, at the very moment when the mineral discoveries were stimulating agricultural production and increasing class differentiation amongst the Boers. Neither an increased hut tax nor the introduction of pass laws, both of which discriminated in favour of those Africans who lived and worked on white farms, solved the problem, for the state was incapable of effectively administering them. Attempts to apply the legislation to weaker African societies simply led them to seek protection from the more powerful and independent polities like the Pedi, who could not be coerced.¹⁸

By the 1870s the Pedi had become 'a major alternative focus of power' both to the South African Republic and the Swazi kingdom in the north-eastern Transvaal. From the mid-century,

¹⁷ C. W. de Kiewiet, *The Imperial factor in South Africa* (Cambridge, 1937; reprinted 1965), 145; S. Trapido, 'Reflections on land, wealth and office in the South African republic, 1850–1900', in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds.), *Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa* (London, 1980), 350–69.

¹⁸ P. Delius, 'Migrant labour and the Pedi, 1840–80', in Marks and Atmore, *Economy and society*, 299.

the paramount chief of the Pedi had sent his young men south in order to acquire firearms, and Sekhukhune, who became paramount chief in 1861, deliberately extended Pedi power, by attracting Zulu and Swazi refugees as recruits to his army. The flight of so-called apprentices and dissatisfied tenants from settler farms to the greater security of Pedi protection further increased its power. On at least three occasions in the decade before the outbreak of war, the Pedi had resoundingly defeated Swazi invaders and forced the Swazi rulers to look to the South African Republic for assistance, a remarkable shift in the balance of power.¹⁹

Through the 1870s, however, the Pedi kingdom began to suffer from increased pressure on resources, the result of natural increase, the influx of refugees and recurrent drought. Pedi subjects settled across the Steelpoort river, where disputes over land were compounded by the refusal of Pedi subjects to work on Boer farms. Finally, in 1876, President Burgers, was forced to mount a military expedition against them.

For the South African Republic the war was a disaster. After a brief and indecisive campaign, the Afrikaners antagonised their Swazi allies but were unable to take the Pedi stronghold. The Boer commandos, disappointed at their failure to capture Pedi cattle, returned home. Burgers, with his cosmopolitan background, liberal religious convictions, and progressive schemes for the modernisation of the Transvaal state, had never been popular with the majority of Transvaalers. The fiasco in Sekhukhuneland completely destroyed his credibility. He was unable to raise his new war tax; and the struggle against the Pedi was left in the hands of a band of adventurers. Although by February 1877 they had forced Sekhukhune to sign a truce, their atrocities increased the outcry against the Transvaal. Burgers was in no position to impose the reforms he promised when British annexation appeared imminent; nor, after the event, were there many ready to spring to his defence. For the most part, the burghers of the South African Republic waited to see what the imposition of British rule really meant.

They were soon to find out. Shepstone had little understanding of Boer society, and his appointees even less. Although he had

¹⁹ Delius, 'Migrant labour', 295; P. Bonner, *Kings, commoners and concessionaires. The evolution and dissolution of the Swazi 19th century state* (Cambridge, 1983), 114–5, 129.

promised the burghers that he would respect their ‘laws and liberties’, the Transvaal was governed as a Crown colony, with a nominated legislature; Shepstone had hoped to win support through financial generosity, but his treasury was bankrupt, credit in the territory was frozen and ready cash had all but disappeared, while his closest financial associates were interested parties of dubious honesty. The first priority in the Transvaal was to raise enough revenue to pay for its administration. Yet taxes could not simply be extorted from the African population through random raiding as was the republic’s wont. Although the machinery of state was made more efficient, and new departments created (including the all-important Native Affairs Department), systematic efforts to raise taxation were hampered by an insufficient administration. Attempts to impose taxation on the Boer population added insult to injury. Within a short time, ‘small-hearted economy and pitiful tactlessness ruined the British chances of holding the Transvaal’.²⁰ Profound regionalism and resistance to central government authority now united with an incipient nationalism, conjured up and led by the former commandant-general of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger, who even before the annexation had been the chief challenger to the president’s authority.

Within four years, the Boers had risen in arms against the British, and, after the defeat of Major Colley at Majuba in 1881, Gladstone, who had replaced Disraeli as prime minister in 1880 and had always professed his opposition to the annexation of the Transvaal and his sympathy with the Boers, withdrew from the South African interior. Paradoxically, the state which Kruger inherited had been immeasurably strengthened by the four years of British rule and the imperial conquest of the Pedi and Zulu kingdoms, as was shown by the success of republican forces in a nine months’ campaign in inhospitable terrain against the Ndzundza Ndebele in 1883 (the so-called Mapoch’s war).²¹

WARS OF CONQUEST SOUTH OF THE LIMPOPO

A major justification for confederation and the annexation of the Transvaal had been the danger of a black–white confrontation in South Africa. And for the Swazi in the east and the southern

²⁰ de Kiewiet, *Imperial factor*, 145.

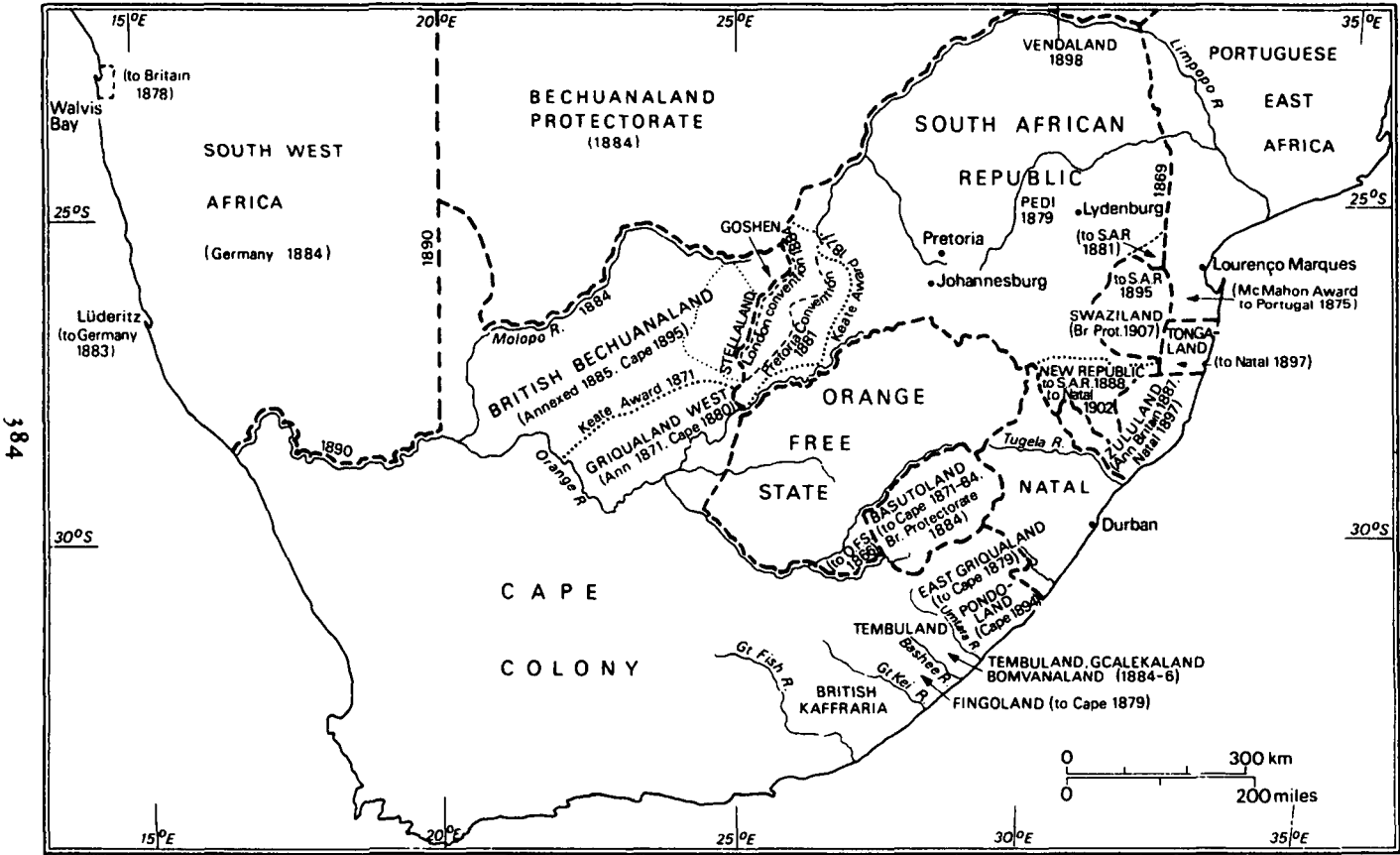
²¹ P. Delius, ‘Abel Erasmus: power and profit in the eastern Transvaal’ unpublished paper (Oxford, 1981).

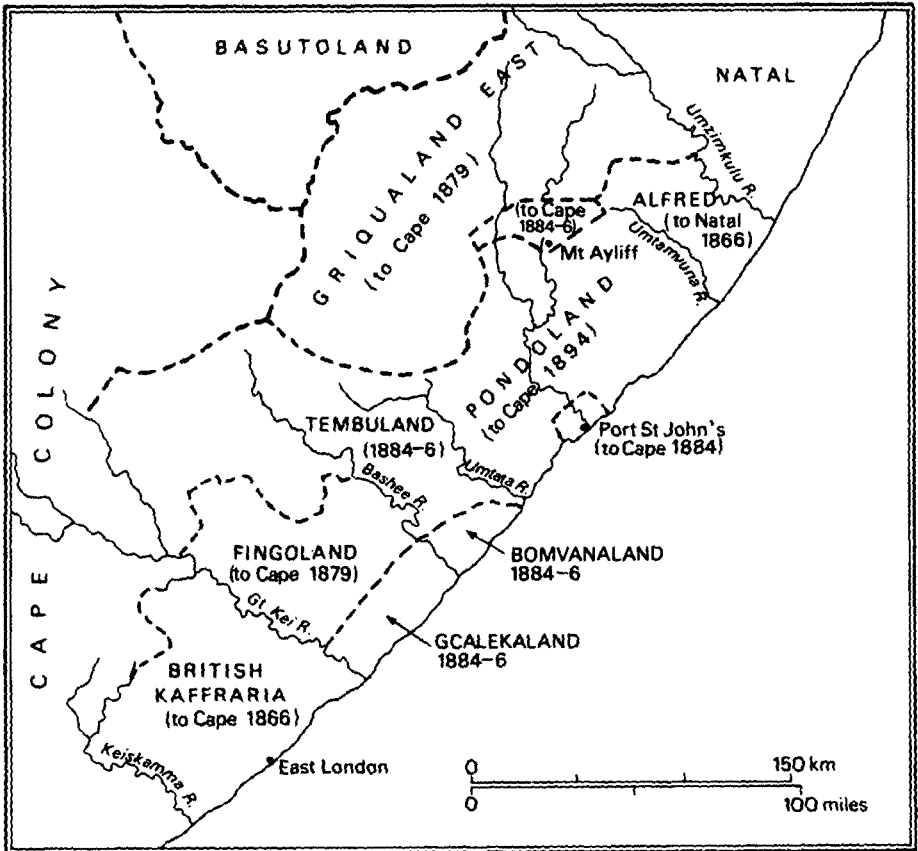
Tswana in the west, British annexation did win a short respite from the relentless pressure on their borderlands of the previous decade. Despite the humanitarian rhetoric, however, Carnarvon's forward policies respected African independence no more than they had respected that of the Republic. By the turn of the decade, a spate of wars had erupted, in which imperial forces took the lead in conquering those African peoples whom the republican and colonial states had been too weak to subdue militarily on their own. By the mid-1880s, the Zulu kingdom had been dismantled, the Pedi finally vanquished and a vast tract of territory in the Transkei incorporated into the Cape Colony. A protracted war between the Cape and the Basotho had ended with the establishment of a British protectorate over Basutoland, while further west, most of the Tswana people had also come under British protection.

At the heart of the crises of the late 1870s was the new imperial agent in South Africa, Sir Bartle Frere, appointed governor of the Cape and high commissioner for southern Africa in March 1877. Frere arrived in South Africa with a formidable reputation as an administrator and humanitarian, a result of his work in India and his suppression of the slave trade in Zanzibar in 1872. Brilliant, ambitious and impetuous, Frere envisaged British expansion as far as Zambezi and beyond, the strengthening of imperial defences along the coasts of southern Africa and the delimitation of Portuguese claims to the east and west. He rapidly determined that independent African kingdoms constituted the major obstacle to Carnarvon's schemes and the main threat to settler security in South Africa. Within months of his arrival, Frere had become deeply involved in the last of the major wars on the eastern frontier, the dismissal of the colony's first responsible ministry, and a rebellion in Griqualand West, although it was his provocation of the Zulu war in 1879 which led to his recall in disgrace in 1880.

It would be misleading to see these upheavals simply in personal terms, however. Frere acted on 'behalf of a syndicate' of interests,²² anxious to use the conflicts resulting from the intensified pressure on African lands and labour for the creation of a new form of state in the region, capable of ending regional

²² N. Etherington, 'Anglo-Zulu relations, 1856-1878' in A. Duminy and C. Ballard (eds.), *The Anglo-Zulu war: new perspectives* (Pietermaritzburg, 1981), 14.





14 Annexations of African territory south of the Limpopo, 1866-97 (based on J. D. Fage, *An Atlas of African History* (London, 1958), p. 37)

rivalries, subjugating African workers and securing the region's capitalist development. For colonial and imperial authorities alike, the wars were both expensive and protracted; nonetheless, they were an essential precondition for the creation of the new social and economic order demanded by industrial capital, and the ultimate unification of the South African polities in a single state, in 1910.

The first of the wars which punctuated Frere's high commissionership erupted amongst the Xhosa peoples on the Cape's eastern frontier after twenty-five years of uneasy peace. In the Transkei, decades of warfare and the activities of traders, missionaries and settlers had undermined even those chiefdoms as yet formally independent of colonial rule. In the Ciskei, magisterial rule and taxation had long displaced the power of chiefs. Yet for Africans, both in the Transkei and Ciskei, the first half of the 1870s were years of prosperity; the relatively high wages on the diamond fields and in the greatly expanded transport and public work projects, together with 'a virtual explosion of peasant activity' amongst Africans in large areas of Fingoland, Tembuland, Queenstown and Lady Frere districts and even parts of the eastern Transkei and Pondoland had given many access to new opportunities and new resources.²³ The success of African peasants in the 1870s did not go unremarked by the white farmers and other employers anxious to secure cheap labour. As in the Transvaal, though with more administrative efficiency, the Cape assembly passed a multitude of new laws to satisfy their farmer constituents. Anti-squatting legislation, increased taxation, a tightening of the pass and vagrancy laws as well as the grant of individual tenure of land were all intended to force Africans onto the colonial labour market. None succeeded so well, however, as the droughts and wars which afflicted the Ciskei and Transkei in the second half of the decade.

Through the 1870s, the Molteno ministry at the Cape moved to extend its authority in the territory between the Kei and the Mthamvuna rivers through the appointment of magistrates. In 1873, it appointed Joseph Orpen, 'an ardent expansionist',²⁴ as its agent east of the Kei, and within a few months of his

²³ C. Bundy, *The rise and fall of the South African Peasantry* (London, 1979), 65–78.

²⁴ C. Saunders, 'The annexation of the Transkei', in C. Saunders and R. Derricourt (eds.), *Beyond the Cape frontier: studies in the history of the Transkei and Ciskei* (London, 1974), 187–8.

appointment, the Mpondomise as well as the Griqua east of the Drakensberg were brought under colonial rule. In 1875, the difficulties of the Thembu with the Gcaleka who had defeated them in 1872, led to the extension of magisterial rule over the former. It was, however, the Cape–Xhosa war of 1877–8, followed by the Mpondomise–Thembu uprising of 1881, which enabled the colony to take over Gcalekaland and Bomvanaland, and led to the stationing of colonial officials in Xesibe’s territory and at Port St Johns in Pondoland, although the latter was not annexed until 1894. In many districts, the expropriation of African lands and the forced movement of peoples reversed the gains made by the peasantry over the previous decade; the hundred-year war for domination on the frontier was at an end.²⁵

1877 saw the continuation of the fearful drought which had started as early as 1875 in some parts of the Eastern Cape and Basutoland. Two-thirds of the crop failed and the number of men seeking work doubled in a year. Peasant prosperity for some meant poverty for others, and in some areas, especially on either side of the colonial frontier, the land was ‘overpeopled, overstocked and overcultivated’.²⁶ Constant skirmishes over cattle and trespass were relieved only by the ability of peasants to seek work on the labour markets of the colony and Griqualand West.

The effects of the drought were exacerbated by depression amongst farmers and traders, with the collapse at Kimberley and in the Cape wool market – the result of an economic slump in Europe. By mid-1877, rumours of war abounded. Friction was most marked between the Gcaleka (the Xhosa under paramount chief Sarhili [Kreli]) and the Mfengu, which was the result of a decision in 1865 by the Governor, Sir Philip Wodehouse, to settle the latter as a buffer on lands confiscated from the Gcaleka in the Transkei; this was the Mfengu’s somewhat ambiguous reward for more than half a century of collaboration with the Cape Colony. A minor scuffle at a beer-drink was followed by raid and counter-raid between the bitterly antagonistic groups, and by September, the Cape ministry had decided to intervene.

The first stage of the war against Sarhili in the Transkei seemed all but over within a couple of months. Frere’s plans to offer Gcaleka lands to colonial farmers, however, led to fresh upheaval. Within weeks the Gcaleka were joined by the Ngqika in the

²⁵ Bundy, *The rise and fall*, 83.

²⁶ De Kiewiet, *Imperial factor*, 150.

colony, and martial law was declared. Despite the objections of the Cape ministry, Frere, now obsessed with the notion of a vast conspiracy against whites being directed by Cetshwayo from Zululand, requested imperial reinforcements. Disagreements between Frere and the ministry over the conduct of the war led to a constitutional crisis, and at the beginning of February the governor dismissed Molteno and appointed the self-serving J. G. Sprigg to replace him.²⁷

On the frontier, the war dragged on until the middle of the year when, defeated by famine, the Xhosa threw in their hand. Frontier defence was now tightened up, with the establishment of several new forces and three new Transkeian magistracies; and in May 1878 Sir Thomas Upington, the attorney-general, introduced the Preservation of Peace Act (the Disarmament Act), aimed at confiscating African-owned guns. Despite promises of compensation and that disarmament would only be applied in selected rebel areas, the new act was applied indiscriminately, and simply provoked further rebellion and war in the Transkei and Basutoland, in 1879.

As in the case of the Ciskei and Transkei, the first half of the 1870s had been prosperous years for Basutoland, as the kingdom recovered from the wars of 1865–8 against the Free State. The coming of Pax Britannica and the opening of the diamond fields rapidly revived the economy. Large amounts of grain and stock were exported, and equally large quantities of manufactured goods were imported from the Cape, which had annexed the territory in 1871. As early as 1873, hut tax more than covered the costs of Cape administration.

In the long run, however, the high level of agricultural exploitation proved ecologically disastrous, as increasing numbers of people and cattle were hemmed into a shrunken territory, the result of the Treaty of Aliwal North, between the British and the Free State, which allocated the best farming lands along the Caledon river to the Orange Free State; by the late 1880s the Sotho were beginning to colonise the difficult barren highlands in the interior of the country, with results that can be seen on the landscape to this day. In the 1870s, however, there were few signs of Basutoland's twentieth century underdevelopment.

²⁷ P. Lewsen, *John X. Merriman: paradoxical South African statesman* (New Haven, 1982), 63.

Politically, the early years of Cape rule were relatively uneventful. Despite the stated policy of the Cape administration, here as elsewhere, to undermine the power of the chiefs and win the people over to magisterial rule, the hold of the Koena ruling lineage was greatly strengthened. Letsie, the oldest son of Moshoeshoe, was recognised as paramount chief, though in northern and central Basutoland, his brothers, Molapo and Masupha, held sway. Despite Cape rule, the Koena chiefs determined to secure their continued power through military organisation, and annually thousands of young men were sent by their chiefs to the diamond mines to earn firearms.

The prosperity and grudging acceptance by the Sotho of the Cape magistrates was shattered in the late 1870s by drought and the actions of the Cape ministry. The trouble began in 1877, when conflicts arose between the Phuti chief, Morosi, and a newly appointed magistrate in the remote, mountainous Quthing district. Letsie co-operated with the government in defusing the situation, but the district remained disturbed. When in 1878 the Cape's newly passed Preservation of Peace Act was proclaimed in Basutoland, the prospect of impending disarmament caused widespread consternation. Morosi now openly defied the white authorities, incorrectly assuming he had the support of Molapo and Masupha, and perhaps encouraged by the news of Isandhlwana. Full-scale fighting broke out in March 1879, with the paramount chief collaborating with Cape forces. It was a bitter campaign in dreadful weather, with Morosi and 1,500 Phuti beleaguered on their flat-topped mountain stronghold. In November, the mountain was stormed, large numbers of Phuti were killed and even larger numbers captured and sent as prisoners to work on Cape Town's breakwater or on eastern Cape farms.

Even before the end of the hostilities, plans were drawn up for dividing the Quthing district into white farms, and the hut tax was doubled to £1. At the same time, the Cape reiterated its intention of applying the Disarmament Act in Basutoland. Despite the protests of local officials, French missionaries and liberal opponents of the Sprigg government that the men to be disarmed had in fact fought on the colonial side, Frere supported Sprigg's aggressive policy. In July 1880 the Disarmament Act actually came into force, and although the paramount chief, Letsie,

vacillated, other members of the house of Moshoeshe emerged as leaders of the war which broke out in September 1880. Casualties were high on both sides, and by the following April, the war had cost the Cape £3 million. Although the fighting between the Sotho and the Cape petered out, the imposition of a cattle fine on the rebels and the shortage of fertile land led to simmering discontent which turned into civil war. The Cape government was wholly unable to handle the new situation, and by 1884 the British government reluctantly reassumed control over the territory. All legislative and executive power was now vested in the high commissioner. In effect the Sotho had won their long struggle for limited independence – or so it seemed. Certainly most of the senior members of the ruling élite – the ‘sons of Moshoeshe’ – had emerged with enhanced power. Their political and legal power remained practically unchecked until well into the twentieth century.

For the Cape ministry the imperial annexation of Basutoland came as a welcome relief; by this time, they would equally happily have handed over the Transkeian territories, where fresh resistance to colonial rule had broken out late in 1879. Sparked off by the murder of a white magistrate in Mpondomise territory and the expulsion of magistrates from Thembuland, the struggles even spread to the Ngqika and Mfengu peoples who had collaborated with the colonial forces in 1877–8, a result of the extension of the Disarmament Act and the absence of the small Transkeian policeforce in Basutoland. The conflicts dragged on into 1881, and cost the Cape government more than £1½ million to quell. Although the uprisings were uncoordinated, several thousand Africans were killed, the Sprigg ministry was forced to resign, and the Cape lost its appetite for further expansion east of the Kei. According to the contemporary historian, G. M. Theal, the armed resistance of the Sotho and the Transkeian peoples together constituted ‘the most formidable attempt ever made by natives in South Africa to throw off European supremacy’.²⁸

For Frere and his supporters, these wars were an unwelcome distraction, convinced as they were that the true threat to the new

²⁸ F. Brownlee (ed.), *The Transkeian native territories: historical records* (Lovedale, 1923), 53, cited in C. Saunders, ‘The Hundred Years War: some reflections on African resistance on the Cape–Xhosa frontier’ in D. Chanaiwa (ed.), *Profiles of self-determination* (Northridge, 1979).

order in southern Africa came from the Zulu kingdom to the north of Natal. Fear of the Zulu was a persistent theme in the history of Natal, and ever since his succession in 1872, Cetshwayo was believed to be behind all African unrest in southern Africa, a view sustained by the undoubted communication between the independent African polities all the way up to the Zambezi. Increasingly it seemed as though 'power to control the Zulus includes that of controlling all the rest'.²⁹ It was, however, with the British annexation of the Transvaal that the Zulu came to be seen as the central obstacle to Carnarvon's plans for confederation.

Struggling Natal settlers had long eyed Cetshwayo's fertile and populous lands, while for thirty years, as secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, Shepstone had toyed with the idea of using Zululand as a 'dumping ground' for the colony's 'surplus' African population. With the increasing demand for labour in Natal, he began to intervene ever more vigorously in the affairs of the kingdom, in the hope of securing Natal's corridor to the mineral riches and labour supplies of the interior through the king's domains. Crucial in his ability to do so were continued Boer encroachments on Zulu lands in the region of the Blood river through the 1860s and 1870s. At the same time, the growing Zulu population was suffering increasingly from pressure on resources. The Zulu pushed up against Swazi lands, and on several occasions Cetshwayo seemed on the verge of invading his northern neighbour.³⁰ Both the Zulu and the Swazi repeatedly requested Natal intercession, but to no avail, although Shepstone professed sympathy with their respective causes and blamed the Boers for the growing tension in the area. Shortly after his annexation of the Republic, however, Shepstone met a Zulu delegation to discuss the territory disputed with the republic – and in his new guise as administrator of the Transvaal backed the Boer claims to the hilt. Anxious to avoid war, Cetshwayo now approached the Natal governor, Sir Henry Bulwer, to appoint a commission of enquiry into the disputed territory.

The commission reported back in the middle of 1878 and, to Shepstone and Frere's dismay, fully supported the Zulu case.

²⁹ SNA 1/7/6 Shepstone, memorandum, 3 March 1873, cited in Etherington, 'Anglo-Zulu relations', in Duminy and Ballard (eds.), *The Anglo-Zulu war*, 30.

³⁰ Bonner, *Kings, commoners and concessionaires*, 150–1.

From this point on, Frere began actively to foment war, despite the caution of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who had replaced Carnarvon at the Colonial Office. Yet the war was not simply engineered single-handedly by Shepstone and Frere, with the object of ‘winning the loyalty of the Transvaal Boers and converting the rest of white South Africa to a more favourable view of confederation’.³¹ Before the annexation of the Transvaal, Frere had needed Zulu co-operation to gain access to that corridor; ‘now he had only to uphold the Transvaal claims in order to secure the corridor free of charge...’³²

At the end of 1878, Frere finally published the report of the Boundary Commission – and demanded the surrender of a number of Zulu accused of minor border incursions, the payment of a large fine and the disbanding of the Zulu ‘military system’ within thirty days. There was no way the Zulu king could comply with this ultimatum; what was being demanded was the dismantling of his state. Persuaded by Shepstone that once the Zulu were given an opportunity to rise up against ‘the tyranny of a bloody despot’, the Zulu kingdom would disintegrate through its internal divisions, Frere believed the Zulu could be conquered in a single swift campaign; he was sadly misinformed both about the nature of the Zulu kingdom and the strength of the British troops at his disposal. Despite the undoubted tensions which had resulted from population pressure and the development of trading relations with Natal, ‘the invasion, instead of fragmenting the kingdom, united the Zulu people in support of Cetshwayo and independence’.³³

On 11 January 1879, Lord Chelmsford entered Zululand with a body of British troops. Eleven days later, they had been disastrously defeated by the Zulu at Isandhlwana. Even with reinforcements, Chelmsford was unable to retrieve the situation: further defeats at Rorke’s Drift, Eshowe and Hlobane were only partly avenged by the British victory at Ulundi six months later. Although Ulundi was elevated into a spectacular military victory, after which Chelmsford could honourably resign the command to Sir Garnet Wolseley, it signalled the exhaustion of both sides

³¹ C. Webb, ‘The origins of the Anglo-Boer War’, in Duminy and Ballard, *Anglo-Zulu War*, 6.

³² N. Etherington, ‘Anglo-Zulu relations’, 40–1.

³³ P. Colenbrander, ‘The Zulu political economy on the eve of the war’, in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo-Zulu war*, 78–97; J. J. Guy, *The destruction of the Zulu kingdom* (London, 1979), 50.

rather than the destruction of the kingdom. More important in ending the war was Wolseley's promise that the Zulu people would be left in possession of their land and cattle, once the king had been captured and they had laid down their arms. Nevertheless, it took a further six weeks of 'systematic terrorism'³⁴ before the king was betrayed to the imperial troops. On the 31 August, Cetshwayo was marched to Port Durnford under heavy guard, and despatched by sea to join Langalibalele in exile outside Cape Town.

Wolseley's instructions were neither to annex Zulu territory nor to extend imperial responsibilities. Having removed the king, he placed Zululand under thirteen independent chiefs, many of whom had been men of importance in the pre-war kingdom, subject to the authority of a British resident. The settlement was doomed to failure from the outset. By the end of 1881 violence had erupted between supporters of the royal house, the Usuthu, and the two appointed chiefs who were most closely tied into the colonial economy, Zibhebhu and Uhamu. They energetically forged links with Natal officials and traders, and seized Usuthu cattle and other property in their desire to build up their private wealth. Faced with renewed disorder in Zululand, in 1883 the British government decided to restore Cetshwayo. He was returned to a severely truncated kingdom, the result of the machinations of Natal officials, who effectively 'turned restoration into partition, and who divided the country between the king, his foremost rival Zibhebhu, and . . . the Colony of Natal'.³⁵

The true destruction of the Zulu kingdom followed the king's return. Usuthu protests against the loss of territory went unheeded; their unsuccessful attacks on Zibhebhu simply invited retaliation. The civil wars which ensued were even more devastating than the British victory at Ulundi. In August, the refugee king was captured, and he died early in 1884, leaving behind a young and inexperienced successor, Dinuzulu. In an attempt to recover their lost lands, the Usuthu now entered a disastrous agreement with Transvaal Boers: in return for their assistance the Boers claimed one-fifth of Zululand, including the fine cattle-country north of the Mhlatuze river, and from the Transvaal to

³⁴ Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu kingdom*, 57–63.

³⁵ This paragraph is based on J. Guy, 'The role of colonial officials in the destruction of the Zulu kingdom', in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo-Zulu war*, 148–73; the quotation is on p. 63.

the sea. By 1887, the prospect of fresh disorder in Zululand and news that the Germans were taking an interest in the coast of south-east Africa led to further imperial intervention. While the Boers had to give up their ambitions to an outlet to the sea and their assertion of sovereignty over the Zulu, their claims to the area which became known as the New Republic were recognised. It was soon absorbed by the South African Republic. British sovereignty over the remainder of Zululand was formally recognised in 1887, when Zululand became a Crown colony. Usuthu protests against the partition of their country and the return of Zibhebhu to the north ended with further British military action and the surrender, trial and imprisonment of the Usuthu leaders, including Dinuzulu. They were only to return when Zululand was finally incorporated by Natal in 1897.³⁶

Contrary to Frere and Shepstone's expectations, the conquest of the Zulu did not in fact lead to peace in southern Africa. Sir Garnet Wolseley followed up his campaign in Zululand with a further assault on the Pedi who, perhaps encouraged by Boer restiveness, continued to resist the Transvaal state's attempts to extend its jurisdiction over their polity. This time the Pedi were definitively crushed; Sekhukhune was captured, and imprisoned in Pretoria. By 1883 one of his more compliant brothers had been appointed regent; in exchange for supplying labour and military levies to the local native commissioner, the Pedi were eventually granted a location, a fraction of their former domain.

Paradoxically, now that their frontiers were secure and their major enemies conquered, the imperial defeat of the Zulu and the Pedi enabled the Boers to throw off British control. In 1881 and 1884, peace conventions at Pretoria and London returned internal self-government to the South African Republic while stipulating continued British 'suzerainty' over its relationships with foreign powers, and bound the republic to respect the frontiers with its African neighbours as established by the Keate Award. As in the case of Zululand, this proved no bar to continued Boer encroachments on African lands. The intervention of Boers in the lands of their southern Tswana neighbours was even more immediate. There, too, they found a ready-made field for intervention, as competition sharpened between and within chiefdoms

³⁶ The following section is based on Shillington, 'Land loss', 188–226.

over scarce resources which resulted from their proximity to the diamond fields.

Through the 1870s, the Rolong and Tlhaping people in the Molopo region of southern Bechuanaland had found a ready market for their produce in Kimberley; unlike the situation in Griqualand West, where the market undermined the authority of the rulers, here the chiefs were in the forefront of commodity production and retained a hold over their followers. Nevertheless, by the mid-1870s the Molopo region was the site of conflict over irrigable agricultural land, and winter-grazing areas, in heavy demand for the cultivation of winter wheat. The struggle was intensified as 10,000 southern Tswana, ousted from the western Transvaal and Orange Free State, arrived in the area. Further south, too, there was similar friction between the Kora and Mankurwane's Tlhaping over grazing and agricultural land. Everywhere the pressure was aggravated by the incursions of Afrikaners from the Transvaal, seeking the much-valued timber and cattle resources of the region.

By the early 1880s, endemic friction in both regions had spilt over into armed warfare. African chiefs were 'assisted' against their enemies by white volunteers, who by 1883 had carved out the mini-republics of Stellaland and Goshen. The exhaustion of land and game resources in the Transvaal coupled with depression and the amalgamations at Kimberley rendered many destitute and desperate men only too happy to take advantage of the wars to find farms and fortune, or take to cattle rustling. At least half of the volunteers, however, and certainly the key figures in setting up the new republics, were quite substantial Transvaal land-owners, officials and traders, tacitly supported by the Transvaal, eager to control the missionary 'road to the north'. War, with its possibilities of loot, the trade in guns and ammunition, and land and timber concessions, provided useful opportunities in depressed times for speculation and accumulation. Landholdings in Stellaland and Goshen rapidly changed hands as colonists from the Cape and the Orange Free State appreciated the speculative possibilities.

Despite the pleas of the Rev. John Mackenzie of the London Mission Society (LMS), the Tswana chiefs and Cecil Rhodes (the new member for Barkly East in the Cape parliament, who was

anxious to secure the labour and fuel resources of the interior for Griqualand West³⁷ and retain the missionary ‘Road to the North’ for Cape commerce), the British were slow to intervene in southern Bechuanaland; Basutoland and Zululand were more pressing concerns in southern Africa, while the main attention of the British cabinet was on Egypt and Ireland. Nevertheless, Cape and LMS agitation ensured that the London Convention of 1884 limited Transvaal expansion to the east of the trade route. At the same time, on the understanding that it would soon be incorporated by the Cape Colony, a British protectorate was declared over the rest of the territory south of the Molopo river, and Mackenzie was appointed deputy commissioner.

A ‘humanitarian imperialist’, Mackenzie believed that imperial protection would lead to the transformation of African society, through the undermining of chiefly powers and ‘pagan’ culture, the development of a ‘class of native yeoman’³⁸ with individual title to land, and the creation of a wage labour force for white enterprise. Nevertheless, he opposed the abrasive effects of settler colonialism; his policies ran directly counter to men like Rhodes who were pressing for more restrictive labour legislation, and to the land speculators who hoped to see the incorporation of the region into the Cape. In little more than six months, he had been forced to resign and was replaced by Rhodes as deputy commissioner.

Rhodes, with his eye on Afrikaner voters in the Cape, quickly bought the Stellalanders off through the promise that their title to Tswana land would be recognised by the Cape government. In Goshen, however, he was less successful: a Transvaal take-over of the republic in direct breach of the London Convention was only prevented by the despatch of troops under Major Warren by the British government, now fearful of German designs in the area and a possible German–Boer link across northern Bechuanaland.

There, Mackenzie, who accompanied the Warren expedition, persuaded Chief Khama to offer land for British settlement in exchange for British protection and indirect rule. His example was

³⁷ See Shillington, ‘Land loss’, 214–26, which argues that Rhodes’s demands for annexation have to be related to his interests in Griqualand West and immediate political exigencies, rather than representing the first stage of his imperial ambitions to expand further into the interior.

³⁸ Dachs, ‘Missionary imperialism’, 650.

WARS OF CONQUEST SOUTH OF THE LIMPOPO

soon followed by the remaining northern Tswana chiefs. By September 1885, despite strong Cape Afrikaner opposition and still hoping for Cape annexation, the British reluctantly established a Crown colony south of the Molopo river, while the region north of the river up to latitude 22° south was declared a British protectorate. Sidney Shippard, a friend of Rhodes, was appointed the new administrator of British Bechuanaland and deputy commissioner for the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

By requesting a protectorate, the northern Tswana chiefs avoided the bloody and costly wars which had been the lot of most African peoples to their south and east, and bought time. Elsewhere, in much of the territory south of the Limpopo, by 1886, a subjugated African workforce had been created out of formerly independent African chiefdoms. Increasingly, young men were forced to seek work on the mines and farms, railways and harbours of South Africa, not at the discretion of their families and chiefs but through necessity, at the behest of colonial authorities and capitalist employers, and on the terms and conditions they offered. It is no accident that on the Cape railways, the real cost of African labour was more than halved between 1877 and 1883; or that in Kimberley the bargaining position of Africans was so transformed that ten years after the Diggers' Revolt, the rigorous closed-compound system could be established. Yet one should not exaggerate the speed with which this result was achieved. There were still considerable areas where Africans could evade the labour recruiter, while the substantial kingdoms of the Swazi and the Mpondo remained independent for another decade. The northern Tswana chiefs, who had negotiated the terms of their entry into the Protectorate, and Chief Khama in particular, who was widely regarded by liberal opinion as the model Christian chief, were able to retain a certain room for manoeuvre. This was not simply the reward of collaboration: in Griqualand West, Nicholas Waterboer had discovered too late the penalties of peacefully offering his land to the British, while in Basutoland the sons of Moshoeshoe were undoubtedly better off as a result of the Gun War, though whether this made much difference for the majority of their people is less clear.

Despite the extent of the upheavals, Africans were not uprooted from their lands in vast numbers, although almost everywhere

land was lost, and people were forced onto the labour market. The intervention of the British government, aware of the costly resistance which would be provoked by large-scale expropriation, meant that in Zululand, the Eastern Cape and the Bechuanaland and Basutoland protectorates, most Africans retained their lands (though these had already been severely truncated by the 1880s) while elsewhere ‘locations’ on the model of the Eastern Cape and Natal were set aside. They became the rural base for the migrant labour system which was to be developed even more systematically on the Witwatersrand in the next decade than it had been at Kimberley.

For Africans all over southern Africa, the wars of the 1870s and 1880 caused a great crisis of commitment. They were not simply fought between black and white; everywhere ‘loyal levies’ assisted the colonial and imperial forces – most notably, but by no means exclusively, the Mfengu in the eastern Cape and the Swazi against the Pedi. In both cases, ancient enmities overrode any necessity for a common front against the settlers. In Swaziland, the 1870s had been a time of increasing internal and external uncertainty, with a real possibility of an alliance between the Zulu and Pedi and other Swazi enemies in the eastern Transvaal. The Transvaal–Pedi war and then that between the British and the Zulu came as a great relief to the regents who governed the Swazi kingdom during the minorities of both Ludvonga (who died in suspicious circumstances in 1873) and Mbandzeni (who took full office in 1881). They handled a threatening situation by appealing to Natal against the belligerence of the Boers and the Zulu, and to the Transvaal against the Zulu and the Pedi, offering their services to the Republic and to Sir Garnet Wolseley during both wars against the Pedi, and sitting on the fence until it was clear which side was going to win in the Anglo-Zulu war.³⁹

Despite increasing disenchantment with royal authority and the growing pressures from prospectors, Boer graziers and missionaries, Swaziland survived the ‘decade of crisis’ with its territory and sovereignty relatively intact, though it lost land in the 1880 boundary delimitation with the Transvaal. Ominously for the future, however, the republic, deprived of St Lucia Bay by British annexation, increasingly saw Swaziland as its route to the sea,

³⁹ Bonner, *Kings, commoners and concessionaires*, 151, 176. Much of this section is based on Bonner, chapters 8 and 9, and I am grateful to Cambridge University Press for allowing me to see the page proofs of this work.

CHRISTIANITY AND CLASS FORMATION

while Mbandzeni's spate of concession-granting had already begun. Although his councillors were aware of the danger, Mbandzeni resisted their attempts to call in a Natal adviser or to accept a British resident. He was only to recognise the severity of the threat to his kingdom in 1887.

CHRISTIANITY AND CLASS FORMATION

If the Swazi were able to buy time by opting for collaboration, in most areas south of the Limpopo, chiefdoms were split on the issue of resistance. There were many who had profited from the new prosperity of the seventies and wished to safeguard their new-found wealth, while the formation of a new class of Christian peasant farmers, preachers and teachers, small shopkeepers, artisans and minor civil servants added to the divisions. The great military kingdoms of the Zulu, the Swazi and the Ndebele, it is true, managed to keep the missionaries at arms length. Both Cetshwayo and Lobengula, king of the Ndebele kingdom north of the Limpopo, feared that Christianity and its new mores would undermine their authority. Although missionaries were allowed into all three kingdoms, their activities were strictly controlled; they made virtually no converts before imperial conquest. Hostile missionary propaganda was the prelude both to the Anglo-Zulu war and the British South Africa Company's take-over of Rhodesia (see next chapter). Given Cetshwayo's hostility to the *amakholwa* (believers) it is perhaps not surprising that in the Zulu War, it was the Christian converts of Edendale and Driefontein who assisted Chelmsford in Isandhlwana. Already by this time their lifestyle and values were remote from those of the majority of Africans.

Yet not all Christians were collaborators. Amongst the Pedi, for example, the king's half-brother, Johannes Dinkwanyane, and the Christian community he led on the periphery of the kingdom became 'increasingly prominent amongst those that rejected the... demands made by officials and challenged the rights claimed by landowners'.⁴⁰ They became increasingly independent, too, of missionary tutelage. When, in 1876, war broke out between the South African Republic and the Pedi, Dinkwanyane's stronghold was the first to be stormed. Amongst the southern

⁴⁰ P. Delius, *The land belongs to us. The Pedi polity, the Boers and the British in the nineteenth century Transvaal* (Johannesburg, 1983).

Tswana and the Griqua, also, Christians were to be found amongst both collaborators and resisters.

The very terms ‘collaboration’ and ‘resistance’ are inadequate to encapsulate the variety and subtlety with which Africans responded to their rapidly changing world. Violent conquest was not the only way in which they were incorporated into colonial society; and it was not necessarily the most successful. Whether there was direct conquest or the more gradual penetration by merchants and missionaries, however, the new order was ‘but-tressed’ by ideological practices⁴¹ – essentially in school and church and through the law – which shaped and moulded the life-style and values of an increasing number of Africans. In the Cape, educational growth in terms of schools and students was sustained through the 1870s and the first half of the 1880s; the educational institution which attracted Africans from beyond the confines of the colony was undoubtedly the outstanding Free Church of Scotland institution at Lovedale. Its impact was felt as far afield as present-day Malawi.

In Natal, Lovedale’s counterpart was the Amanzimtoti Institute, which was expanded and separated from the theological seminary in 1875, while the first African girls’ school anywhere in South Africa was established at Inanda in 1869, ‘its object being to train Christian wives and mothers’.⁴² In 1885, there were sixty-four African schools in Natal, with an average attendance of just under 3,000 pupils and a government grant-in-aid of about £2,500. From the 1870s, Wesleyan, Church of Scotland and American Board missionaries began to ordain African ministers. Increasingly they came to ‘supplant European missionaries as the principal agents of mission work among Africans’, although even before this happened for many Africans the first experience of Christianity had come from their fellows who had encountered ‘the Word’ on their journeys to the colonial labour markets.

The cleavage between the *abantu basesikolweni* (school people) and the *abantu ababomvu* (‘red’ or ‘blanket’ people) was particularly sharp in the Cape, though the distinction between the two was far from absolute. To Xhosa ‘traditionalists’, the converts were traitors, *amagqoboka*, people who had ‘opened a hole which had

⁴¹ B. Magubane, *The political economy of race and class in South Africa* (New York, 1979), 57.

⁴² M. Horrell, *African education: some origins, and development until 1913* (Johannesburg, 1963), 17.

allowed their white enemies to gain entrance', but it was paralleled elsewhere.⁴³ In Zululand, for example, until after the Zulu war, 'Christianity and Zulu citizenship were mutually exclusive'.⁴⁴ To the Victorian visitor African Christians seemed to embody the ideal independent peasantry. As an Anglican clergyman enthused of a community in Natal, 'There is not a village in England corresponding to Springvale, where every man lives under his vine and his fig tree.'⁴⁵ Whatever their image in the eyes of, others, however, the 'School' people or *amakholwa*, as they were known in Natal, saw themselves as the heirs to the future, 'progressive and civilised'. Everywhere they were imbued with the values of nineteenth-century *laissez-faire* liberalism. The prosperous peasantry settled on the Protestant mission stations of the Cape and Natal, as well as the petty bourgeoisie which derived from it, constructed their world out of the mid-Victorian vision of a 'progressive world order' based on the virtues of free labour, secure property rights linked to a free market in land, equality before the law and some notion of 'no taxation without representation'.

It was in the Cape Colony alone that a black élite had full access to the franchise, and this inspired their peers in the rest of South Africa well into the twentieth century. 'Above all... a strategy... for the political incorporation of part of the African and Coloured population',⁴⁶ the non-racial franchise was bolstered by Cape Town's liberal establishment – businessmen, politicians and professionals. Perhaps most significantly and consistently, it was backed at constituency level by the merchants, lawyers and officials of the Eastern Cape, whose livelihood was intimately linked to the prosperity and stability of a black peasantry. Thus, in a substantial number of constituencies in the eastern Cape, African voters were able to ensure the return of 'friends of the native', individuals who could be relied upon to oppose attacks on African rights and the more coercive government proposals. In the western Cape, by contrast, the Coloured vote tended to be

⁴³ R. Hunt Davis, 'School vs. blanket and settler: Elijah Makiwane and the leadership of the Cape school community', *Afr. Affairs*, 1979, 78, 310.

⁴⁴ N. Etherington, *Preachers, peasants and politics in south-east Africa, 1831-1880* (London, 1978), 80.

⁴⁵ Cited in Etherington, *Preachers*, 173.

⁴⁶ S. Trapido, 'The friends of the natives: merchants, peasants and the political and ideological structure of liberalism in the Cape, 1954-1910', in Marks and Atmore, *Economy and society*, 250, on which this section draws heavily.

in the gift of the local landlord or missionary, and in the towns ‘Coloured men were recruited to the electoral machines by a combination of patronage, corruption and intimidation.’⁴⁷

The progressive incorporation of large African populations into the colony in the 1870s and 1880s, the demand for a mass of unskilled workers and the growth of Afrikaner political organisations put increasing strains on the liberal tradition in the Cape. Anti-imperial anti-black populism, as well as identification with the struggles of the republics amongst poorer Afrikaner farmers, was represented in the first Afrikaner political and cultural organisation, founded by the Rev. S. J. du Toit in 1875, Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (the Fellowship of True Afrikaners). This aimed at the inculcation of a self-conscious Afrikaner identity based on Afrikaans (rather than Dutch), an anti-British interpretation of South African history and the advocacy of neo-Calvinist educational policies. This was replaced in 1879 by du Toit’s Afrikaner Bond, which achieved its greatest popularity after the Transvaal threw off British annexation in 1881, spreading rapidly not only in the Cape Colony but in the republics as well. By 1883, however, the Afrikaner Bond was dominated by Jan Hofmeyr, an exponent of a broadly pro-imperial Cape-based nationalism. His wealthier western Cape constituents were rather more concerned with the protection of Cape farming interests through parliamentary representation and continued access to British troops and credit, than with du Toit’s pan-Afrikaner economic nationalism. Apart from moments of heightened consciousness, as in 1881, Afrikaner nationalism and pan-Afrikaner sentiment were never as powerful as imperial officials imagined. For Hofmeyr’s following, however, the non-racial franchise and the independent African peasantry, especially in view of its propensity to vote for liberal English – rather than Dutch-speaking – candidates at elections were anathema.⁴⁸ Thus, through the 1870s and 1880s the colour-blind franchise was the subject of bitter attack.

Such was the liberal hegemony, however, that the Afrikaner Bond never called for total black disenfranchisement, whatever reductions in black voting numbers it tried to introduce. Ironically, Carnarvon’s confederation schemes, allegedly designed in part to

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 267.

⁴⁸ T. R. H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond. The history of a South African political party (1880–1911)* (Cape Town, 1966), 50.

protect Africans against settler rapacity, left the question of the black vote outside the Cape to the colonists. This outraged liberal members of the Cape ministry, who thought Carnarvon's South African (Permissive Federation) Act (1877) involved 'the unmerited disenfranchisement of the whole of the coloured races, kafirs, Hottentots, emancipated Negroes'.⁴⁹

Beyond the Cape Colony, the incorporating, controlling and mediating roles of liberals were almost wholly absent. In Natal, despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of settlers were of British origin, material conditions had laid the basis for the ideology and practice of segregation: the allocation of reserved lands for Africans between 1846 and 1864; the recognition of chiefly rule, and African marriage practices; the recognition, and in 1875, the codification of 'native law'; and the attempt to prevent permanent African urbanisation in the 1870s through the implementation of the so-called Togg system, whereby African workers were registered by the day. Under the complex franchise laws, virtually no African qualified to vote, though theoretically Christian Africans could be exempted from 'Native law'. In the republics, matters were simpler: there was to be no equality between black and white in church or state; Africans in areas under burgher control were governed by Masters and Servant laws based on the early nineteenth century Cape practice; the members of the stronger independent African chiefdoms were treated warily as the subjects of foreign powers, and there was no provision made for those Africans who had been 'detrribalised', either through conversion to Christianity or through their *oorlam*⁵⁰ status.

Whatever the legal status of 'non-tribal' Africans, in Natal, the republics and beyond the frontiers of white control, social and economic change and the work of missionaries had, as in the Cape, led to class differentiation, the growth of an African peasantry and the beginnings of an African Christian intelligentsia. While in the

⁴⁹ BPP C1980. 1877. *Further correspondence respecting the proposed confederation of the Colonies and states of South Africa*, Barkly to Carnarvon, 17.4.1877, cited in S. Trapido, 'The friends of the natives', 253.

⁵⁰ The Oorlams were a group of Africans of mixed ethnic origin who had either come to the Transvaal with the original trekkers, or had been captured as children and 'apprenticed' to Boer masters. They spoke Dutch, and were culturally assimilated to trekker society, in which they constituted a class of overseers and skilled workers. For a history of the Oorlams, see P. Delius and S. Trapido, 'Inboekselings and Oorlams: the creation and transformation of a servile class', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1982, 8, 2.

early days of mission endeavour, the first converts had been largely among the oppressed and disaffected, by the 1870s the missionaries had also been successful in their efforts to win chiefs to Christianity, hoping thereby to gain the adherence of their following. By far the most outstanding example was Chief Khama III of the northern Tswana, the Ngwato people.

Among the northern Tswana, state and church had been intimately connected since the mid-century. There, 'both Sechele I and Khama III, converted Christian kings, were, in their espousal of capitalist values of accumulation and consumption, independent African confirmation of the Protestant ethic'. By the 1870s, Shoshong, the Ngwato capital, had replaced the Kwena capital as the 'emporium of the north', dominating the still important trade in ivory, furs and ostrich feathers and increasingly significant as a supplier of food and cattle for the Kimberley market. In the late 1870s, it was estimated that ivory worth £55,000 left Shoshong annually, while Khama's personal income from cattle and ivory sales amounted to between £2,000 and £3,000.⁵¹

One response to the expanded opportunities of the interior was widespread conversion to Christianity, which became identified with 'progressive' reform. While Sechele of the Kwena trod an uneasy path between total acceptance of the Christian ethic and the maintenance of traditional mores, Khama III earned his reputation as southern Africa's model black Christian by his refusal to observe traditional practices. This had led to civil war in 1865 and the bitter hostility of his father, whose office he forcibly usurped in 1875. In 1872–3, when he briefly replaced his unpopular Macheng as ruler, his attempts to modify traditional practices such as royal rain-making and initiation ceremonies, led to his downfall; on his return to power in 1875 he was more careful to consolidate a constituency, through building up and using his personal fortune for national purposes and by renouncing his rights to royal cattle held on loan by Tswana headmen and commoners, though the loan system still applied to non-Tswana vassals. He carefully controlled white traders in his kingdom, whom he segregated in a separate ward at the capital, and attempted to conserve natural resources, such as ostrich chicks,

⁵¹ N. Parsons, 'Khama III, the Bamangwato and the British, with special reference to 1895–1923', Ph.D. Edinburgh, 1973, 26.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND SOUTHERN RHODESIA

once the ivory frontier moved north. Having watched the disintegration of the Tswana kingdoms further south, he matched this with a careful policy of non-confrontation against whites and an expansionist policy further north.

In 1876, Khama, still consolidating his hold over the Ngwato kingdom, had looked to the British to prevent Boer and Ndebele encroachments on his kingdoms. By the late 1870s he had expanded Ngwato control over the Tawana in Ngamiland, and over less powerful neighbouring peoples, and was pressing up against the equally expansive states of the Ndebele and the Lozi to his north. When, in 1885, the British Protectorate was declared, Khama III claimed a vast tract of territory up to the Gwaii-Zambezi confluence, including much of what is now western Zimbabwe. It was through Khama that Moremi II, the Tawana king, was converted to Christianity and the Church established in Ngamiland in the late 1870s; this became an important area for Ngwato evangelical activity. In 1878, it was again Khama who persuaded the Paris Evangelical Mission to send its mission to Bulozhi. Although his attempted reforms and close liaison with the missionaries still roused formidable opposition which focused around his father, Sekgoma, until the latter's death in 1884, and around his brothers thereafter, Khama ruled the Ngwato for a further forty-eight years. By the 1890s Ngwato economic and strategic significance was bypassed by the building of the British South Africa Company railway to Bulawayo. Nevertheless, through the 1870s and 1880s, Khama III was the most powerful of the northern Tswana chiefs. With his great personal wealth, his commitment to Christianity, and above all his strategic position astride the road to the north, he was seen by the missionaries as holding the key to the interior, and by the British as a bulwark against Boer expansion.⁵²

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By the mid-1880s, Khama's position as a bulwark against Boer expansion was of particular significance. For by then British and Cape alarm at Boer movements westward had been increased by the German annexation of South West Africa. In August 1884,

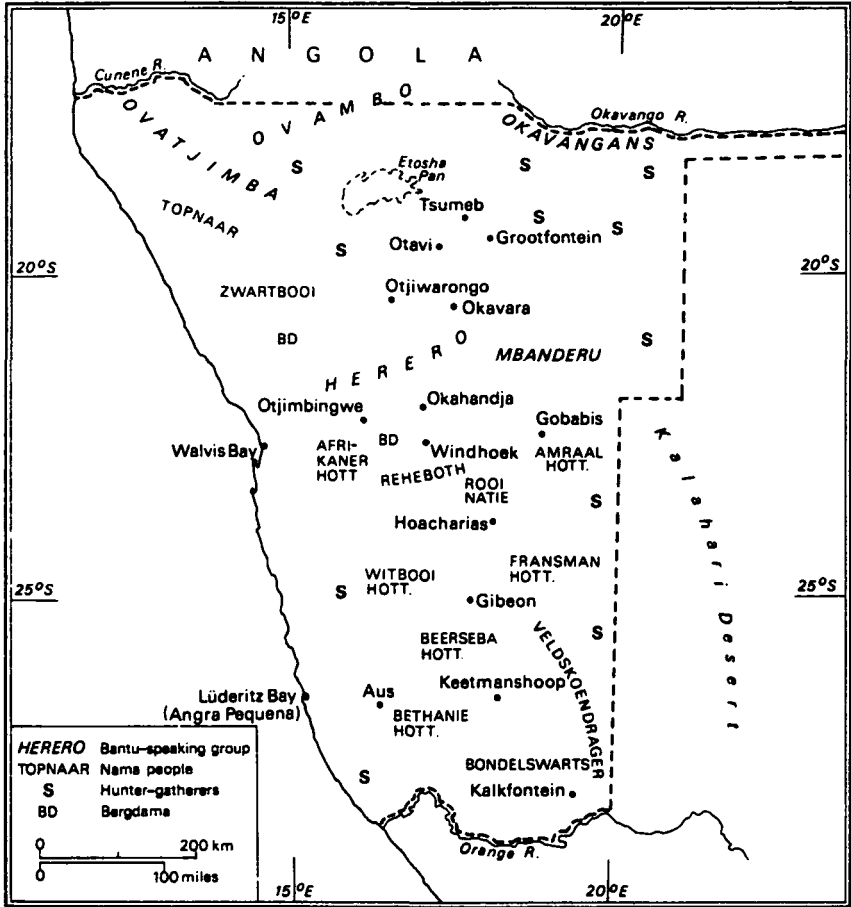
⁵² *Ibid.*, 23–6. N. Parsons, 'The economic history of Khama's country in Botswana, 1844–1930', in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.), *The roots of rural poverty in central and southern Africa* (London, 1977), 116–22.

spurred by British imperial dilatoriness and Cape sub-imperial bluster, Bismarck was persuaded to extend German control from a tiny enclave around Angra Pequena, annexed on the urging of a Bremen businessman, F. A. Lüderitz, who had acquired extensive concessions around the bay, to claim a vast territory from the borders of the Cape in the south to the Portuguese colony of Angola in the north. Notwithstanding the chagrin of the Cape Colony at German intrusion into its hinterland, and the disquiet of imperial officials, in 1886 an Anglo-German commission settled the frontiers of the new colony, leaving the Cape only with the guano islands off Angra Pequena. Conventionally and correctly regarded as signalling a change in Bismarck's colonial policies, the annexation accelerated the 'scramble' for southern Africa, disturbing British hegemony in the region and rousing fears of an alliance between Germany and the South African Republic.

Through the 1870s, German missionaries and merchants in South West Africa had agitated intermittently and in vain for a German take-over of the vast, semi-desert territory. Conflict on the frontiers between the pastoralist Herero and Nama peoples over sparse grazing lands and water had been intensified in the nineteenth century by the advent of so-called Oorlam peoples (people of Khoisan and mixed descent) from the Cape Colony, and the proliferation of guns as a result of the activities of Cape and European traders in search of ivory, cattle and ostrich feathers. Fierce competition in the 1860s between the Nama and Oorlam groups in the south was paralleled by seven years of bitter warfare between the Herero under Chief Maherero and the Oorlam Afrikaners under Jan Jonker, who had established his supremacy over the Herero and a number of Nama chiefdoms. By 1870 the Herero had thrown off Oorlam domination, and sheer exhaustion had led to an uneasy peace which left both sides looking for outside allies.

Influenced by Cape traders, on more than one occasion Maherero had appealed to the British high commissioner at Cape Town for intervention on his behalf; in the mid-1870s, his appeals were given additional urgency when three separate Boer treks left the Transvaal in search of fresh lands to the west. Although the first parties were forced to turn back, the danger of Boer expansion into an area the colony considered to be its preserve, together with rumours of its mineral wealth, led to wider Cape

SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND SOUTHERN RHODESIA



15 Peoples of South West Africa before the 1904-5 uprising (based on Wellington, *South West Africa and its human issues*)

interest in the region. In 1876, the Cape legislature despatched W. C. Palgrave to the territory, ostensibly to explore its mineral resources and the disposition of the local peoples towards colonial rule. Although he persuaded Maherero to accept a protectorate, however, Palgrave's recognition of the inflated claims of the Herero to control the pastures around Windhoek, Rehoboth and Gobabis, were contested by the Nama and especially by Jan Jonker. The Nama remained loth to come under Cape or British colonial 'protection', despite the arrival south of the Okavango river of the so-called 'Thirstland' trekkers from the Transvaal by

1878. When in the following year Jan Jonker appealed for Cape assistance against Herero encroachments on his land, it was too late.

As so often, while Cape mercantile interests wanted to see the region annexed, they were unwilling to foot the bill; and while the British government would have been happy enough to see its hegemony expanded through local sub-imperialism of the Cape, they were also unprepared to take on the financial burden of an uninviting slice of territory. By this time, the cluster of wars elsewhere in South Africa made even Lord Carnarvon advise caution. Thus although Walvis Bay was annexed by Britain in March 1878, Palgrave's wider schemes of settling 400 Boers in a new British colony in the region came to nothing. The outbreak of serious war between the Herero and the Nama in 1880, in no small measure the result of Palgrave's apparent pro-Herero bias, led to a withdrawal of the resident.

The removal of the British resident, and even the nominal protection which this had afforded the traders and missionaries, led, on the outbreak of the four-year-long Nama–Herero war, to greatly increased pressure on the German government to protect its citizens in the territory, although in fact virtually no Europeans were injured. Initially Maherero was successful in driving the Oorlam Afrikaners from Windhoek, and by 1872 the Rehebothers had sued for peace. By 1884, however, the remaining Nama had united behind the remarkable leadership of Hendrik Witbooi to drive the Herero north of Windhoek and Okahandja. Although later on, Witbooi was to lead the Nama resistance to the Germans, when the threat first appeared, the peoples of South West Africa were bitterly divided. Despite the considerable German missionary presence, there was no single leader with sufficient knowledge of the new forces confronting the region and capable of simultaneously manipulating them and holding his own against local enemies. Over the decades that followed, neither resistance nor collaboration was to suffice against what turned into perhaps the harshest colonial regime in southern Africa.

North of the Limpopo, Lobengula, king of the Ndebele was well aware of the potential menace to his kingdom from the whiteman, and trod a wary if very different path to that taken either by Khama

or the chiefs of South West Africa. Throughout this period and beyond, he was torn between those who advised caution in the face of the white advance, and those who wanted to use violence in excluding whites from the kingdom. That the king should have been suspicious of the intentions of white men from the south was perhaps not entirely surprising, given the early history of conflict between the Ndebele and the Transvaal and the particular circumstances of Lobengula's accession to the throne in 1868. On the death of Mzilikazi, the Nguni⁵³ founder of the kingdom, a bitter succession dispute had raged between those who believed that Mzilikazi's 'true' heir, Nkulumane, was still alive and should be restored to the throne, and those who accepted that he had been killed in the civil war in 1845–6, and that Lobengula, Mzilikazi's own nominee, should be recognised. Widespread dissatisfaction in the kingdom focussed on the succession dispute and erupted in civil war. The prospectors and traders who had rushed to the area on the discovery of the Tati goldfields attempted to push the claims of the faction which promised them the most gain, while Lobengula attempted to strengthen his hand by granting mining concessions in the disputed Tati district in the south-west, and in the lands of the Shona people over whom he claimed sovereignty in the east.⁵⁴

The grant of a second mission station to the LMS missionaries at Hope Fountain in 1870 formed part of the same strategy, although Lobengula's tolerance of a handful of missionaries in his kingdom did not imply any encouragement of their evangelical activity: neither the LMS nor the Jesuits, who sent eleven missionaries to start work in Matabeleland in 1879, made a single convert. Fearing the threat to his authority, Lobengula prevented missionaries from working amongst the subordinated Shona people and strongly opposed any of his subjects becoming Christian.⁵⁵

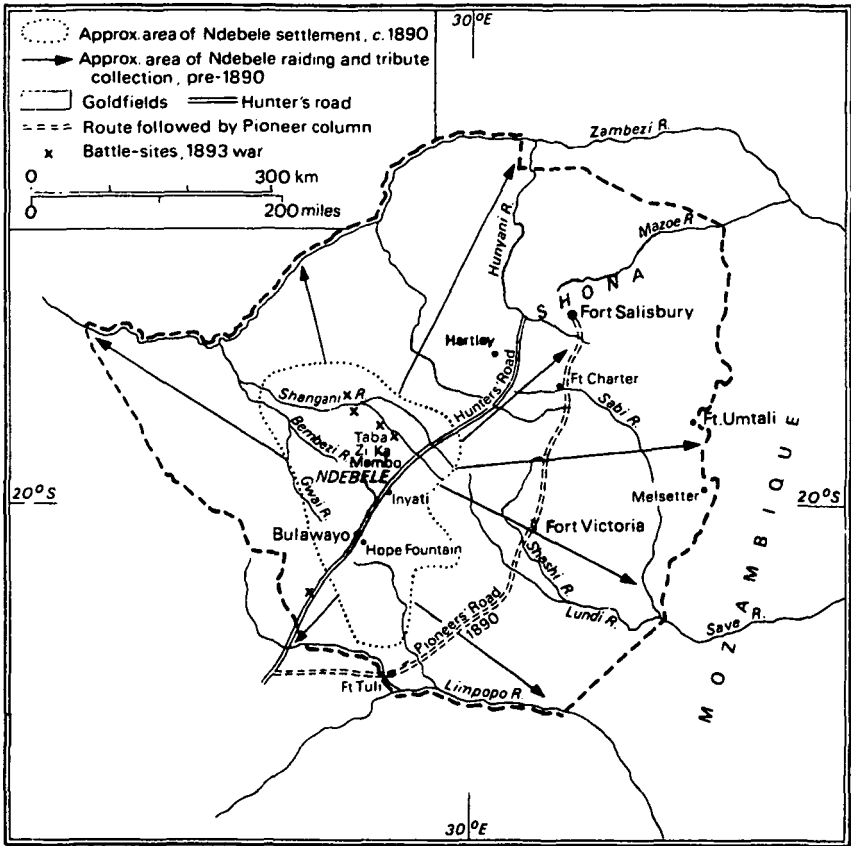
In 1870, however, it was the intervention of Theophilus Shepstone, then still secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, which prolonged the civil war after Lobengula's victory at the battle of

⁵³ For the origins of the Ndebele and other *mfecane* offshoot kingdoms, see *Cambridge history of Africa*, v, chapter 9.

⁵⁴ R. Brown, *The Ndebele succession crisis, 1868–1877* (Salisbury, Central African Historical Association, 1962).

⁵⁵ J. R. Cobbing, 'The Ndebele under the Khumalos', Ph.D. Lancaster, 1976; N. M. B. Bhebe, 'Christian missions in Matabeleland, 1839–1920', Ph.D. London, 1972.

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16 Mashona and Matabeleland in the late nineteenth century (based on G. Kay, *Rhodesia: a human geography* (London, 1970), p. 40, and T. Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* (London, 1967), p. 45)

Zwangendaba. In Natal the discovery of gold at Tati had roused the wildest hopes of vast mineral wealth in the interior, while Transvaal attempts to claim the region roused fears that Natal's rightful heritage would be lost. Shepstone, who was closely associated with Natal prospectors and expansionists, used the succession dispute in Matabeleland to resurrect one of his employees, Kanda, into the missing Nkulumane. In 1871-2, he went further and encouraged Kanda to invade the Ndebele kingdom from Tati, in alliance with Macheng of the Ngwato. By that time, however, the civil war had died down and whites in

Matabeleland had thrown their weight behind Lobengula. The invasion was easily repelled, and this contributed to Khama's victory over Macheng at Shoshong; nevertheless, Lobengula was to be haunted by the possibilities of insurrection until Kanda's death in the Transvaal in 1884. Indeed, in 1878, when Shepstone's emissary, sent to report secretly on possible imperial expansion across the Limpopo, threatened Lobengula with Nkulumane, he and his companions were mysteriously murdered.⁵⁶

Although the rebels had had a certain amount of support, Lobengula emerged from the invasion with his position strengthened; however, he never escaped the taint of being a usurper, or achieved the power of his father. Throughout his reign, he remained dependent on the faction which had supported him in the crisis, including diviners of the Mwari cult which deepened its influence among the Ndebele in these years. By the 1870s, royal herds had been depleted, and the strength of surrounding peoples was increasing, as they came to arm themselves with the more freely available firearms; and although the Ndebele also acquired guns – indeed the first batch of Ndebele went to Kimberley in 1877 in response to the recruitment campaigns of Alexander Baillie – they were never fully integrated into Ndebele military strategy. As elsewhere, there seemed little incentive for a successful army to change its methods of warfare.

Nevertheless, for most of the 1870s and 1880s, Ndebele troops continued to dominate their neighbours and consolidated their hold over the Shona to the east, despite the latter's mastery of defensive warfare and their flow of guns, mercenaries and military know-how from the related Venda people in the Transvaal. In 1879, a large Ndebele army attacked the stronghold of the Rozwi ruler, Chivi Marorodze, accused of building a private army, and was probably victorious, though it suffered heavy losses.⁵⁷ A number of Shona chiefdoms, including some Rozwi polities, paid regular tribute to the Ndebele kingdom for the first time in

⁵⁶ Brown, *The Ndebele succession crisis*, 12; T. J. Couzens, 'Literature and Ideology: the Patterson embassy to Lobengula, 1878, and *King Solomon's mines*', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, collected seminar papers on the societies of southern Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, v (London, 1974).

⁵⁷ There is some controversy over this battle. According to D. N. Beach, 'The rising in south-western Mashonaland, 1896–7' (Ph.D. London, 1971), 142, the Shona won; according to J. R. Cobbing, 'The Ndebele under the Khumalos', 318, the Ndebele were victorious. As both agree the Chivi was captured, taken to Bulawayo and skinned alive, and that the Rozwi paid tribute to the Ndebele, albeit irregularly, thereafter, it does seem as though the Ndebele were the victors.

Lobengula's reign, and formed a definite political relationship with it. Many Shona adopted Ndebele culture, language and way of life, and were incorporated into its army, thus avoiding retaliatory raids.

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By the mid-1880s, however, Ndebele activities were gradually restricted by colonial and imperial expansion northward. The declaration of the Protectorate over the northern Tswana in 1885, partly dictated by Khama's fears of Ndebele expansionism after Ndebele cattle raids on the Tawana people of the Lake Ngami area in the preceding couple of years, bolstered the Ngwato against the Ndebele, while to the north, Ndebele expansion was checked simultaneously. Here, the consolidation of Lozi power with the accession of Lewanika and the reassertion of Portuguese ambitions along the Zambezi ended any hopes the Ndebele may have had of adopting their traditional response to danger and escaping the closing noose from the south by migrating yet further north.

Like Lobengula himself, Sipopa who restored the Lozi monarchy after the Kololo⁵⁸ interregnum in 1864, faced a divided kingdom. After an attempted coup in 1869, he tried to eliminate all centres of discontent and in so doing alienated the faction that had put him in power. Losing control over the Lealui valley, in 1874 Sipopa moved his capital to Sesheke, where he hoped to find support from his Toka and Subiya tributaries, and perhaps to strengthen his hand through increased proximity to the trade and gun frontier further south. By moving south, away from the places of ritual significance on the flood-plain, and by relying on Mbunda diviners, however, Sipopa further antagonised the 'traditionalists' in his kingdom. By 1876, his despotic and vicious rule provoked an uprising in which he was shot.

The death of Sipopa did not end the struggles for power in Buluzi. His successor, Mwanawina, was toppled after only two years in office and was replaced by the young Lubosi, who was in turn faced by a number of contenders with equally legitimate claims to the throne. Lubosi re-established the capital at Lealui and tried to reconcile the traditionalists. In doing so, however, he lost the support of those factions that had supported his rivals,

⁵⁸ The Kololo were another Nguni offshoot – see *Cambridge history of Africa*, v, ch. 9.

and the early years of his reign were marked by further attempted coups and invasions, culminating in 1884 in his exile and deposition. Yet this last rebellion brought to power a man so out of touch with Lozi sentiment that many feared the collapse of the Lozi state and domination by the southern Mbunda people whose interests he seemed to represent. By the end of 1885, Lubosi had regained the kingship after a resounding victory over his enemies. From this time, he came to be widely known by his praise-name (already in use before his restoration), 'Liwani ka la Matunga' (one who gathers together) or, more commonly, Lewanika, 'the conqueror'.⁵⁹

By the time of his restoration, it was clear to Lewanika, too, that he would have to come to terms with the forces from the south. For the past decade he had watched the slowly moving imperial frontier, and was well aware of the strategies of his immediate neighbours, Lobengula and Khama. Indeed, despite the bitter animosity between the Lozi and the Ndebele, for a time in the early 1880s he toyed with joining Lobengula in a defensive alliance against the whites. In the event, he decided to emulate Khama by inviting in François Coillard of the Paris Evangelical Mission as an intermediary with the white man and his technology.

For people south of the Zambezi, and to some extent even for the Lozi to the north-west, the crucial issue in these years was increasingly what strategy to adopt towards the intruders from the south. Although a trickle of white hunters, merchants and missionaries also made their way into what is now Malawi and eastern Zambia from the south and east, for most peoples along the river and to its north, the upheavals they experienced resulted from the activities of well-armed slave and ivory hunters from the coast, exacerbated by the raiding and warfare of Ngoni invaders from the south, who had established themselves in four major military kingdoms in east-central Africa by the 1870s. Here, there was an intensification and modification of older patterns of raiding and trading, rather than any new direction. Although some of the major chiefs, such as the Bemba *chitimukulu* or the

⁵⁹ This is based on M. Mainga, *Bulozi under the Layana kings* (London, 1973); G. L. Kaplan, *The élites of Barotseland 1878–1969: a political history of Zambia's Western Province* (London, 1970); G. Prins, *The hidden hippopotamus: reappraisal in African history: The early colonial experience in western Zambia* (Cambridge, 1980).

mwase kasungu of the Chewa, were able to maintain and even increase their power in these years, for the majority of the agricultural peoples of the region, there was little question of diplomatic manoeuvring for position in the face of the onslaught; the choice was whether to join the predators and at least share in the security of their stockaded settlements or take flight to the swamps and hills.

The nexus of ivory, slave and gun-trading was not new in this period. Throughout the nineteenth century, 'the increased European demand for ivory piano keys and billiard balls changed a continent'.⁶⁰ It was accompanied by an increase in the slave trade both for hunters and soldiers and human portage. At the same time, the European demand for tropical crops was met through the local use of slave labour. As the most sought-after commodity in exchange was guns, those chiefs and adventurers who monopolised the traffic immeasurably increased their power over their followers and their neighbours. Warfare became more lethal and paradoxically, at the very time that European abolitionists congratulated themselves on having virtually stamped out the slave-trade, its destructive impact in east-central Africa may well have increased.

Although we have no figures for the loss of life involved either in the slave-raiding campaigns or in the wars of the Ngoni, the reports of travellers and missionaries who followed in the wake of Livingstone to trans-Zambezia talk almost uniformly of war and devastation, death and destruction. While this was partly propaganda intended to encourage support for mission activity and engage British intervention, there can be little doubt that these were years of immense dislocation and insecurity for the majority of agricultural peoples outside the pools of protection established by the warlords themselves.

By the 1870s, south-central Africa was criss-crossed by a number of trade routes to the east and west coast. The reopening of the Portuguese trading centre at Zumbo on the Zambezi–Luangwa confluence had led to the expansion of the slave and ivory trade along the Zambezi where there were no powerful African rulers to block it. Although both the Plateau Tonga and the Gwembe Tonga seem to have been able to use the trade to

⁶⁰ L. Gann, *The Birth of a plural society under the British South Africa Company: Northern Rhodesia 1894–1914* (Oxford, 1959).

arm themselves against their more powerful Lozi and Ndebele neighbours, they were in no position to defend themselves against the ruthless slavers who were raiding as far as the Kalomo Gorge by the mid-1870s.⁶¹ The Portuguese government exerted little control over the new breed of traders, though many of them operated in their name. Two of the most notorious, 'Kanyembe', and his brother-in-law, 'Matakenya', were even recognised as Portuguese officials and granted title to land. Their Chikunda armies were recruited in the main from slaves of mixed origin who had escaped from the Portuguese estates on the lower Zambezi. Kanyembe made his base on the south bank of the Zambezi and from there raided both along the river and to the north of it, interfered in local politics and added local Africans to the ranks of his armies. His men, who were notorious for their brutality, were armed with flintlocks and soon controlled communications on the Zambezi. Matakenya raided the Nsenga and Bisa people along the Luangwa river, and amongst the Lala, Lamba and Lenje peoples along the upper Luapula.⁶²

In the upper Luapula and upper Luangwa valleys, Matakenya's raiders met with Bemba and Swahili traders, replacing the Bisa and Kazembe who had dominated the long-distance trade of the region over the past century. The rising profitability of ivory may account for the more permanent Swahili trading settlements and the increased scale of commercial activity in what is now northern Malawi from the late 1860s. The traders between the southern tip of Lake Tanganyika and Lake Mweru were linked to the entrepôts of Ujiji and Tabora, and from the east of northern Lake Malawi, the route went from the Deep Bay crossing to Kilwa. Both areas still had rich concentrations of elephant in the late nineteenth century, while the Ulungu-Mweru region was an important source of salt. Whereas the earlier traders had restricted themselves to commercial activity, this new 'generation of Swahili traders, led by Tippu Tip and his associates, brought about . . . a significant alteration of the political role of foreigners'.⁶³ Tippu Tip's attack on the Tabwa, in 1867, was the prelude to almost continuous civil war after the death of the paramount chief in 1870, which was

⁶¹ T. I. Matthews, 'The historical traditions of the people of the Gwembe valley, middle Zambezi' (Ph.D. London, 1976), 305-18.

⁶² A. Roberts, *A history of Zambia* (London, 1976), ch. 8.

⁶³ M. Wright and P. Lary, 'Swahili settlements in northern Zambia and Malawi', *Afr. Hist. Studies*, 1971, 4, 3, 552; this section draws heavily on this article.

readily exploited by Swahili and Bemba outsiders. Swahili traders even intervened in the internal affairs of the Kazembe kingdom and challenged the hegemony of what had been the most powerful African state in the region at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Further south and east, the Senga people seem to have been less threatened by the Swahili settlements established in the 1870s. Kota Kota, the settlement of the Jumbe, established at the expense of the Marenga people, was by the 1870s a well-established commercial and administrative entrepôt recognised by the sultan of Zanzibar. The Jumbe controlled traffic across Lake Malawi, and may, like the other Swahili traders in Senga and Henga country, have afforded the local populace some protection against the Ngoni and the Bemba.

The Bemba were indeed amongst the few peoples of east-central Africa to prosper as a result of the ivory and slave trade. Slightly off the main trade routes, and with a tradition of raiding and hunting rather than trading or agriculture, their interests complemented rather than competed with those of the Swahili. Their campaigns against Ngoni invaders in the mid-century meant that they were well-organised to pursue the ever-diminishing herds of elephant, and they had little use for the slaves they captured in their raids. In general, the East African traders were content to act in alliance with the *chitimukulu* and never actively intervened in Bemba internal politics. As a result of long-distance trade, local production and exchange was expanded and diversified. Bemba iron weaponry improved, and after the mid-1880s the Bemba used the new types of guns available to extend their hegemony over surrounding peoples. In the 1870s and 1880s they were able to take over much new territory in the south, north and west from the Bisa, Mambwe, Lungu and Tabwa.

While the long-distance trade strengthened the Bemba against their neighbours, it led neither to economic independence within Bembaland, nor to an increase in the power of the *chitimukulu*. Access by chiefs to beads, cloth, shells and firearms was a significant way of attracting and rewarding followers, and tended to strengthen subordinate Bemba rulers against their own people and against the *chitimukulu* who never had a monopoly over the trade. What fragile unity there was amongst the Bemba 'was based primarily on links between a number of chiefs, each with his own

specific economic interests; and no one of them was clearly predominant'.⁶⁴ Between 1860 and 1880, the Bemba polity had probably doubled in extent; yet it consisted of about twenty chiefdoms which were only loosely connected, mainly through matrilineal ties. They all recognised the ritual supremacy of the *chitimukulu*, but had no centralised political military or economic institutions. The chiefs were linked rather by a flexible kinship and affinal network, and their power 'from the *chitimukulu* downwards, was largely determined by the prevailing constellation of alliances and antagonisms within an expanding and unstable system'.⁶⁵

To the west and south of Lake Malawi, the agricultural Chewa and Manganja peoples, living in dispersed matrilineal villages, were less fortunately placed. While beyond the main onslaught of the Bemba and Swahili slave raiders, they were at the mercy of two other groups of intruders, the Ngoni and the Yao. The Yao, who had moved into the area that is now southern Malawi in several waves from the mid-nineteenth century from their base in Mozambique, had long had contact with the political economy of the coast. By the 1870s, powerful dynasties had emerged and had established military and commercial chieftaincies, with a distinctive culture modelled on that of the coastal elite. Thus, Mponda and Makanjira's settlements near the lake 'were substantial townships containing up to 8,000 inhabitants'. 'Pioneers of the Arab trading frontier' like the Swahili in the north, they 'introduced a new factor into political relations south of the lake'.⁶⁶

The Ngoni, like the Ndebele, originated in the south, in the wars which accompanied the rise of the Zulu kingdom in the second and third decade of the nineteenth century. During many years of migration and warfare they had absorbed a vast number of ethnically diverse peoples, who had come to identify culturally and politically with their conquerors. At the same time, the Ngoni themselves, while retaining their northern Nguni military and political organisation, had assimilated many of the social norms of surrounding peoples. By the 1870s, four main groups had come to settle in east-central Africa: the Maseko Ngoni, at the south

⁶⁴ A. Roberts, *A history of the Bemba* (London, 1973), 213.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁶⁶ J. L. McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875-1940. The impact of the Livingstonia mission in the northern Province* (Cambridge, 1977), 6.

end of Lake Malawi in the modern Dedza district; those of Chief Mpezeni near Chipata (Fort Jameson) on the eastern Zambian plateau; in Chewa country, those of Chiwere Ndhlovu, himself an Nsenga by birth and a former captive; and to the north, the Ngoni of Chief Mbelwa. While the Ngoni were not primarily slave-traders, their political economy depended on raiding: to establish themselves on the land, accumulate cattle and incorporate new soldiers into their armies.

While contemporaries stressed only the destructiveness of the Ngoni, more recently historians have been concerned to show the constructive state-building aspect of Ngoni activity. Within their realms, order and a certain security prevailed. Yet their impact, together with that of the slave-traders, whether Bemba or Yao, Swahili or Chikunda, undoubtedly added to the chaos and confusion of east-central Africa in these years. It is true that outsiders brought the region new principles of political organisation, and new ideas, crops, and technologies. Yet these were more than outweighed by the destructive impact. The prosperity of the outsiders was largely bought at the expense of the local populace, who lost their autonomy, their land and their people. Even people like the Yao or the Bemba gained little in the long-term from their unequal relationship with the world economy. In exchange for luxuries and quickly consumed commodities, they traded their people, exterminated their game, and lost their independence.

Even the slaves who were used internally did little to transform or even expand the local forces of production. The internal use of slavery distorted and dislocated local social relations as 'brothers' and 'wives' were sold to traders for the much-coveted beads and cloth, guns and powder. For a matrilineal people like the Yao, slave-marriage had very real advantages for the men, who could establish virilocal lineages, and gain total control over the labour power and offspring of women who had no protective kinship ties. For women there were few benefits. As the premium on slaves rose, even the limited security of a slave marriage was lost as women acquired exchange value.

The incorporation of captives into the Ngoni regiments also deprived local societies of their necessary male labour. Whether the major famine of the 1870s can be traced to this withdrawal of local labour is not clear. What is clear is that, by the 1870s,

the political geography of large sections of the region had been transformed as slaves were concentrated in the commercial entrepôts, young men were taken into the Ngoni armies and those who escaped fled to the hills or huddled for safety in stockaded villages.⁶⁷

It was in this complex, fluid and insecure world that the first Free Church of Scotland missionaries founded the Livingstonia mission at Cape Maclear at the south end of Lake Malawi in 1875, to be followed a year later by a Church of Scotland mission at Blantyre in the Shire highlands. Inspired by Livingstone's death, they hoped to establish 'practical' Christianity and 'legitimate commerce' in the heart of Africa. Both parties were accompanied by lay artisans, responsible for the practicalities of establishing the missions and bringing industry to the African. In addition, in 1878, the small group of Glasgow businessmen who supported the Livingstonia mission also founded the Livingstonia Central Africa Company (renamed the African Lakes Company in 1881) to establish cash-crop production and control European trade in central Africa. The company had little hope, however, of undercutting the Yao and Arab east-coast trade, and was soon itself dependent on the export of ivory, most of it from powerful slave-owning traders like the Arabs at Karonga or the Jumbe of Kota Kota, for whom it provided a convenient new outlet and whose slaving activities it thus inadvertently advanced.

Initially the missionaries had little success in introducing Christianity to the more powerful Yao chiefdoms. The close connection between slavery and the coastal trade on which chiefly power depended meant that, as in other parts of Africa, the earliest mission adherents were largely the disaffected and the dispossessed – freed slaves returning home, refugees from the slave-raiding and warfare, the children of the Kololo rulers, who had accompanied Livingstone into southern Malawi. Within a year, the presence on the settlement at Livingstonia of these dissidents had led to troubles with neighbouring chiefs as well as acute problems of internal authority.

At Blantyre and at Livingstonia's outstations around Bandawe (where Livingstonia was moved in 1881) these problems were

⁶⁷ M. Vaughan, 'Social and economic change in southern Malawi: a study of rural communities in the Shire Highlands and upper Shire valley from the mid-19th century to 1915', Ph.D. London, 1981.

compounded by the arbitrary actions of the artisans suddenly granted uncontrolled responsibilities. Rival headmen and villagers actively encouraged the mission's intervention in village affairs in the hope of attracting the assistance of external authority, and in the early days of both missions the lay artisans in command flogged and fined Africans on the stations and in the villages outside it who infringed their code of conduct. When in 1879 news reached Britain of violent miscarriages of justice at Blantyre, the entire industrial enterprise was thrown into question. Both missions were ordered to refrain from civil jurisdiction, though the change in policy was more successfully implemented at Bandawe than at Blantyre, which retained its character as the 'nucleus of a state'.⁶⁸

Despite its early difficulties, over the next decade, Livingstonia pioneered a new form of mission, directly engaging with village life, and seeding dozens of new outposts over much of northern and central Malawi. At Bandawe the missionaries were welcomed by local headmen who sought allies against Ngoni raiders and local rivals. Depleted by years of Ngoni warfare, their economy undermined and their polities in disarray, the lakeside Tonga rapidly appreciated the new opportunities presented by the mission. The capitalist ethic it propounded interacted with the emphasis on individual achievement in their society, itself perhaps a response to a decade of profound social disruption. Like the Mfengu in the eastern Cape, the Tonga responded with alacrity both the wage labour and the education the missions provided; by 1894 there was a regular attendance of over 1,000 pupils at eighteen Free Church schools, while in the same year, 1,400 Tonga were working for the African Lakes Company, and 4,000 for settlers in the Shire highlands.⁶⁹

While the Tonga constituted the most spectacular missionary success, and the Yao – who turned increasingly to Islam in these years – their most dismal failure, the missionaries also made some headway amongst Mbelwa's northern Ngoni, in part the result of internal tensions amongst his people. They do not, however, seem to have been able to exploit similar tensions amongst either the Ngoni to the south of the Lake or the Ngonde to its north. As elsewhere, the relationship of Africans to the mission initiative –

⁶⁸ McCracken, *Politics and Christianity*, 70, on which this account is heavily dependent.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 80–1.

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itself the product of particular historical circumstance – was to profoundly shape not only their interaction to colonialism, to which it was the prelude, but also and more significantly the geography of opportunity and class, of politics and education, well into the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 8

SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA, 1886–1910

If diamonds had begun the transformation of southern Africa, the industrialisation which followed the discovery of vast seams of underground gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, followed by the renewed assertion of British supremacy in the interior of southern Africa, greatly accelerated the forces making for change over the entire region, and set the pace for much of the twentieth century. In the 1880s the sub-continent was still composed of a cluster of independent African kingdoms and Afrikaner republics, British colonies and protectorates; the huge new German acquisition of South West Africa was still largely unconquered. By 1910, with the political unification of the South African colonies, British ambitions of creating a southern African confederation seemed well on the way to fulfilment, while, to the north, British imperial frontiers stopped short only at Katanga and Tanganyika. All over southern Africa the annexation of African polities meant the establishment of colonial states, with government departments and courts, alien soldiers and policemen. By 1910 railroad arteries, often built at enormous human cost, connected the coast with mining centres as far afield as Bwana Mkubwa and Elisabethville (Lubumbashi), opening up new markets and releasing new sources of labour. Boundaries had been drawn which were to last beyond the colonial period, and it was accepted by the colonial rulers that the Zambezi was to be the boundary between the 'white south' and the 'tropical dependencies' of east and central Africa, although British Central Africa¹ uneasily straddled the divide.

Everywhere, the colonial administrator and tax-collector, but also the trader, prospector and labour recruiter, gave colonial rule its main practical effect. The scope of mission work, already

¹ This was the name applied from 1889 till 1897 to the British sphere of influence north of the Zambezi, including both that part ruled by the British South Africa Company (from 1897 Northern Rhodesia) and that part ruled directly by the British government through the Foreign Office (from 1897 Nyasaland). The latter was distinguished from the former as the British Central Africa Protectorate.

entrenched to the south of the Limpopo and in the Shire highlands, was vastly extended, as numerous new societies appeared on the scene, and introduced schools and, on a very limited scale, clinics. Despite settler criticism, these societies played a key role as mediators between rulers and subjects, encouraging individualism, wage labour and commodity production, and fostering the growth of a class of educated Christian Africans, who were to become the most effective critics of colonialism. Ineluctably, the traditional societies of the sub-continent lost their remaining autonomy and were meshed, albeit still incompletely, into a money economy. In the new dispensation, whites assisted by the colonial states controlled private property and the means of production – although not all whites equally; and blacks were increasingly seen solely as the source of labour power. Even in South Africa, however, the extent of the independence of settler colonialism should not be exaggerated: the Union formed in 1910 was still a poor and divided one, dominated by international mining capital, with white settlers its most convenient if somewhat uncomfortable allies.

This is not to argue that the history of the region can be portrayed homogeneously as a single history. The diversity of the African societies of the sub-continent, their differing nineteenth-century experience and the historical interplay of personality and chance led to complex and distinctive developments within the region. It is characteristic of capitalism that it should advance unevenly. In southern Africa this unevenness was not merely regional and sectoral; it was a function of the diversity of capitalism itself. Capitalism occurred in many forms – from the highly industrial complex of the Witwatersrand, to the essentially rentier and mercantile activities of the land concession companies; even in 1910, side by side with the most advanced technology in the world, there were white farms still based on non-capitalist forms of production, and protectorates and reserves in which the homestead, communal tenure and the authority of chiefs remained superficially intact, though increasingly dependent on the colonial economy for their continued existence.

As we have already seen in chapter 7, the ‘scramble’ for Africa had its specifically southern African aspect, which was already under way in 1886, and which was further spurred on by German intervention in a region Britain regarded as her sphere of influence

and by its known abundance of mineral resources. After 1886 the African territories south of the Limpopo required only a ‘mopping up’ operation as they were absorbed into the neighbouring colonial states; north of the river, however, in 1886 the ‘scramble’ had barely begun. From 1887, Cecil Rhodes, who had already played a major role in the extension of British domination over Bechuanaland, and who was in the throes of amalgamating the Kimberley diamond mines, turned his attention to the north. Within less than five years a vast expanse of territory including present-day Zimbabwe and Zambia had come under the control of his chartered British South Africa Company.

By far the most important factor in accelerating the pace of change was the discovery of gold in the Transvaal. While the diamond discoveries had begun a series of social and economic changes, the discovery of gold, and in particular in 1886 the deep seams of gold along the ridge of mountains between Heidelberg and Potchefstroom, known as the Witwatersrand, intensified and carried this revolution far beyond the Limpopo. Within a decade of the official proclamation of the fields, the economy of southern Africa had been transformed and its political direction sharply changed. By the turn of the century, the region had become the world’s largest producer of diamonds and, more significantly, gold. From a pastoral backwater, ‘an unprosperous State that had never known genuine solvency’,² the South African Republic had become essential not only to the political economy of southern Africa, but also to the world money market. Its new wealth transformed the local balance of power, challenging Cape dominance and ultimately threatening British hegemony in the sub-continent. The coastal colonies engaged in cut-throat competition to control the lucrative trade to the Rand, while men and money flowed to the gold-fields. The ramifications were felt over an ever-widening area, as capital expanded from this storm-centre in an accelerating drive to find and exploit additional mineral resources, labour supplies and land.

It is relatively simple to delineate the demographic changes wrought by the mineral discoveries, and to cite statistics of gold production, or revenue and expenditure accounts. These are but a clue to the impact of capitalist development on the relations of production all over southern Africa, and to the traumatic and

² C. W. de Kiewiet, *A history of South Africa, social and economic* (Oxford, 1937), 123.

frequently ruthless transformation of societies, both black and white. Some of the implications of industrialisation for the relationship of race and class in southern Africa have already been delineated in Kimberley. The sheer scale of the demand for labour on the gold-fields, the controls demanded by an acutely cost-conscious industry over its massive unskilled labour force, and thus the assistance it expected from the state, set the experience of the Rand apart. The gold-mining industry was at the heart of the structure and evolution of modern South Africa – ‘it was there that...the first and most extensive industrial institutionalisation of racial discrimination in South Africa’ occurred.³

For whole societies, as for individuals, both black and white, the period was one of tremendous upheaval. The conjuncture of the ‘scramble for resources’, the imposition of colonial or company rule, and an industrial revolution based on mineral extraction, meant that within ‘a matter of decades, and sometimes perhaps within the space of even a single generation, Africans could successively be pastoralists, peasants, proletarians or prisoners’ in a traumatic ‘downward socio-economic spiral’.⁴

All over the sub-continent, moreover, this decline was accelerated by the disasters which struck at rural society in the mid 1890s: pre-eminently the rinderpest epidemic which devastated African cattle-holdings in 1896–7, preceded in many cases by smallpox, and followed even more disastrously by locusts, drought and further human disease. In what is now Zambia, it has been remarked, ‘the 1890s were perhaps most widely remembered not so much for wars and high politics, as for a series of natural disasters’.⁵ And the same was true for much of the rest of the region. But whereas in the past, African societies had been forced to recover from natural disaster through falling back on their own resources, the disasters of the 1890s further locked them into dependence on the burgeoning colonial economy.

Contrary to much conventional literature, this dependence was not simply the result of ‘natural’ processes; it was actively engendered by violence and deception, even in areas where imperial expansion took place without initial warfare. Nor can the

³ F. A. Johnstone, *Class, race and gold: a study of class relations and racial discrimination in South Africa* (London, 1976), 3.

⁴ C. van Onselen, *Studies in the social and economic history of the Witwatersrand, 1886–1914*, vol. II, *The new Nineveh* (Johannesburg and London, 1982), 172.

⁵ A. D. Roberts, *A history of Zambia* (London, 1976), 171.

lines be simply drawn between colonial or company rule, or the contrasting modes of British, Boer or German domination. The discourse of Social Darwinism and naked racial domination was universal and peculiarly well-suited to an era of land and labour expropriation. Everywhere the priority of administrations was for revenue and labour, and imperial and company rule were followed by the imposition of taxation. Attempts to raise tax were frequently accompanied by hut-burning, flogging and the confiscation of crops and cattle for non-compliance. Although in many areas, state and administration were weak, and fearful of rousing widespread resistance, this did not prevent much localised violence in the subjection of African societies, and in the exploitation of labour on mines and farms. Indeed, the violence was frequently greatest where administrations were weakest: in longer-settled areas, legislative intervention and the earlier loss of land and cattle were in themselves capable of pushing out the much-needed labour supply.

In some areas, colonial expansion had already created an available pool of male wage-labour at least at certain times of the year; with the advent of foreign rule many of the previous occupations of men – in government, as well as in hunting and warfare – came to an end. However, so long as Africans had access to the land, they weighed the ‘opportunity cost’ of different forms of labour, and had some bargaining power. In most of the pre-industrial African societies of southern Africa, women did much of the arable agriculture, and young men could be spared from the homestead seasonally without disturbing production, so long as the process was selective. In general, it was the young men who were the first migrants, very often sent out by the homestead itself, which in turn tried to control their return and their wages. For the young men, a spell of labour migration could give them independent access to the marriage payment called *lobola*. This was a process which, as we have seen, had begun earlier,⁶ but which undoubtedly accelerated in this period, and had profound ramifications for the control by the homestead head over young men and women, and for colonial administrators over their taxpayers. This in part explains the increasingly anxious cries of the chiefs and headmen to commissions of enquiry concerning their lack of

⁶ For further discussion see S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds.), *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa: African class formation, culture and consciousness* (London, 1982), introduction and essays by Guy, Kimble, Harries and Shillington.

control over their juniors, and the alliances they struck with colonial administrations and recruiting agencies to secure the return of migrants.

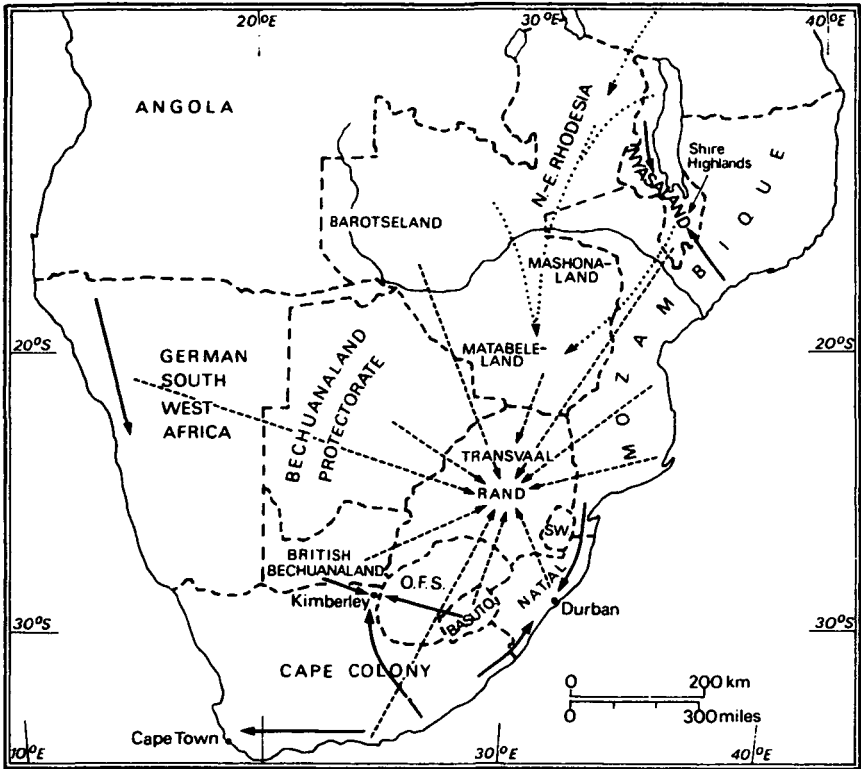
Yet it is difficult to assess the impact of migrant labour for the region as a whole. In south-central Africa, the main agricultural areas probably did not send migrants, and it was from the lands already devastated by slaving and raiding that the flow was greatest. In the early stages, earnings were often used to expand agricultural production, and single spells of absence probably left homestead production unscathed. Nevertheless by the end of the first decade of the century, missionaries in British Central Africa were beginning to detect signs of strain as a result of the absence from home of the large numbers of migrants demanded by new colonial enterprise, and especially transport, while the absence of young men responsible for burning the bush and cutting down trees was adding seriously to the ecological dislocation which resulted from colonial game and settlement policies.⁷ South of the Limpopo too, repeated migrancy was becoming the norm, and numbers of young men, and increasingly even young women, were beginning to disappear from the countryside to settle permanently in town, with major repercussions for family and homestead structure. The division of labour in the countryside began to change, and increasingly the burden of agriculture fell on women and children. Once trapped in the migrant-labour system, it became more and more difficult to escape.

For the migrants, conditions in the towns and mines were often appalling, with high mortality and frequent violence. Africans rapidly developed strategies of survival in the towns, and forms of worker consciousness evolved which included heightened ethnic identification for the purposes of protection and mutual assistance, new organisational forms, concerted desertion, and, on occasions, strike action. Their rural roots did not prevent migrants from displaying an acute understanding of the labour market and their position within it; nor did it prevent their taking militant action to demand wage increases or improved conditions. It would however be misleading to think, in this period, of a fully-fledged and self-conscious working class.⁸

⁷ L. Vail, 'The political economy of colonialism in northern Zambezia, 1870–1975' in D. Birmingham and P. M. Martin (eds.), *History of Central Africa* (London, 1983).

⁸ Marks and Rathbone, *Industrialisation and social change*, 26–7; C. van Onselen, 'Worker consciousness in black miners: Southern Rhodesia, 1900–1930', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1973, 14, 2, 237–56.

SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA, 1886–1910



17 Labour migration routes in the early twentieth century

For many white Afrikaners the changes were no less profound. In 1886 the South African Republic was still a pre-industrial agrarian state ruled by cattle-owning notables; by 1910 it was at the heart of a rapidly industrialising subcontinent dominated by mining capital. The dramatic imposition of capitalist relations of production, the ravages of war and imperial social engineering had transformed Afrikaner society as painfully and perhaps more completely than its African counterparts.

Yet, as in most industrial revolutions, the costs were unevenly distributed. And what brought suffering and deprivation to the many, also provided new opportunities for the few. The political order re-established after the war in South Africa in 1902 was predicated ultimately on an alliance between the mine magnates and the more prosperous Afrikaner landholders, and this alliance emerged as the most important political force by 1910. Even

before the war, the cleavage between the landless Afrikaners and the notables in control of the state was in evidence; after the war, with the increased capitalisation of white agriculture the processes of class formation were accelerated, and British officials remarked on the hostility between the old landowners and their increasingly displaced white clients.

In other areas of white settlement, both company and colonial power reached an accommodation with the forces of local capitalist development, whether in South West Africa, Rhodesia or in the Shire highlands. Elsewhere, different alliances were struck with local ruling élites, in situations where African political structures were both partially dissolved and then conserved. In the reserves and protectorates of southern Africa, Africans were still governed through chiefs and hereditary headmen, but their roles were subtly transformed as they became appointees of the colonial authorities. Again, the process varied from area to area. Whereas, in the nineteenth century, the Cape and Natal states had attempted to destroy the overarching powers of Africans kings or paramounts, the utility of intermediate chiefs in providing a cheap administrative infrastructure was more easily recognised.

Whether or not an accommodation was reached with the more powerful African rulers depended in large measure on the number of whites present in a given area: in British Central Africa, where the number of white administrators and soldiers available to Crown or Company was minute, there was no alternative to finding African allies. In areas with a large settler population, anxious to expropriate African land and labour rapidly, the African king was seen to hold a pivotal position in maintaining the military and social cohesion of the polity – a cohesion which had to be destroyed; in more marginal areas of settlement, aristocracies and administrators were able to come to a mutual accommodation. Thus in this period the Ndebele king had to be destroyed, as the Zulu king had been earlier. In South West Africa too, the Germans ruthlessly attempted to destroy the African social fabric and political hierarchies in the first decade of the century. On the other hand, in Barotseland, Basutoland, Swaziland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, the paramounts played a key role in the peaceful incorporation of their territories within the imperial framework, and in the mobilisation of labour for the colonial economy. The exception was British Central Africa,

where, despite or perhaps because of, his military weakness, Harry Johnston adopted a policy of ‘weakening, dividing and wearing down every political system that possessed any capacity to menace or resist’.⁹

All over southern Africa, demands by the colonial state for tax were met, where possible, by increased agricultural production. The rise of new markets meant that the prosperous peasantry, already in evidence in the Cape and Natal by the mid-nineteenth century, became more widespread. Yet new towns and their markets also opened up possibilities for those with the resources and skills to exploit them – whether black or white. For individuals able, whether through their prior historical experience and education or by good fortune, to take advantage of the new opportunities, the processes of proletarianisation could be warded off, if only for a time.

For the up-and-coming black bourgeoisie, many of them the product of mission education, and imbued with the values of a new individualism, Kimberley and later the Rand, as well as the smaller centres of central Africa, provided an arena for the development and deployment of their entrepreneurial and clerical skills. If their hopes of inclusion in a wider, more tolerant society – in which class and achievement, rather than race, would be the criteria for acceptability – were to be dashed by the provisions of the Act of Union in South Africa and colonial racism elsewhere, there was still in their manifest mobility and ‘progress’, some room for optimism.¹⁰

Yet for the middle-class Coloureds and Indians, the period was probably one of regression rather than advance. Strident demands for urban segregation were voiced by settlers all over the subcontinent in these decades, and increasingly Coloureds and Indians found themselves classified as ‘uncivilised natives’. The older Cape tradition of social control through class co-option was overtaken by the high tide of European racist ideology. Even wealthy Indian merchants found themselves insulted, spat upon and assaulted in the streets of Durban and Johannesburg; barriers were imposed on Indian immigration into all the South African colonies, and the grant of responsible government to Natal was

⁹ E. T. Stokes, ‘Malawi political systems, 1891–1896’ in E. T. Stokes and R. Brown, *The Zambesian past. Studies in Central African history* (Manchester, 1965), 360.

¹⁰ For the optimism of the petty bourgeoisie in this period and its characteristics, see B. Willan, ‘The life and times of Sol T. Plaatje’, Ph.D. London, 1980 (London, forthcoming).

THE DISCOVERY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

immediately followed by a spate of anti-Indian discriminatory legislation. The period which witnessed the growth of a class of educated blacks also witnessed increasing settler antagonism to the whole notion of 'civilised natives', who might have 'ideas above their station'.

The frustrations and freedoms of the new town were perhaps nowhere better evidenced than in the growth of the independent churches. Although their origins lay in the countryside, with the activities of a small group of mission-educated preachers, it was on the Rand in particular in the 1890s that the independent churches spread like wildfire, especially after Mokone formed his Ethiopian Church in 1892, and established links with the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) in the United States of America. The whirlwind visits to South Africa of, on the one hand that turbulent 'missionary hitchhiker', Joseph Booth, and on the other, of the fiery Bishop Turner of the AMEC with his 'back to Africa' schemes, added to the ferment of what became known as 'Ethiopianism'. Fuelled by the rawness of colonial conquest, the resentment caused by settler racism and the struggle over land and labour, the proliferating African independent sects came in many instances to be characterised by a millenarian vision which roused the anxiety of settlers, missionaries and administrators alike.

For migrants from British Central Africa, the experiences of the Rand had explosive force. Many returned home with heightened expectation and a sharpened sense of grievance, which characterised leaders of the Watchtower movement like Eliot Kamwana or Charles Domingo; the discontent expressed itself in the millenarianism which found a ready seed-bed in a territory which had been the scene of so much mission activity since the days of Livingstone. For many this constituted the answer to the contradiction between their aspirations and the harsh reality of colonialism.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE WITWATERSRAND AND THE END OF AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE SOUTH OF THE LIMPOPO

Already in 1886, it was well known that gold was to be found in the Transvaal. From the 1850s there had been rumours of its existence, and the Republic's first Gold Law dates from 1858. In

1874 alluvial diggings had been started in the Lydenburg district of the eastern Transvaal. Although these were quite quickly worked out, ten years later the De Kaap fields were discovered, also in the eastern Transvaal, while first reports in 1885 from the Sheba mine in the Barberton district aroused spectacular hopes. The diamond discoveries meant there was local capital to invest, while small diggers displaced by the company amalgamations streamed north. The excitement was short lived, however. The claims were exaggerated and the Barberton fields were soon deserted, leaving a legacy of bankruptcies and of scepticism on the share market.

Thus when a few months later the existence of new gold-bearing reefs was announced, stretching some 40 miles from east to west along the Witwatersrand, there were many – including the by now prominent Cape politician and diamond magnate, Cecil John Rhodes, and his associate, C. D. Rudd – who remained cautiously on the sidelines;¹¹ but if Rhodes and Rudd were slow off the ground, others were not. Very quickly, capitalists who had first made their fortunes on the Kimberley mines moved on to the Rand, with all their expert knowledge of the international capital market and the experience they had gained in systems of labour control. In September 1886 the Rand was declared a public digging and by the end of the year land was being sold in the new city of Johannesburg. Within three years more than five hundred companies had been floated, though few of them were actually producing gold.

Some of the feverish excitement which accompanied the mineral discoveries can be appreciated from the colonial and imperial literature of the time. Here, one description must suffice – Lady Bellairs writing of her trip to Johannesburg in 1889, only three years after the opening up of the fields:

Never in the history of the universe was such an extraordinary city conceived or carried out as Johannesburg... Day after day comes the news of fresh discoveries; week by week patience and the pick are teaching us what we may later expect. We are simply living in a sea of gold...

Johannesburg is barely two and a half years old; but as we drive across the tops of hills and gaze downwards it seems impossible to believe it. Acre after acre, mile after mile covered with lordly buildings or the humble shanty. House room is precious and costly... An ordinary eight-roomed house may total £3,000 or £4,000 and a rental of £50 a month is by no means uncommon... every

¹¹ A. P. Cartwright, *Gold paved the way* (London, 1967), 39.

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bit of furniture or everything indeed that comes from the Cape costs threepence per pound in freight alone... Two hundred wagons a day come into the market place, each carrying a freight of 7,000 to 8,000 lbs and drawn by twenty patient oxen. A month they have been on the road.¹²

Yet within a year of this flurry, Johannesburg was in the depths of gloom: in 1889 at the height of the boom, the miners hit pyritic ore. Hitherto, it had been relatively easy to crush and extract the gold from milled ore, through its amalgamation with mercury. This new problem threatened to add £1 per ton to costs, and render many of the mines unprofitable. As the market collapsed, dozens of companies closed down. The crash resounded across South Africa. In the coastal colonies, already closely tied to the fortunes of the Rand, the depression spread. In the Cape, three banks were forced to close down. The pattern of boom–slump, which was to characterise the mining industry and the increasingly inter-connecting regional economy, was already establishing itself.

It was this crash which disillusioned both Lady Bellairs and the many individual fortune-seekers who made their way so hopefully to the Rand: patience and the pick could not exploit the new gold fields. Mining engineers now came to appreciate that the ‘so-called reefs were not reefs... but layers of conglomerate in a vast lake of sediments which were thus continuous and could be followed to great depths’.¹³ The gold fields picked up as this fact was appreciated.

As local capital proved inadequate to the task, international investment came to the rescue. It needed little encouragement. By the late 1880s the decline in world prices from their 1866–7 levels was being widely ascribed to the fall in the world’s gold output – estimated by contemporaries as a 20 per cent decrease between 1875–91, compared with the previous quarter century. At the same time, gold was increasingly becoming the world’s monetary standard. European bankers and financiers greeted the new finds with enthusiasm, and new technology was brought to bear on the problems of mining refractory ores at great depth: the discovery of the MacArthur–Forrest cyanide process made possible the recovery of pyritic gold and made it viable to mine even low-grade

¹² Lady K. F. Bellairs, *The Witwatersrand goldfields. A trip to Johannesburg and back* (London, 1889), cited in D. H. Houghton and J. Dagut, *Source materials on the South African economy, 1860–1970* (Cape Town, 1972), 1, 302–3.

¹³ Cartwright, *Gold paved the way*, 61.

ore; steam power and electricity opened the deepest levels to exploitation. In 1892 the first deep-level mines were in operation. In spite of the 1895 stock market crash in mining shares (in part the result of over-speculation, and the large amounts of capital necessary for the development of the deep levels), by then the future of the deep-levels was well appreciated by European financiers and the leading companies: Wernher, Beit and Company and their subsidiary, Ecksteins, and Rhodes's Consolidated Goldfields.

From 1886 until 1913 between £116 million and £134 million was invested in the Witwatersrand by European shareholders – three times as much finance as in all Canadian and Australian mining activity. It came in five major spurts: 1889, 1895, 1899, 1902–3 and 1908–9, although it became far more difficult for the mines to raise outside capital after 1903.¹⁴ In addition, the profitable exploitation of the newly discovered deep-level mines was made possible only by the flow of huge amounts of overseas capital needed for primary development. Finance was necessary not only for investment in mining: because the minerals were discovered so far in the interior and in the midst of essentially pre-industrial societies, an entirely new infrastructure had to be created to make the mines viable. Given the significance of the discoveries, however, investment was not slow in coming: British investment in South Africa rose from £34 million in 1884 – on the eve of the gold-mining revolution – to £351 million in 1911 (the sharpest rise anywhere over the same period of time).¹⁵

Crucial for the raising of these vast sums of money was the amalgamation of the individual companies into a small number – eight by the century's end – of mining finance 'houses' or groups, with a high degree of overlapping ownership. Apart from giving the mines access to the major sources of international capital, they enabled research services to be centralised, thus cutting overhead costs. Of these groups, the two most important were Wernher, Beit and Eckstein, and Rhodes's Consolidated Gold Fields, both formed in 1892. By the end of the 1890s

¹⁴ Van Onselen, *Studies*, 1: *New Babylon*, 3; for detailed studies of investment on the Rand, see R. V. Kubicsek, *Economic imperialism in theory and practice: the case of South African gold-mining finance, 1886–1914* (Durham, NC, 1979) and J. J. Van-Helten, 'British and European economic investment in the Transvaal, with specific reference to the Witwatersrand goldfields and district, 1886–1910', Ph.D. London, 1981.

¹⁵ A. K. Cairncross, *Home and foreign investment, 1870–1913* (Cambridge, 1953), table 42, 185.

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Wernher, Beit alone produced about half of the gold mined on the Rand. Both these companies, together with Farrar's Anglo-French group, undertook the risky business of raising capital both in the UK and on the European stock exchanges to work the very expensive deep-levels, and their involvement in these levels and in a wide variety of enterprises connected with the mining industry and the development of the Rand, was to give them a long-term stake in the territory and an acute concern with the actual nature of the Transvaal state which was less felt by the smaller companies. By 1889 the Transvaal Chamber of Mines had been formed to act as the spokesman of the gold-mining companies, and to negotiate on their behalf with the state. Until 1902 the chairman was invariably drawn from Wernher, Beit and Eckstein.

From the late 1880s gold rapidly outstripped diamonds as the region's most important export. By 1898 the value of gold production had risen to £16 million, more than a quarter of the world output. In the twelve years between 1883 and 1895, the revenue of the South African Republic increased twenty-five times, as a result. At last immigration to the South African colonies needed no official encouragement, as thousands of fortune seekers of every description made their way to the 'Golden Rand'. In 1870 the total white population of southern Africa was probably under a quarter of a million; by 1891 it had increased to over 600,000, while by 1904 it was over one million. Within ten years of its foundation, Johannesburg's white population numbered 102,000, and it ranked 'as one of the commercial centres of the world... For thirty miles along the crest of the ridge, the pit-head gears, batteries and surface works of the sixty or seventy companies in active operation give evidence of the millions of capital which have been invested.'¹⁶ Thus, within a remarkably short period of time, a highly sophisticated form of capitalism was implanted on the South African veld.

Nor were the effects of the gold discoveries confined to the South African Republic. In the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State and Natal, changes set in train by the diamond discoveries and the opening-up of the early gold-fields were now sharply accelerated. In almost every sphere, the mineral discoveries led to economic growth. Roads, railways and harbours had to be

¹⁶ W. B. Worsfold, *South Africa* (London, 1897), 156-7.

built, and enterprises already established in the coastal colonies rushed to the north in an effort to reap the benefit of the new opportunities. Manufacturing, though in its infancy even in the Cape Colony, also responded to the new consumer market on the Rand, and in the new towns and villages which sprang up in its wake. The need for coal led to the renewal and expanded exploitation of the mines in the Cape, and especially in Natal and the Transvaal. Farming became more market-orientated and land prices soared. In Natal, both the dairy and the wattle industries trace their origins to the 1890s, while in the Cape and the Orange Free State more scientifically based farming practices were adopted by both white and black farmers. Nevertheless, there was still tremendous opposition to government-directed attempts at disease control, such as the Cape government's anti-scab Act in 1894 and the efforts all over southern Africa – often more drastic than the disease itself – to stamp out the rinderpest epidemic of 1896–7.¹⁷

If the diamond discoveries had led to a vastly increased market for labour, with these new developments the demand became ubiquitous and insatiable. By far the greatest number of unskilled, cheap workers was needed on the Rand. With the development of the deep-level pits an enormous amount of support work was necessary, which could not be easily mechanised. The problem for the mine magnates was to attract a work force to the dangerous and difficult work underground at a time of expanding demand from other sectors of the economy, while they had no real leverage over the Transvaal state and Africans still had independent access to land.

As we have already seen, the years following the diamond discoveries saw the conquest of the majority of the African polities south of the Limpopo. Now the final stages were completed as the drive for land, minerals and labour, spurred by the demands of the Rand and the increased availability of speculative capital, intersected with earlier historical processes of settler expansion. Within the Transvaal, the defeats of Malaboch's Xananwa in 1894 and the Venda in 1898 rounded off the conquests of the African people of the north and east, which had begun with the wars against Sekhukhune (1876 and 1879) and

¹⁷ See C. van Onselen, 'Reactions to rinderpest in South Africa', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1972, 13, 3, 473–88.

Mabogho (1884). In the Cape, Pondoland was finally brought under formal administrative control after a dramatic show of force by Rhodes in 1894. In the next year Bechuanaland south of the Molopo river, since 1885 the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland, was incorporated into the Cape Colony, though northern Bechuanaland remained a British protectorate under imperial control. Zululand, too, after eight years of destructive civil war between the Usuthu and their opponents, was annexed by the Crown in 1887, and handed over ten years later to the white colonists of Natal, who had achieved responsible government in 1893. In each case the immediate occasion for annexation differed, though the underlying causes were the same as they had been in the previous decade. For Britain the 'natural' agents of annexation continued to be the local settler communities. With their increased wealth and population, and united in their desire to control additional land and labour, they needed far less urging than they had before 1886.

Both within and outside the frontiers of the colonial states concessionaires were spurred by the prospects of further discoveries and by the speculative capital available for investment in southern Africa as a result of the Rand discoveries. Land speculation had long been a feature of South Africa's political economy, but with the discovery of the Witwatersrand and the rise in land prices, huge new areas were staked out by land companies, mining houses and individual entrepreneurs. In the Transvaal itself, land prices rose dramatically – and although for a few this spelt the beginning of good fortune, those without land-title (usually poor kin and clients of wealthier Boer farmers) increasingly found themselves landless in the midst of plenty. By 1900 land companies (some owned by mining houses) possessed some 20 per cent of the land in the Transvaal, of which Wernher, Beit and Eckstein controlled about a quarter.¹⁸

It was in Swaziland that the effect of this land speculation and concession-hunting could be seen at its most spectacular. From the 1870s Boer graziers and British mineral prospectors had sought land and mineral concessions from the Swazi king, Mbandzeni. With the discovery of the De Kaap and Komati gold fields on Swaziland's western flank in the eastern Transvaal,

¹⁸ War Office, Intelligence department, *List of farms in...[21] districts, Transvaal, with the names of their registered owners* (Pretoria, 1900); I am grateful to Dr Stanley Trapido for this reference and information.

concession-seekers flooded in, hopeful that Swaziland would prove a second Barberton. Perhaps believing that he would be able to neutralise the increasing political pressure he was feeling from the Boer graziers and the South African Republic and gain British protection, Mbandzeni granted concessions to the newcomers, frequently to land already allocated to graziers, with increasing disregard for the consequences. The country became a speculators' paradise, as concessions granted by the king were then traded, sold and resold, subdivided and sublet. In 1889 Mbandzeni even granted a concession to grant concessions. The appointment of the Natalian, 'Offy' Shepstone (the son of Sir Theophilus Shepstone), as official adviser to the King failed to halt the decline into anarchy, and he was soon ousted by a white committee which virtually ran the country. The deteriorating political situation was matched by a deterioration in the health of the king, and led to a spate of witchcraft accusations and political murders. After Mbandzeni's death, the ability of the Swazi ruling group to juggle the complex rivalries of Britain and Boer concessionaires, and the increasing number of republican and imperial agents, was limited.

By bribing the local British concessionaires and probably Shepstone himself, the South African Republic now staked a claim to a large number of concessions which made the country virtually ungovernable without republican intervention. Quite apart from providing land for his subjects, Swaziland had a strategic importance for Kruger in that it lay in the path of the Republic's independent access to the sea at St Lucia Bay. Although Britain was determined to block Kruger's attempts to gain a port, by 1889 it was clear she was reluctant to intervene in the increasingly sordid strife of the concessionaires in Swaziland, and was willing to hand over Swaziland to the republic in exchange for a free hand north of the Limpopo. Despite the vociferous opposition of the Swazi rulers, in 1894, under the Third Swaziland Convention, Britain finally agreed to Transvaal sovereignty over the territory – taking care to annex the Tsonga territory between Swaziland and the sea to Zululand almost immediately thereafter. The protectorate lasted until the South African war, when Swaziland came under British control.¹⁹

¹⁹ This section draws heavily on P. Bonner, *Kings, commoners and concessionaires: the evolution and dissolution of the 19th century Swazi state* (Cambridge, 1983), 183–207.

The Limpopo constituted no barrier to the flood of concession seekers, and the years between 1889 and 1895 saw the dramatic annexation of all the African territories up to the Congo in what has been termed 'a gigantic speculation in mining futures'.²⁰ In south-central Africa, British ambitions competed with those of the South African Republic, Portugal, Germany and the redoubtable King Leopold II of the Belgians. In an era of increased international competition, the rivals staked their claims to the sub-continent, beguiled by the lure of what Joseph Chamberlain described as 'those vast auriferous and fertile regions which stretch almost into the very heart of the African continent'.²¹ In east-central Africa, to the west and south of Lake Malawi, the thrust from the south encountered the less powerful, but nonetheless still significant, anti-slavery missionary 'frontier' from the east.

From the reports of Karl Mauch and Thomas Baines in the 1860s on the Ndebele kingdom, it was known that there were 'ancient workings' between the Zambezi and the Limpopo, rumours of which had reached fabulous proportions. By the mid-1880s Lobengula, king of the Ndebele was surrounded by concession hunters seeking trading, land and mineral rights. In 1887–8 alarm at possible Transvaal expansion across the Limpopo led the British high commissioner at the Cape to secure a treaty with Lobengula declaring the area a British sphere of interest.

It was at this point that Rhodes, by now the most powerful capitalist and politician at the Cape, decided to enter the arena. By 1888, having missed out on the most important mining properties on the central Rand, he was beginning to regret his initial caution. In central Africa he hoped to find a 'second Rand', open a new area for exploitation, and out-flank the increasingly powerful South African Republic.²² At the end of August 1888, he hastily sent a party under Charles Rudd, to Bulawayo, to secure the mineral rights to Lobengula's kingdom. Assisted by imperial officials in South Africa and by the former missionary J. S. Moffat,

²⁰ R. E. Robinson and J. Gallagher with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians* (London, 1961), 250.

²¹ In a speech to the London Chamber of Commerce, May 1888, cited in J. L. Garvin, *The life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 3 vols. (London, 1932–34), 1, 464.

²² I. R. Phimister, 'Rhodes, Rhodesia and the Rand', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1974, 1, 1, 79–90.

now the British representative in Bulawayo, Rhodes's agents soon had the edge over their competitors at the capital. Whether, however, Lobengula ever signed the concession Rudd claimed subsequently to have procured is dubious. Very soon after his departure Lobengula repudiated the concession, which he had been led to believe had full imperial backing. Moreover, although the oral agreement between Rudd and Lobengula stipulated that no more than ten surveyors or miners were to enter the kingdom at a time, the written document granted the newly formed British South Africa (BSA) Company full rights to do 'whatever was necessary' to exploit the mineral riches of the kingdom.

Concession in hand, in London Rhodes was able to outbid or incorporate his chief rivals, and in 1889 he persuaded the British government to grant his BSA Company a royal charter for the exploitation of central Africa. This authorised the company to extend its administrative control over a huge and vaguely defined area north of British Bechuanaland, confined only by the Portuguese and German coastal colonies. Little attention was paid to the nature of the company to which these wide powers were being delegated. An amalgamation of big financial interests in the City of London, its prospectus bedecked by an array of aristocratic directors, the BSA Company represented the most naked form of unchecked capitalist enterprise. Notwithstanding some bland phrases about protecting 'native interests', it set about realising a profit in central Africa with ruthless determination.²³

Even before his charter was ratified, Rhodes was encouraged to stake his claims across the Zambezi. Here, the head of the Conservative government and British Foreign Minister, Lord Salisbury, was alert to the dangers of advance by the Portuguese, still dreaming of joining their east and west African territories, to German ambitions of conquering 'Mittelafrika' and to the southward drive of King Leopold of the Belgians from the Congo Independent State. In the Shire highlands in particular, and around Lake Malawi, Anglo-Portuguese rivalries had sharpened since the mid-1880s. The appointment in 1883 of a British consul, with a watching brief on the slave trade in this region, led the Portuguese to step up their activities both north and south of the Zambezi, in an attempt to secure treaties with African chiefs.

²³ For an account of the British South Africa Company in its formative years, see J. S. Galbraith, *Crown and charter* (California, 1974) and his 'Engine without a governor: the early years of the British South Africa Company', *Rhodesian History*, 1970, 1, 9–16.

Increasingly, local British missionaries and the African Lakes Company called for Foreign Office intervention and the declaration of a British sphere of influence in the region. Faced with Treasury reluctance to take financial responsibility for the expansion of empire, however, there was little Salisbury could do but send the young Harry Johnston, who had already impressed him with his imperial zeal, as emissary to Portugal and consul to Mozambique. A chance meeting with Rhodes on the eve of his departure in May 1889 enabled the two men to settle 'the immediate course of events in South and Central Africa'.²⁴ Rhodes agreed to grant Johnston £2,000 for a treaty-making expedition, and promised more if he would establish the rights of the chartered company north of the Zambezi. For Salisbury nothing could have been better. Rhodes and his company were the ideal agents to further British imperialism north of the Limpopo, against the encroachments of both European powers and the South African Republic, at minimal expense to the British taxpayer.

The next twelve months were occupied by a flurry of treaty-making in central Africa by Johnston and the agents he appointed, as well as by additional emissaries engaged by Rhodes. A major objective was Msiri's kingdom in Katanga (the present Shaba province of Zaïre) where rich copper deposits were already suspected. But Rhodes and Johnston were concerned to extend the frontiers of imperial hegemony over as wide an area of south-central Africa as possible. While Johnston was anxious to stake out British claims against German and Portuguese expansion from the east and west coasts, and against King Leopold's moves south from the Congo Independent State, Rhodes wanted to secure the rights of his company over the mineral wealth he believed to run in a continuous reef north from the Rand through Mashonaland and across the middle Zambezi to Katanga. Moreover, if Africa's potential was to be exploited, the main lines of communication had also to be secured: for Rhodes, the route to Beira was to become vital in the early years of his settlement in Rhodesia, though from the wider imperial point of view it was Johnston's vision of a Cape-to-Cairo route which was furthered by the treaty-making. Although none of Rhodes's agents

²⁴ Cited in R. Oliver, *Sir Harry Johnston and the scramble for Africa* (London, 1957), 152.

persuaded Msiri to grant concessions to the BSA Company, and in the following year his kingdom was forcibly annexed to the Congo Independent State, the agreements signed in 1889–90 claimed the whole of present-day Zambia and Malawi for Company and Crown.

The precise nature of the treaties and their doubtful legality was of little importance. In general, they secured mineral and sometimes land concessions for the company, while the chiefs agreed to accept British jurisdiction over non-Africans in their domains and over their external relations. Despite all the paperwork, colonial rule in what is now Malawi was based on the declaration of a British protectorate – over the Shire highlands in 1889, and over the whole of the area west of Lake Malawi to the Luangwa watershed in 1894; in the company sphere still further west, the signature of the more powerful chiefs on treaties, which they were led to believe were with the Crown, became the basis of BSA Company rule, even over peoples who were not party to the signing. But the frontiers of the British, German and Portuguese domains were being decided in the chancelleries of Europe, rather than in Africa: and here the treaties provided useful bargaining counters. In 1890–1 conventions were drawn up between the British and the Portuguese, and the British and the Germans, which largely established the frontiers of the modern states of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania in the east, and between Zambia, Angola and Namibia in the west, although the precise boundary line between Zambia and Angola was only settled in 1905, through the mediation of the king of Italy – and with the loss of considerable territory claimed by the Lozi king.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLONIAL STATES: SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND RHODESIA

Treaties and lines on maps were one thing; giving them substance was another matter. In South West Africa, Bismarck hoped that the privileged *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika* would effectively administer the territory in exchange for a monopoly over trade, land and minerals, and at no cost to the German taxpayer. By 1888, however, this German company had shown itself totally incapable of raising sufficient capital either to

develop the vast semi-arid territory or to subdue and control the local inhabitants. Most of the peoples of South West Africa, who had been persuaded to sign the so-called *Schützverträge* (treaties of protection) with representatives of the company or the German commissioner soon realised the latter's incapacity to extend the protection promised. They therefore continued to pursue the struggles over cattle, grazing and waterholes which had punctuated the history of the area for much of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, in 1890, the southernmost Nama chiefs accepted *Schützverträge* and, after a brief flirtation with Cape merchant interests, Kamaherero, chief of the Herero, who was being threatened again by the Nama chief, Hendrik Witbooi, renewed his adherence to the Germans. Witbooi remained the German's most formidable opponent. Fully aware of the implications of colonial rule, he had prophetically warned Kamaherero as early as 1889, 'You will...eventually sorely regret...that you have handed over your country and your governing rights to the white people',²⁵ and began making peace overtures to the Herero and other Nama chiefs in the hopes of uniting them against German rule. The death of Kamaherero in 1891, however, left his successor, Samuel Maherero even more dependent on the Germans in the face of serious internal opposition as well as the continued threat from Witbooi; he was to prove less compliant in the following decade. By 1892 the imperial commissioner in South West Africa, C. von François, decided to send a military expedition against Witbooi, although it took two years of fierce guerrilla struggles before the latter was forced to submit to the new *landeshauptmann*, Theodor von Leutwein, in 1894.

Given the continued turbulence, it is hardly surprising that German industrialists failed to invest in the colony, despite a flutter of activity in 1888, when it was believed that gold had been discovered. German authority remained fragile until 1893 when L. von Caprivi, Bismarck's successor as chancellor, declared that despite its poverty, he had no intention of abandoning the territory. He encouraged investment by the grant of lavish concessions to commercial companies. Almost unnoticed, Rhodes controlled the two largest, including all the mineral-rich land. By the early twentieth century, nine companies held about a third of the land, although none of them had paid a dividend nor carried

²⁵ Cited in J. H. Esterhuysen, *South West Africa, 1880-1894* (Cape Town, 1968), 159.

out much by way of economic development. At the same time the Germans were drawn ineluctably into local conflicts, as the government now had to establish the minimal conditions under which the companies could operate.

With the defeat of Witbooi, South West Africa was rapidly opened up to white settlement, despite the opposition of Leutwein (who became governor in 1898) to the more extreme settler demands. German attempts to enforce frontiers on grazing peoples by confiscating vast herds of cattle, the banning of the gun trade from Botswana, and the favouritism extended to the western Herero under Samuel Maherero as against his chief rival in the east, Nikodemus, led to a major uprising of the eastern Herero (or Mbanderu) in 1896. Despite Leutwein's attempts to avoid war, three Mbanderu chiefs were court-martialled, and resistance against German rule mounted. The governor had little doubt about the necessity for capitalist development, before which the indigenous peoples would be forced to bow. Within ten years a colonial state had been established, facilitated by the building of the Otavi railway, the reserves policy of 1897–8, and the rinderpest epidemic which wiped out 95 per cent of African cattle-holdings, thus lowering resistance and freeing grazing land simultaneously. By the turn of the century, the Rhenish missionaries were noting with alarm 'the disintegration of tribal life'.²⁶

For much of this period, the Ovambo people, who straddled the region claimed by the Portuguese and the Germans, remained outside formal colonial control. From the mid-1880s cattle replaced ivory as the main item of trade, which the Ovambo, armed with guns from their slaving days, raided from their neighbours and traded to the new markets in Botswana and at Kimberley. Equally hit by the rinderpest epidemic, and the disastrous drought and flood years which followed, the Ovambo, like the Herero, became increasingly indebted to European traders. The war leaders who had emerged in the years of slave- and ivory-trading now extorted harsh and arbitrary tribute from their own people on behalf of the chiefs. Already by the turn of the century a trickle of pauperised Ovambo were making their way to the labour markets to the north and south.

In Rhodesia, rule by concessionary company lasted rather longer than in South West Africa. One of the great advantages

²⁶ H. Bley, *South West Africa under German rule 1894–1914* (London, 1971), 114.

of Rhodes's BSA Company for the British government was its promise to populate central Africa with white immigrants, who, it was believed, would not only make British occupation effective but would also bring the necessary capitalist development to the interior. Using company shares to buy out opposition, and backed by both British and Afrikaner opinion in the Cape Colony, where he was now prime minister, Rhodes sent a 'pioneer column' into the indeterminate borderlands between the Ndebele and the Shona in mid-1890. It consisted of nearly two hundred white settlers, one hundred and fifty black settlers drawn from Kimberley and the eastern Cape, and some five hundred armed police.

Lobengula watched the column make its way to Salisbury with dismay, but without interfering. By October, three hundred men were already prospecting, and 465 gold claims had been registered. At the same time a small body of men under the company administrator, A. R. Colquhoun, marched into the eastern highlands where the gold reef was thought to run, and whence Rhodes also hoped to forge a route to the coast. Here, however, the company's claims clashed with those of Portugal, and the last months of 1890 and beginning of 1891 saw a number of skirmishes, both sides using and being made use of by local Shona chiefs and by the ruler of the Gaza kingdom and his chief rivals in Manica. In 1891 an Anglo-Portuguese convention delimited the BSA Company's sphere. In all of this, little account was taken of the prior rights of the African peoples of the area. By and large, the company proceeded on the authority of the Rudd concession – even though it was allocating land which had in no way formed part of Lobengula's kingdom – and which in any case the Rudd concession had no authority to dispense.

From the outset it is clear, however, that the BSA Company's real goal was the Ndebele kingdom, where the main gold reefs as well as the richest lands of the territory were believed to be. If the lands between the Limpopo and the Zambezi were to be opened up for capitalist development, the Ndebele kingdom would have to be destroyed. In 1893 Leander Starr Jameson, who had replaced Colquhoun as administrator, deliberately provoked war. A raid by the Ndebele against their Shona tributaries at Fort Victoria gave him the pretext. In October the company's troops invaded the Ndebele kingdom, and within weeks Bulawayo was in flames. The king fled northward towards the Zambezi, where

he soon caught smallpox and died. Despite the successful invasion of the strategic centre of the kingdom, Ndebele administration and political structures remained intact, however, and Lobengula's son, Nyamanda, was quickly recognised as his successor. Nevertheless, the war resolved, as Jameson had opined, the 'uncertainty' which was devaluing Chartered shares, removed an obstacle to the flow of Shona labour, and opened access to the reputedly rich Ndebele gold-fields.

The conquest of the Ndebele was followed by a speculative boom in BSA Company shares, the investment of more than £500,000, and the flotation of several new speculative companies: these were concessionaries of the BSA Company, which received a half-share of any profits on mining ventures. By the end of 1894, however, it was clear to Rhodes's mining engineers that the second Rand was not in Rhodesia, but on the Rand itself. As their hopes of instant wealth through gold waned, so the settlers and the company turned to the other African assets: cattle and land.

In terms of their agreement with the BSA Company, settlers who participated in the war were granted farms on a lavish scale and were additionally rewarded with mineral claims. A land commission perfunctorily set aside two land reserves for Ndebele occupation on the Gwaai and Shangani rivers, on soils neither white nor black farmers thought worth cultivating. Now Jameson set about allocating the rich Ndebele heartlands to the 'honourable and military' element who had formed land syndicates and were already buying out the 'Pioneers'.²⁷ Vast quantities of Ndebele cattle were looted on the fiction that they had belonged to the king, and forced labour and taxation were prised out of both Shona and Ndebele communities by the newly appointed and increasingly unpopular Ndebele police. Inadequate administrative manpower was made good through the enlistment of settlers into the newly formed Native Affairs Department, which was mainly concerned with branding and registering the looted cattle, impressing forced labour and extorting further cattle in lieu of tax. These activities rapidly led to an explosive situation, as Ndebele opposition gathered force under Nyamanda.

The flashpoint came in 1896, when to company misrule were added further despair and room for hope: the outbreak of

²⁷ The phrase was that of the imperial resident commissioner, William Milton, when he arrived 'to salvage something from the wreck'. See R. Palmer, *Land and racial domination in Rhodesia* (London, 1977), 35–6.

rinderpest ravaged what was left of African cattle, while the removal of company police from October 1895 in anticipation of Jameson's attack on the South African Republic gave Africans their opportunity. On 24 March, the Ndebele rose, and within a week more than 145 whites had been killed and the survivors huddled in laagers in the towns. Late in June, the Ndebele were joined by the Shona of central and western Mashonaland who had come out in full-scale war following sporadic acts of violence against white tax-collectors, labour recruiters and farmers and their black agents. Only the timely arrival of imperial troops and the collaboration of a number of Shona polities which either feared the resurgence of Ndebele power or were more preoccupied with local rivalries and regional political alignments, saved the settlers. Nevertheless, continued Ndebele strength induced Rhodes to seek a negotiated settlement with Nyamanda's advisers before the BSA Company was completely bankrupted. As a result of his initiative, the royal counsellors accepted peace in exchange for personal amnesty, the disbanding of the Ndebele police and promises of land. Although the war against the Shona dragged on until almost the end of 1897, the preparedness of the Ndebele leadership to come to terms with Rhodes probably preserved company rule in Southern Rhodesia.

Although there is some controversy over the extent of the co-ordination both between the Shona and Ndebele and between the Shona polities themselves, amongst the Ndebele and those Shona polities within their political orbit the uprising was most probably organised by the still intact royal political authorities. Amongst the Shona it seems likely that in some areas the Chaminuka-Nehanda spirit mediums and priests of the Mwari cult played a political role in advising paramounts and overcoming the problems of scale, though their uprisings were neither as preconcerted nor as well-organised as is sometimes thought.²⁸ Nevertheless, *chimurenga*, as the rising was called by Africans, led to direct imperial intervention in company affairs for the first time, with the appointment of a British resident commissioner at Bulawayo responsible to the imperial high commissioner in Cape

²⁸ The nature and organisation of the 1896-7 rising is a matter of some controversy. For the debate see T. O. Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7* (London, 1967); D. N. Beach, 'The risings in south-western Mashonaland', Ph.D. London, 1971 and his 'Chimurenga': the Shona risings of 1896-7', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1979, 20, 4; and J. Cobbing, 'The absent priesthood: another look at the Rhodesian risings of 1896-7', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1977, 18, 1.

Town. Inspired by fear of further African resistance, as well as guilt and compassion, the Colonial Office demanded the reform of the Native Affairs Department, land to be set aside for African occupation, and mission and industrial education to be encouraged. Inadequate though these changes were, they set some limit on the extent and speed of African dispossession.

THE COLONIAL PRESENCE NORTH OF THE ZAMBEZI

Despite the initial hopes of the British government that the British South Africa Company would provide for the effective occupation of the territory to the north of the Zambezi as well, events to the south left Rhodes little time, energy or resources to spare until the late 1890s. Opposition from the missionary lobby and from certain interests within the African Lakes Company ensured the separation of the region around Lake Malawi and the Shire valley from the BSA Company's domain to the north of the Zambezi. In 1891, after consultations in London between the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office, the African Lakes Company and Johnston, the area known as Nyasaland (now Malawi) was declared a Protectorate.

Johnston returned to his administrative capital at Zomba as commissioner and consul-general for the territories under British influence north of the Zambezi. At the same time, the BSA Company had appointed him administrator of their sphere and agreed to contribute an annual sum of £10,000 towards the costs of administration, as well as a transport subsidy. For both the British government and the BSA Company, the ambiguity of Johnston's role was offset by their mutual advantage. It released Lord Salisbury from Treasury parsimony; and it was a cheap way for the company of securing their possessions at a time when they were unprepared to launch their own administration. Even in Nyasaland it was anticipated that Johnston would secure the company's long-term land and mineral interests, while the establishment of a colonial state on its eastern flank and main communications route was a further advantage.

Financial insecurity and the necessity to serve two masters soon soured Johnston's relationship with Rhodes, however, and in 1895 the Treasury took over financial responsibility for what then became known as the British Central African Protectorate. The

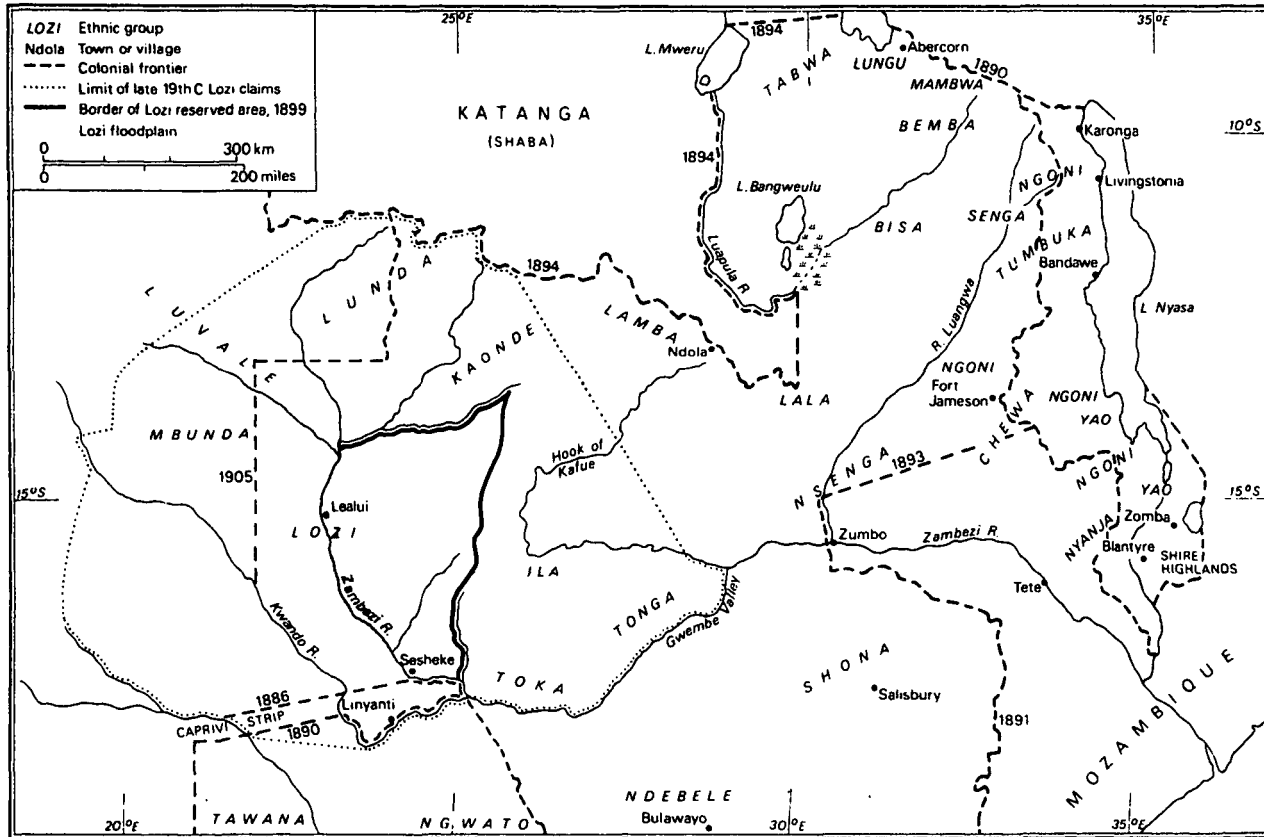
BSA Company appointed its own deputy administrator in Northern Rhodesia, as its territory north of the Zambezi came to be called. During the first six years of the protectorate, Johnston engaged in a series of wars against the Swahili-Arab traders and the Yao, in particular those who straddled his lines of communication. His strategy was dictated by his limited funds and troops; he had less than 200 men at his command, including 71 Indians, mainly Sikhs. He sought collaborators amongst the weaker agricultural groups, who were in general happy to have allies against their raiding and slaving neighbours, and amongst dissatisfied elements within chiefdoms. Yet his campaigns in the first couple of years were not particularly successful. It was only after he was able to increase the number of his troops with the additional finances he obtained from Rhodes in 1894, and the doubling of his resources with the Treasury's first grant-in-aid in 1895, that he was able to step up the campaign against the major opponents of his régime. By the time he left the protectorate, Johnston could boast that he had rid the area of slavers.

Although Johnston thus defended his 'little wars' as anti-slavery campaigns, they also had the virtue of releasing 'slave labour' for European enterprise. His vision was not dissimilar to that of Rhodes. From the outset, he was convinced that the protectorate's future development should be based on the marriage of white enterprise and black labour, assisted by the Asian middleman. As he wrote in his final report before leaving the protectorate: 'The native labour question is almost the most important question which can now claim the attention of those administering the Protectorate... All that needs now be done is for the Administration to act as friends of both sides, and introduce the native labourer to the European capitalist.'²⁹ From the African point of view it looked rather different. As Nkosi Ngomane, chief of the Maseko Ngoni put it: 'I come to ask why the white man brings war to my country, kills my people and harms my villages.'³⁰

Notwithstanding the treaties signed with chiefs north of the Zambezi at the beginning of the 1890s, most of the people living

²⁹ FO print 6851 no. 142, H. H. Johnston, Report on the British Central Africa Protectorate 1895-6, 29 April 1896, cited in E. T. Stokes, 'Malawian Political Systems' in E. T. Stokes and R. Brown, *The Zambesian past*, 372.

³⁰ Cited in R. I. Rotberg, *The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: the making of Malawi and Zimbabwe, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, Mass, 1966), 20.



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to the east of the Protectorate were drawn under colonial rule somewhat more gradually. Neither Johnston, fully engaged in his wars against Yao and the Swahili-Arabs, nor Rhodes, preoccupied with events south of the Zambezi, had time to pay attention to the subordination of what were to become the north-eastern and north-western provinces of Zambia. In the north, Rhodes was anxious to retain access to the important Lake Tanganyika waterway, and between 1891 and 1894 Johnston established three administrative outposts amongst the Tabwa, Lungu and Mambwe people at Abercorn (Mbala), Fife and on Lake Mweru, to this end. This was all he could do to keep communications open to the north. He was certainly in no position to tackle the three dominant groups in the area, the Bemba, the Ngoni and the Lunda.

Almost imperceptibly, however, the white presence was making itself felt. Although the decade up to 1895 was characterised by its continuity with what had gone before, even before the BSA Company appointed its own officials to take possession of the region, the balance of power was shifting in response to white activities on the periphery. Internal tensions over succession to the kingship among the Bemba, raids and counter-raids and the continuation of the profitable slave- and gun-trade between the Congo and the coast may all have seemed of more moment than the occasional white visitor, but the German defeat in 1893 of a large Bemba raiding party under their king was a frightening portent of the white man's strength. Increasingly too, African leaders were having to take account of missionaries, with the expansion of the London Missionary Society (LMS) among the Mambwe, and the White Fathers gradually extending their work into Bemba country.

From 1895 the BSA Company began intercepting slave caravans in the north-east, after Johnston's successful attack on Mlozi at Karonga had cut the Bemba slave-trading link to the south-east. Even then, the abortive attack on Kazembe's Lunda kingdom on the Luapula river warned Major P. W. Forbes, the newly appointed deputy administrator, of the need to proceed with caution. It was only in 1899 that Kazembe's capital was finally destroyed, and the chief fled to the Congo, surrendering the following year. Limited attacks on slave and ivory caravans around company outposts led the East African traders in Tabwa

country, who had an eye on what was happening at the coast, to surrender the slave trade – the main object of company attacks – in the hopes of preserving their profits in ivory.

To establish its authority in this area, however, the company had to come to terms with the powerful Ngoni and Bemba chiefdoms. Amongst the Ngoni, it was only the followers of Chief Mpezeni who offered open resistance. As early as 1885 Mpezeni had granted a large land concession to the German adventurer, Karl Wiese. In 1891, Wiese, aware of the encroaching frontier of the British South Africa Company, sold his claims to one of its subsidiaries, the North Charterland Company – taking care to inflate its value by circulating rumours of the rich gold resources to be found in Mpezeni's country. From 1896 an increasing number of prospectors began arriving in Ngoni country around Fort Jameson (Chipata). Aware of the activities of Jameson and Johnston to his south and east, the chief eyed them warily, though his son and army pressed for war. In 1898, on a convenient pretext, Mpezeni's country was invaded, his son and army-commander killed, and vast numbers of cattle looted. By 1906 the Fort Jameson Ngoni had lost 10,000 square miles of land and five-sixths of their cattle. Fort Jameson became the capital of North-Eastern Rhodesia.³¹

The fate of Mpezeni was a salutary lesson to the weaker peoples of the region. No other group was to feel quite the same onslaught, though the administration anticipated trouble with the still powerful Bemba, whose *chitimukulu* (king) was reported to have over a thousand guns in 1893. Perhaps as much through luck as design, the Bemba came under the rule of the BSA Company without overt struggle. The natural caution of Bemba leaders as they took the white man's measure was matched by British reluctance to provoke conflict. The gradual influence gained by the White Fathers, and in particular the hold which Bishop Dupont gained over Chief Mwamba in his last days in 1898, together with the deaths in 1896–8 of the other leading Bemba chiefs who might have led organised resistance, and the poverty of resources in their area further contributed to this peaceful outcome. On the death of Mwamba, the company established an outpost in Bemba country, and indeed played a role in deciding

³¹ J. K. Rennie, 'The Ngoni states and European intrusion', in Stokes and Brown, *The Zambesian past*, 325–31; J. A. Barnes, *Politics in a changing society: the Fort Jameson Ngoni* (London, 1964), 93–6.

his successor.³² This, together with the crushing of the Ngoni and the final defeat of Kazembe, meant that by the turn of the century North-Eastern Rhodesia was finally under company control. By 1902 taxation was collected without opposition in all but the more remote areas.

The process of imposing colonial rule in North-Eastern Rhodesia, once it began, was both swifter and less violent than it had been either to the south or in Nyasaland. It may be that the natural disasters of the 1890s had weakened the ability of even the more powerful peoples to resist, while for lesser groups, company rule meant a welcome release from the raids and exactions of tribute by the Ngoni and Bemba and the activities of slavers. Above all, however, in this region it was the apparent lack of resources which spared people major confrontations with colonialism: in the one area where gold was believed to exist, the onslaught was as dramatic as in Southern Rhodesia, and the expropriation as brutal.

In the north-west, too, little was done to give practical effect to the treaties obtained by Rhodes's agents until the late 1890s, despite the desire of the Lozi king, Lewanika, for a British presence. Lewanika's 'scramble for protection' in the 1890s arose from the same set of circumstances as his original decision to invite the white man into his kingdom in 1886.³³ As part of a wide-ranging strategy to restore his power both internally and externally, ideologically and materially, in that year he renewed an invitation to the pro-British missionary, François Coillard of the Paris Evangelical Mission, to settle near his capital of Lealui. Despite the fears of those groups in his kingdom threatened by the new religion and the increase in royal authority which Coillard's presence brought, the missionary rapidly established himself in the king's confidence. Over the next three or four years Coillard aided and abetted Lewanika in his attempts to emulate the example of his friend and ally, Khama of the Ngwato, and gain British protection. For the missionaries in Barotseland, as

³² This section is heavily indebted to A. D. Roberts, *A history of the Bemba. Political growth and change in north-eastern Zambia before 1900* (London, 1973), 230–54.

³³ For the most recent interpretation of Lozi history, see G. Prins, *The hidden hippopotamus* (Cambridge, 1980); this section is based on the above, and also on M. Mainga, *Buluzi under the Luyana kings. Political evolution and state formation in pre-colonial Zambia* (London, 1973); G. Caplan, *The elites of Barotseland 1878–1969* (London, 1970); L. van Horn, 'The agricultural history of Barotseland, 1890–1964' in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.), *The roots of rural poverty in Central and Southern Africa* (London, 1977), 144–69, and W. G. Clarence-Smith, 'Slaves, commoners and landlords in Buluzi, c. 1875 to 1906', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1979, 20, 2, 219–34.

earlier in Bechuanaland, imperial protection and the establishment of communications with the south were crucial.

Partly in response to Lewanika's entreaties, Frank Lochner, one of Rhodes's agents on his way to Katanga, stopped at Lealui in June 1890. Taking care to blur the distinction between Company and Crown, and assisted by Coillard and Khama's emissary, Lochner persuaded Lewanika to grant the BSA Company the mineral rights to his kingdom. This was matched by the promise of an annual salary of £2,000, firearms against his enemies to the south, the Ndebele, and technical and educational assistance: the latter a feature of all the company's treaties at this time.

Through the Lochner concession, the BSA Company claimed the whole of what was to become North-Western Rhodesia. Between Barotseland and the more powerful people of North-Eastern Rhodesia, there was a broad swathe of country which was unvisited by any company agent. Thus, Lochner had every interest in backing the widest Lozi territorial claims, even to the point of including the Copperbelt in Lewanika's domains. By maximising the king's claims, the Lunda and Luvala in the north, the Kaonde in the north-east, the Ila to the east and the Tonga and Toka in the territory disputed with Lobengula in the south were all brought under company rule.

Although these claims also suited Lozi expansionist plans, bitter internal opposition to the Lochner concession, which even led to witchcraft accusations against the king, was matched by Lewanika's own consternation when he discovered he had signed a treaty with the BSA Company and not with the Crown. Through the nineties, Lewanika's opponents blamed drought, locusts, rinderpest and famine on the concession and on the coming of the missionaries. Yet for the first seven years there was little to justify their fears of the company. Despite repeated pleas, even the Resident requested by the Lewanika was not sent. Indeed, in these years, Lewanika was able to build up his personal power through the consolidation of the administrative, political and economic reforms he had instituted in the 1880s, and to extend his rule over outlying parts of the empire, which supplied the Lozi aristocracy of the heartland with tribute and slave labour, cattle and ivory. Nevertheless, by the mid-nineties Lewanika clearly recognised the fragile basis of his power in relation to the encroaching Europeans. He welcomed the defeat of the Ndebele

in 1893; but the advent of white prospectors from the south, the appearance of Portuguese forts in territory claimed by the Lozi, and the failure of the French missionaries to provide the firearms, skills and education he had anticipated, led Lewanika to appeal once more for British protection.

Finally, in 1897 Major R. T. Coryndon was sent – more because the British government was anxious that the BSA Company should uphold its claims in the area against the Portuguese than because of company guilt over unfulfilled obligations. In 1898, the Lawley concession gave the company even greater jurisdiction over Bulozhi than the Lochner treaty, though it met with less popular resistance. Unlike the first concession, however, the advent of Coryndon, the Lawley concession and the British Order-in-Council of 1899, which granted ultimate sovereignty to the British monarch, together with a further concession by Lewanika in 1900, spelt the end of Lozi independence. Over the next decade the powers of the Lozi aristocracy, if not of the king, were whittled away. British insistence on the abolition of serfdom and slavery in Bulozhi in 1906 – in part a response to increasing slave resistance, in part to release labour for white enterprise in the south – had serious repercussions for the cultivation of the flood plain on which Lozi agriculture depended. For the thousands of emancipated slaves, migrant labour to Rhodesia and the Rand may have been preferable to bondage to the local ruling class. Lewanika's 'scramble for protection', the shrewdness with which he manipulated the benefits brought by the missionaries and the lack of mineral resources in his domain meant he secured a protected status from a company weakened by its experiences further south. Nevertheless, his hopes of controlling the modernisation of Bulozhi, symbolised perhaps in the brief appearance of an independent school and church movement in Bulozhi under royal charge in 1904–5, were in vain. Bulozhi passed from an independent kingdom to a protectorate within a protectorate, as much tied to the southern African political economy as its neighbours.

All over southern Africa, the imposition of colonial rule meant the imposition of taxation to raise much-needed revenue for administration and to force people out to work. This was a

well-worn expedient within South Africa, where in both the Afrikaner republics and the British colonies, taxation on Africans had been levied and periodically increased during the nineteenth century, especially in response to labour demand. The same was true north of the Limpopo. Even north of the Zambezi, and despite the small number of settlers and the limited scale of capital investment, the demand for labour was vast, especially until the construction of railways relieved the need for human portage.

In Southern Rhodesia, the Native Affairs Department was specifically established to collect tax, and BSA Company police enforced payment even before they had a legal right to do so. In Northern Rhodesia, too, taxation had been imposed everywhere by 1902, although it took several years before it was collected regularly over the entire area. In the Shire highlands, Johnston had imposed an annual hut tax of 6 shillings as early as 1892, although he was soon forced to lower it to 3 shillings in view of the lack of employment and the very low wages paid in Nyasaland. In 1901 hut tax was doubled once more, except for those Africans who could prove they had been in white employ for thirty days.

In British Central Africa, Africans working on the plantations or in the mines were frequently met by tax collectors as they received their monthly wage packet; although it was illegal, many employers paid their workers' tax directly to the district commissioner. Taxation both disguised and facilitated *chibaro*, forced labour practices, as tax defaulters were despatched by local officials to work on the mines in Southern Rhodesia or the plantations of the Shire highlands. Until the longer-term mechanisms of landlessness, growing consumer wants and new work discipline had been established, collectors extracted tax through overt violence. While the starkest example of this was in Southern Rhodesia before the rebellion, in British Central Africa, too, missionaries were outraged by the frequent trail of hut-burnings and even shootings that accompanied tax collection. In 1901, when Alfred Sharpe, Johnston's successor as commissioner of the British Central Africa Protectorate, precipitately raised the rate, many people moved across the boundary into Mozambique, reversing the usual pattern of migration. In Northern Rhodesia, as late as 1907–8, there was serious danger of tax resistance amongst the Ila and outright opposition amongst the Lunda.

Perhaps the most striking example of resistance to taxation

came in 1906, in Natal and Zululand, where the government had imposed a £1 poll tax on all adult males, over and above the already existing burden of taxation. The tax fell particularly and deliberately heavily on Africans who were being squeezed by their landlords, evicted from newly developing wattle plantations, and hit by a combination of drought and depression. Heavy indebtedness and landlessness were already a feature of the Natal countryside, and thousands of Africans were being forced onto the labour market. In a very real sense, resistance to the poll tax was resistance to proletarianisation. When magistrates attempted to collect the tax at the beginning of 1906 they were met by sporadic acts of defiance, which led to the declaration of martial law, and large-scale troop movements. These may well themselves have sparked off the armed resistance led, in its main phases, by the minor Natal chief, Bambatha, and encouraged by the use of the name and authority of the son of the last Zulu king, Dinuzulu. When martial law was finally lifted in September 1906, between 1,000 and 4,000 Africans had been killed and 7,000 held prisoner. White losses amounted to some thirty: striking evidence, if it were still needed, of the superiority of white firepower over unarmed Africans in early twentieth-century South Africa.

While tax provided revenue for colonial administration in the face of the British determination that colonies be self-financing, its effects in forcing people out to work were equally important. To a certain extent, in those areas where Africans still had access to sufficient land and to markets, they were initially able to meet tax demands by producing crops and cattle for sale. Yet there was none of the debate in southern or central Africa about the possibilities of extensive peasant production which characterised East and West Africa slightly later on. In South Africa, by the turn of the century the prosperous eastern Cape peasants were already 'passing through a period of stress', although the demand for provisions, horses and cattle as well as transport during the South African war opened up new opportunities both there and elsewhere for black producers. In South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, agricultural production for the market, stratification amongst the peasantry, and the growth of a relatively wealthy stratum, continued well into the twentieth century.³⁴ Its incidence

³⁴ For the South African peasantry, see C. Bundy, *The rise and fall of the South African peasantry* (London, 1979), especially 109–64; for Central Africa, see Palmer and Parsons (eds.), *Roots of rural poverty*; for a critique of the literature and evidence for the continued

was uneven, however, and increasingly it was on the fringes of white agriculture and in the face of the indifference, if not the outright opposition of the state.

In British Central Africa, despite the paucity of settler agriculture, there was no greater encouragement given to African peasants. An attempt by Sharpe to encourage African cotton production had little success in this period as a result of planter hostility and the demand for mine labour in the south. Contrary to colonial ideology, which held that true progress depended on individual land-title in male hands, agricultural production expanded amongst matrilineal people like the Manganja and Chewa of in the Shire valley, especially after Lomwe immigration from Mozambique relieved some of the pressure on local peoples from the plantations. They were amongst the few successful peasant cultivators in the region, although in Northern Rhodesia the Ila were able to take advantage of the line of rail to produce for the market and in the north the opening of the Katanga copper mines opened new opportunities of food production.

Elsewhere in Central Africa, the administrative attack on 'slavery', taxes on iron hoes, and the prohibition on African hunting and possession of firearms probably reduced food production. In North-Eastern Rhodesia, the natural disasters of the 1890s were compounded by the absence of young men as labour migrants, the administrative insistence on closer settlement and gun and game laws which led to the proliferation of wild game while denying the people the meat. Tsetse-infected wild animals spread sleeping sickness amongst both humans and cattle, and this reached epidemic proportions in some areas. Even where there was no outright expropriation of land, large numbers of young men were forced to seek work beyond the homestead, and already in the first decade of the century, widespread social and ecological dislocation was in evidence, further accelerating labour migrancy.³⁵

Everywhere it was assumed that capital and enterprise were the prerogative of the white man; the role of the black was to provide labour. In Northern Rhodesia, a trickle of white settlers was prosperity of at least a section of the peasantry into the mid-twentieth century, see T. O. Ranger, 'Growing from the roots: reflections on peasant research in Central and Southern Africa', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1979, 5, 1, 99–133.

³⁵ L. Vail, 'Ecology and history: the example of eastern Zambia', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1977, 3, 2.

encouraged by the BSA Company in the hope that their presence would lead to a rise in land prices, and between 1898 and 1908 the concessions granted by Lewanika enabled it to allocate land in Ila–Tonga country and along the line of rail. Hopes of copper at Kansanshi and lead and zinc at Broken Hill (Kabwe) led the company to extend the railway into the colony, but only attracted a handful of prospectors. Nor were early plans for cotton and rubber plantations or cattle-ranching any more successful; by 1911 there were some 1,500 white settlers in the territory. The lack of settler success did not, however, lead to any encouragement of African agriculture. From the outset, Northern Rhodesia was seen as an appendage of the south, and any alternative to labour migration was discouraged.

In Nyasaland the declaration of a Protectorate in 1889 had been accompanied by land speculation on a large scale, and by 1891 a number of coffee planters had established themselves to the south of Lake Malawi, closely tied to major trading interests. Although Johnston claimed to discourage wanton speculation in land and to prevent African dispossession, he never queried the right of chiefs to alienate their people's land. The clause he inserted in the title deeds granted to planters, guaranteeing that African cultivators should be undisturbed in their occupancy, was a dead-letter from the outset. In all, he alienated 3.5 million acres of land in the Protectorate, 2.7 million to the British South Africa Company and the African Lakes Company in the north, the rest in the fertile but already densely settled Shire highlands. Sharpe allocated a further 360,000 acres for railway construction, and 100,000 acres to settlers – again in the overcrowded south. At the beginning of the century, only 1 per cent of these lands was under cultivation.³⁶ Africans who remained on the alienated land were forced to render labour in lieu of rent in the hated *thangata* system, and the planters scoured the rest of the country for additional workers.

White enterprise was equally unimpressive in Southern Rhodesia. There as we have already seen, huge tracts of land had been alienated by the turn of the century, amounting to about one-sixth of the territory's 96 million acres. Most belonged to speculative syndicates, and relatively few settlers were actively engaged in

³⁶ B. S. Krishnamurthy, 'Economic policy, land and labour in Nyasaland, 1890–1914', in B. Pachai (ed.), *The early history of Malawi* (London, 1972), 385–8.

agricultural production. In the early days, most continued to depend on Africans for their food supply, which they obtained largely through trade. As long as the BSA Company believed the future lay with mining, it did not pay much attention to the territory's agricultural potential, although it clearly hoped for a general rise in land value. By 1903, however, disillusionment with the 'second Rand' had brought about a collapse in the market for Rhodesian shares. The mines were scattered and the ore poor, and although gold mining remained central to the economy for a further thirty years, the company now decided to encourage white immigration and farming more actively. In 1906 it set up an estates department to do so, and developed agricultural and veterinary services to assist and advise white farmers, while by 1908 settlers were given a greater say in the legislative council which had been established in the aftermath of the Shona–Ndebele risings.

Although it is frequently asserted that the touchstone of imperial trusteeship in this period was the protection of African land rights against settler encroachment, even in those areas south of the Limpopo subject to direct imperial control the record is far from unambiguous. In Basutoland, it is true, whites were specifically barred from acquiring land, a reflection of successful Sotho resistance in the Gun war of the early eighties against Cape colonial rule. In the Bechuanaland Protectorate, too, relatively little land was lost to white settlers, apart from small areas around the Tati goldfields and in the Ghanzi district. Fortuitously and fortunately for the northern Tswana, Rhodes was unable to establish company rule in the Protectorate – which he claimed as part of his Charter – before the fiasco of the Jameson Raid, and the Shona–Ndebele rebellion put paid to his ambitions in the region. For both Basutoland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, these were relatively quiet years in which the ability of richer peasants to provision South African and Rhodesian markets respectively, and the alliances forged between the leading chiefs and the British administration and missionaries, masked the longer-term processes of growing social stratification and dependence on the South African labour market.

In British Bechuanaland, annexed as a Crown colony in 1885, the case was rather different. By the time of the British take-over it was already the site of a complex struggle over land. The

southern Tswana had lost three-quarters of their land by the 1884 London convention, while a land commission held in 1886 did little to resolve their land shortage. Ten reserves were marked out as Tlhaping territory, while the intervening 14,000 square miles were made available for white settlement and bought up by white farmers in the decade between British and Cape colonial annexation. Cape annexation and the renewed demands from white settlers for land and labour increased the insecurity of the southern Tswana chiefs, embittered by their loss of land, and by the impact of imperial rule. The contrast was particularly galling for those southern Tswana who had been able to avoid work on the diamond fields by producing fuel and food for the Kimberley market. As their tax burden increased, so their capacity to lead an independent existence diminished. In December 1896, under the Tlhaping chiefs, Galeshiwe and Luka Jantje, who had led resistance in Griqualand West in 1878, and Chief Toto of the Tlharo, the southern Tswana in Phokwane and the Langeberg rose against Cape Colony rule, incensed finally by the shooting of their cattle during the rinderpest outbreak. It took over 2,000 well-equipped Cape Colony troops to bring the rising to an end. In August 1897 the southern Tswana chiefs found their lands confiscated, their cattle looted and their people dispersed as indentured labour to the farmers of the western Cape.³⁷

In two other areas the British sanctioned the outright expropriation of African land. In 1897, when Zululand was finally incorporated into self-governing Natal, it was agreed that after a five-year moratorium a joint Imperial–Natal delimitation commission should set aside reserves for African occupation, releasing the rest for white enterprise. Between 1902 and 1904, some two-fifths of Zululand was opened to white farmers from Natal to produce sugar, wattle and cattle – a potent factor in persuading the people of southern Zululand to join Bambatha in 1906.

Although white administrators in neighbouring Swaziland feared African resistance to land loss, the Swazi also lost much land during the first decade of the century. There, as a result of Mbandzeni's concessions, the question of land ownership was the thorniest problem facing the British administration which took the territory over from the Boers after the South African war.

³⁷ K. Shillington, 'Land loss, labour and dependence: the impact of colonialism on the southern Tswana, 1870–1900', Ph.D. London, 1981; H. Saker and J. Aldridge, 'The origins of the Langeberg rebellion', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1971, 12, 3.

Despite the prolonged struggle of the Swazi, led by the queen regent, who protested that the king had granted only the usufruct, in 1907 two-thirds of Swaziland was recognised as belonging to foreign concessionaires and only one-third to the Swazi themselves. There were few colonial officials who did not agree that, for the territory to be developed, European property rights had to be secured.

Within the existing British colonies and Boer republics, these years saw the rapid increase of settler populations and the consolidation of areas of white settlement distinct from African reserves or locations. Despite the insatiable land-hunger of white farmers, there was no dramatic transfer of land. Everywhere there was strenuous opposition by whites to the maintenance of tribal lands and communal ownership; it was expressed forcibly before the Cape Labour Commission of 1893, the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903–5 and the Natal Native Affairs Commission of 1907–8. Yet by and large fears of African resistance, together with the countervailing interests of land companies and industry, prevented wholesale expropriation. In the Cape it was believed by liberals that the introduction of individual tenure, private land ownership and production for the market would inevitably push out surplus labour, and this was given full expression in their support for Rhodes's well-known Glen Grey Act of 1894, which he significantly termed 'a Bill for Africa'.³⁸ This Act divided the land of that district into 4-morgen holdings, imposed a 10-shilling tax on men who could not prove they had been in employment for three months in the year, and established local councils in lieu of African participation in the central representative institutions of the state. Individual tenure was opposed however by most non-Christian Africans and chiefs, as well as by white farmers, who feared the creation of a competitive peasantry, and those colonists who connected land rights with access to the franchise.

Rhodes and his fellow mining-magnates could tolerate the existence of a limited number of African peasants: as Rhodes recognised, the subdivision of African lands into peasant allotments would necessitate the proletarianisation of the less fortunate, a process already well in evidence in the Cape Colony. As

³⁸ For a discussion of the Glen Grey Act which sees it as the basis for later policies of segregation, see M. Lacey, *Working for Boroko* (Johannesburg, 1981), 14–17.

he remarked in his introduction to the Act, '... every black man cannot have three acres and a cow, or four morgen and commonage rights... It must be brought home to them that in future nine-tenths of them will have to spend their lives in daily labour, in physical labour, in manual work.'³⁹

Yet if there was only partial conflict between the interests of the peasantry and those of the capitalist sector who wanted labour, there was total conflict between African peasants and white farmers as agricultural production became commercialised, and they competed for land and markets. During this period, however, this conflict was not always fully evident. In many areas, where white farmers were still establishing themselves, they depended on the Africans on their land for labour, and at times for food. In the early days, settlers, notwithstanding their claims to land, made their living through trade and extracting rent and were in no position to eliminate 'squatting'.⁴⁰ The large land companies were often equally happy to retain the rents of the Africans living on their newly acquired acreages; where, as was often the case, the land companies were the subsidiaries of mining houses, there was a triple bonus, as the homesteads provided not only rent, but male migrants and cheap female food-producers.⁴¹

In areas of rapid white population growth and commercial agriculture, however, land prices boomed and companies began to sell off some of their land: in Natal, for example, especially in the midlands, numerous rent-paying tenants were displaced. As agriculture became directed to the markets of the Rand and Kimberley, small farmers all over South Africa appealed to governments to attack the 'evils' of 'kaffir-farming', and pushed for labour-tenancies rather than rent-tenancies. This period witnessed a spate of anti-squatting legislation: in the South African Republic in 1887 and 1895; in the Orange Free State in 1893; in Natal in 1896; in the Cape in 1899 and 1909, and even in Southern Rhodesia in 1908. Of all these attempts, it was only the Cape's Private Locations ordinances which were really successful. This

³⁹ 30 July 1894 in 'Vindex', *Cecil Rhodes: his political life and speeches* (London, 1900), 382.

⁴⁰ J. K. Rennie, 'White farmers, black tenants and landlord legislation: Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1930', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1978, 5, 1; T. Keegan, 'The restructuring of agrarian class relations in a colonial economy: the Orange River Colony, 1902-1910', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1979, 5, 2, 234-54.

⁴¹ S. Trapido, 'Landlord and tenant in a colonial economy: the Transvaal, 1880-1910', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1978, 5, 1, 26-58.

was a reflection of the greater development of capitalist relations of production in the Cape and the concomitant development of its state apparatus, for 'anti-squatting legislation made very little impact unless there was an already existing capacity to compel labour to work'.⁴² Outside the Cape the opposition of the more powerful farmers and absentee landowners rendered much of this legislation inoperative; nevertheless, it provided precedents which were of the utmost significance in the decades to follow.

It was in South West Africa that the processes of expropriation and proletarianisation were worked out with the greatest ferocity – though the contrast with the rest of South Africa was in degree rather than in kind. There, through the 1890s, Africans had seen the arrival of settlers who eyed their lands and cattle greedily, and whose arrogance was unchecked by legal or civil institutions. Although the actual amount of land alienated was not large, it was situated in the better-watered highlands, for long contested between Nama and Herero pastoralists. The activities of the speculative companies, too, spread unease, though again it was the rinderpest outbreak which destroyed African herds and brought the Herero, at least, to the edge of despair. Widespread indebtedness was a feature of these years, as Africans attempted to replace their lost cattle and had to purchase food for the first time. The misguided attempts in 1902–3 of Governor Leutwein to place a moratorium on debts, after giving creditors a year in which to collect outstanding sums, led to savage extortion and looting and simply exacerbated the situation.

At the beginning of 1904, when the militia was in the south stamping out a small disturbance amongst the Bondelswartz people, the Herero rose under Samuel Maherero, and killed over a hundred German settlers and traders. The Germans retaliated in full-scale war, under the ruthless General von Trotha, who, supported by the German High Command, saw the campaign quite simply as one of extermination. Before his recall by a horrified German Reichstag in mid-1905, over 70 per cent of the Herero had been killed, many of them dying in the desert in an attempt to escape to the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The death-rate was almost as high amongst the Nama, who joined the uprising in October 1904 under the eighty-year-old Hendrik Witbooi.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 44.

LABOUR ON THE RAND

Despite Witbooi's death in 1905, the Nama, now led by Jacob Marenga, were only finally vanquished in 1907; thousands died in concentration camps. Virtually all Herero cattle perished, while of the remaining human population, about a quarter were deported to other parts of the country. At the end of the war, the peoples who participated were deprived of all their remaining lands and cattle, which were sold to settlers. All forms of chieftainship were proscribed, and the people were forbidden to rear cattle, wear tribal dress or meet in groups: even the Christian revivalism which followed in the wake of the wars was frowned upon as evidence of nationalist sentiment. Paul Rohrbach, a well-known spokesman for settler interests, wrote in 1907 that the objective was to ensure that 'as far as possible [the Herero] should be stripped of his national identity and his national characteristics and gradually amalgamated with the other natives into a single coloured working class'.⁴³ By 1912 only 200 Nama and Herero males were without paid employment.⁴⁴

The sheer devastation of the war, which carried dispossession to its logical conclusion, served as a warning elsewhere in southern Africa. Ultimately, von Trotha had to be stopped because he was killing off the settlers' labour supply; indeed to complete their conquest and build railways and harbours after the war, the Germans were forced to import labour from the eastern Cape, and to look for the first time to the Ovambo people to the north, who had so far been only marginally affected by the German presence. Although after the Herero revolt the Reichstag prevented the conquest of the north, by 1908 with the help of the Finnish and German Lutheran missionaries in Ovamboland, treaties had been signed with all the chiefs, persuading them to send migrant labour to the mines and construction works of what became known as the Police Zone in the south. The Ovambo of South West Africa were only brought fully under colonial rule in 1915 after the South African invasion of the colony.

LABOUR ON THE RAND

By the beginning of the twentieth century fierce African resistance to the alienation of land was a major factor all over southern Africa in persuading colonial authorities and employers that industry

⁴³ Bley, *South West Africa under German rule*, 224.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 50.

would, in the first instance, have to be based upon migrant labour. Yet if Africans could not simply be divorced from the means of production, these years saw a network of laws and institutions designed to push them on to the labour market, and to keep them on the treadmill for as long as possible. Everywhere, breach of contract became a criminal offence under newly designed Masters and Servants laws. Pass laws, which had originated in the agrarian slave economy of the Cape, were now revitalised and reformulated to cope with the problems raised by industrial development. In the rural areas of southern Africa they were advocated by farmers anxious to prevent the movement of their labourers into the towns, and to prevent unauthorised trespass. It was, however, on the Rand that they received their greatest elaboration as an instrument of control over the mine labour force. As C. S. Goldman told the 1897 Industrial Commission of Inquiry, the Pass law ‘which has been condemned as an instance of Boer oppression of the natives... came into existence at the request of the mining industry’.⁴⁵

At the insistence of the Chamber of Mines, under law 31 of 1896, the Republic’s *Volksraad* (the legislature) provided that Africans entering the mining areas had to have passes authorising them to seek employment for three days. Once employed, the worker handed his pass to his employer until he was discharged, and was provided with an ‘employers’ pass in exchange: failure to produce a pass on demand rendered an African liable to a £3 fine or three weeks’ hard labour for a first offence, and a rising scale of penalties for any offence thereafter.

As the pass laws themselves indicate, even the conquest and annexation of the remaining independent African polities of southern Africa did not fully answer the new demand for labour, or at least not quickly or cheaply enough. Throughout the 1890s wage levels on the mines fluctuated in response to supply and demand. As early as 1893 the Chamber of Mines toyed with schemes for recruiting from Mozambique, which had provided migrant labour for colonial enterprise from the 1850s. In 1896 it formed its first centralised recruiting agency, which became known in 1900 as the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA, dubbed by Africans ‘Wenela’), to obtain labour from southern Mozambique on a regular basis. By the turn of the

⁴⁵ C. S. Goldman, evidence to the 1897 Industrial Commission.

century almost two-thirds of the labour on the Rand came from Mozambique. There the Portuguese defeat of Gungunyana's Gaza kingdom in 1895, and the passage in the following year of a labour ordinance making it obligatory for Africans to work for colonists, proved admirable recruiters for the mines. The low cost and longer contracts of Mozambique labour made it additionally attractive.

If the defeat of the Gaza kingdom was fortuitous, the Chamber of Mines was not slow to appreciate the beneficial effects of natural disaster for its labour supply. The equation was simple: in years of abundant harvest, the flow was slow; in bad years it was more forthcoming, and wages could be reduced with little immediate effect on supply. All over southern Africa, the rinderpest epidemic played a major role in propelling Africans to the mines: in Pondoland, for example, only annexed to the Cape Colony in 1894, and long resistant to the appeals of the labour recruiter, migration to the mines now began in earnest – in exchange for advances of cattle paid to heads of homesteads.⁴⁶ Yet without the broader structural changes taking place, even this would have been only a temporary windfall for the mining industry, while Africans earned enough to replace their herds. That it was not so must be attributed to the longer-term processes advocated by the chamber and slowly implemented by newly formed colonial administrations.

By the 1900s, for Africans all over the sub-continent forced to seek work, the great magnet was the Witwatersrand. In the early years of the century, WNLA recruiters honeycombed the sub-continent, while in 1903 the Rhodesian Native Labour Association was formed for the same purpose. The undercapitalised, scattered and small-scale mines of Southern Rhodesia found it difficult to compete with the Rand, and they resorted to a variety of forced labour practices to ensure labour remained in Southern Rhodesia and to keep down its costs. The predictable results were high rates of mortality, disease and desertion. So desperate were the Rhodesian mines for labour that they even thought of scouring Asia for miners, following the example of the Rand in 1904.⁴⁷

Within the South African colonies, Africans had rather more

⁴⁶ W. Beinart, 'Joyini Inkomo: cattle advances and the origins of migrancy in Pondoland', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1979, 5, 2.

⁴⁷ C. van Onselen, *Chibaro. African mine labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933* (London, 1976).

choice about where to work and what work to do, and historical patterns of labour-seeking had already been built up. For most people in Nyasaland, however, there was only the poorly paid work and harsh conditions on the plantations of the Shire highlands or, until the building of the Nyasaland railway, head portorage; in Northern Rhodesia there were even fewer local job opportunities, apart from limited mining at Kansanshi, Broken Hill and Kasempa. Increasingly central Africans made their way west to the Katangan (Shaban) copper mines, or south – either to the mines of Southern Rhodesia or preferably to the Rand itself, much to the consternation of local employers. Nevertheless, despite local opposition, by 1903 the government of Nyasaland had accepted institutionalised labour-recruiting for the export of contract labour to the mining industry in the south. In that year over 6,000 recruited workers crossed the Zambezi at Feira to work in the south, of whom 1,000 were on their way to the Rand; by 1904 the numbers recruited for the Rand had risen to 5,000 – quite apart from those who made their own way south. By comparison with the three to six shillings a month offered to workers in the Nyasaland Protectorate, the 30s. for a thirty-shift month on the Rand mines was a powerful draw. In 1907, the Protectorate government, appalled by the high mortality on the gold-mines and pressed by local planter interests, prohibited further recruiting; the recruiting posts simply moved across the frontier and the stream continued unabated. By 1910 there were some 20,000 Nyasalanders in Southern Rhodesia, and a smaller but still substantial number on the Rand, determined to sell their labour on the most favourable labour market.

Control over the supply of labour was one problem; reducing its cost was another – and reducing the costs of labour was of the essence on the Rand, as in Rhodesia. In addition to the high operating costs and geological constraints involved in deep-level mining on the Rand, the mine magnates faced two further problems. Compared to Australia and Canada, the yield of South African ores was low. At the same time, because of the ceiling on the price of gold on the world market, the costs of extraction could not be passed on to the consumer. The cost of imported stores was beyond the magnates' control, and constantly rising. The crucial area of cost reduction was thus seen to be in workers' wages – and more specifically black workers' wages – which were by far the largest single item of expenditure.

By 1899, in addition to the one million black workers there were some 12,000 white workers in the Rand and, ideally, the magnates would have liked to cut the wages of *all* workers. The increased complexity of deep-level mining technology after 1890 had created a demand for highly skilled labour with experience of hard-rock drilling underground. While an unskilled labour force could be prised out of the pre-capitalist social formations of southern Africa, the immediate need for skilled labour could only be met by attracting workers from the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States of America, by the lure of high wages. The cost of living in the interior was extremely high and most miners migrated in the knowledge that their working days would be short. Because of the very high concentration of silica in both the lode and the ore on the Rand the incidence of miners' phthisis was perhaps the highest in the world: in 1904 the average age at death of Cornishmen who had worked on rock drills in the Transvaal was 36.4 years, with an average period of rock drill employment of only 4.7 years.⁴⁸

While most white workers had a knowledge of craft union organisation and strategy, some came to the Rand with the vivid collective memory of the assault on the working class in the diamond mines of Kimberley. Fully aware that skills can be learnt, and that the mine owners had every incentive to find less expensive substitutes, the white miners on the Rand – mostly, like their African counterparts, single men without their wives and families – organised to protect their position. Indeed, the first gold mineworkers' union, the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union was formed in 1892 to protest 'against the attempt of the Chamber of Mines to flood these fields with labour by means of cheap emigration' from the United Kingdom.⁴⁹ But they perceived the greatest threat as coming from the African miners working under them. Kimberley had already shown that – where the magnates had control of the state – the compound system, labour migrancy and pass laws ensured that black labour was both cheaper and more easily controlled than its white counterpart, and that capital had every incentive to try to substitute black labour for white. Trade unionists clearly recognised the threat, and although one cannot discount the heavy

⁴⁸ G. Burke and P. Richardson, 'The migration of miners' phthisis between Cornwall and the Transvaal, 1876–1918', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1978, 4, 2.

⁴⁹ H. J. Simons and R. E. Simons, *Class and colour in South Africa, 1850–1950* (Harmondsworth, 1969), 53.

overlay of late-nineteenth century racism in their utterances, the failure of a single, trans-racial working class to emerge at this time related largely to their structural vulnerability.⁵⁰

Throughout the 1890s various attempts were made by white unionists to protect their position through the reservation of certain jobs for whites only, but with only limited success. At the outbreak of the South African war, engine-driving was the sole occupation barred to blacks by statute. In general white, English-speaking workers still had a monopoly of skilled and supervisory jobs on the Rand, although the industry attempted, with varying degrees of success, to limit the number of white underground workers. The scarcity value of white workers and their experience of class organisation, as well as the need of the mine magnates for working-class support in their conflict with the South African Republic, meant that the full thrust of cost reduction was to be borne by the black workers. In 1888 mine managers were already petitioning the Volksraad for a pass system, monthly contracts and the registration of all Africans in the Transvaal. The first annual report of the Chamber of Mines, in 1889, complained bitterly of competition between mine managers for labour which led to overt attempts to bribe workers to desert their employers. It deplored the fact that there had been ‘a steady rise in wages all round, which is adding a very heavy additional expense to the working of the mines’.⁵¹

Throughout the 1890s, mine magnates were dissatisfied with the numbers of black workers they were able to secure, the wages they were forced to pay, and the degree of control they were able to exert. At every point, they blamed the failure of the South African Republic to come to their assistance. Even where the state passed the legislation requested by the industry, as in the case of the pass laws, the inefficiency of the police force meant that it was ineffectively carried out, while the power which large landowners had over the state apparatus at a time of rising labour demand in the agrarian sector meant that Africans making their way to the gold-fields both from within and from outside the Republic had to ‘run a gauntlet of field cornets set on acquiring

⁵⁰ Johnstone, *Class, race and gold*, 49–75; and R. H. Davies, *Capital, state and white labour in South Africa, 1900–1960* (Brighton, Sussex, 1979), 56–60.

⁵¹ Transvaal Chamber of Mines, *First annual report*, Statement of the Chairman, 31 Dec. 1889 (Johannesburg, 1889).

labourers for themselves and their fellow burghers'.⁵² Moreover, once the worker managed to reach the Rand, the state seemed unable or unwilling to prevent his desertion, or, almost as disastrously for the industry, his incapacitation through drink.

The liquor question, indeed, stood at the heart of a complicated wrangle both within the industry and between the Chamber of Mines and the Kruger government. Initially, both because it appreciated the social and economic control which the manipulation of alcohol gave it over the black worker, and because of the involvement of its own members in the distillation and sale of liquor, the chamber was reluctant to advocate total prohibition. Nevertheless, by 1895 the demand for a stable and efficient work-force took precedence over these concerns – crucially, just as the deep-level mines were coming into production. In that year, the annual report of the Chamber of Mines complained bitterly of the 15–25 per cent of the black labour force disabled by drink, a factor which added significantly to their wage bill. Despite Act 17 of 1896 providing for 'total prohibition', the next few years saw little improvement: illicit liquor syndicates, with the tacit connivance of the police force and the President himself, simply took over where the licensed canteen-holders were forced to leave off.⁵³ Again, this constituted a major grievance of the magnates against the Kruger government – and one that was only resolved with the imperial annexation of the Transvaal.

Observing the outcry of the magnates in the years leading up to the war on the issue of labour, the British radical, J. A. Hobson, a close observer of the South African scene at this time, was moved to comment that 'put in a concise form' the South African war was 'waged in order to secure for the mines a cheap adequate source of labour'.⁵⁴ Important as this insight was, the contradictions between the Kruger state, the mining industry and imperial Britain which led to the Jameson Raid and the South African war went beyond the issue of cheap labour. They were related to the whole cost-structure of the industry, the nature of the state in

⁵² S. Trapido, 'Reflections on land, office and wealth in the South African Republic, 1850–1900', in S. Marks and A. Atmore, *Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa* (London, 1980), 361.

⁵³ This paragraph is heavily indebted to C. van Onselen, 'Randlords and Rotgut, 1886–1903', in his *Studies*, 1: *New Babylon*, 44–102, originally published in *History Workshop*, 2, 1976.

⁵⁴ J. A. Hobson, *The war in South Africa* (London, 1900).

which it was established, and the stability of the region on which it depended, as well as Britain's position in the sub-continent and as a world-power.

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

For the burghers of the South African Republic, the sudden intrusion of the vast quantities of capital and of alien immigrants, known as *uitlanders*, constituted a crisis of the severest order. It was not just that the speculating, gambling, drinking and whoring of a brash bachelors' town offended the sensibilities of Calvinist burghers and their fundamentalist president, Paul Kruger. The usual picture of Kruger and his burghers as obstinately standing in the way of change is a misleading one: as early as 1883, he announced a policy of developing the resources of his country through selective industrialisation based on concessions, and a number of capitalists like the Hungarian, Nellmapius, and the East European Jews, Lewis and Marks, made their fortunes by developing enterprises which were of some benefit to Transvaal producers.⁵⁵ The demands of the mining revolution, however, went well beyond state-controlled concession. Quite suddenly, burghers found their whole way of life was being threatened, both at the material level and in all its assumptions. For many it meant a painful process of proletarianisation, as they lost their land through drought and disaster compounded by the growing capitalisation of agriculture; the possibilities of an independent livelihood as transport riders or petty entrepreneurs also diminished as mining capitalists themselves expanded into transport and construction.⁵⁶ Moreover, despite its heterogeneous origins, the *uitlander* community had behind it the resources of the British state. Even without the previous half-century of friction and suspicion between the South African Republic and the British, the situation would have been difficult; under the circumstances, Kruger's actions in defending his republic were by no means as reactionary as contemporary antagonists proclaimed.

There were, however, limits to what Kruger could do. Essentially he tried to use the opportunities opened up by the mineral discoveries to enrich his fellow-notables in the republic, while

⁵⁵ Trapido, 'Reflections on land, office and wealth', 360.

⁵⁶ Van Onselen, *Studies*, I: *New Babylon*, 19–20, and chapter 4; II: *New Nineveh*, 111–24.

limiting their impact by controlling policy in five main areas: seeking alternative foreign alliances; encouraging industrialisation through the grant of concessions; developing an independent railway and tariffs policy; expanding territorially; and excluding the *uitlanders* from effective political power. The problem was that Kruger's first four strategies brought him into direct conflict with British imperialism, the mine magnates and the Cape Colony, while his fifth provided an excellent excuse for British intervention on behalf of its 'rightless' subjects.

Each of Kruger's strategies had its earlier roots, but they now acquired a new shape and significance. Even before the discovery of the Rand, the politics of railway construction and tariff policies had held the centre of the stage in the relationships of the two British coastal colonies to the land-locked interior. In 1885 Kruger had offered the Cape a customs agreement which the colony had short-sightedly turned down. With the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, the tables were turned and, from 1887, the competition to reach the new Rand market by rail became increasingly intense. The competition was not simply between the coastal colonies and the Transvaal-backed, German-financed, Netherlands–South Africa Railway Company (NZASM) line from Delagoa Bay – the natural and nearest outlet for the Transvaal. The bitterness spilled over between the coastal colonies themselves, and even between the three main Cape ports. It was further complicated by Rhodes's attempts to buy Delagoa Bay from the Portuguese in the late 1880s and again between 1892 and 1894. By 1890, in addition to being one of the wealthiest men in South Africa, Rhodes had become Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, in alliance with the Afrikaner farmers' party, the Afrikaner Bond, and he was anxious both to secure Cape economic supremacy and an outlet at Delagoa Bay or Beira for his land-locked new colony in Rhodesia. He was foiled in his attempts, however, by the opposition of the Portuguese, the German veto of his plans, and the refusal of the British government to come to his assistance.

Although the Delagoa Bay line eventually reached the border of the South African Republic in 1889, at the same time as the Cape railway reached the Orange river, the depression on the Rand in 1890–1 delayed its further progress. Kruger, anxious for a rail-link and for the capital Rhodes offered the NZASM to

construct the section of the railway connecting the Cape line to the Rand, and mollified by the bait of Swaziland dangled before him by the imperial government, now granted Cape colonial produce preferential treatment in the Transvaal, under the Sive-wright agreement. For the two years between 1892 and 1894, Cape farmers enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the Rand market, and the Rhodes–Bond alliance on which the British pinned many of their hopes for successful imperial and Cape dominance in southern Africa flourished. At the same time, the Bechuanaland railway was extended to Mafeking, and the Rhodes ministry renewed the internal railway construction at the Cape, which brought the three Cape ports into communication with one another and with the Rand.

At the beginning of 1895, however, when the Delagoa Bay and Natal railway lines reached the Witwatersrand, and with the lapse of the Sivewright agreement, the crisis over railway and tariffs erupted once more. Disagreement over the division of the rail traffic between competing lines led the South African Republic to raise the tariffs once again on the Cape line, and when Cape traders attempted to circumvent the tariff by using ox-wagon transport for their goods once they crossed the Vaal river, Kruger retaliated by closing the river crossings (or drifts). The Cape ministry appealed for British assistance, and Kruger was forced to give way before an ultimatum issued by the British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury. At this moment, British fantasies, which had recurred at intervals since Majuba, of a pan-Afrikaner conspiracy to overthrow its supremacy in southern Africa, could not have been further from the truth, as Rhodes carried the Afrikaner Bond behind him in opposition to republican policies.

That Salisbury should have taken such a hard line on the Drifts Crisis was in large measure connected to the imperial government's wider concern at the changing balance of power in southern Africa, the need to protect British creditors and investors in the Cape Colony who were threatened by the Transvaal's growing independence, and fears that Britain was losing control over one of the swiftest growing markets in the world and the largest single supplier of gold. Kruger's search for independent access to the sea and his appeal for German diplomatic and financial support increased imperial apprehension. Germany was warned that intervention in South Africa could mean war, as Britain deter-

mined to secure the whole of southern Africa as her 'sphere of influence', using the ambiguous terms of the 1884 London Convention. While the Liberal government in power in Britain from 1892 to 1895 refused to sanction overt force against the Transvaal, it hoped for the reassertion of British hegemony in a confederated South Africa, through the sheer weight of British numbers in the sub-continent.

For leading companies like Consolidated Goldfields and Wernher, Beit and Company, with their main interests in the deep-level mines, these demographic calculations were of academic interest. Committed to a long-range mining programme, they were particularly affected by the obstructive nature of the republican state. In 1895, as the deep-level mines were just coming into operation, development costs were high and they calculated the expenditure of every penny. The state's taxation policies weighed more heavily on the deep-level than on the outcrop mines; they were more dependent on state intervention to control their vast labour force and they complained bitterly that the Netherlands-South Africa Railway Company's monopoly over the internal railway system and Kruger's concessions policies led to inefficiency and added considerably to their finely calculated costs.

The liquor and dynamite concessions were of special concern to the mine magnates: they alleged these amounted to an additional tax on the industry of some £600,000. They were particularly irksome to the deep-level mines, with their tight working costs and greater need for labour and explosives. By the beginning of 1895, Beit, Rhodes and other leading mine owners were plotting a *coup d'état* with the Uitlander Reform Committee in Johannesburg, which had been agitating for increased franchise rights since 1892. The appointment in June 1895 of Joseph Chamberlain as secretary of state for the Colonies in the Unionist government was a crucial moment in the conspiracy. In August 1895 Rhodes persuaded Chamberlain to grant him a strip of territory along the Bechuanaland frontier, ostensibly to build a railway, although the colonial secretary well knew it was intended as a launching pad against the Republic. Then, despite the manifest reluctance of local Uitlanders to support an armed invasion and the last-minute attempts by Rhodes and Chamberlain to call the affair off, on 29 December 1895, Leander Starr Jameson, at the head of a column of 478 British South African Company

police, rode into the South African Republic, hoping to precipitate an uprising on the Rand.

Four days later, the incursion was all over. On 2 January 1896 Jameson and his men surrendered to the forces of the South African Republic, Rhodes was forced to resign from the premiership of the Cape Colony, which he had held since 1890, and the British–Bond alliance he had carefully constructed was irretrievably destroyed. All over South Africa, Boer and Briton became increasingly divided along ethnic lines, and republican suspicions of imperial intentions dramatically increased. Far from removing the grievances of the mine magnates, the Raid precipitated the prolonged depression of 1896–8 on the Rand, and exacerbated the tension between Kruger and Britain. Despite the very serious attempts made by the Transvaal in the wake of the Raid to meet the demands of the mining industry by tightening up administration, introducing a new pass law, reducing the tariffs charged by the NZASM and reforming the gold law, over the next four years the political situation continued to deteriorate. Continued agitation over the franchise issue for Uitlanders and attacks on the Kruger régime, were directed by the newly formed South Africa League and covertly financed by Rhodes and his colleagues, despite their undertaking after the Raid to abstain from politics. Incidents which would barely have caused comment in mining communities in other parts of the world were publicised in highly partisan fashion in the press, largely owned by the leading magnates.

In April 1897, Sir Alfred Milner was sent to South Africa as high commissioner and governor of the Cape. It was hoped by all sides that this ‘model civil servant’ would resolve the most intractable imperial problem of the day. Milner was more than simply a civil servant however: his previous career had been spent closely connected at every point with the financial heart of the British state, as private secretary to Lord Goschen, himself no mean businessman, who was within a year of Milner’s leaving his service to become chancellor of the Exchequer; as under-secretary in the Egyptian Ministry of Finance; and then as chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue. It is unlikely that he did not recognise the significance for the British economy of either South Africa’s gold or her new markets at a time of increasing international, especially German, competition. Increasingly, the Transvaal came

to be seen as the key to continued imperial supremacy, not simply in southern Africa but more generally.

Within a year of his appointment Milner had concluded that, notwithstanding the industrial commission held in 1897, there was no hope that the South African Republic could produce the reforms demanded by the mining industry and the imperial government. With the backing of the British cabinet, he intervened with growing frequency in the Transvaal's affairs. Increasingly under attack, the republican government began to rearm. Despite the inclination of many of the capitalists on the Rand to negotiate with the rather more accommodating Kruger régime, there can be little doubt about the continued hostility to the Republic of the leading deep-level owners actually in South Africa: Fitzpatrick, Phillips, Beit, Farrar and Rhodes. After Milner's deliberate rejection of franchise proposals made at the Bloemfontein Conference in May–June 1898 by Kruger's new state attorney, Jan Smuts, which might well have resolved this particular issue, war became increasingly inevitable. At the end of September 1899, with the backing of the Orange Free State, the *Volksraad* despatched an ultimatum demanding the removal of British reinforcements from South Africa, and accusing her of unlawful intervention in the Transvaal. It amounted to a declaration of war. On 11 October commandos of the Transvaal and Orange Free State made a pre-emptive strike into Natal, hoping to take Durban and to cut the Cape–Rhodesia rail link before reinforcements arrived and in the belief that they would get international support.

Much ink has been spilt by historians trying to understand the 'causes' of the Jameson Raid and the South African war, and a good deal of the emphasis has been laid on the fears of the British that the new wealth of the Rand would draw the Cape into a pan-Afrikaner, anti-imperial federation which would jeopardise her sea-route to India.⁵⁷ Yet Afrikaner nationalism in this period was more a product than a cause of imperial agitation. Much, too, has been made of the 'imperial ambitions' of Rhodes; the 'obduracy' and 'obstinacy' of Kruger; the aggression of Chamberlain and the importance of public opinion (which he was largely responsible for creating) in finally forcing his hand; and the determination of the 'half-German' Milner to have 'his' war.

⁵⁷ See R. Robinson, J. Gallagher with A. Denny, *Africa and the Victorians* (London, 1961).

Undoubtedly, personality and accident played a role in the final configuration of events; nevertheless, these protagonists can only be understood if account is taken of the increasingly competitive late-nineteenth century world they operated in, a world in which control over the largest single source of new gold internationally and the most rapidly growing market were seen as crucial to imperial interests. Whatever their patrician distaste for individual mine magnates, it was this which made such strange bedfellows of Lord Salisbury and Cecil Rhodes, Lord Milner and Wernher, Beit and Company.⁵⁸

At the end of the nineteenth century, a peculiar disjuncture existed between the enclave of advanced mining capital, based upon the most advanced and sophisticated technology and huge concentrations of European finance capital in the Transvaal, and political/state power which remained in the hands of Afrikaner notables, themselves largely dependent on their land-holdings. The form of the state in the late nineteenth-century Transvaal still reflected the pre-industrial agrarian society of the Afrikaners. Although Kruger tried, through his concessions, to create an independent industrial base, in fact these attempts simply led to an increase in the possibilities of corruption among the small bureaucracy emerging out of the class of notables, most members of which still retained the ideology, life-style and kinship obligations of the earlier agrarian way of life. Although there were very real signs in the 1890s that the South African Republic was capable of 'reform', i.e. of 'modernising', and that individual Afrikaners were undoubtedly making the transition to capitalism, it was an earlier entrepreneurial and individualistic form of capitalism which was remote from the world demanded by the new concentrations of economic power on the Rand, and from the demand of the mining magnates for a new form of centralised and effectively coercive state apparatus. In large measure, Jame-

⁵⁸ For the role of public opinion in 'pushing' Chamberlain into the war, see A. N. Porter, *The origins of the South African war. Joseph Chamberlain and the diplomacy of imperialism, 1895–99* (Manchester, 1980). The literature on Rhodes, Milner and Kruger is too extensive to list in a footnote. For a critique of this literature and an elaboration of the argument in this section, see S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South African state', *History Workshop*, 1979, 8, 50–81; and S. Marks, 'Scrambling for South Africa', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1982, 23, 1. For a well-argued account of the relationship between the mine magnates and the imperial authorities, but with which the above interpretation differs in some respects, see A. H. Jeeves, 'The Rand capitalists and Transvaal politics, 1892–9', Ph.D. Queens University, Ontario, 1971.

son's abortive raid in 1895, and the deliberate contrivance of war in 1899, were designed to eliminate the dangers of foreign intervention and to substitute a different political authority in a region which had assumed major importance for both the British and the international economy.

The outbreak of war was greeted with jubilation by large sections of the British press and public. Accustomed to measuring their maxim guns against ill-armed African peoples, the British thought they would have a swift victory, but in fact Kruger's ultimatum caught them unprepared. Contrary to Milner's expectations, the war lasted three years and had a devastating effect on the countryside for another two. The response of the British military commanders to the guerrilla tactics adopted by the Boers after the British conquest of Johannesburg in 1900 was to divide the countryside into a series of fenced areas by means of blockhouses. Columns were then despatched in a series of great drives to scour the countryside, burning the farms, scorching the earth and rounding up the women and children into camps which soon became notorious; insanitary conditions, poor rations and gross overcrowding led to major epidemics and frightful mortality. From the beginning of 1900 to 18 February 1901, 28,000 out of a total of 117,000 white inmates had died of disease, the vast majority of them women and children. The camps left a deep scar on Afrikaners, and became a potent symbol in the construction of their nationalism; they led Campbell-Bannerman, leader of the British Liberal party, itself deeply torn over the war, to refer to British 'methods of barbarism'.⁵⁹

Less remarked at the time was the fate of Africans who were also herded into camps in the attempt to denude the rural areas. Unlike the Boer women and children, the Africans were forced to work for their upkeep, and by the end of the war their percentage mortality in the camps was even higher than that of whites; by 1901 there were twenty-nine camps with 107,344 inmates – of whom, according to the official figures, 13,315 died. The true figure was probably much higher.⁶⁰

Nor were African fatalities limited to death in British concen-

⁵⁹ S. B. Spies, *Methods of barbarism? Roberts and Kitchener and civilians in the Boer republics: January 1900–May 1902* (Cape Town, 1977), 265–6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* This section is based on P. Warwick, *Black people and the South Africa war, 1899–1902* (Cambridge, 1983); W. R. Nasson: 'Black society in the Cape Colony and the South African war of 1899–1902: A social history', Ph.D. Cambridge, 1983.

tration camps. Afrikaner commandos plundered peasant supplies and assaulted blacks in an assertion of republican overrule. In the northern Cape, the Boer invaders were assisted frequently by impoverished local land-owners, who threatened blacks with total expropriation and disenfranchisement in the event of republican victory. During the war, African resistance to this violence was on occasion as desperate and direct, whether it took the form of massed attack as at Holkrantz in 1901, or of individual acts of desertion, the poisoning of wells and the maiming of Boer cattle. In the Cape, blacks gave evidence against their former masters in a further pursuit of revenge. After the war, a virtual jacquerie erupted in the countryside, fuelled by the embittered rural relationships and the hopes engendered by British promises of change. These were soon to be shattered as warring Boer and Briton rapidly united to restore black–white property relationships.

In other ways, too, the view that the South African war was purely ‘a white man’s affair’ was manifestly a myth. Everywhere, Africans provided labour, accompanying the troops as transport riders, cattle guards and baggage carriers, while on the Rand they were drafted into service on the railways and gold mines under martial law and at minimal rates of pay. In some areas they played a more active role as armed combatants, spies and scouts, despite declarations to the contrary by both sides. Although the Swazi watched from the sidelines, in the northern Cape and western Transvaal, Tswana groups actively assisted the British and played a key part in the siege of Mafeking, while in the eastern Cape black levies prevented the entry of commandos and manned town garrisons. They played a notable part in the sieges of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking.

By 1902, however, it was clear that the greater resources of ammunition and manpower of the British army had worn the Afrikaners down, and their leaders were forced to sue for peace. On 31 May a treaty was signed at Vereeniging. In all, between 1899 and 1902 nearly half a million British troops had been deployed in South Africa against a Boer force of between 60,000 and 65,000. The cost to the British taxpayer was in the realm of £222 million; some 6,000 British soldiers had died in action – and another 16,000 of enteric fever and other diseases. The Boers lost

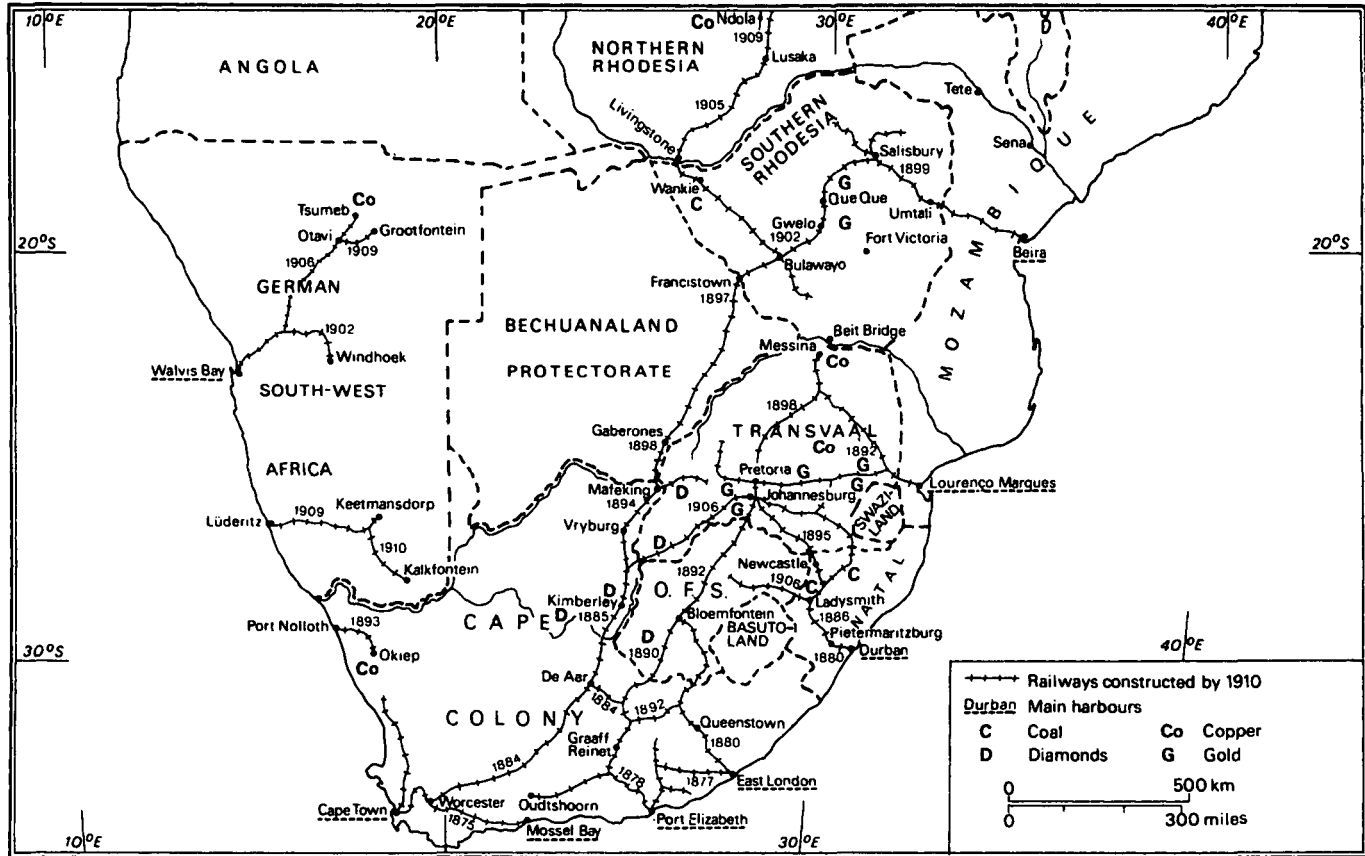
THE CONSTRUCTION OF MODERN SOUTH AFRICA

some 7,000 in action. The total number of African dead is unrecorded. Thus ended one of the costliest and most bitterly fought of colonial wars.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MODERN SOUTH AFRICAN STATE

Even before the war was over, Milner had appointed his 'kindergarten', young men from Oxford who shared his social assumptions, to join him in 'reconstructing' the Boer states. At one level, this was a matter of establishing an efficient bureaucratic machine, setting up municipal government, and re-establishing some modicum of order after the war. Within a short time, the Boer commandos had been dismantled, and the prisoners-of-war and ex-servicemen resettled. The dynamite concession was abolished and the Netherlands–South Africa Railway Company bought out, ending two of the most obvious grievances of the mining houses. An inter-colonial council was established to unify railway and tariff policies between the four colonies, and to discuss matters of common concern.

At another level, the changes were more profound. As high commissioner and governor of the Crown colonies of the Transvaal and Orange River, assisted by lieutenant-governors, Milner held unprecedented power to intervene in South African society and shape its future. Fundamentally these years of 'reconstruction' saw the accelerated transformation of South Africa by the social engineers along the lines demanded by the mining engineers a decade earlier. At the heart of this reconstruction were the relationships between agrarian and mining capital and labour, both black and white. In the new dispensation, there was no doubt but that the interests of international mining capital were a matter of much moment. The smooth functioning of the mining industry was central to Milner's administration for economic and political reasons. Yet the end of the war saw a major crisis in the structure of its financing and a major labour shortage, in part provoked by the actions of the Chamber of Mines itself in reducing black wages in 1900 to half their pre-war level. The return of Africans to their war-torn lands, the breakdown of the Mozambique labour supply during the war, and the labour demands from other sectors of the



19 Southern Africa, c. 1910

economy in the immediate post-war boom all exacerbated the crisis. The chamber was in any case anxious for state assistance to force down all wages and thus make possible the mining of low-grade ores left unexploited before the war.

Despite the unceasing demands for land and labour from every side, the forcing out of labour through the outright expropriation of African land, which was demanded by many farmers, was clearly too costly and dangerous, in the light of recent experience. In Natal and the Transvaal land colonisation companies opposed the uprooting of their rent-paying tenants, while in the Orange River Colony, share-cropping was particularly crucial to the restoration of agriculture after the war.⁶¹ Moreover, although the mine magnates were anxious to solve their problems of labour supply, they were becoming increasingly aware of the utility of African reserves in subsidising their labour costs. As Howard Pim, at that time the accountant for the Chamber of Mines and an important influence on the 'kindergarten', observed in 1905:

Let us assume... that the white man does turn the native out of one or more of his reserves... the natives must live somewhere. We will suppose that he is moved into locations attached to the large industrial centres... In the location he is more closely huddled together in surroundings in which his native customs have no place and he is compelled to purchase from the white man the food which in his own country he raised for himself. What the white man gains, therefore, is little more than the labour required to pay for the food which under natural conditions the native raised for himself... The white man has not yet shown that in South Africa his cultivation of the simple crops which the native requires can compete with native cultivation... For a time the urban location consists of able-bodied people, but they grow older, they become ill, they become disabled – who is to support them? The reserve is a sanatorium where they can recruit; if they are disabled, they remain there. Their own tribal system keeps them under discipline, and if they become criminals there is not the slightest difficulty in bringing them to justice... As time goes on these location burdens will increase and the proportion of persons in the locations really able to work will still further diminish... it is a fair assumption that at the outside one-fifth of the location population... is able to work. This means that the wages paid by the employers will have to be sufficient to support four other persons besides the workman...⁶²

⁶¹ T. Keegan, 'The transformation of agrarian society and economy in industrialising South Africa: the Orange Free State grain belt in the early twentieth century', Ph.D. London, 1981.

⁶² H. Pim, 'Some aspects of the South African native problem', *South Afr. J. Science*, 1905, 4, cited in M. Legassick, 'British hegemony and the origins of segregation in South Africa', unpublished seminar paper, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 1973.

In the short term, in order to solve its labour and profitability crisis, the Chamber of Mines decided to import indentured Chinese labour, a policy which demanded the intervention of both the imperial and colonial government actually to mobilise the labour and to secure the necessary international agreements. Between 1903 and 1907, when the scheme was ended, some 60,000 Chinese labourers were brought to South Africa on three-year contracts, and at lower wages than those of local African workers.⁶³ The policy roused a storm of protest, both in South Africa and in the United Kingdom, where the issue of ‘Chinese slavery’ was an important feature of the 1906 election campaign. The importation undoubtedly jeopardised what have conventionally been regarded as Milner’s political objectives in South Africa. It split the English-speaking vote, starkly revealed the mutual dependence of mining industry and state, and unified Afrikaner opposition to Milner at an early date.

The dramatic qualities of the Chinese labour ‘experiment’, and its political price-tag, should not, however, obscure its longer-term implications. The bargaining power of African workers was removed by direct state intervention at the very time that they were in a relatively strong position to exert it; an explicit colour bar which was to outlast the use of the Chinese was inserted into the regulations employing the Chinese in order to allay the fears of the English-speaking working class; and a definite decision was taken that the white man would not be employed as an unskilled labourer at the side of the black, notwithstanding the high rate of white unemployment on the Rand at the time, and despite Milner’s desire to swamp the Afrikaner demographically.⁶⁴ Neither Milner nor the mine-owners were prepared to see the growth of large numbers of unskilled, non-supervisory white workers on the Rand. As Milner put it, white labour was ‘much too dear’:⁶⁵ unlike Africans, the unemployed and unskilled Afrikaners who were beginning to stream into Johannesburg from the rural areas after the war were wholly landless and required a wage which would provide for their own upkeep as well as their families’

⁶³ The most recent account of the importation of Chinese labour is P. Richardson, *Chinese mine labour in the Transvaal* (London, 1982).

⁶⁴ For the way in which the imperatives of the mining industry took priority over Milner’s purely political objectives, see D. Denoon, ‘Capital and capitalists in the Transvaal in the 1890s and 1900s’, *Hist. J.*, 1980, 23, 1, 111–32.

⁶⁵ Milner’s reply to a deputation from the White Labour League, 2 June 1903, in C. Headlam, *The Milner papers*, 2 vols. (London, 1931–3), 459.

subsistence and reproduction. Fear that the unskilled workers would become unionised was a further consideration.

But the white working-class could neither be dispensed with nor disregarded and this led to a series of interventions by the state, both to reduce its cost and to prevent its joining up with black workers. These ranged all the way from municipal government and fiscal policies, to sewers, transport and housing. The latter was particularly important, given the growth of multiracial suburbs in the 1890s. Among the first actions of the Milner regime was the tightening up of urban segregation: as in other parts of South Africa, public health measures and the metaphor of disease provided the ideological justification, as white working-class housing was separated from that of black, in much the same way as the 'respectable' working class was being separated from 'outcast London' in late nineteenth-century Britain.

The provision of white working-class housing was intimately linked with further schemes to shape the geography of class on the Rand and stabilise the skilled working class. Thus among the first schemes blessed by both imperial administration and mining industry (which provided the finance) was the importation of women domestics from the United Kingdom, who, it was hoped, would release scarce black male labour from domestic service, and supply wives for white workers.⁶⁶ Education too was given a high priority – both for the defeated Boers, and for the children of English workers on the Rand.

A further way of cheapening the cost of labour was, as mining spokesmen had recognised even before the war, through improved agriculture, and here, again, the new administration introduced far-reaching changes. These were related in turn to Milner's plan to introduce a 'leavening' of British capitalist farmers to the South African countryside, who would increase the numbers of British settlers in the ex-republics, transform rural relations of production and send up the price of land. Milner's immigration schemes brought too few settlers to have an appreciable political effect, and the other attempts of the administration rapidly to restore agriculture were impeded by the devastation caused by the

⁶⁶ Van Onselen, *Studies*, 1: *New Babylon*, 27–8; J. J. van-Helten and K. Williams, 'The crying need of South Africa: the emigration of single British women to South Africa, 1901–10', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1983, 10, 1.

scorched earth policy, drought, cattle disease and depression. Nevertheless, it was during the British administration that state intervention in agriculture, to become such a feature of twentieth-century southern Africa, was made effective. Both colonies were given land boards, which developed into departments of agriculture, experts were brought in to advise the government on scientific farming, and agricultural societies were founded to advise farmers on crops, animal breeding and disease and new technology. In 1908 a land bank was established in the Transvaal, financed by a £5 million British government loan. In that year, the food shortages of the pre-war era were replaced by surpluses for export for the first time.⁶⁷

Although at the end of the war there were those who saw a future for African peasant production, and compared its productivity favourably with that of white farming, African hopes that the British conquest would lead to a redistribution of the land they had lost were soon disappointed. Pre-war property relations were swiftly confirmed, in both town and countryside. Popular African resentment can be traced through the millenarian prophecies recorded in the colonial archives, the rumours of impending rebellion – sufficient to secure the almost immediate rearming of Afrikaner notables – and the proliferation of independent faith-healing sects. Insecure themselves, especially as the post-war boom was replaced by a major economic depression, whites interpreted African restlessness as a result of the effect on ‘the native mind’ of the ‘white man’s war’, and agitation by ‘Ethiopians’ (members of independent black Christian sects), who were believed to be preaching a doctrine of ‘Africa for the Africans’, under the influence of black Americans.

Whatever the dangers from Ethiopianism, the failure of the British administration to fulfil the hopes that its war-time propaganda had aroused, and the renewed pressures for African land and labour after the war, were of greater moment in firing discontent. Milner’s emphasis on ‘well treated and justly governed black labour’⁶⁸ did not mean that he opposed institutional controls on African labour; his administration took over much of the legal framework of the Kruger régime. Tax and pass laws were now administered more efficiently. Arbitrary terror was

⁶⁷ Marks and Trapido, ‘Lord Milner and the South African State’, 68–71.

⁶⁸ Milner to Sir P. Fitzpatrick, 28 Nov. 1899 in Headlam, *Milner papers*, II, 351.

reduced, but the greatly improved state apparatus drew far larger numbers of Africans into the network of colonial control. In 1903 a South Africa-wide Native Affairs Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Godfrey Lagden, in order to unify 'native policy', in view of an impending confederation of the southern African territories. Although it took evidence from all over southern Africa, and included a large number of Africans amongst its witnesses, the commissioners were largely English-speaking or imperial administrators. Drawing on existing precedents in the Cape and Natal, its recommendations provided the blue-print for the segregationist South African state after 1910. They were directed to limiting the amount of land available to Africans, establishing territorial 'separation' of land ownership; the transformation of African 'squatters' into wage-labourers; and the provision of some form of representation of African 'grievances' outside the central decision-making bodies of the state.

Much British propaganda before and during the war had been concerned with the political rights of British subjects, and educated Africans. Indians and Coloureds all over South Africa believed that, with the British victory, at the very least discrimination against them would cease and the limited non-racial franchise which existed at the Cape would be extended to the new Crown Colonies. These hopes were also to be dashed. Almost the first action of the Milner administration in the Transvaal was to remove Indians to locations, thus enforcing Kruger legislation which the imperial government had been opposing since 1885. Despite lip-service to the needs of the 'respectable' Coloured man, and fears that if he were not incorporated into the colonial state, he might join hands with the African, neither Milner nor his successor, Lord Selborne, took action on his behalf. The small, formal political organisations which existed to cater for the needs of the educated middle class amongst Africans, Coloured and Indians, were equally almost invariably rebuffed, despite their essentially moderate and pro-British stance. It was his experience of these years which led Mohandas Gandhi, legal adviser to Indian merchants in Natal and Transvaal from 1892, to formulate his techniques of *satyagraha*, non-violent passive resistance. Meanwhile, in the Cape, Dr Abdurahman, the leader of the Coloured African Political Organisation, began to advocate black-brown

unity and working-class solidarity in response to the failure of the British to extend political rights. All over South Africa, vigilance societies and congresses sprang up organised by the growing black intelligentsia. There were relatively few meeting points at this stage between Gandhi and the desperately impoverished indentured and ex-indentured Indian labourers of Natal, between the African Political Organisation and the increasingly landless Coloured proletariat, or between the provincial native congresses and African peasants and workers. Nevertheless, as they found their attempts at incorporation rejected, middle-class leaders were on occasion radicalised and strove to speak on behalf of all blacks, if only to increase their own constituency and credibility.

After the victory at the polls of the Liberal Party in the United Kingdom early in 1906, new constitutions were devised for the ex-republics, granting them self-government based on adult male suffrage. The issue of a vote for blacks was not even subject to debate. The peace agreement between Britain and the Boers at Vereeniging had explicitly deferred consideration of the franchise for 'natives' until 'after the introduction of self-government' in the Transvaal and Orange Free State: as both Milner and Chamberlain recognised, this effectively pre-empted the issue. In both colonies, Afrikaner parties won the elections, led by the Boer War generals, Hertzog, Botha and Smuts. In the Transvaal the latter were assisted by English-speakers, who saw in *Het Volk* allies against the party of mining capital.

The victory of the Afrikaner parties, the division of the English-speaking vote, and the abandonment of an imperial attempt to adopt anti-discriminatory policies, have led many historians to describe Milner's sojourn in South Africa as a failure.⁶⁹ Certainly Milner himself saw the grant of responsible government to the conquered republics in this light. Nevertheless, within a very short time, as members of his 'kindergarten' were among the first to recognise, an accommodation was reached between the Afrikaner leaders in the Transvaal and the mining and imperial interests. Dubbed 'the alliance between maize and gold',⁷⁰ it also represented an alliance between mining capital and the state.

⁶⁹ The notion of Milner's 'failure' has become a commonplace in the literature; for the alternative view, see Marks and Trapido, 'Lord Milner', 33-4; and M. Chanock, *Unconsummated union: Britain, Rhodesia and South Africa* (Manchester, 1977), 2-7.

⁷⁰ The phrase was originally S. Trapido's in 'South Africa in a comparative study of industrialisation', *J. Development Studies*, 1971, 7; for a recent study of the 'symbiotic'

Three issues perhaps epitomise the nature of this alliance: the Smuts–Botha agreement to allow the gradual phasing out of Chinese labour, while allowing the mines to increase the length of African contracts and assisting its recruitment in Mozambique and Malawi; the readiness of the mining industry to employ unskilled Afrikaners in supervisory roles during the 1907 mine strike, during which British troops were called out ‘to keep English miners in order’;⁷¹ and imperial backing for the Land Bank. Botha and Smuts were keenly aware of the centrality of the mines for the capitalist development of South Africa and, as progressive farmers, were as heavily committed to the industry which constituted their main market as Milner and his kindergarten had been.

Within a couple of years of the war, the major political issue both for colonial politicians and members of the ‘kindergarten’ was the unification of the South African colonies. A spur to the movement came in 1906 with the Bambatha rebellion in Natal, which revealed the dangers of leaving ‘native affairs’ in the hands of small and nervous colonial governments. The demand for a uniform ‘native policy’, a synonym for control over labour, was one of its major objectives. Backed by information and publicity provided by the kindergarten and financed by the mining industry, a national convention representing most white political opinion, thrashed out a constitution in 1908–9. This formed the basis for the Act of Union, approved by the colonial parliaments, by a referendum in Natal, and by the British parliament, before coming into operation on 31 May 1910.

Two issues were the matter of heated and divided discussion at the convention – and had profound implications: whether or not the old maxim ‘equal rights for all civilised men’ would be adopted by the Union, and how constituencies were to be drawn up. Although at the time of the grant of self-government to the Transvaal, the latter issue had been a matter of major concern (with Progressive Party insistence on equally drawn constituencies based on their male, white, adult population), after a prolonged tussle with the Cape delegation, the Act of Union allowed the

relationship between the state and the mining industry, see D. Yudelman, *The emergence of modern South Africa. State, capital, and the incorporation of organized labor on the South African gold fields, 1902–1939* (Westport, Conn./London, 1983), 59–78.

⁷¹ Lionel Phillips to Julius Wernher, 3 June 1907, in M. Fraser and A. Jeeves (eds.), *All that glittered: selected correspondence of Lionel Phillips 1890–1924* (Cape Town, 1977), 179.

weighting of rural constituencies of up to 30 per cent. This provision, which granted a certain electoral advantage of rural, and thus largely Afrikaner, voters, was portrayed at the time as part of the price of the much vaunted ‘reconciliation’ between Boer and Briton. Again, despite the rhetoric, however, the mine magnates were not averse to a franchise weighted in favour of rural Afrikaners, especially after the politicisation and mass unionisation of the white working class which followed in the wake of the 1907 strike, and which led in 1909 to the formation of the South African Labour Party. Afrikaner nationalism had not yet established itself as a monolithic, ethnically mobilisable force, despite the early efforts of the displaced Afrikaner intelligentsia—teachers, preachers and professionals—and a burgeoning Afrikaans literature playing on the recent memory of the war. Afrikaner farmers, especially in the Transvaal but also in the Free State and the Cape, saw their future as inextricably linked with the mining industry and imperial markets, while poorer Afrikaners, themselves the product of class-formation in the countryside, were perhaps as attracted to class-based as ethnically-based associations in this period.⁷²

Although Cape delegates defended their non-racial, class-based franchise, which they saw as a useful ‘safety-valve’ for black aspirations, they were aware that any attempt to insist on its extension would jeopardise union. Before the war, Africans in the Cape eligible for the property-based franchise had already had experience of Western-type political organisation for a generation and more. The large increase in black voters in the 1880s consequent on the annexation of Transkeian territories and the shift in hegemony in Cape politics from merchants, interested in a stable peasantry, to industrialists with an insatiable demand for unskilled labour had already undermined the basis of the Cape franchise. In 1887 communally-held land no longer qualified Africans to vote, while in 1892 the property and educational qualifications were raised. Nevertheless, with the dramatic polarisation of Cape politics as a result of the Jameson Raid, the fourteen constituencies

⁷² For the weakness of Afrikaner nationalism before the South African War see H. Giliomee, ‘Reinterpreting Afrikaner nationalism, c. 1850–1900’, unpublished seminar paper, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 1983; for the attempt to organise on class lines, see Van Onselen, ‘The main reef road into the working class: proletarianisation, unemployment and class consciousness amongst Johannesburg’s Afrikaner poor, 1890–1914’, in *Studies*, 11: *New Nineveh*, especially 125–70.

in which African voters held the balance became an important electoral factor for white politicians.

Elsewhere in South Africa, blacks were virtually totally excluded from political rights. In Natal, despite the existence of a large and vibrant African Christian community, some of its members being third-generation *amakholwa* (believers), there were but half a dozen African voters on the rolls by the turn of the century. If anything, Natal politicians were more adamantly opposed to even a qualified black suffrage in the forthcoming Union than the ex-republicans. In the end a 'compromise' proved acceptable to both the convention and the British government. While the Cape retained its existing franchise, elsewhere white adult male suffrage obtained. This, together with the clause protecting equal language rights, was entrenched under the constitution. In addition, anyone not of 'European descent' was barred from sitting in either house or parliament.

African and Coloured opposition to the 'colour bar' provisions in the draft Act of Union was immediate and clear. A joint delegation was despatched to London in an attempt to get the British government to veto the discriminatory constitution. It availed them little. Most British politicians were convinced of the need for unification in the interests of economic development, and euphoric about the great reconciliation which had taken place between the white 'races'. The few lonely voices raised against the dangers of a constitution which excluded the vast majority of the population from the political community, were ignored in the atmosphere of mutual congratulation.

Although representatives of Southern Rhodesia and the high commission territories were present at the convention, it was quickly decided that Southern Rhodesia would not enter the Union until its future was clearer, and that the smaller territories of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland would also remain outside the Union for the time being, although a schedule attached to the Act of Union set the terms for their future incorporation. There was considerable feeling among white politicians that the schedule represented a lack of confidence in their good faith on the part of the imperial government and that the territories would constitute an imperial enclave within the South African state, derogating from its sovereignty. Nevertheless, the danger of violent African resistance to incorporation, together with

humanitarian opposition and a British desire to maintain an independent foothold in South Africa meant that the three territories remained outside the new Union. As in the case of Southern Rhodesia, however, it was assumed that their ultimate fate was within the Union, whose frontiers would ultimately extend, as Milner had envisaged, to the Zambezi.⁷³

Despite the achievement of union a mere eight years after the South African war, and the enormous changes which these years had wrought, one should not exaggerate the strength of the political union established, nor its economic autonomy. Powerful in its regional context, it was still, as Martin Chanock has reminded us,

... defenceless in a world of predatory imperial powers; it was believed by many (with reason) to be inherently unstable; and apart from having within its borders valuable mineral resources which were foreign owned, it was poor – a small-time exporter of agricultural raw materials, not self-sufficient in food. It was a new African country which was weak, divided, poor and owned overseas, with the majority of its population effectively excluded from its political processes and distrusted by their rulers...⁷⁴

The twentieth century has so far transformed all but the last.

⁷³ Milner to Fitzpatrick, 28 Nov. 1899, *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ Chanock, *Unconsummated union*, 2.

CHAPTER 9

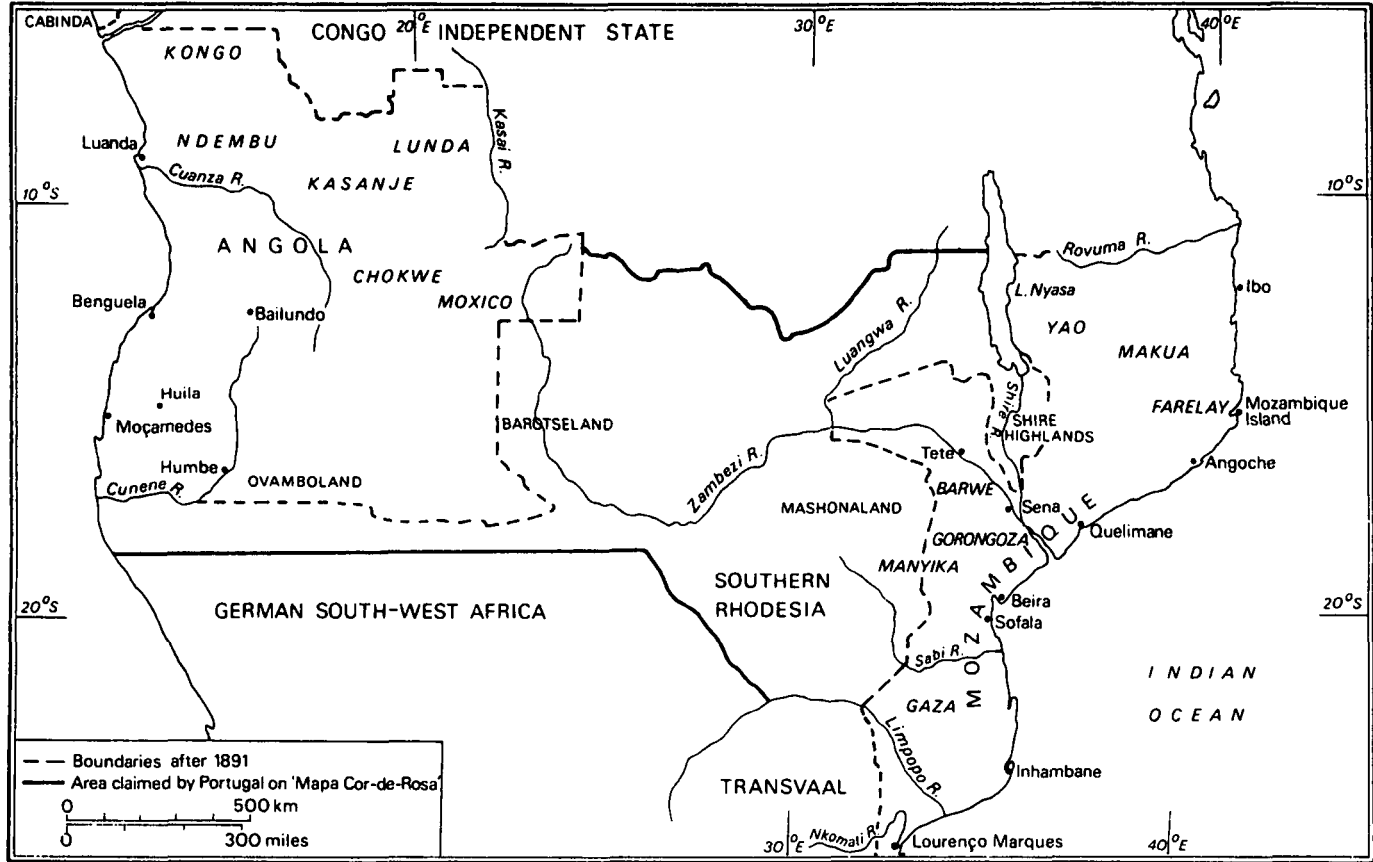
PORTUGUESE COLONIES AND MADAGASCAR

A. ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE, 1870–1905

ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE BEFORE PARTITION, 1870–85

The inception of the scramble for Africa obliged Portugal to act on what had been an established ideal for many centuries. Whereas their contemporaries in other European countries had eschewed the acquisition of territory, many Portuguese had envisaged the ultimate conquest and consolidation of the territories in the hinterland of their coastal settlements in Angola and Mozambique. That these ideas never bore fruit resulted from the lack of urgency, the inadequacy of Portuguese resources, and, above all, the successful resistance of African peoples to those plans which actually were initiated. However, when other Europeans began to show an interest in the lands of central Africa, Portugal chose to marshal its limited resources in a concerted effort to secure as much territory as possible. Because of this effort, Portugal eventually received recognition from the other powers of its right to exploit the vast land areas of Angola and Mozambique. Yet, the same lack of resources which had delayed the conquest of these regions for such a long time played a crucial role in determining the pace of the establishment of effective occupation and the nature of Portuguese colonial control.

Even in 1885 Portugal occupied only a small portion of the territory which would ultimately be recognised as Angola. There was a degree of irony in the fact that the Berlin Conference of that year enunciated the doctrine of effective occupation, since Portugal had recently completed a withdrawal from the interior. During the 1850s, the Portuguese had penetrated many parts of the populous western half of Angola in the hopes of profiting from direct control of these regions. However, when it was realised that this expansionist policy had not produced the desired results, they began to retreat to their traditional bases of operation. Thus, by



20 Angola and Mozambique at the beginning of the twentieth century

the 1860s Portuguese activity in Angola was concentrated in and around Luanda, along the north bank of the Cuanza river, and in the environs of the southern towns of Benguela and Moçamedes.

In these regions, however, the Portuguese impact on local culture had been profound. Over the course of time, a distinctive and uniquely Angolan society, characterised by its ambivalent social attitudes, had emerged. In Luanda, Portuguese served as the official language, but all segments of the population made equal use of Kimbundu. Colour played a prominent role in the system of social stratification. Yet it was not uncommon to find Africans included in the highest stratum of society and *mestiços* relegated to the lowest. Although the centre of this nascent Creole culture was located in Luanda, its impact was not limited to the capital. In addition to taking root in other country towns, aspects of Creole culture were spread throughout the southern plantations by the Mbari slave and ex-slave population, and disseminated more widely in the highland areas by such peripheral groups as the coffee planters of the Luanda hinterland and the itinerant traders of the interior.¹

A rather different cultural nexus had evolved in the extreme south of Angola. In 1849 white settlers began to take up permanent residence in Moçamedes and the adjacent Huila highlands. Because of the healthy climate and the weakness of the neighbouring African states, this nucleus was able to multiply quite rapidly. During the early 1880s, trek-Boers emigrating from the Transvaal and peasants arriving from Madeira helped to swell the ranks of the white colonists. By 1885, their number already exceeded 1,500, and more were expected from both Portugal and the Transvaal. In many ways the emerging social and cultural ethic of the southern population was more similar to that of South Africa than the older towns of Angola. Unlike the stable convict populations of Luanda and Benguela, it was a society dominated by family groups. Moreover, in contrast to the relaxed tolerance of Creole Luanda, the white élite exercised a strict social and cultural domination over blacks and *mestiços*. In this environment openly expressed racist ideas became the norm of society.

Changes of a different nature had been occurring in the areas which lay beyond direct Portuguese cultural and political

¹ D. Wheeler and R. Pélissier, *Angola* (London, 1971), 68–71.

influence. By 1885, the disintegration of large state systems, already visible in many areas from the beginnings of the century, had become general. The Kongo kingdom in the north retained considerable prestige and ritual importance, but its real political authority was extremely limited. Power had passed to a multitude of independent chiefs, who controlled the expanding trade of the Congo estuary and the adjacent coast. Similarly the once formidable kingdom of Kasanje, to the east of Luanda, was only a hollow shell, with power in the hands of the lineage elders.² Further east, the Lunda empire was rapidly disintegrating, while in the central highlands the Ovimbundu kings were increasingly threatened by emergent groups of traders. In the far south, the ancient kingdom of Humbe on the Cunene river was much reduced and threatened by the rising power of its former Ovambo subjects.

This tendency toward political decentralisation did not imply that African societies were becoming weaker and less able to resist European encroachments. On the contrary, these changes often reflected the emergence of new and dynamic groups, more capable of defending their independence than some of the brittle polities which they had come to supersede. The Ndembu, immediately to the north-east of Luanda, served as a focus for runaway slaves and resisted the Portuguese successfully. Even more striking was the case of the Chokwe, who raided for slaves, hunted for ivory, and collected wild rubber. The wealth produced by these endeavours allowed them to build up a large arsenal of modern firearms and swell their numbers by incorporating alien women through the system of pawnship. As a result, the Chokwe were able to spread over eastern Angola and western Zaïre, overthrowing the Lunda empire in the process. The Portuguese were to find it extremely hard to conquer this elusive foe, particularly because of the lack of any centralised institution on which to concentrate their forces.³

The restructuring of African societies mirrored the economic transformation which Angola had undergone during the nineteenth century. The winding down of the Atlantic slave trade began in 1836 with the abolition decree, and was virtually

² J. Miller, 'Slaves, slavers and social change in nineteenth century Kasanje', in F. Heimer (ed.), *Social change in Angola* (Munich, 1973), 10–29.

³ J. Miller, 'Chokwe trade and conquest in the nineteenth century', in J. R. Gray and D. Birmingham (eds.), *Pre-colonial African trade* (London, 1970), 175–201.

complete by the 1860s. Products of hunting and collecting, however, took the place of slaves in the African sector of the Angolan extractive economy. Initially, it was the ivory trade which assumed increased importance. Stimulated by the end of the royal monopoly, the ivory cycle reached a peak during the 1850s, before subsiding in the 1860s. Rubber and beeswax, however, soon filled the vacuum created by the decline in ivory. Various regions of Angola were also fortunate in finding indigenous products, which, with only minor attention, could be profitably grown. Palm products were predominant in the Kongo area, where the trees grew wild and Africans ran a kind of semi-plantation system. In the hinterland of Luanda groundnuts and coffee, both indigenous to the area, provided the staples. Thus, virtually every region of Angola was able to find a substitute for the export of human beings.

The Creole sector of the economy also underwent a period of growth and change. The most important innovation was the development of a plantation system. Although Africans operated plantations in many areas, the coastal estates were usually dominated by Europeans, who often made use of slave labour. Despite violent price fluctuations on the world markets, both groups were generally fortunate in finding new cash crops which could be profitably grown. Cotton, cultivated on European holdings in the south, thrived during the period from the end of the American Civil War until the 1880s, when a steep drop in prices brought ruin to the industry. Similarly, plantation-produced coffee and sugar each experienced periods of prosperity. In addition to the increased attention devoted to the products of the soil, Europeans in the south also began the intensive development of fisheries.

The cyclical nature of Angolan production was not without impact on African society. Since there was no competitive Asian factor, and European and *mestiço* attempts to penetrate the interior were thwarted, Africans were able to maintain control of commerce. Yet, the alterations in the economy served to thrust forward groups and classes which were in a position to react more quickly to the changing circumstances. Thus, the Chokwe, whose residential mobility enabled them to move into areas which produced a product of contemporary demand, gained in both wealth and power. Similarly, in these new conditions, successful

individuals and corporate lineages of traders were able to challenge the older order which found it difficult to transform static social structures based on slaving and defence against raiding. Typical of these new men were the shrewd Kongo chiefs of the northern coast whose independence of the monarchy was abetted by their ability to collect taxes on the ivory, rubber, and palm products exported from their area. At the same time, in the southern part of Angola, Ovimbundu trading corporations, whose memberships were based on dispersed matrilineages, began to challenge the dominance of the localised patrilineal chiefdoms.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Angola enjoyed a substantial geographical advantage over Mozambique, which probably explains the much greater political and economic importance of the former colony until 1885. Before the building of the Suez Canal and the development of the mining economy of southern Africa, Angola was much closer to the important world markets and was better served by steamers. Although the colony was not without financial problems and was often in deficit, it was still the principal jewel in the Portuguese imperial crown, with larger revenues than those of any other colony.⁴

Portuguese influence in Mozambique had been much less extensive than in Angola. In 1885 it was largely limited to a number of small settlements along the coast. Starting from Lourenço Marques in the south, they included Inhambane, Sofala, Quelimane, Mozambique Island and Ibo in the far north. With the exception of Lourenço Marques (Maputo), which was beginning the transformation which ultimately would make it into a major port, these stations had much in common. Each housed a very small number of Portuguese soldiers, a somewhat larger number of African recruits and a few petty traders. Only among the Tonga in the environs of Inhambane could it be said that the Portuguese ruled over the local African population. Elsewhere the weakness of the military stations determined that they had no impact whatsoever on the neighbouring peoples. Similarly, Portuguese settlement in the interior was restricted to the two Zambezi towns of Sena and Tete, neither of which was capable of influencing events beyond the immediate vicinity.

Portuguese influence, however, was being disseminated in the

⁴ A. de O. Marques, *História de Portugal*, vol. II (Lisbon, 1973), 149–51.

interior by the expansion of the *prazo* system of large estates. During the nineteenth century, *prazeros* (land-holders), often of mixed African and Asian descent, had extended their control along the Zambezi and its tributaries. With the aid of their locally recruited Chikunda armies, they had come to control populations on both sides of the river. As a group the *prazeros* retained the independent spirit of the frontiersman and resisted violently when the Portuguese Crown attempted to intervene in their affairs. As long as the Portuguese administration allowed free scope to their activities, however, *prazeros* maintained a nominal allegiance to it and often acted in its name. Thus, according to M. D. D. Newitt, 'if there had been no "Partition", Central Africa would probably have been settled by a number of Chikunda tribes under chiefly families with Portuguese names'.⁵

Elsewhere, Portuguese influence in the interior of what was to become Mozambique was virtually non-existent. Although the vast region bounded by the Zambezi on the south, the Indian Ocean in the east, the Rovuma river in the north, and Lake Malawi and the Shire river in the east, was largely unknown to Europeans, it was in the process of undergoing major transformations. The incipient spread of Islam was among the most important. Muslim Swahili sultanates continued to dominate the coast as they had done for centuries. However, Islam was beginning to make inroads among the Makua, who occupied all of the eastern half of the region. It was also being carried to the western portion by the Yao, whose expansion had taken them as far as the Shire highlands and the shores of Lake Malawi, where they were engaged in raiding the local populations. They were often successful in incorporating the Nyanja, Lomwe and Makua peoples they encountered into new chiefdoms. In addition to the expansion of the Yao, northern Mozambique was also the scene of the aggressive raiding of a number of small Nguni polities. The populations in such diverse localities as the Luangwa, Shire, and Rovuma river valleys were all subject to incursions by the groups which had infiltrated many of the peripheral regions. Thus, throughout northern Mozambique, aggressive and militant societies were in the process of initiating important social changes.

There were a number of factors discernible in the dynamic

⁵ M. D. D. Newitt, *Portuguese settlement on the Zambezi* (London, 1973), 306.

evolution of society in northern Mozambique which would have a profound effect on resistance to European encroachment. The region lacked a dominant state or ruler against whom the Portuguese could concentrate. Rather, there were a large number of small chiefdoms, each virtually independent of its neighbours. Secondly, many groups were accustomed to the use of firearms, which were supplied in ample quantities by Portuguese merchants on the coast. Finally, the penetration of Islam provided an ideological base both for the opposition to Christian encroachment and for a pan-ethnic resistance. Thus, an infrastructure, which suggested the capability of successful resistance, had evolved in northern Mozambique.

Conditions to the south of the Zambezi differed greatly from those prevailing in the north. The whole of the region beyond the influence of *prazo* society continued to be dominated by the Shangane state of Gungunyana. Since his grandfather, Soshangane, led a group of Nguni refugees from Natal into Mozambique in the 1820s, the Shangane had resided in a number of places. The capital had been located as far south as the Nkomati river and as far north as the hinterland of Sofala. By 1885, Gungunyana had transferred his residence from the north and settled in the Limpopo valley. The itinerant nature of the Shangane state determined that the amount of influence it exercised over the peoples of the southern half of Mozambique largely corresponded to the location of the capital at a particular point in time. When the Shangane mostly resided in the hinterland of Sofala, they dominated the kingdom of Manyika and the Ndauspeaking peoples to the north of the Sabi river. Once they had shifted southward, it was the Tsonga and Tshopi populations who were obliged to pay tribute.⁶

The dominance of the Shangane over so much of southern Mozambique was to have a profound influence on how the process of partition would unravel. On the one hand, it provided the Portuguese with a central focus on which to concentrate their efforts, while, on the other, the military prowess of the Shangane posed an obstacle which even most Portuguese respected. By 1885 both factors were already in evidence. The Portuguese claimed to possess a document signed by Mzila, Gungunyana's father, in

⁶ G. Liesegang, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Reiches der Gaza Nguni im südlichen Mosambique, 1820–1895* (Cologne, 1967).

which the former king had allegedly agreed to become a 'vassal' of the crown. Gungunyana, however, not only denied the authenticity of this document, but maintained that he was not bound by any agreements made by his father. Moreover, because of the strength of his impis, Gungunyana was able to act in a defiant manner and treat the Portuguese claims with disdain. Similarly, the weakness of the forces at the disposal of Mozambican officials obliged them not to undertake any actions which might provoke him.⁷

The lack of military strength and the poverty-stricken nature of the Portuguese settlements resulted partly from the depressed state of the economy. Traditionally Mozambique had depended on the export of ivory, gold and slaves. Yet, by 1885, the commerce in all three had diminished greatly. The elephant herds on which the ivory trade had been based had disappeared virtually throughout Mozambique. Moreover, a great deal of the traffic which originated further in the interior had come to be exported by other routes. A similar fate had befallen the gold-mining industry. Changes in the patterns of marketing the gold produced in the interior had combined with the exhaustion of the alluvial deposits, on which the kingdoms of the south had been based, to bring the trade to a virtual halt. The slave trade proved the most resilient of the three former pillars of the economy and was still actively pursued in the northern half of the country. Yet, even that was succumbing to the forces which were gradually eroding its importance in East Africa.

Several facets of the economy as it existed in 1885 caused concern among the Portuguese. Unlike Angola, Mozambique had proved unable to adjust its economy in accordance with changing world demand. Although Africans had taken the lead in the collection of rubber, groundnuts and other products, the new commodities were subject to sharp yearly variations and usually produced insufficient revenue for the coffers of the administration. As a result, the usual annual budgetary deficit had to be corrected by contributions from metropolitan Portugal. In addition, Portuguese concerns and citizens played only a minor role in the commerce of Mozambique. Asian middlemen, usually from British India, reigned supreme in all transactions in the interior.

⁷ D. Wheeler, 'Gungunhana', in N. Bennett (ed.), *Leadership in eastern Africa* (Boston, 1968), 165-220.

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They dominated the retail trade and also purchased the goods supplied by African cultivators and collectors. Moreover, the major commercial houses which exported these goods were almost exclusively controlled by Europeans of other nationalities or by Asian financiers. Thus, as the age of accelerated imperialism was about to begin, Mozambique found itself in a much greater state of disarray than Angola.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRONTIERS, 1885–1891

Although neither colony was in a satisfactory state, both contained the nucleus of a colonial party which advocated expansion. These colonials had been active on a number of fronts. They had been instrumental in sponsoring such expeditions as those of Serpa Pinto and of Brito Capelo and Roberto Ivens. They also functioned as vocal lobbyists in Lisbon, where they argued the case for increased metropolitan activity in the colonies. Although most of their pleas had fallen on deaf ears, the colonials were in a position to act as the vanguard of Portuguese expansion when Lisbon changed its policy.

The Berlin Conference of 1884–5 provided the stimulus for a radical change in Portugal's African policy. On the one hand, it ruled against Portuguese claims to the control of the mouth of the Congo river, while, on the other, it suggested that future questions should be decided by effective occupation. Both these rulings had a significant impact in Portugal. Colonial matters had previously commanded little attention either in Parliament or with public opinion. The outcry against what were widely regarded as the unjust decisions of the conference, however, brought colonial considerations to the forefront. Secondly, in the aftermath of the Berlin Conference, those advocating a pro-expansionist policy were able to manipulate public opinion to overcome the opposition of those who felt that the colonies, or at least the unprofitable ones, should be abandoned. They effectively combined the sentiments stemming from what was described as a national humiliation with the sense of urgency suggested by the doctrine of effective occupation to win the day for vigorous action in Africa.⁸

Between 1885 and 1890 the expansionists operated on several

⁸ G. Papagno, *Colonialismo e feudalesimo* (Turin, 1972), 94–104.

fronts. Their goal, as exemplified by the publication of the famous *mapa cor-de-rosa*, was to win control of all the territory between Angola and Mozambique. In terms of diplomacy, they felt that they scored an early victory by concluding treaties with Germany and France in 1886. In these documents both nations promised not to interfere in the territory to the south of the Rovuma river in Mozambique or to the north of the Cunene in Angola. In addition to diplomatic initiatives, the pro-expansionists sponsored a number of expeditions in the African interior, which sought to explore, sign treaties and prepare the way for effective occupation. In Angola, the expeditions of Henrique de Carvalho to the Lunda area, which produced treaties of vassalage with innumerable chiefs and the Lunda king, and those of Artur de Paiva to the southern regions to sign treaties with the Ngangela and the Ovimbundu, were among the most important. Similarly, in Mozambique there were expeditions to Mashonaland under Paiva d'Andrade and to the Shire highlands under Antonio Cardoso and Serpa Pinto.⁹

Although France and Germany virtually exempted themselves from the contest, there remained a number of questions to be settled with the British and with Leopold, King of the Belgians. The Berlin Conference had resolved the issue of the Congo mouth, but failed to delimit frontiers between Leopold's Independent State and Angola. The question of the extension of Angola's borders to meet those of Mozambique remained unanswered, because in 1888 Cecil Rhodes obtained title to the Lochner concession, which he claimed gave him exclusive control of Barotseland. Rhodes and the British South Africa Company were also at the centre of the controversial issues which were brewing in Mozambique. He concluded a treaty with Gungunyana and thus laid claim to Gazaland. Similarly, in an effort to secure a route to the sea, his agents were active in treaty-making and infiltration in Manyika. Finally, there was the contested region of the Shire highlands, where Scottish missionaries had worked since the 1870s and were equally active as agents of British imperialism.

Although the various participants were parrying for the advantage on all of these fronts, it was the question of the Shire highlands which hastened a resolve to the outstanding disputes. Prior to 1889, it seemed unlikely that a major confrontation would take place between Britain and Portugal over this area. The

⁹ See E. Axelson, *Portugal and the scramble for Africa* (Johannesburg, 1967).

Portuguese had always considered it as part of their sphere and had despatched a number of treaty-making expeditions. The British government, on the other hand, expressed no real interest in the region and in draft versions of treaties, agreed to recognise it as Portuguese. Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office, however, was aware of the domestic pressures which would occur if the Scottish missionaries came under Portuguese control against their will. Thus, he was content as long as the area remained neutral. Two very distinct events, however, obliged Salisbury to alter his policy. The first was the discovery in 1889 of the Chinde mouth to the Zambezi, which, by allowing ocean-going vessels direct access to the river, made it unnecessary to land goods in Portuguese East Africa and made the prospect of a viable protectorate in the Shire highlands much more of a reality. Secondly, in return for other considerations, Cecil Rhodes offered to meet the expenses of the proposed protectorate, thus removing the last major obstacle to a British take-over. It was under these changed circumstances that Salisbury despatched Harry Johnston to the Shire highlands, armed with the authority to declare a British protectorate, if necessary. Since Serpa Pinto was preparing to take a large expedition to the very same area, a confrontation between the two powers became more likely. Although the British government sent increasingly vehement warnings to the Portuguese, Henrique Barros Gomes, the minister of the Marine, took little note of these messages. He seemingly hoped that Serpa Pinto's expedition would provide Portugal with the effective occupation required by international understanding. Although the area had already been declared under British protection when Pinto arrived, the expedition continued in pursuit of its objective. When this news arrived in London, the Foreign Office despatched the message which has subsequently been known as 'the Ultimatum'. In a bellicose manner, the British ordered the Portuguese to retreat from the Shire highlands. Thus, not only did Salisbury make it apparent that the British position on this issue was inflexible, he also hastened the resolve of other outstanding questions.¹⁰

Although the Portuguese ministry resigned two days after meeting the requirements of the ultimatum, the new government agreed that a general settlement with Britain was needed. The two countries drafted a treaty which kept the *contra-costa* principle alive

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 157-232.

by creating a 20-mile zone north of the Zambezi in which Portugal was to have transit and telegraph rights between Angola and Mozambique. However, the August Convention contained other provisions which further incensed the already hostile public opinion in Portugal to the extent that the Cortes refused to ratify it. With yet another ministry toppled, Portugal found itself in the difficult position of being unable to satisfy both an enraged public and an increasingly impatient Great Britain. Although Britain agreed to a *modus vivendi* of six months duration dating from November 1890, during which a new treaty was to be negotiated and both sides were to respect the position of the other in disputed territories, Portuguese politicians realised that further delays would result in the loss of additional territory. As a new series of negotiations progressed, this sentiment seemingly filtered down to a more sober public opinion. By June of 1891, both the Portuguese government and public accepted a treaty less favourable than the one which had been rejected six months earlier. Although the final demarcation of borders could not be resolved for some years, the treaty of 1891 determined the essential configuration of both Angola and Mozambique and brought the European phase of the partition to a close.¹¹

Under the terms of the treaty the outline of Mozambique was somewhat different from what it would have been had the August Convention been ratified. It granted considerably more territory to Portugal north of the Zambezi, but made no provision for the *contra-costa* ideal. This increase of territory was compensation for granting the lion's share of Manyika to Rhodes and the British South Africa Company. Yet, despite his entreaties and the provocative activities of his agents in south-eastern Africa, Rhodes was denied the strip of territory which would have provided Rhodesia with a direct outlet to the sea. Similarly, it refused to recognise his claims to Gazaland, although he had obtained mineral concessions in return for supplying Gungunyana with 1,000 rifles and other considerations. Thus, despite putting an end to the idea of linking Angola with Mozambique, the treaty of 1891 provided European recognition of Portugal's right to exploit a vast territory in south-eastern Africa.¹²

The essential configuration of Angola was also determined in

¹¹ Great Britain, Admiralty, *A manual of Portuguese East Africa* (Oxford, 1920), 492-503.

¹² P. R. Warhurst, *Anglo-Portuguese relations in south-central Africa, 1890-1900* (London, 1962), 14-109.

1891, but the six-month period following Portugal's refusal to ratify the August Convention resulted in the loss of additional territory. In the original version Barotseland was divided between Angola and Northern Rhodesia. During the interim, Rhodes protested that the Lochner concession entitled the British South Africa Company to control all of Barotseland. Thus, instead of being divided along the upper Zambezi, all of Barotseland fell into the British sphere. However, if the settlement of the south-eastern border proved unfavourable, the Portuguese were quite satisfied with the resolution of the north-eastern frontier with the Congo Independent State. The area had been the scene of intense competition, and, at one time, Leopold had purchased a gunboat and actually contemplated delivering his own ultimatum. Yet, in 1891, he was prevailed upon to settle the issue over the conference table. The resultant negotiations proved successful for the Portuguese, as they were able to secure the Kasai as the north-eastern frontier, even though their influence in that region had been minimal.¹³ Thus, with the southern frontier having previously been settled with Germany, 1891 marked the end of the diplomatic aspect of the partition.

THE OCCUPATION OF THE INTERIOR REGIONS,
1895-1905

Due to a serious financial crisis which hit Portugal in 1890, the end of the European phase of the partition did not result in the implementation of the grand designs for colonial development which had been promised. The crisis was announced by the collapse of the Baring financial house, but its roots lay in the serious overspending which had occurred during the 1880s. Metropolitan Portugal was obliged to abandon the gold standard, default on interest payments to foreign creditors, and undergo a period of inflation. It was not long before the effects were felt in the colonies. Since the large sums of money poured into Angola had produced no economic gains, measures of financial stringency were imposed. Similarly, the depression necessitated such serious retrenchment in Mozambique that virtually all but the most crucial public services came to a halt. Because of the prevailing

¹³ E. dos Santos, *A questão da Lunda, 1885-1894* (Lisbon, 1966).

climate of austerity there was little inclination in either colony to initiate new schemes or even to attempt to establish superiority over the vast majority of the African population. In fact, it seemed, once its claims to African territory had been recognised, that Portugal would again lapse into a period when all major initiative would be indefinitely postponed.

A poverty-stricken Portugal might have allowed the lull in African activity to continue had it not been for a revolt in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. In 1894 the Ronga chief, Mahazul, took up arms against the Portuguese because his people were complaining about unremunerated labour and a sudden increase in the hut tax. Many of the other Ronga chiefs supported him, and, although no direct assault was made, the position of the town was described as precarious. Since Lourenço Marques provided the vital outlet from the Transvaal on which the economy of Mozambique depended, large numbers of Portuguese and Angolan troops were imported to deal with the crisis. This additional firepower soon brought an end to the hostilities around the town and successfully quelled the rebellion.

The importance of the revolt in Lourenço Marques, however, stems from the fact that it was directly responsible for initiating the long-anticipated confrontation between the Portuguese and Gungunyana. Following his defeat, Mahazul sought refuge in Gazaland with the Nguni chief. Since the Portuguese would not have dared to interfere with Gungunyana under ordinary circumstances, this flight seemingly assured the Ronga chief of his freedom. However, the presence of thousands of troops in the territory, commanded by the aggressive high commissioner, António Enes, represented a distinct break with normality. Although many observers believed that the Portuguese were outmatched, Enes was one of the few who felt that Shangane power was overrated. Acting on this assumption, he ordered Gungunyana to surrender the fugitive or face a punitive expedition. Gungunyana had done all in his power to avoid hostilities. He had attempted to manipulate the various European forces which surrounded him in an attempt to safeguard his independence and had demonstrated great restraint in not attacking the Portuguese when they were at their weakest. However, since he apparently assumed that not answering this challenge would result

in the loss of his independence, he refused to comply with the ultimatum and prepared for war.¹⁴

The ease of the subsequent Portuguese victory testified to the astuteness of Enes's assessment. The power of the Shangane proved less formidable than many had imagined. It suffered from the fact that the subject peoples of the Shangane had not been as thoroughly assimilated as in other Nguni states, from the large-scale labour migration to South Africa, and from the inability of their soldiers to make use of the firearms at their disposal. Thus, the three-pronged Portuguese offensive which moved into Gazaland found that the size of the force which confronted them was much smaller than anticipated, that the Tsonga recruits quickly deserted their Nguni leaders, and that the opposing rifle-fire invariably was directed over their heads. Therefore, the taking of Gungunyana's capital, followed shortly thereafter by the tracking down of the fleeing king, was accomplished by the end of 1895.¹⁵

Although the war itself was somewhat of an anti-climax, its consequences were important and immediate. Despite a subsequent unsuccessful revolt in Gazaland, it secured Portuguese possession of what was to be the most important part of the province. Moreover, with the removal of Gungunyana as a force, it proved a simple matter to occupy the territories to the north of the Sabi river which had been in his sphere of influence. In addition to facilitating the occupation of southern Mozambique, the victory provided the Portuguese with an enormous psychological lift. It is not too much to say that it restored pride in a nation whose confidence had been badly shaken by the Ultimatum and other sources of embarrassment. The inspirational value was so great, in fact, that, for one of the few times during the partition era, the Portuguese began to initiate action rather than respond to it.

The aggressive spirit which emerged from the defeat of Gungunyana was largely responsible for a Portuguese attempt to bring northern Mozambique under control. Unlike many of his predecessors, Governor-General Mousinho de Albuquerque was possessed of a vision of what Mozambique should become and

¹⁴ D. Wheeler, 'Gungunyane, the negotiator: a study in African diplomacy', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1968, 9, 4, 585-602.

¹⁵ A. Enes, Ayres d'Ornelas, J. Azevedo Coutinho, J. Teixeira Botelho, and many others wrote accounts of the campaigns.

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seemingly had the support to bring these plans to fruition. Before anything else could be successfully accomplished, he argued, it would be necessary to defeat the remaining independent African groups. His first objective was to impose a hut tax on the Swahili and Makua peoples of the northern Mozambique coast. By 1897, however, this attempt to interfere with their independence had provoked a resistance movement which was supported by almost all of the Makua chiefs, the Swahili sultans, and even Portuguese merchants. Although large numbers of Portuguese troops were active in the field during 1897, they were able to make little headway against the well co-ordinated guerrilla tactics and sharp marksmanship of an adversary which was well informed in advance of Portuguese movements. Eventually the necessity of putting down the 1897 revolt in Gazaland obliged the Portuguese to suspend their northern operations. They had established a number of coastal forts and signed some meaningless treaties, but had fallen far short of Mousinho's goal of bringing the area under effective Portuguese control.¹⁶ Thus, by 1898, effective occupation had become a reality only in most parts of the southern half of the province.

The contemporaries of Enes and Albuquerque in Angola, however, had not pursued a similar policy of expansion. Between 1891 and 1899 military operations were undertaken only in order to secure sensitive border regions or to protect a threatened commercial interest. For example, some small-scale actions were fought in the Moxico region in order to establish forts along the extensive eastern frontier and prevent encroachment by Rhodes from Barotseland. Similarly, 1896 witnessed a number of operations along the northern border with the Congo Independent State. More important campaigns resulted from the desire to secure regions of economic importance. Between 1893 and 1895 troops were sent into the traditionally hostile territory on the south of the Cuanza river, where the opposition of the Kimbundu-speaking population threatened the rubber routes. In 1898, a rebellion caused by an epidemic of rinderpest obliged the Portuguese to move into the Humbe region, the centre of the southern cattle trade. When no commercial interest was at stake, however, the officials of Angola preferred not to initiate military

¹⁶ N. Hafkin, 'Trade, society, and politics in northern Mozambique, c. 1753-1913' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1973), 371-98.

campaigns. The result was that by 1898 little of the territory recognized as Portuguese had been occupied.

In 1898, plans for expansion into the interior of both colonies were dealt a blow by the appearance of yet another financial crisis in Portugal. Although the unresolved struggle with foreign creditors was the immediate cause of the collapse, the heavy spending which had attended the military campaigns in Mozambique certainly contributed to the problem. Critics in Portugal took special aim at Mousinho de Albuquerque, accusing him of having wasted enormous sums on unnecessary and glory-seeking military campaigns. With the value of the currency falling to half the level of 1891, colonial governors were ordered to desist from all offensive campaigns. Although Albuquerque resigned in protest against what he labelled the lack of metropolitan support, a financially troubled Portugal again found itself unable to put its plan into operation.

Although the worst of the financial crisis had come to an end by 1902, the extension of Portuguese control over their colonies continued to be a slow process. Rather than taking the initiative in a concerted campaign designed to wrest control of the independent areas, they continued to react to specific and often localised problems. In the whole northern half of Angola there were protracted but small-scale operations against the fragmented polities lying outside Portuguese control, usually caused by trading conflicts as Portuguese and *mestiço* traders penetrated ever further inland. The largest campaign was against the Ndembu, in hilly and jungle-covered territory close to Luanda. The Portuguese lost many men through disease and ambush and wasted vast amounts of money in order to reduce the Ndembu area to an apparent state of 'pacification' by 1908. But the area was to continue to give constant trouble in later years.

In the central highlands and the southern flood-plains, African kingdoms had retained a much higher degree of centralisation than in the north, although there were no polities of the size of the Shangane state in southern Mozambique. At first sight they appeared to constitute a more formidable foe than the fragmented northern peoples, but in general they proved easier to conquer after the first main clash and, above all, easier to administer after defeat. This was particularly noticeable in the so-called Bailundo war of 1902. In that year the price of wild rubber fell disastrously

on world markets and the growing conflict between Portuguese and Ovimbundu traders came to a head. Scores of Portuguese and *mestiço* traders were assassinated, and the leader of the rebellion, Mutu-ya-Kavela, was proclaimed king of Bailundo. But attempts to draw other Ovimbundu kingdoms into the movement were generally a failure, in spite of the use of various forms of cults to create a feeling of Ovimbundu solidarity. This failure was due largely to the growth of slave-raiding between different Ovimbundu kingdoms, as the export of labour to the cocoa plantations of São Tomé became greater every year. In the neighbouring kingdom of Wambu, Mutu-ya-Kavela was feared as a terrible slave-raider and was unacceptable as the leader of a unified rebellion. The Portuguese were therefore successful in putting down the revolt in a very short time, and used the opportunity to extend their control over all the central highlands.¹⁷

In the southern flood-plains the Portuguese experienced more difficulty in subduing the small but highly centralised Ovambo kingdoms. They thought it necessary to occupy this remote and sparsely populated area in order to settle a lingering boundary dispute with Germany and put an end to the regular Ovambo raids, which were penetrating deep into central Angola. But in building up their systematic raiding industry, the Ovambo had accumulated a large stock of modern rifles and had learnt how to use them with devastating effect. A first Portuguese column in 1904 was ambushed and lost over 300 men. Two successive campaigns in 1905 and 1906 were unable to avenge this humiliating defeat, and in 1907 the largest expedition ever mounted in Angola to that date was sent to deal with the Ovambo. But the Portuguese scored only a partial success in 1907. They defeated the Mbadya people, responsible for the 1904 ambush, but they failed to attack and occupy the Kwanyama kingdom, the largest in Ovamboland.¹⁸

By 1907 the Portuguese felt their position sufficiently secure in Angola to reimpose the collection of hut tax. Yet the occupation of the territory was far from complete. Only the coastal zones and the densely populated western and central highlands were considered as occupied. Otherwise, except in isolated areas, the

¹⁷ D. Wheeler and D. Christensen, 'To rise with one mind' in F. Heimer (ed.), *Social change in Angola* (Munich, 1973), 54–92.

¹⁸ R. Pélissier, 'Campagnes militaires au Sud-Angola, 1885–1915', in *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 1969, 9, 54–123.

vast and sparsely populated sandy plains which comprised most of eastern Angola had yet to feel the impact of colonial rule. Moreover, those territories which had been conquered were far from secure. Before effective control would actually become a reality, there would be a series of serious revolts throughout the highland regions.

Events in Mozambique after the financial crisis followed a course similar to that in Angola. In 1902 the Portuguese undertook a major campaign in the Barwe region and in the Tonga *prazos* of the Gorongoza, the last independent regions south of the Zambezi. Portuguese influence in these areas had existed only in the form of Manuel António de Souza, an adventurous *prazero* who had collected tribute from the Makombe, chief of Barwe. Following de Souza's assassination, there was a contest for the position of *makombe* between Nchanga, who had disposed of the adventurer, and Shupatura, the legitimate ruler. Despite the role played by Nchanga in liberating the territory from the forces of de Souza, the Barwe continued to recognise the leadership of Shupatura. However, when the latter seemingly accepted submission to the Mozambique Company in 1900, most of the Barwe rallied around Nchanga and his call to resist the white man. Although Barwe was included in the company's sphere, the fact that its agents were denied access to the territory obliged it to call on the government of Mozambique to deal with the situation. In 1902 a force under the command of Azevedo Coutinho was entrusted with the dual charges of extending Portuguese control to the Gorongoza region and suppressing the opposition of Nchanga. Despite determined opposition, the largely uncoordinated resistance movement collapsed by the end of the year and both regions succumbed to Portuguese control.¹⁹

The occupation of the remainder of the province, however, was more protracted. Although Barwe had been the major target of the 1902 expedition, the force seized the opportunity to crush resistance in the *prazos* in the lower Zambezi valley. By 1904 expeditions sponsored either by the government or the Zambezi company had extended control along the upper stretches of the river and along the tributaries both to the north and the south. The occupation of the northern districts, however, was not to

¹⁹ J. Azevedo Coutinho, *Memórias de um velho marinheiro e soldado de África* (Lisbon, 1941), 529–660.

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come until a later date. Although the Portuguese scored an important victory in 1906 when they defeated the Namarral chief, Marave, other Swahili and Makua groups along the coast continued to resist. Not until 1910, with the defeats of the Sultan of Angoche and Farelay, the ruler of the coast opposite Mozambique Island, was this opposition brought to an end.²⁰ Once the Portuguese had secured the littoral, the Makua chiefs rapidly succumbed to the government agents who increasingly penetrated the interior. Events in the territories of the Niassa Company in the far north followed a similar pattern. For almost twenty years a succession of Yao chiefs, bearing the title *mataka*, had successfully resisted the feeble attempts of the company to extend Portuguese influence. By 1912, however, after a series of campaigns had successfully established forts among the Makua and Makonde, the reigning *mataka* was obliged to surrender.²¹ The submission of the last major chief bore testimony to the fact that a military occupation of the province had been completed.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES, 1895-1905

The advent of colonial rule in Mozambique did not produce many changes in the colonial social structure. Perhaps the greatest impact was in the Zambezi valley, where absentee European landlords were coming to replace the racially mixed *prazero* who had dominated the region during the nineteenth century. The system by which the lessee of a prazo was granted a monopoly of commerce also obliged Asian merchants to seek their fortunes in other parts of the colony. Yet, despite the fact that most Portuguese considered Indians as a menace to be done away with as soon as possible, no effective measures were taken to threaten their still dominant position in the retail trade of the colony. The inability of the Portuguese to dislodge Asians from control of commerce combined with the absence of opportunities for small-scale farming was partly responsible for preventing large-scale immigration by the illiterate peasantry of Portugal. Thus, although there was a growth in the European population of

²⁰ M. D. D. Newitt, 'Angoche, the slave trade and the Portuguese, c. 1844-1910', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1972, 13, 4, 659-72. Namarral was the name given to a confederacy of the central Makua.

²¹ *Manual of Portuguese East Africa*, 510-12.

Mozambique, a significant portion was comprised of apolitical foreigners employed on short-term contracts. Since the residence in Mozambique of both the Portuguese and foreign populations was often transitory, neither group was very active in expressing its discontent with local conditions.

In Angola, on the other hand, the imposition of a more effective colonial rule produced conflicts of major proportions between the recent arrivals and local Creole society. In the post-partition era poor whites and metropolitan officials began to enter Angola in increasing numbers. The arrival of each group contributed to a reduction in the status of the indigenous population. The poor whites were instrumental in increasing racist feeling against Africans, whether they were 'uncivilised' or 'assimilated'. At the other end of the scale the importation of metropolitan Portuguese to man the colonial administration resulted in the removal of Creoles from many of the positions they had previously occupied. The Creole response to the new challenges was somewhat ambivalent and disunited. All sectors could agree on their opposition to the growing influence of Lisbon in their affairs. However, their views on racial matters ranged from the ambivalent position of the majority who despised the 'uncivilised' African while decrying the growth of racism within the colonial nucleus, to the pro-African radical *assimilado* journalists of Luanda, who tried to defend Africans from harsh labour policies and glorified traditional African culture. Although each sector of opinion wanted a greater degree of autonomy, these divisions within Creole society weakened its opposition to metropolitan control.²²

Despite the increasing presence of metropolitan officials, the same lack of resources which delayed the occupation of the African territories obliged Portugal to link colonial rule with foreign capital. This was especially the case in Mozambique, where almost a third of the colony was entrusted to the administration of chartered companies. Subject only to certain veto powers retained in Lisbon, the Mozambique Company and the Niassa Company were granted the right to rule over their respective spheres as virtual sovereign powers. Although control of the companies was theoretically to remain in the hands of Portuguese based in Lisbon, in actual fact the major decisions were made in boardrooms in London, Paris or Brussels. Of the

²² Wheeler and Pélissier, *Angola*, 90–108.

two, the Mozambique Company was the more successful, largely because it possessed a readily exploitable resource in the transit traffic between its port of Beira and Southern Rhodesia. The Niassa Company, on the other hand, exemplified all that could be wrong with a chartered company. The directors were more concerned with in-fighting and speculation than with laying the foundation for the exploitation of a colony. As a result, fifteen years after the granting of the charter, virtually nothing had been accomplished in its territory.

Foreign capital also provided many of the essential services of Mozambique. Colonial planners such as Enes and Albuquerque realised that the limited quantity of Portuguese investment capital would be insufficient for the needs of the colony. Potential foreign investors, therefore, were encouraged to aid in the development of Mozambique. As a result, transportation, communications, the municipal services, the major commercial houses and commercial agriculture were all dominated by imported capital. The role of foreigners was particularly important in railway construction and the search for export commodities. By 1900 they had completed the vital rail links between Lourenço Marques and the Witwatersrand and between Beira and Southern Rhodesia. They also had received a significant number of land concessions throughout the province, on which experiments were proceeding in the search for viable export crops.

The advent of colonial rule in Angola, however, was not accompanied by as great an influx of foreign capital. Although concessions in eastern and central Angola were granted to foreign dominated companies, the Portuguese Parliament refused to ratify the proposed charters. The Moçamedes Company, which was financed by interests connected with Rhodes, was the only chartered company allowed to function in the colony. Unlike its counterparts in Mozambique, however, it was denied access to customs duties and to the coast.²³ Although the hostile attitude of the government with respect to chartered companies did not extend to all foreign capital, the economy of Angola remained less dependent on alien sources of revenue than did Mozambique. Foreign investment was largely confined to such activities as the provision of services in the principal towns and the construction

²³ H. Drechsler, 'Germany and Southern Angola, 1898-1903', *Présence Africaine* (1962), 42-3, 51-69.

of the Benguela railway. However, it was noticeably absent from the productive spheres of the economy, such as coffee-planting or fishing.

The absence of imported capital, however, did not mean that there was no foreign input in the colonisation of Angola. In fact, missionaries from several European nations and the United States played a crucial role in the evolution of the colony. Although the Portuguese were always distrustful of the large number of predominantly American and English Protestant missionaries who flocked to Angola, they were bound by international treaty agreement to permit their entry. Protestants were accused of complicity with the supposed machinations of other colonial powers and of fomenting dissent among the African population. The Portuguese initially attempted to employ Catholic missionaries from their Colonial Seminary of Sernache to combat the growing influence of the Protestants. When it became apparent that there was an insufficient number of Portuguese for the undertaking, the government turned to the French-based Holy Ghost Fathers, who came to hold a virtual monopoly of Roman Catholic mission work. By providing them with ample subsidies, the government hoped to counteract what it considered the 'denationalising' influence of the Protestants. The politics of religion, therefore, determined that mission influence in Angola was much more significant than in Mozambique.²⁴

The imposition of colonial rule did not have an immediate impact on the Angolan economy, which continued to rely heavily on products of hunting and collecting from the interior and on a colonial sector afflicted by rapidly alternating booms and slumps. There was a distinct shift southwards in the economic centre of gravity of the colony, although this had very little to do with the imposition of colonial rule. At the turn of the century, northern Angola was afflicted by a devastating epidemic of sleeping sickness, which depopulated large areas and lasted many years. Labour for plantations became very difficult to obtain and transport was paralysed by the lack of porters. The situation was aggravated by the slump in world prices for coffee after 1896. By 1906 exports of coffee had fallen to about a quarter of their value ten years previously, and many plantations were simply abandoned. The other great pillar of the northern economy, wild

²⁴ M. Samuels, *Education in Angola, 1878-1914* (New York, 1970).

rubber, was adversely affected by the lack of porters and was redirected to more southern ports. There was also a significant shift in the sources of rubber. Whereas previously rubber had come from creepers and trees which grew mainly in northern Angola, from the 1890s the majority of Angola's rubber exports came from a root which grew in the dry sandy plains of the south-east.

The plantations of central and southern Angola enjoyed a boom in the 1890s consequent on the tariffs adopted in 1892 in order to stop imports of foreign spirits. Locally grown sugar cane was distilled into *aguardente* (fire-water) and used for the rubber trade inland. The oases of Benguela were the largest producers in Angola, although many coffee plantations in the hinterland of Luanda were also converted to sugar cane. In the far south, economic prosperity was based on a booming export trade in cattle and dried fish. These commodities were supplied to many plantations in the Gulf of Guinea and especially to those on São Tomé, where dried fish became an essential ingredient in the diet of plantation labourers. Benguela was the greatest beneficiary of all these economic changes, and by 1905 it had become the chief port of Angola, while Luanda lay 'bankrupt and beautiful'.²⁵

But in the early years of the new century, Angola was experiencing the beginning of a slump. Rubber prices declined slowly, and it became increasingly evident that African wild rubber could not compete with the plantations of South-East Asia once these came into full production. Angolan plantations were hit first by the collapse of coffee prices in 1896, and then by administrative measures taken from 1901 to curtail the production of *aguardente*. Portugal undertook these measures reluctantly, as a result of international pressures, but by 1905 the *aguardente* industry was clearly doomed. Attempts to produce sugar instead failed, as did efforts to replace sugar cane with cotton. In the far south cattle exports never fully recovered from the terrible rinderpest epidemic of 1897–9, and dried fish began to face severe competition from other suppliers. Thus by 1905 the whole colony was suffering from a slow but steady recession, and this undoubtedly goes a long way toward explaining the violence of the clashes between Portuguese and African traders in the interior, which were responsible for much of the military activity.

²⁵ H. Nevinson, *A modern slavery* (New York, 1906).

The advent of colonial rule, however, brought little change in the nature of the exploitation of labour in Angola. Despite reams of legislation guaranteeing the rights of labourers, the situation as it existed on the plantations differed little from slavery. Workers continued to be secured by purchase from the interior. Moreover, they were viewed as disposable property and could be sold at the discretion of a plantation owner. Although the law provided proscriptions against corporal punishment and guaranteed that nominal wages were to be paid, these safeguards were often and easily avoided. Thus, much of Angola's production continued to be based on a slave system which had been abolished in name only.²⁶

Since Mozambique did not possess a similar plantation economy, the exploitation of labour in agricultural pursuits differed in some respects. Yet, as the conquest of the province proceeded, the roots of an almost equally pernicious system began to take hold. Africans residing on lands conceded to various European interests were obliged to pay taxes in commodities determined by the concessionaires. Moreover, either a private police force or government troops could be called on to make certain that any surplus was sold to the proprietor at rates well below the market value. Not only did this system deprive African producers of the opportunity to market their goods advantageously, it often resulted in serious decreases in the production of the staples used for home consumption. Although forced cultivation of this nature was generally confined to the Zambezi *prazos* in 1905, the system was to be extended to most of northern Mozambique once those territories had been conquered.

Despite the incipient system of forced agricultural labour, the productive sector of the Mozambican economy had shown little development by 1905. Industrial production had always been limited to the production of *aguardente* for export to the South African Republic and local consumption. However, pressure from certain interests in Portugal and severe restrictions imposed by the British in the Transvaal after the Anglo-Boer war, caused a decline in production. The agricultural sector had as yet not reaped the benefit of the experimental projects which had been undertaken. Of the various crops only sugar had demonstrated that it could both thrive in the climate and bear the cost of

²⁶ J. Duffy, *A question of slavery* (Oxford, 1967).

transportation. Yet, in 1905 most of the sugar industry remained in the developmental or planning stages. Therefore, the production of rubber, which reached its peak in that year, was the most valuable export of the colony. Otherwise, exports were limited to small quantities of the various oil-producing products. Thus, in comparison with Angola, the productive sector of the Mozambican economy remained at a relatively low level.

Although Angola and Mozambique differed in their productive capacities, both were being manipulated in such a way as to ensure that they suffered from a dual dependency. On the one hand, their relationship with metropolitan Portugal was one of classical colonial dependence. The description of Portuguese imperialism as uneconomic is certainly an over-simplification.²⁷ The colonies provided certain segments of the financial establishment with ample opportunity for profit making. For example, the Banco Nacional Ultramarino, which functioned in both colonies under extremely favourable circumstances, provided its Portuguese stockholders with considerable dividends. Moreover, Portuguese industry benefited from both its importing and exporting relationships with the colonies. On the one hand, it ignored the colonial produce for which it had no need, thus requiring those commodities to compete on the world market. On the other, it consumed virtually all of the sugar produced in the colonies. The increasingly centralised control that Lisbon exercised over the colonies ensured tariff manipulation in favour of metropolitan interests. Thus, through selective duties imposed on the colonies, goods of Portuguese manufacture, such as wines, shoes, clothing and tobacco, found virtually no competition in the colonies. The favourable balance of trade with the colonies, therefore, proved very beneficial to many interest groups in Portugal.

In addition to being dependent in its relationship with Portugal, each of the colonies found itself in the position of being exploited by its neighbours. The economy of Mozambique, for example, was almost entirely dependent on South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The transit trade from Lourenço Marques to the Transvaal and from Beira to Southern Rhodesia was by far the most significant economic activity in the province. Rail transport and the attendant activities not only provided the major source of employment in the colony, but contributed valuable sums to

²⁷ R. J. Hammond, *Portugal and Africa, 1815-1910* (Stanford, 1966), 335.

the coffers of the colonial government. The export of labour to the mines of the Witwatersrand, however, was an even more important source of revenue. The exploitation of migrant labourers, whose numbers approached 60,000 by 1905, aided the provincial government in a number of ways. The government received a fee for each worker recruited in Mozambique, had his hut tax deducted from his earnings, and was provided with valuable foreign exchange from the gold which the workers received – in wages. Thus, in addition to the ever-growing hut tax, the direct and indirect contributions derived from its relationship with its neighbours enabled Mozambique to function.

The exploitation of Angola by its neighbours also involved the use of black labourers. Yet the export of labour to the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe proved more pernicious than the migrant labour system in Mozambique, because its dividends to the colony were insubstantial and caused extreme dislocations among the African population. The early years of the twentieth century proved exceedingly productive ones for the cocoa plantations of these Atlantic islands. São Tomé, in fact, was the only Portuguese colony which regularly returned a large surplus of revenue. Its prosperity, however, was absolutely dependent on the cheap labour provided by Angola. It was estimated that between 1885 and 1903, 56,189 *serviçais* were exported from Angola.²⁸ Unlike Mozambique, where migrant labourers exercised some freedom of choice, the *serviçal* was virtually in the position of a slave. Although he was allegedly a labourer contracted for five years, more often than not he was captured in a slave raid, transported in chains first to the coast and then to the islands, whence he rarely returned. Thus, because of the needs of the planters in São Tomé and Príncipe, many Africans in Angola lived in a state of insecurity similar to that which prevailed during the slave trade.

By 1905 new patterns of dependency and production for the export market had significantly modified the place of Portugal's two major colonies within the imperial whole. On the one hand, Angola had progressed slowly and erratically in the economic field since 1885, so that the total revenue of the colony was now only half that of Mozambique. In the 1870s Angola had occasionally produced budgetary surpluses, but by 1905 there was a regular

²⁸ A. Marvaud, *Le Portugal et ses colonies* (Paris, 1912), 208–15.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

and extremely large deficit. But Angola could count on two pressure groups to maintain expenditure at a high level. The white settlers of the south exercised a political influence in Lisbon out of all proportion to their numbers and wealth, while the powerful textile lobby in Portugal looked to Angola as one of its major markets. On the other hand, Mozambique, which had earlier been viewed as the backwater of the empire and produced less revenue than Goa, was now entering a period of great stability and relative prosperity. The revenue derived from migrant labour, rail transport to the Transvaal and hut tax, not only provided the largest revenues of the whole empire, but also guaranteed a budgetary surplus. But as there was no vocal settler community, and as Portuguese commercial interests were much weaker, Mozambique could not stop its budgetary surpluses from being used to subsidise other parts of the empire, and notably Angola. Thus Mozambique became ever more dependent on its neighbours and lost the opportunity for productive investment, while the Portuguese state wasted huge sums in Angola on unproductive projects such as the building of the Moçamedes Railway to pander to the demands of white settlers.

B. MADAGASCAR AND FRANCE, 1870–1905

RAINILAIARIVONY, 1870–85

With his power henceforth firmly established, Rainilaiarivony,²⁹ the Prime Minister and consort of Queen Ranavalona II, could govern the country without too many worries, and was able to turn his attention to reforms. He was motivated to contemplate these reforms by his desire to strengthen the country and make his government conform to a European model. Christianity, which he had just adopted, entailed a certain number of changes which the ever more numerous and influential English missionaries were urging on him. But the prime minister had too much common sense, and had learned his lesson too well from the dreadful example of Radama II, to make too abrupt a break with the customs and traditional feelings of his people. His reforms were prudent, taking account both of the needs of his subjects and the requirements of his authority.

²⁹ See *Cambridge history of Africa*, v: c. 1790–c. 1870, 412–16.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

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In 1873 the queen and her consort accompanied by the entire court travelled to Betsileo, and spent a month at Fianarantsoa, where they promulgated a code of laws specially formulated for that area: Imerina was still governed by the Code of 101 Articles. The other subject peoples retained their traditional customs and their chiefs under the supervision of Merina governors. The sale of alcohol was prohibited, at least in Imerina, as had already been the case in the days of Andrianampoinimerina, but this did not prevent some members of the upper class, in particular some of the royal princes, drinking to excess. In 1877 it was decided to free the 'Mozambique' slaves, that is, slaves of African origin. This had long been demanded by Britain as part of its campaign to end the slave trade. The owners kept only their Malagasy slaves, who were by far the greater number. Some of the freed slaves were settled in Sakalava territory as colonists. In 1878–9 the army, which had lost a great deal of its effectiveness since the days of Radama I and his conquests, was reorganised. Military service was made obligatory over the age of 18. In principle it was to be for five years, but in practice it amounted to three months' training, with a subsequent liability to call-up at any time. This measure entailed the discharge of 6,500 old soldiers, whom the Prime Minister distributed amongst the villages of Imerina with the title of *sakaizambohitra* (friends of the villages). They were given the task of general supervision and of acting as official registrars for the state (with the aid of secretaries with school training). They were paid by means of a tax on the certificates they issued. The Prime Minister thus provided them with a pension, whilst strengthening his own power over the country areas and diminishing to an equivalent extent that of the land-holding aristocracy.

In March 1881 the Code of 305 Articles was promulgated for Imerina, replacing the 1868 Code of 101 Articles. It enacted new rules concerning civil and criminal law and procedure. Previously accepted customs not modified by this document were expressly preserved. Some of these customs had already been abolished, as being incompatible with Christianity, such as polygamy and the unilateral repudiation of wives (which was replaced by legal divorce). Corporal punishments were abolished except for irons, and fines were fixed in cattle and in money. Three courts of law were set up at Tananarive. This code was so well adapted to the

country that later on it was retained under the French régime and extended to cover virtually the entire island.

The *sakaizambohitra*, known from now on as *antily* (watchmen), were retained but, having little education and a merely informative role, they were ill-equipped to enforce the new laws and overwhelmed the Prime Minister with unimportant details and requests for directives. To remedy this situation, he took two kinds of measures. Firstly, he set up in 1881 eight ministries (Interior, Foreign Affairs, War, Justice, Law, Trade and Industry, Finance and Education), each having several departments – a system modelled on those of Europe. It did not function well in Madagascar, despite the large staff employed. This included 21 high-ranking officials, 215 executive civil servants and 243 clerks. Some of those holding office were incompetent and most were afraid to take any decision for fear of angering the authoritarian Prime Minister. In vain, he urged them to use their responsibility wisely; it had no effect. Secondly, he encouraged the activities of the *fokon'olona* (popular assemblies in the villages), which Andrianampoinimerina had successfully employed to ensure the maintenance of order and the enforcement of law. These bodies could draw up by-laws, and in Imerina at least were well established and proved useful.

Although they set up a royal chapel to ensure their own independence, the Queen and her consort gave encouragement to the Protestant missionaries, especially the British. The London Missionary Society (LMS) alone possessed 1,200 churches and an equal number of schools. Schooling was the responsibility of the missions, but the Prime Minister had decreed the principle of compulsory education, and saw that it was applied. The villagers built the schools and provided the teachers with rice. The LMS had established three high schools for Theology, Education and Medicine. A few young men had been sent to Europe, of whom two returned as doctors. A hospital and several dispensaries were set up. The Anglican, Quaker and Catholic missions were smaller, but were gradually increasing in importance. Some subordinates, trying to curry favour with those in power, made difficulties for the Catholics, but the Prime Minister (whose daughter-in-law, Victoire Rasoamanarivo, was a militant Catholic) knew how to temper their ardour. All these new developments in legislation and administration, religion and education, had their greatest

effect in Imerina, but also spread into Betsileo and to Tamatave. Elsewhere, and even in the remoter parts of Imerina itself, the traditional customs (*fombandrazana*) were religiously preserved, in deference to the widespread distrust of any change.

Rainilaiarivony, who was quite well informed on European matters, was above all afraid of France, which had never formally renounced its 'historic rights' in Madagascar, and which was being pressed by two groups, the Catholics and the people of Réunion, to extend its influence over the island. The missionaries appear to have given him the impression that he might hope for British protection, but the British government, now launched on its Egyptian adventure, was anxious not to give France any new cause for enmity. The various European colonial powers had begun the process of dividing up Asia and Africa between them, and in this game of chess, Madagascar was merely a minor pawn.

Jean Laborde,³⁰ who had died in 1878, had left estates that were claimed by his heirs, whereas the Malagasy government considered that these had only been granted to him for life. Moreover, in 1840 the French had occupied Nosy-Bé; this was after the Sakalava rulers who had fled to the island had ceded it to France, together with their rights over those parts of Madagascar itself from which they had been driven by the Merina occupation. In October 1881 the French consul laid claim to these rights, and to those of Laborde's heirs. Rainilaiarivony replied that the whole island belonged to the queen, and that he could not give up any part of it, 'even enough to plant a grain of rice'. He set up Merina flags on the disputed stretch of coast, which were torn down in June 1882 by the French sea captain, Le Timbre. Rainilaiarivony then sent a diplomatic mission to Europe under the leadership of his nephew. He obtained from Britain the renunciation of all freeholds held by British subjects; these received long leases in exchange. With France discussions dragged on, and eventually broke down, since the envoys dared not take any decision without the prior authorisation of the Prime Minister (November 1882–August 1883). Meanwhile, a reasonably favourable French government was replaced by another, in the event a short-lived one, in which for a time care of the navy was entrusted to the deputy for Réunion, François de Mahy. He sent a small naval force to Madagascar, under the command of Admiral Pierre, which

³⁰ See *Cambridge history of Africa*, v, 409–12.

occupied Majunga on 16 May, and then bombarded Tamatave and occupied it on 11 June. The Jules Ferry ministry, which was now in power, demanded the cession of the northern part of the island as far as the sixteenth parallel and the right for French citizens to hold property in freehold. These demands were rejected by the Prime Minister in a major public speech, which was supported by a general outcry.

Ranavalona II died on 13 July 1883, and Rainilaiarivony, then 55 years old, chose as Queen and wife a 22-year-old princess, who became Ranavalona III. The war was dragging on. The French had occupied Diego Suarez, but were unable to advance into the interior for want of sufficient troops. An Englishman, Colonel Willoughby, who had been engaged as a military adviser by the Prime Minister, had helped Rainandriamampandry, the governor of Tamatave, to organise a strong defensive position on the Farafaty lines. But the French blockade stopped the delivery of arms and halted the collection of customs, which were the main source of revenue. In France the Ferry administration fell on 10 March 1885 over the Tonkin affair, and there was a general desire to have done with other colonial expeditions still in progress. Negotiations were opened between the two weary adversaries. Accordingly, on 17 December 1885 a treaty was signed by Admiral Miot and the diplomat, Consul Patrimonio, on behalf of France, and Colonel Willoughby and one of Rainilaiarivony's sons for the government of Madagascar. Its terms were as follows. The French government would represent Madagascar in all its external relations ('toutes ses relations extérieures') (the Malagasy text said 'à l'extérieur' (abroad)). A French 'resident' would 'preside over Madagascar's external relations, taking no part in the internal administration of the states of 'Her Majesty, the Queen'. He would reside at Tananarive and would be supported by a military escort. An indemnity of 10 million francs would be paid to France. The queen would 'continue to preside over the internal administration of the entire island'. France reserved the right to occupy Diego Suarez Bay.

In a clarificatory letter requested by Rainilaiarivony, Miot and Patrimonio specified that the resident's escort would not exceed 50 men, that French settlers would accept 99 year leases, and that the occupation of Diego Suarez Bay would not extend more than a mile and a half south of the Bay.

THE PHANTOM PROTECTORATE, 1886–94

Rainilaiarivony had avoided the term ‘protectorate’, but the French had the firm intention of imposing one in practice. The first French resident, Le Myre de Vilers, encountered stubborn resistance from the prime minister, and was able to gain concessions only on minor points. The Miot–Patrimonio letter, which had been written after the treaty had been signed, was not recognised by the French government, and the troops advanced as far as 20 kilometres from Diego Suarez Bay. Rainilaiarivony insisted that the recognition of the credentials (*exequatur*) of foreign consuls be the sole prerogative of the queen, whereas the Resident’s intention was that these should first be presented to him. This matter was never settled, even after Lord Salisbury’s British administration had recognised ‘the Protectorate of France over the Island of Madagascar, with all that this entails, in particular the consuls’ *exequaturs*...’ (5 August 1890), in exchange for the French recognition of the British protectorate over Zanzibar. The Comptoir d’Escompte established a branch in Madagascar. A telegraph line was built from Tananarive to Tamatave. French residents were installed in Tamatave, Majunga, Fianarantsoa and later at Tulear.

Thus in 1894, although the status of Madagascar was in dispute at the international level, internally it remained more or less unchanged. The régime benefited Imerina, whose rice fields were extended with the labour of a large number of slaves. Tananarive had 75,000 inhabitants. Its roads were still only stony paths, but the wooden houses at the top of the hill were gradually being replaced by two-storeyed constructions of brick and stone. The ruling oligarchy (composed of important members of the *hova* and *andriana* castes) adopted European fashions, and grew rich on trade, on political influence and the labour of slaves. The rulers were entirely christianised: of the 164,000 mission pupils in the island, two-thirds were in Imerina. The queen was a symbol and a figurehead. Everything was done in her name, but she had no real power. The Prime Minister, who was also the commander-in-chief, ran everything. He was older now, and had to face plots against his government. He was informed of everything, but could not prevent the growth of disorder in the countryside.

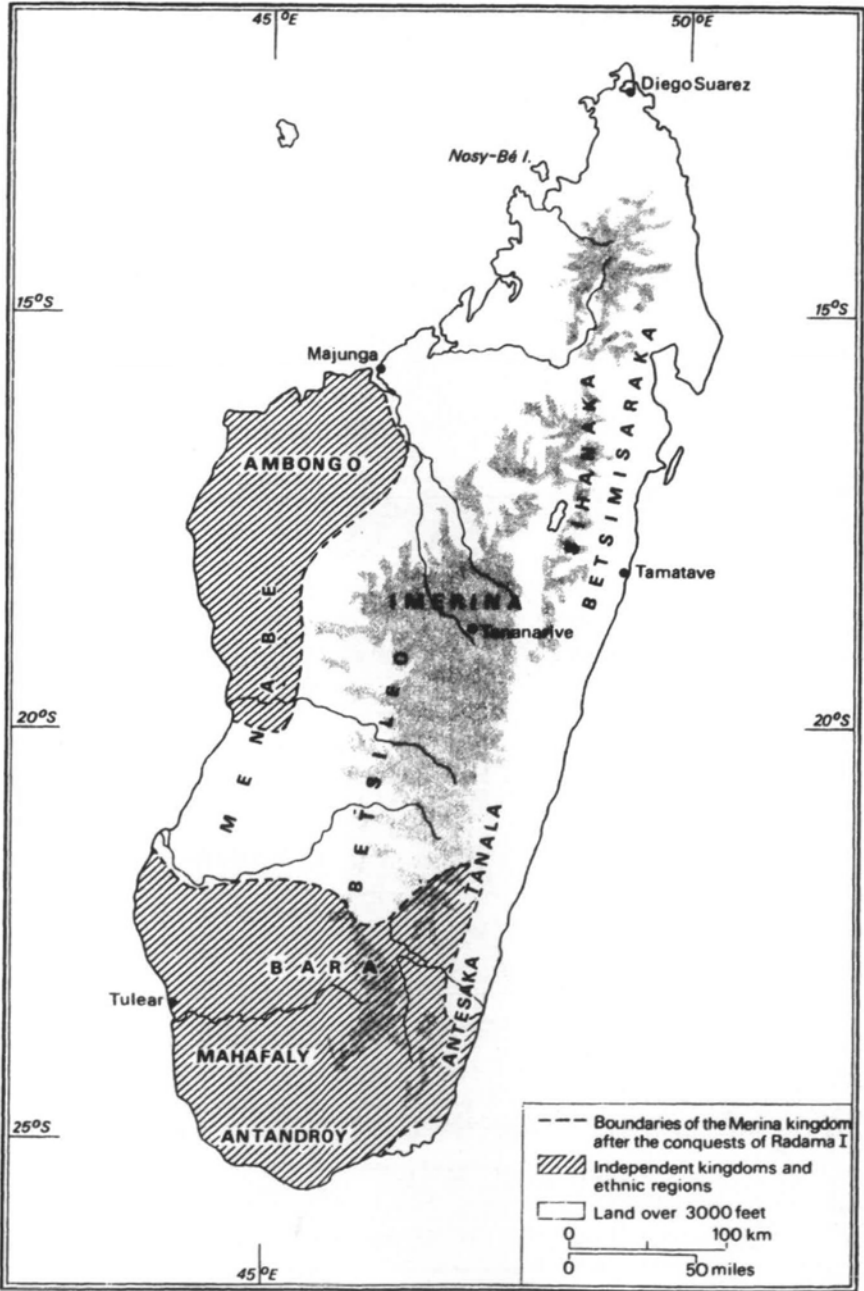
The machinery of government was rudimentary indeed. State

revenues were derisory, and depended on a few archaic taxes, and the income from customs duties were mortgaged by the need to pay the 10 million francs indemnity due to France. Officials went unpaid. The *corvée*, a form of taxation that was very well suited to a country without a regular currency (Spanish or French piastres were used, cut up into small pieces), made it possible to undertake certain public works such as public buildings and irrigation dykes, but there were neither roads nor bridges. Porters' shoulders were the only means of transport. The economy was based on self-sufficiency: rice, cassava, sweet potato, poultry, cattle, house-building, the weaving of cloth, the plaiting of mats, iron work and small industries introduced by the Europeans such as brick-making and tin-smithing. More and more European and American cloth was imported. Exports consisted of live cattle, a little wild rubber, wax and raphia. In the absence of properly equipped ports, goods were offloaded on the beaches.

Some of the provinces, notably Betsileo and Betsimisaraka, were administered directly by Merina governors and military commanders, while others, such as Sakalava and the south-eastern territories, were under a sort of protectorate, with the local kings retaining their functions under the surveillance of a Merina garrison. This colonial system worked reasonably well, but did not succeed in creating any overall feeling of nationhood. However ardent and sincere might be the patriotism (tinged with xenophobia) of Imerina, the subject peoples did not share in it, and were at times indeed hostile to it. Rainilaiarivony did not think it worthwhile that these peoples should participate in the government; on the other hand, he encouraged Merina colonists to settle in certain provinces, especially Betsiboka, the Sihanaka country, and Tamatave. A third of the island was still independent of Imerina: in the west, Ambongo and part of the old Sakalava state of Menabe; in the south, parts of Bara and Tanala, Antandroy and Mahafaly. In the southern part of the island, Prince Ramahatra, a cousin of the queen, seized Tulear in 1890 at the request of French merchants who had been held to ransom by the local chiefs.

The army was poorly equipped for its duties. It possessed 300 field-guns, some of which were very old, and 20,000 modern rifles, which were often badly maintained in spite of having cost a lot of money. The soldiers received neither pay nor rations, and lived

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at home, assembling only periodically for training exercises. The Prime Minister recruited a few British officers, who trained some good artillerymen. The soldiers were mainly Merina; others were not trusted. This army was not adequate for the maintenance of order; banditry was on the increase and there were slave raids by independent peoples in certain areas of the plateau. Rainilaiarivony was not sufficiently aware of this military weakness, which became all too obvious in the conflict with France. He still relied more or less on those two great defenders of the island traditionally called 'General Hazo' and 'General Tazo' – the forest and the fever.

THE FRENCH CONQUEST AND THE INSURRECTION, 1894–96

By 1894, Europe had entered the final phase of the partition of Africa. In France the opponents of colonial expansion had been reduced to a small minority, and it was generally recognised that the ambiguous status of Madagascar could no longer be tolerated. Le Myre de Vilers was sent to Tananarive, and on 17 October 1894 he handed to the Prime Minister the draft of an agreement, by which Foreign Affairs would be handled directly by the Resident, while the French would have the right to maintain on the island as many troops as might be necessary for security, and to undertake public works. Rainilaiarivony submitted a counter-proposal, which granted nothing. On 27 October Le Myre de Vilers lowered the French standard at the Residency and left the capital, giving orders that the French nationals should follow him. This was war. The French Assembly voted supplies, and on 12 December the French forces occupied Tamatave, followed on 15 January 1895 by Majunga. It was from here that the French expedition to Tananarive set out.

This ill-planned expedition, undertaken in the middle of the rainy season and involving the construction of a road through the swamps, opened with the victory of General Tazo: out of 15,000 men, 6,000 died of fever. The Merina army, on the other hand, inflicted only minor losses. The successive positions it took up were each evacuated when it felt the weight of modern firearms. The coming of the dry season allowed the French to advance more rapidly, and General Rainianjalahy made his last efforts at

resistance at Tsarasoatra on 29 June and at Andriba on 22 August. On 14 September General Duchesne formed a light infantry column of 4,000 men, equipped with mules for the transport of provisions and heavy weapons. Rainilaiarivony appeared at a loss. He ordered an attack on the rear of the column, but it failed. The Malagasy gunners, who were the *corps d'élite* of the Malagasy army, were slaughtered at their guns. On 30 September 1895 the heights flanking Tananarive to the east were occupied. An artillery battery fired two high explosive shells on the queen's palace, decimating the huge crowd that had gathered there. The queen raised a white flag, and that same evening French troops entered the town.

The treaty brought by Duchesne was signed the following day, 1 October. The queen accepted the French protectorate with all its consequences. Henceforward, the resident-general would be responsible for the internal affairs of the kingdom. Rainilaiarivony was exiled to Algiers, where he lived in a fine house until his death on 17 July 1896. But the Merina oligarchy survived almost unchanged. The protectorate formula had produced good results in Tunisia, and seemed to offer the most economical method of colonisation.

Only government personnel and the more or less Europeanised, christianised population of the towns had so far been taken into consideration by the French. No thought had been given to the country people, who were still faithful to their ancestors and hostile to foreigners, even to the defeated government. As early as 22 November 1895, a band of men 2,000 strong took Arivonimamo, not far from the capital, and assassinated the Merina governor and also a British missionary and his family. The rebels demanded the abolition of Christian worship, schools, military service and labour dues. The subject peoples, too, were beginning to be troublesome. The peoples of the south-east had their own revolution, driving out their nobles, who had become the agents of the Merina. In Betsimisaraka territory there were revolts against the Merina, who were massacred. The French army suppressed these insurrections ruthlessly and without distinction.

In December 1895 it was decided in Paris that Madagascar should be transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to that of the Colonies, and in January 1896 the queen was obliged to recognise France's taking of possession. In fact this changed nothing. The resident-general, M. Laroche, was a former French

MADAGASCAR: GALLIENI'S FIRST TOUR OF DUTY

prefect, of the Protestant faith, who treated the queen respectfully and sympathetically, but was completely untrained for colonial command, and had no authority over the army. In Imerina nationalistic and xenophobic feelings were gaining ground, identifying with the *fahavalo* (bandits). This produced the revolt of the *menalamaba* (red togas), who wore on their foreheads the *felana* (round shell) of the ancient warriors. The principal leaders were on the one hand a *fahavalo* called Rainibetsimisaraka, and on the other hand two governors, named Rabezavana and Rabozaka. They operated mainly in the thinly populated regions on the northern and southern borders of Imerina. The French responded with flying columns, which drove back the insurgents and burned the villages. When they left, the insurgents returned, their numbers swollen by the unfortunate villagers. The rebellion came to within 15 km of Tananarive. It was said that some of the ministers were encouraging the insurrection, in spite of the queen's peace-loving proclamations. Authority was disintegrating everywhere, except for a few centres held by the French, and chaos was rapidly spreading to the whole island.

GALLIENI'S FIRST TOUR OF DUTY, 1896-99

It appeared that new policies were required in order to bring the situation quickly under control. The minister for the Colonies, André Lebon, called in General Gallieni who, first in the Sudan and then in Tonkin, had acquired a well-earned reputation for his skill in colonial pacification. Although on his return from Indo-China he was very ill, he accepted this virtually hopeless task. A law of 6 August 1896 proclaimed Madagascar a French colony; the Chamber of Deputies, moreover, decided unanimously that this entailed the abolition of slavery. Ministerial directives, probably suggested largely by Gallieni in the light of his previous experience, ordained the 'abolition of the *hova* hegemony':³¹ 'the sovereign power must now make its presence felt directly, through the intermediary of the chiefs of each particular people'. They prescribed 'a policy of firmness... in respect of certain persons at the Court of Emyrne' (Imerina), 'moderation in respect of the native lower classes', 'prudence... in the suppression

³¹ In France, the word *hova*, though only applicable to certain castes, generally designated the Merina.

of acts of rebellion', and 'equality of treatment for all religions, except for the banishment of those who had concealed political designs beneath the cloak of some kind of religious belief'. On 28 September, Joseph Simon Gallieni, having reached Tananarive, was granted total civil and military powers. He was afterwards given the title of governor-general.

The Merina oligarchy was abruptly reduced to submission. On 15 October Prince Ratsimamanga and the minister Rainandriamampandry were shot, after being condemned to death as accomplices of the rebels. Ranaivalona was henceforward only 'Queen of Imerina'; then on 27 February 1897 she was exiled, first to Réunion and then to Algiers, where she died in 1917. The minister Rasanjy, who had supported the cause of France, was appointed governor of Imerina. On 15 March the royal remains, which might have become a central focus for sedition if left at Ambohimanga, were transferred to Tananarive. The festival of the Royal Bath was replaced by the French holiday of 14 July. On 17 April the feudal system was abolished. These measures reflected in no uncertain way both Gallieni's republicanism and his sense of immediate necessities.

The methods of pacification developed by Gallieni in Tonkin, and later employed in Madagascar, involved, according to his own directives, three main points. First, *l'action politique*, getting to know the country and rallying the people to the French. Recourse to *l'action vive* (military intervention), was to ensue only if political action proved inadequate. Secondly, *la tâche d'huile* (oil stain), the spreading of the French presence by diffusion. There were to be no more flying columns: 'any forward movement of troops must be accompanied by the effective occupation of the conquered area'. Under cover of military posts, the territory was to be brought under control by reassuring the population, protecting them from the *fabavalo* and helping them to re-establish their villages and their crops. To those in charge of the posts Gallieni gave the order: 'Act in such a way that those you administer tremble only at the thought of your departure.' Thirdly, unity of command: a single commander at each level, responsible for everything to his immediate superior. This principle, giving his officers a sense of responsibility and putting them on their mettle, proved very fruitful.

By the end of 1896 links between Tananarive and the ports had

been established, or if they had already existed, made secure. The greatest number of troops were concentrated in Imerina. The various rebel bands were first isolated and then driven back to arid regions. In June 1897 operations were brought to a close. Since the French presence was now being acknowledged, no action was taken against the rebel chiefs. In the provinces previously ruled by the Merina, the new racial policy was implemented by replacing the Merina governors with French officers or administrators directing or supervising chiefs taken from the local ethnic groups. This measure was welcomed, but the disorders of the previous years were at times difficult to resolve. In the arid region to the north of Imerina, the leader of the Raintavy bands surrendered only in November 1897. At that date the entire former kingdom had been occupied and brought under control. An insurrection in October 1898, caused by the misbehaviour of some settlers amongst the northern Sakalava, was suppressed in three months.

The lands that had been independent of Imerina were more difficult to subdue. There, the French were dealing with warrior peoples, practised in the art of ambush in uncharted and semi-desert terrain, broken by swamps and forests, in which distances were enormous and supply difficult, and where there existed no single chief capable of making his authority felt over any substantial area. The troops used were mainly Senegalese and Malagasy, with French officers and NCOs, but there were also elements from the Marines and the Foreign Legion. The local Ambongo kinglets were picked off one by one. Contrary to Gallieni's intentions, the invasion of the Sakalava of Menabe resulted in the massacre of King Toera and his warriors, thus prolonging hostilities. The king of Fiherenana surrendered. The king of the Imamono Bara, who had given assistance to the French, had his kingdom raised to the status of a protectorate. Inapaka, king of the Be Bara, repulsed an attack on his stronghold of Vahingezo, which was not taken till 1899. Another famous stronghold, the mountain of the Ikongo, where in former times the Tanala had defeated several Merina armies, was taken in 1897; but in 1899 a rebellion broke out among the Tanala, who held out in the forest for two years. In the same way, the forested cliffs between the Bara and Antesaka were used as a refuge by numerous rebels. Apart from these two very restricted areas, the only part still to be subjected was

Mahafaly and Antandroy in the extreme south, a land of waterless thorny bush.

Gallieni had been tireless in giving detailed orders for pacification and setting up military sectors, which were constantly modified according to need. He had personally travelled twice completely round the island by boat to examine the situation and to determine the best points at which to disembark the troops. He was also responsible for general policy and the administration of the country. The provincial and district boundaries, which had been largely taken over from the Merina, were frequently altered as the need arose. The majority of the Malagasy people had accepted the authority of France in succession to that of the Queen, and Gallieni was everywhere received with unfeigned popular demonstrations. The freed slaves had mostly left Imerina either for their own homes or to settle in Betsiboka, and for this reason about half the population of Tananarive had left the town. The high-caste Merina who had lost power, slaves, fiefs and the virtual monopoly of trade in one fell swoop, must doubtless have felt some regret, but they took care not to show it. A number of them, who had sufficient education, found positions in the new administration, and their skills also found an outlet in the economic field, either in commerce or on the plantations on the east coast. Gallieni now favoured the Merina, and relied on them for the general development of the island. One of his circulars of 1898 even said, with some exaggeration: 'The Hova race appears to be the only one capable of providing an adequate population and labour force for the future.'

Gallieni paid great attention to this question of manpower; he had indeed come to the country with an axiom, doubtless suggested to him in France: 'Colonies are made for French colonists.' The establishment of a head tax and of compulsory labour contributed in some measure to this aim. The tax forced the Malagasy people to obtain money, either by producing on their land a little more than they consumed, or by engaging themselves as wage-earners in the service of the Europeans. The obligation of compulsory labour, fixed first at 50 days a year, and later at 30, were a tax in kind. This was the old *corvée* under another name, and made it possible to carry out some public works without making inroads into the meagre budget; the settlers could redeem their employees' obligation of compulsory labour with

MADAGASCAR: GALLIENI'S SECOND TOUR OF DUTY

money. Between 1896 and 1899, 200,000 hectares of land were granted in concessions; thus Gallieni hoped to attract capital investment and launch the process of economic development.

The value of imports doubled in two years, even though Madagascar, as a colony, had entered a customs union with France, so that French goods had replaced foreign ones, especially British and American textiles. Large French import-export companies opened branches: the *Compagnie Lyonnaise* in 1897, and the *Compagnie Marseillaise* a year later. The introduction of French currency, the establishment of peace, and the development of roads and markets, all encouraged internal trade and local food production; but production for export was still at a very low level.

One of the subjects of concern to Gallieni was that of the Christian missions. As they increased in size, they had to be dealt with tactfully and even encouraged; but he frequently had to deal with the rivalries between them: in particular he reminded the British Protestants that Madagascar was French, and that the teaching of French should take up at least half the timetable. Personally he had no difficulty in remaining neutral between the various denominations; he was a disciple at once of Voltaire and of Spencer.

GALLIENI'S SECOND TOUR OF DUTY, 1900-05

As a disciple of Voltaire and Spencer, Gallieni was an evolutionist. 'The natural development of the country must dictate its organisation,' he wrote (*L'organisation... doit suivre le pays dans son développement naturel*). He was a broad-brush technician, one who thought before acting, ever ready to learn from experience, constantly on the watch against rigidity, and waging war on routine and bureaucracy. 'I am for ever pushing onward.' He was always prepared to alter his own ideas if he found that they were inadequate or out of date, and his second tour of duty was marked by a number of changes. In 1900 the completion of the pacification programme was entrusted to a 'Commandement supérieur du Sud' (Southern High Command), with its headquarters at Fianarantsoa, under the command of Colonel Lyautey, who had been Gallieni's assistant in Tonkin and was to be the architect of French Morocco. In 1900, Ambovombe, the Antandroy centre, was occupied, and peripheral military posts were set up. The Mahafaly

kings surrendered one after the other; in the forested cliffs of the south-east, the two rebel areas were eliminated. In 1902, with the pacification programme apparently completed, the Southern High Command was abolished.

In fact there were still a few local difficulties in Antandroy, but a major problem arose in 1904 with the revolt in the south-east amongst the Antemanombondro, a small tribe to the south of the Antesaka, who killed some Europeans. The movement spread to northern Antanosy and the 'Falaises' region. These areas were covered with thick bush and forest, which had never been thoroughly pacified, and in which a prohibition on bush fires was destroying the agricultural traditions of the inhabitants just at the time when taxation was increasing. Gallieni sent troops with orders to 'pacify, not exterminate'. The instigator of the revolt, Corporal Kotavy, was captured in September 1905. That was the last spasm; the unification of the island, begun by Andrianampoinimerina, was now complete.

Hitherto, estimates of the total population had been conjectural. The first systematic census in 1900 gave a total of about 2.5 million, which was not large for an island larger than France. Gallieni established an indigenous medical service, with hospitals and dispensaries in the major centres, and a School of Medicine to train Malagasy doctors. In 1898 and 1902, the coastal region was ravaged by the plague, which had arrived from India. Pacification, road building, and the development of industry, plantations and mines all helped to facilitate internal migration. In 1903, 8,000 Antesaka emigrated temporarily to Diego Suarez, Tamatave and western Madagascar as manual labourers; the former Merina slaves continued to settle along the Betsiboka, and Merina colonists spread out westwards and southwards from Imerina. Bara herdsmen spread into the empty spaces of the west, close to the plateau, as did Betsileo farmers, who also settled in Betsiboka. In this way the large demographic gaps began to be filled in little by little. The non-Malagasy population also increased, as a result of the arrival of officials, settlers and merchants: in 1905 there were 7,800 French (more than half of them from Réunion), 1,000 Mauritians, 1,000 Indians (mainly from Gujarat) and 450 Chinese.

Education, like the medical service, was one of Gallieni's constant preoccupations. Without interfering with the rights of

the mission schools, he began from 1903 onwards to establish secular education, in accordance with the policy of the French government of the day and with his own convictions. When he left there were 343 government schools and 178 mission schools. There were also three high schools set up to train the Malagasy in administration and commercial skills, one in Tananarive and one on each of the two coasts.

Another new measure was the abolition of compulsory labour in 1901; its place was taken by a new tax, the proceeds of which were allocated to Public Works. Gallieni extolled the economic and social role of taxation, and its educational value, in that it forced people to work, and thus to develop the country. It quickly became apparent that the tax, though it varied from region to region, bore too heavily in some areas that lacked resources. But, although she readily lent capital to foreign countries, France at that time insisted that her colonies, though still in their infancy, should find the funds for their own budgets.

During his leave in France, Gallieni had nevertheless obtained a loan of 60 million francs for the construction of a state-managed railway line from Tananarive to Tamatave. The first two sections were completed before he left in 1905. Transport on this essential route had already been made easier by river boats and by the construction of a wagon road; in 1898 the route employed 63,000 porters, and in 1904, 8,000 ox-carts. Gallieni brought the first motor-car to Tananarive; other wagon roads linked Tananarive to the major centres. These public works, like the construction of official buildings, were undertaken first by the army engineers, and then by a public works' service.

A law of 1896 had, in principle, guaranteed traditional Malagasy property rights. After due declaration and survey, these rights, together with concessions granted to both Europeans and non-Europeans, could be entered in land registers. Gallieni had modelled this system on the Australian Torrens Act, which was simpler and more suitable for new countries than the archaic complications of the French system. The enormous concessions granted in the early days were curtailed. By the time of his departure, Gallieni had come to the conclusion that Madagascar was not a colony for settlers. He relied increasingly on the Malagasy peasantry, establishing services for agriculture, stock-rearing and forests, and taking steps to revitalise the *fokon'ola*

(village assemblies). At this time 80 per cent of external trade was with France. Discoveries of gold veins in the region of Diego Suarez had made gold the most important export product; the other exports – rubber, skins, raphia, cattle and wax – still came essentially from the exploitation of the natural resources of the country.

Gallieni finally left for France in May 1905. Over the previous nine years, his views had changed considerably. The future now seemed to depend mainly on the economic, social and cultural evolution of the Malagasy people. In 1902 he had founded the Académie Malgache, and recognised the Merina dialect as the second official language. His authority, his great intelligence and his appreciation of the role of change had laid the foundations for modernisation. Raseta, the nationalist Malagasy member of the legislature, called him ‘a positive, constructive person’, and Roberts, the Australian historian, not normally favourably disposed towards French colonialism, has said: ‘Gallieni, perhaps the greatest figure in French colonial policy, really made Madagascar.’

CHAPTER 10

EAST AFRICA 1870–1905

East Africa in 1870 is best defined as the economic hinterland of the commercial entrepôt of Zanzibar. This area included much of what is now Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, as well as parts of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaïre, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Somalia. The region was criss-crossed by trade routes which converged on the Swahili towns of the east coast. It was along these paths of Swahili expansion that Europeans in the later nineteenth century began to penetrate and occupy the interior. By 1905 Britain and Germany had divided most of East Africa between them, and they had achieved overall command in military and strategic terms. But their new colonial governments exercised a very uneven control over the African population, while the new colonial economies had only partly deflected local labour and capital from older systems of production and exchange. New economic structures were emerging, but their impact was only just becoming evident. Thus the period under study here is very much one of transition. To understand it, we need to consider not only the European innovation but also the local and regional economies, and the wide-ranging Swahili commercial and cultural network. We must also acknowledge the importance of individuals. The changes of the period gave much scope for the exercise of leadership and the pursuit of political rivalry. Initially, African horizons of statecraft were much enlarged, though often one early effect of colonial rule was to narrow them. What follows, then, is a synthesis stressing processes of differential integration in the immediate pre-colonial period, the dynamics of the decade of military conquest, 1888–99, and the terms of reconstruction preparatory to systematic state formation which occurred from the turn of the century until 1905.

THE COMMERCIAL SPHERE AND REGIONAL PATTERNS

Through the activities of the Swahili commercial system, East Africa during the early and mid-1870s became a more internally integrated and geographically specific region of the world than it had been before. The transport network became denser and more pervasive, its personnel conveyed cultural as well as material values, and credit relations hastened the dissolution of old and the construction of new social relations. But commerce did not act in isolation. Deployment of land and naval forces by Egypt and Britain hardened frontiers on the upper Nile and at the coast. In response, rulers in the interlacustrine region regularised their armies and the Sultan of Zanzibar also took steps to strengthen his state apparatus. Such centralisation met with resistance from coastal community leaders. There is no doubt that the presence of the well-armed, if not always well-stocked, long-distance traders entered strongly into the calculations of leaders in all manner of polities.

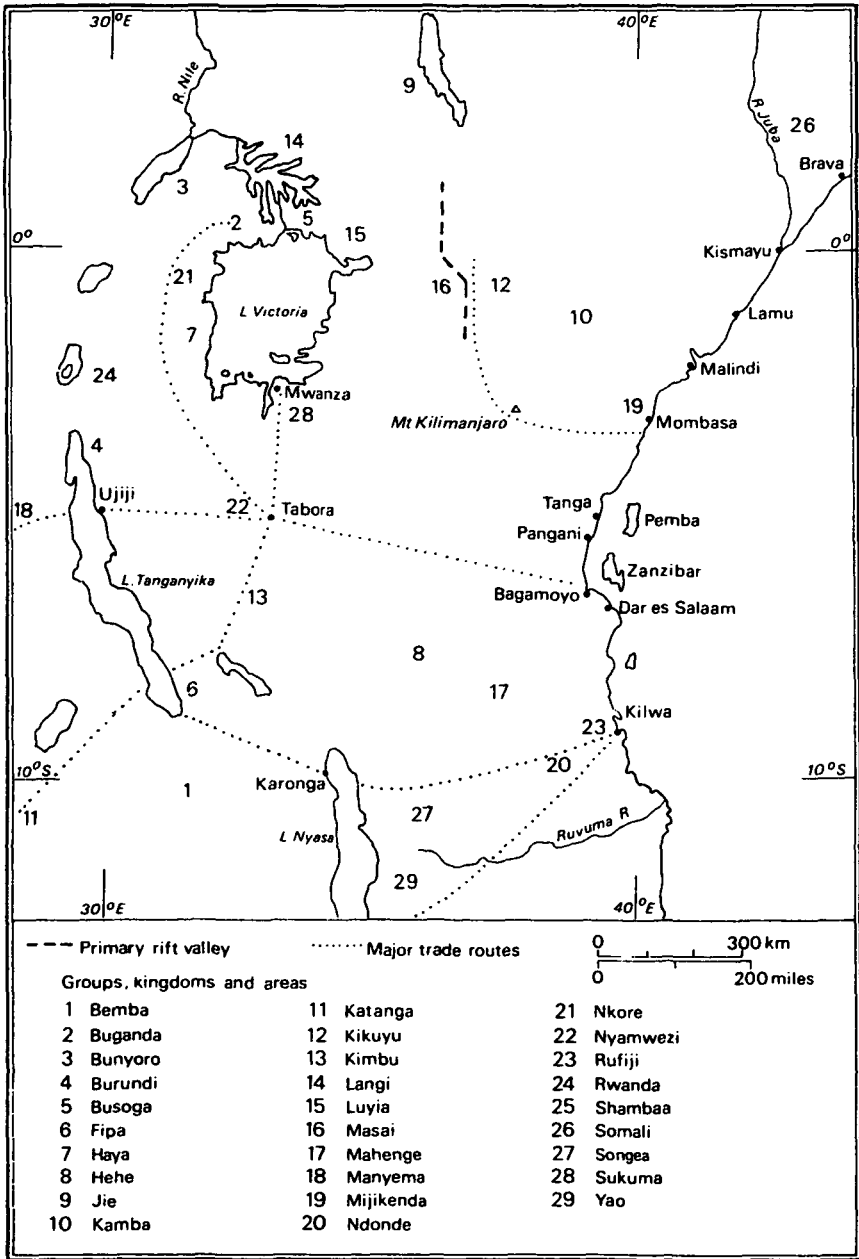
Behind much of the expansionism of regional powers lay a determination to control valuable resources. Jurisdiction over land and people was jealously sought and defended. Tribute in labour and produce helped chiefs to concentrate surplus in their own hands. The numbers of women at their disposal, living at their headquarters, represented a rough index of many chiefs' assets. Variant indices of wealth in the northern and inter-lacustrine regions were numbers of cattle and/or clients, and pages or apprentice functionaries of state, as in Buganda. Wealth in followers, clients, or women was potential, while wealth in ivory was more easily converted. Chiefs and ambitious upstarts alike sought to acquire ivory, the former by vigilance and insistence upon the 'ground' tusk of any elephant felled in their domains and by extension of police power to make certain that trading or hunting parties entering their country did not deal with underlings. Principles of superiority and territoriality thus became strengthened. The exacting of tolls for passage and of tribute from subordinated communities was not necessarily accompanied by elaboration of governmental apparatus. The most evident area of expansion was military. Such generalisations take on greater significance in the light of conditions within specific regions, which contained varied political cultures, social formations and economic resources.

The region to the west of Lake Victoria commonly known as the interlacustrine region, where political life was shaped by kingdoms, underwent an enlargement in military and economic scale beginning in the early 1870s. As Egypt reached for the headwaters of the Nile, its garrisons and diplomatic initiatives became part of the political scene, above all in the kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro. This advance of political and administrative ambition led to the formation of the Equatoria Province, which was the first formal manifestation of imperialism in East Africa. The activities of the Sudanese slave- and ivory-traders, the 'Khartoumers', had already created a frontier of resistance, however, and among the politically decentralised people of Lango, defensive measures had fostered a new stratum of regional military leadership. Egyptian garrisons and officials, therefore, confronted an increasingly well mobilised and hostile society in the area north of Lake Kyoga. For their part, the Langi increased their interactions with Bunyoro, from which traders came with iron wares and to which men could go to participate in the struggles between rival claimants to the throne and to obtain booty.

Bunyoro was the kingdom on the first line of contacts with the Egyptian agents. This state was based not so much in its political apparatus as in its economy, which provides a classic example of iron-age regional exchange. The varied resources included a solid trinity of iron, salt and cattle. With the increase of external trade with the Swahili, the abundant sources of iron had brought wealth to the rulers. Nyoro boatmen dominated the key riverways and waters of Lake Kyoga and Lake Albert (Mobutu), and were in a position to extend and intensify lines of trade and communication.

As Kabarega (ruled 1869–99), the newly installed *omukama* of Bunyoro, began to take full command of the state after a protracted succession struggle, he built a new military organisation, the *abarusura*, into which many non-Nyoro were recruited, to be paid in booty. In conjunction, this circulation of men intensified the interchange of cattle, food and trade goods. While there is no doubt that the *abarusura* escalated the means of violence at the disposal of the state, they were rarely used in outright conquest but rather for the reconquest of Toro, a breakaway state to the south-west of Bunyoro, for forays to the southern salt lakes which were strategic crossroads of trade, and for internal and

EAST AFRICA, 1870-1905



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border control. The looseness of administrative control in Bunyoro as contrasted with Buganda was permitted by the vitality of its economy, which was tapped rather than dictated by the state.

Buganda in the early 1870s was ascendant. Kabaka Mutesa (ruled 1854–84) had firm control after fifteen years of rule, and a machine of government capable of territorial expansion and tributary exaction. To the old strata of hereditary and appointed chiefs, Mutesa added a new dimension. When he mounted expeditions into new areas, the *kabaka* assigned commanders, *batongole* chiefs who served at the pleasure of the ruler, but whose functions were more military and colonising than those of the *bakungu*, the appointed chiefs in core areas. The motives for Ganda military activities varied: Busoga remained a preserve for slave-raiding and ivory acquisition, while pressure on Nkore secured the southern approaches by which traders entered the sphere of influence of both Buganda and Bunyoro. To further control the terms of access by long-distance traders, the small states of Karagwe and Kiziba to the west of Lake Victoria were kept in the shadow of Ganda power. Buganda under Mutesa came to define and dominate a new regional economy built through the power to commandeer and monopolise. This strategic military and economic expansion was well exemplified on Lake Victoria, where a navy of large canoes secured a monopoly of violence along the littorals and dominated the transport of goods and commodities. Usukuma at the south end of the lake became a source area for iron wares, produced by the Ronga and for food. The Ganda actively participated in the development of this lake route for long-distance trade, to the neglect of the overland approach to the west of the lake and the detriment of Bunyoro.

Between 1874 and 1876, Egyptian forces had attempted to garrison posts south of Lake Kyoga. After overestimating the success of his diplomacy and occupation, Charles Gordon had ruefully to confess that rather than annexing Buganda, his soldiers had been effectively detained by the *kabaka*. The policy of welcoming visitors but keeping them under control was consistently followed by Mutesa, who was very receptive to ideas and technologies that could enhance his power. By the mid-1870s, to offset the aggressiveness of the Equatoria administration, the *kabaka* called upon westerners to come and reside at his capital. While seeking to strengthen his ties to Zanzibar, he saw Christians

as a means of countervailing Muslim power in Equatoria and among Ganda converts.

The élite of Buganda depended upon the *kabaka's* patronage for political advancement. They were also more economically dependent upon the state than in neighbouring kingdoms and polities where clan and community retained control over distribution of land. Advancement for youths entailed apprenticeships at district and provincial courts, from which an aspirant could move to the *kabaka's* capital and there serve the leading chiefs or the *kabaka* more directly. The more concentrated power became and the more expansive was the state, the more feverish was competition among the pages for a place in the meritocracy within an autocracy. At the same time, as the monarch outgrew and became abstracted from the localised and traditional religious systems, Islam and Christianity became available as potential religions of the state, to be domesticated just as long-distance trade had been. Mutesa observed Ramadan and encouraged mosque building in the early 1870s. Literacy was a functional by-product of the new religion, and pages imbibed not only the theological precepts but also the legalisms of Islam. The year after initiating relations with Christians and inviting them to his court, Mutesa launched a purge of Muslims and authorised the public burning of pages whose loyalty to the new religion had compromised their loyalty to the *kabaka*. By contrast, Bunyoro did not have the same concentration of upwardly mobile youths; its functionaries were not too bureaucratised, and the *mukama* himself did not lead in the prayers of any foreign religion. Kabarega nevertheless spoke Arabic, wore a *kanzu*, and otherwise showed in his costume and conduct an awareness of the material importance of the northern and Swahili factors in Bunyoro.

Rwanda was a major expansive state of the interlacustrine region that was not extensively penetrated by long-distance trading interests or subject to the manoeuvres of external powers in the immediate pre-colonial period. Motivated by population pressures, the Rwandan monarch, Kigeri (ruled c. 1865–95), embarked upon conquests of areas to the north. The principle of caste superiority of Tutsi pastoralists over Hutu agriculturalists was thus extended into new areas. But even in the older parts of the state the extent and thoroughness of Hutu subordination remained variable. From the perspective of some Hutu in Rwanda

and many Iru cultivators in Nkore, their states were not rigidly stratified. Tribute often went to the kings directly from cultivating communities through their own leaders, not through Tutsi or Hima lords. Court ideology claimed for the Tutsi an intrinsic, primordial superiority, but the actual process of instituting unequal relations took place slowly. As pressures of human and animal populations on the uplands increased, so the competition for land mounted and with it the potential for deterioration of the terms of clientship. The Hutu cultivators had to pay more dearly for the lease of cattle and access to land. Certain Tutsi also became poorer. Some lost status and joined the Hutu. Others clustered around wealthy Tutsi as clients. A third option was emigration, and a number of Tutsi moved to Unyanyembe to serve as herdsmen for the Nyamwezi.

In sum, the kingdoms of the interlacustrine region, with their varied social formations and places within the regional economy, adopted different postures towards long-distance traders. Buganda and Bunyoro concentrated on ivory and, secondarily, slaves for exchange in the name of the state. In Rwanda, however, the penetration and role of foreign trade was slight. Cattle rather than trade goods, firearms or other imports remained the base of state power. The regiments in which both Hutu and Tutsi served were socially stratified with Hutu in the rank and file and Tutsi as officers. Military units took their collective identity from their named regimental herds. Very little currency mediated relations of personal obligation.

To the east of the interlacustrine region a wide area was occupied by pastoralist people and cattle-owning cultivators, who did not form a common political organisation and were within themselves, like the Langi, decentralised. This northern interior region has continually provided the ingredients for cultural and economic stereotypes, because it contains such sharp linguistic and occupational differences. But autonomy and autarchy were not the rule; Nilotic and Bantu-speaking groups, pastoralists and cultivators, were in fact involved in complex and changing interactions. The Masai, in particular, became labelled as fierce and predatory. This image was sometimes promoted by traders wishing to discourage rivals from establishing relations with the Masai who, contrary to the propaganda, served very effectively as local contacts in the ivory trade. The Masai in fact acted as

middlemen between the Dorobo hunters and the coastmen and secured their relations with the Dorobo suppliers in a number of ways including marriage, trusteeship of cattle, and so forth. In times of distress when the milk and blood diet became impossible to sustain, many Masai redefined themselves as Dorobo, at least temporarily changing their livelihood and life style. The status of Masai was thus contingent upon adequacy of cattle herds. As the Swahili developed this commercial province in the northern Rift Valley, they had to adapt to the special requirements of their pastoral allies, supplying livestock and beads in exchange for ivory. Slaves, firearms, and cloth had slight commercial value in Masailand.

The Kikuyu and neighbouring peoples of the forested central highlands of Kenya in the 1870s were absorbed mainly in the expansion of their agriculture, but were not impervious to trade, particularly in food. The Kamba attempted to retain the middleman function between the Kikuyu and the Swahili caravans and had managed to do so before about 1870, when the main arteries of the ivory trade had run far to the south, striking from Mombasa, Vanga and Pangani due west toward Kilimanjaro before turning northward into the Rift Valley. In the 1870s, however, traffic ran closer and Kikuyu youths in the southern districts such as Kiambu ranged further afield to make contact with passing caravans and promote the direct sale of food. Relations with the Masai deteriorated as Kikuyu warriors defended agricultural activity in areas that also served as dry season pastures.

From place to place, mobilising age cohorts, clients or ritual followings, individuals emerged as entrepreneurs and local notables. The territorial control of these big men remained limited. Land was vested in local families and clans. Only Chief Mumia, of the Luyia, who had successfully allied with traders, retained Masai auxiliaries in order to embark upon expansion and consolidation of a tributary state.

The commercial hegemony wrought by demands for ivory and slaves necessitated very little overt political control. Even the allegiance of subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar, especially in the distant interior but also on the coast itself, was at best situational. The power of Zanzibar rested above all in the hands of bankers, brokers and other wealthy figures who dispensed credit and kept

accounts that summed up a continuing relationship with the mobilisers of exports, traders and expeditors who dispersed throughout the Swahili sphere. The primary creditors were generally Indian, many of the principal up-country traders were Arab, the petty traders were usually islamised Africans, and retainers were often slaves, sometimes of the second generation or more. Slave categories like Nyasa and Manyema loosely reflected origins in the interior. This pluralism notwithstanding, the system was an organised whole engendering loyalty as long as it was expansive and lucrative. The Swahili language was the *lingua franca* of mercantile penetration, and to designate the entire system Swahili is to stress trade and assimilation, rather than race.

In the metropole of the Swahili system before 1873, the sultan's revenues had been derived to a significant degree from the export of slaves. He was also a major owner of slaves and plantations, who benefited fiscally from the general extension of clove plantations worked by slave labour. Marketing of slaves was an institutionalised economic activity, with the large majority of slaves being brought from the Lake Malawi (Nyasa) area by Yao and Swahili traders. The Yao had operated for over a century on an overland route from the southern parts of the lake, while the Swahili were relative latecomers. In the third quarter of the century, the Swahili spread into the area to the north of the Rovuma, where the stabilisation of the Ngoni conquest states provided a new set of political and commercial conditions. Once delivered to Kilwa, some slaves were shipped to Arabia. The principal demand, however, came from the clove plantations of Zanzibar and Pemba and the grain and coconut plantations of the Malindi coast north of Mombasa, which had expanded rapidly in the 1860s.

In the first years of his reign, Sultan Bargash (ruled 1870–88) proved to be a 'progressive' ruler in the eyes of the British officials prosecuting the anti-slavery campaign in East Africa. His positive policy was grounded in a constellation of conditions, some of them internal and some external. Even to become installed, Bargash had to make peace with the British, whose naval and diplomatic power secured him against rival claimants. Economically, he was vulnerable, as succession to office was not accompanied by the automatic transfer of his predecessor's property, which had to be distributed to heirs. Over the course

of his reign, a sultan indeed stood to gain considerable property in land and profit from trading activities, but the most secure source of wealth at the outset was the lease of customs.

Customs masters at Zanzibar were invariably Indian, and often of the Bhadia community. The long-serving Jairam Sewji, who controlled the customs at the time of Bargash's succession, had effectively become a state banker, extending credits to the head of state, to European trading firms, to plantation owners and to caravan merchants alike. Nearly his peer in wealth was Taria Topan, who had cultivated a slightly different clientele – American as opposed to British firms. In 1874–5, Taria was able to outbid Jairam and took over the lease of customs for the ensuing five years at a rent of \$350,000. Afterward, Jairam Sewji bid the rent up to \$500,000 and resumed the position, while Taria Topan concentrated on private business.

Great adjustments of the political economy of Zanzibar in the 1870s came on the heels of the 1872 hurricane, which, while largely sparing Pemba, felled many clove trees on Zanzibar island. The Sultan's fleet was among the losses to shipping. On the mainland shore, such ports as Bagamoyo also sustained major damage to housing and fishing vessels. Energies had to be diverted to economic reconstruction in the islands and Pemba emerged as the new centre of clove production. The world price of cloves, which had declined owing to overproduction, suddenly rose, giving the Pemba planters a high return on the harvest of their surviving trees.

The prospects of obtaining new finance for clove development became poorer in 1873, when Sultan Bargash signed a new anti-slave-trade treaty with the British, agreeing to close the slave market in Zanzibar and make illegal the shipment of slaves from the mainland coast, whether to the islands or beyond. Indians could no longer grant credit against the export of slaves, and new lines of credit had to be established. Furthermore, with the agreement of the government of India, the British consul, Sir John Kirk, in 1874 began to apply increased leverage against British Indian subjects who owned slaves. Ownership of plantations became more than ever an Arab preserve. Indian bankers, unable to operate in their own name plantations on which they had foreclosed, dramatically raised mortgage interest rates for Arab and other subjects of the sultan who still had the right to own

slaves. Indian capital found its outlet in credit against the delivery of 'legitimate' commodities, of which ivory still reigned supreme.

The outlawing of the slave trade was followed by various manifestations of opposition and civil conflict in coastal communities: antagonism towards missionaries who gave refuge to runaway slaves flared into active hostilities near Mombasa; a contingent of Baluchi soldiers had to be sent to Kilwa; the Mazrui leader, Mbarak of Gazi, began a period of rebellion and brigandage lasting from 1874 to 1884. But these events were neither unprecedented nor uncharacteristic of the factious coastal leadership. A revealing episode at Bagamoyo in September 1872, before the treaty had been concluded, gave evidence that Bargash faced challenges from those installed by his predecessor, Majid. A motive for the sultan's visit was a plan to promote Bagamayo as the premier port of the coast. The development of Dar es Salaam had been suspended at an early stage owing to Majid's death, and Bargash intended to develop police posts and wells to facilitate movement in and out of Bagamayo. The *liwali* and commandant of the forces on the Mrima coast was a Baluchi, Sabri bin Safir, who, rather than paying homage to Bargash, virtually snubbed him. Among the tasks facing Bargash quite apart from the issue of the slave trade was the substitution of his own appointees, and a new man became the *liwali* of Bagamayo in 1875.

In 1875 the sultanate of Zanzibar was also threatened by the Egyptian occupation of ports on the upper coast. The commercial, financial and political élites saw their common interest and the need for Great Britain's protection. That Zanzibar did not own the allegiance of these distant coastal communities was evident from their warm reception of the Egyptians. The great Indian merchants of Zanzibar had warehouses and other property of considerable value in Kismayu, Marca and Brava, for which they threatened to seek compensation if the ports were awarded to Egypt. The decision in favour of Zanzibar's claims was quickly followed by British measures to create a 'new sultanate' capable of preserving a commercial sphere as well as extending formal territorial control.

THE NEW SULTANATE AND THE SWAHILI COMMERCIAL SYSTEM

The slave trade from and within East Africa had reached a peak in the later 1860s, due to overseas demand, the labour requirements of an expanding coastal and island plantation sector, and the need of porters for interior caravans. The British, American, German and French commercial agents in Zanzibar may have dealt only in 'legitimate' goods, but these included firearms, powder and caps used in precipitating wars with their harvests of captives, as well as cloth and other trade goods that went into the purchase of slaves. As suppliers, Western traders were participants in the Swahili system and a symbiosis amongst traders of all colours and ideological postures continued until the turn of the century. The western traders not only stocked trade goods, they also signalled the new wants and rising prices of commodities consumed by the industrialised countries. With the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, transport and communication between Europe and East Africa became speedier and more regular. The treaties of 1873 and 1876 between the British and the sultan of Zanzibar did much to constrict the slave trade. The Swahili system and the East African economy proved to be equal to the task of absorbing continuing deliveries of slaves. Rubber quickly took the place of slaves as Kilwa's principal export. But, contrary to the assumptions of abolitionists, the prohibition on exporting slaves and the promotion of a legitimate commodity like rubber did not strike at the root of slavery.

The severing of Pemba and Zanzibar from their source of slaves led to a split between the licit and illicit sectors of the economy. A further blow came with the supplementary anti-slave-trade treaty of 1876, and the organisation of an armed force trained by an English officer, Lloyd Mathews. The treaty authorised, and the army carried out, operations on the mainland coastal belt to deter the movement of slaves from Kilwa northward overland. The overland routes had sprung up when shipping became risky and a glut of slaves developed. Suppliers of slaves had been encouraged by a sustained demand, fed particularly by Malindi planters taking advantage of low prices. Slaves were marched north from Kilwa to the coast opposite Pemba, making Pangani and Sadani commercially important. Further up the coast, the plantations at

Malindi absorbed quantities of slaves, and beyond that, Lamu and its neighbours provided points of embarkation for slaves aboard dhows headed to Arabia with grain and mangrove lumber. Cheap slaves were also set to work to increase the area under cultivation in the Shebele valley as well as reinforcing the economic life of the coastal towns on the lower Somali coast, recently returned to Zanzibar. Kirk estimated that 10,000 slaves crossed the Juba each year during the 1870s.

The licit and illicit sectors of East African commerce cannot be entirely disentangled, but the public separation had several important consequences. First of all, an alliance formed among those committed primarily to the licit trade. The partners included the sultan, the major Indian banker-brokers, and Swahili merchants primarily concerned with the export of ivory, the most famous of whom was Hamed bin Mohammed, Tippu Tip. At the forefront of the organised illicit sector were those engaged in replenishing supplies of slave labour for the coastal and island plantations. Whereas credit for ivory traders came from the Asian capitalists directly, resources for the illicit trade had to come from secondary credit relations and individual initiative. Pemba planters were known to use their own vessels and retainers to bring slaves across the channel. Credit remained the basis of the Swahili commercial system, but in the illicit sector it came increasingly to be shared out to operators of small and often unseaworthy vessels and to a host of other petty traders who mixed slave and ivory trading. Although a primary creditor might operate entirely in the licit sector from the point of view of goods directly given and received, there is ample evidence that the multiple links in the long chain of credit entailed transactions of many sorts. The commercial system had roots in localised and regional trade. That slaves were bought and sold at various moments between the despatch of goods into the interior and the ultimate emergence of a recordable commodity at the coast was not a legal issue in any event. Where the sultan's jurisdiction defined slave trade as illegal, that is, along the coast, the demand for slaves did not let up after the supplementary treaty of 1876. When the newly planted clove trees began to bear, harvesters were badly needed and the price of slaves rose. The risks of illicit trading were worth taking and the sector was well organised. By the same time, about 1879, the promotion of rubber collection in the Kilwa hinterland

had established a legitimate commodity whose export value exceeded that of ivory. Credit and energy on the southern coast became more absorbed in this activity, which supported Kilwa's economy as the traffic in Nyasa slaves declined.

Expansive, absorbitive, and confident, the Swahili system coped with and profited from the influx of money to carry out European exploration and establish missionary outposts. Expediting goods and restocking caravans increased the scale of operations of the licit operators, the magnates of trade, who were reported to the world to be gentlemen who graciously eased the travellers' way, trustingly took cheques drawn on bankers in Zanzibar, and even stood ready to advance the cause of colonialism. The lower elements of the commercial world, on the contrary, were described as vicious, violent and thoroughly committed to slave trading. The swelling ranks of Swahili society were indeed stratified. Not all Omanis among the large numbers coming to East Africa in the 1870s and 1880s were economically independent. Many took menial jobs at first, but they had ample opportunities for advancement. The upper strata of Zanzibar, the plantation oligarchy and the principal ivory merchants, constituted what may be called the 'Arab' class, access to which was facilitated by literacy, a modicum of Muslim learning, and an Arab forebear. Omanis moved into the class readily, but Swahili freemen could also be accorded the same respect if they became wealthy. Trusted slaves who rose as agents for their masters replicated the social order when they had a chance to assume command. Slave porters, even those without special privileges or rewards, had freedom of movement and a sense of professionalism. Like skilled slave craftsmen, they retained a portion of their earnings. Where ties of obligation were loose and fairly mutual, a sense of identification grew between master and slave. Caravan porters vented their displeasure on those foreign employers who were more concerned to cut costs than to pay adequately or look beyond a short-term relationship. The professional porters, *pagazi*, expressed more and more proletarian consciousness as colonialism advanced. In the 1870s, however, the mixture of slave and hired labour tended to strengthen a common Swahili identity. Assimilation and membership led to cultural identification with Islam in its most outward, communal features, such as the ritual killing of meat, slaughtering of animals, and holy feasts and fasts.

The cadre of the Swahili system was composed of Wangwana, a term interpreted to mean the free-born and the civilised. However ambiguous their freedom or however remote their personal experience of the coast, the upwardly mobile elements of the Swahili community coveted this status. In its prosperous days, the Swahili commercial system gave much employment, some opportunity for advancement, and to its regular personnel an aura of superiority. The Islamic element played a rôle in class stratification, since owners or shareholders or other great personages made a display of their fasts and daily prayers and feasted everyone on special religious days. Banners blessed by holy men at the coast symbolised a caravan unit, and porters with elevated status as butchers saw that meat was slaughtered with ritual propriety. Wherever possible, Swahili depot communities grew rice; diet too came to set apart the Wangwana.

The incorporation of people into Swahili culture and economy was nowhere more evident than in Manyema, the trans-Tanganyika commercial province created in the later 1860s. An observation made by V. L. Cameron in 1874 succinctly and accurately summarised the situation:

Very few slaves are exported from Manyema by the Arabs for profit, but are obtained to fill their harems, to cultivate the farms which always surround the permanent camps, and to act as porters.

By the time a caravan arrives at Tanganyika from westward nearly fifty percent have made their escape, and the majority of those remaining are disposed of at Ujiji and Unyanyembe, frequently as hire for free porters, so that comparatively few reach the coast.¹

A profound dislocation and reconstruction had taken place in Manyema in a short period of time, marked by violence and reincorporation within the new commercial economy. The title Wangwana was appropriated by Swahilised Manyema, regardless of the fact that they had often been impressed into the community rather than freely joining it. Chaotic conditions, and the lack of control over slaves being transported towards the east, drove many to become refugees. The masterless Manyema who offered themselves for hire in Tabora eventually formed a highly exploited labour force.

The smashing of old communities and creation of Swahili-dominated ones which occurred in Manyema was an unusual

¹ V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (London, 1877), vol. II, 20.

consequence of commercial expansion. More often, the dynamics of regional politics and economics in this decade reflected more continuity in the combination of internal conditions and the new or intensified commerce. Two contrasting examples of how traditionalist and commercial parties formed within states are to be found in the Shambaa kingdom and the chiefdom of Unyanyembe. In the former, commerce prevailed at the expense of the centralised state, while in the latter, the commercial faction remained continually involved in dynastic politics, ultimately reinforcing and preserving the state.

The Shambaa kingdom, with its capital of Vugha high in the Usambara mountains, stood between the coast and Mount Kilimanjaro. In the early nineteenth century, relations with the people of the lower plains country had been fairly amicable, based on complementarity of hills cultivators and plains pastoralists. From mid-century, however, the development of regular Swahili trade routes had altered the political and economic calculus. Kimweri, the king of Shambaa, emerged as an effective controller of export trade, whose writ extended over a wide region and who remained in with leaders at the coast and in Zanzibar. Kimweri's death in 1869 precipitated a succession struggle, pitting Semboja, whose orientation and alliances rested in the commerce of the plains, against a traditionalist party focused on the ritual and political centre of the monarchy at Vugha. A revolt by the subjugated Bondei in 1871 escalated the level of violence in the Pangani valley; captives sold to traders streamed into the coastal slave depots. For more than a decade, the highland and lowland Shambaa remained at enmity. In the early 1880s the traditionalists leagued with Mbarak, the Mazrui chieftain, whose brigandage kept up a pattern of turmoil, dislodging people from communities and settled production in the Mombasa hinterland. Slaves were taken and sold for guns with which to carry on the civil war. Without question, the failure to develop a 'legitimate' export product contributed to brutalised social relations, increased callousness of rulers, and chronic treatment of people in this region as a commodity rather than as producers of surplus. The demand for these slaves came particularly from Pemba, where some planters began to organise the requisition and transportation of slaves from the mainland. Petty traders also participated in clandestine slave trading. Their supplies were increased by the

famines in Ukambani in 1882–3 and in Mijikenda and Kikuyu countries in 1884. So hunger and pawnship were added to violence and judicial harshness as steps to enslavement and replenishment of plantation labour.

The unresolved civil war which plagued Shambaai and the Pangani valley did not have a parallel in the Kilimanjaro area, where caravans were more interested in securing food supplies and facilities before entering or after leaving the ivory frontiers in and beyond Masailand, than they were in acquiring slaves. Mangi Rindi of Moshi gained an international reputation by entertaining explorers, who accepted uncritically his claim to be ‘king’ of Chaga. Strong as Rindi was, he had effective opponents to his expansionist designs, and the Chaga as a whole wished to be organised neither as a centralised state nor as the core of a regional sub-system. The independence of the Chaga valleys from one another bears comparison with the autonomy of the Kikuyu *mbari* in this period, in respect to their alliances with pastoralists and attitude towards trade in food with caravans. The contrast of Shambaai with Chaga and Kikuyu countries at this point in time suggests that degrees of centralised state formation, dynastic feuds, and geographical position with respect to the main zone of illicit trading must all be considered in analysing the tragedy of the Pangani valley.

Tabora, a Swahili settlement within the territory of the Nyamwezi state of Unyanyembe, became a focus of conflict in the early 1870s, when Mirambo, the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Urambo, undertook a major military campaign with the object of dislodging the commercial community from Tabora and obliging it to relocate at his own capital. The hold-up of ivory effected by Mirambo as part of this campaign proved that he could indeed disrupt the flow of trade from the interlacustrine and trans-Tanganyika trading frontiers. Owing to the resultant scarcity in 1873, the price of ivory at Zanzibar rose dramatically. The sultan’s revenues, even with the recent rise in the customs tariff charged on ivory, were endangered. In 1875 Bargash despatched a large and costly expedition to Tabora to discipline the feuding elements and pave the way for peace with Mirambo. Peace was made in 1876, Tabora remained the interior entrepôt of the Swahili system, and Mirambo turned his energies to imposing his military-administrative régime in the region between Unyany-

embe in the south and Lake Victoria and Karagwe in the north. Within this region, he provided an umbrella for trade, from which he derived wealth, especially when, in the later 1870s and 1880s, the Lake Victoria basin became dominated by the Ganda and traffic through Sukumaland increased.

What is masked by older accounts of Mirambo's struggle for control of the trade is the degree to which it entailed an attack upon the Nyanyembe as well as the Arabs. It was increasingly evident in the 1870s that the merchant faction in Unyanyembe, the *wandewa*, had gained enough power in chieftdom affairs to install their candidate as the paramount chief or *ntemi*. This party intermarried with the coast-derived Tabora community and shared many of its interests – organising caravans, restocking in Tabora, and maintaining regular trade networks. A traditionalist party also existed among the Nyanyembe, stressing the old sources of political legitimation as against the new wealth and loyalties based in trade. Under certain conditions, candidates who succeeded to the position of *ntemi* invoked ancient patriarchy and drew on the persisting extra-commercial sources of power and patronage. Control of the highest office indeed swung between traditionalists and merchants, with consequent shifts in political mood and levels of tribute exacted from the trading community. Without doubt, however, by the late 1870s Unyanyembe as well as Urambo was secure for the operations of the Swahili system, whose values were matched by those of influential Nyamwezi.

The Nyanyembe indeed predominated within the Swahili system as it extended in the direction of Lake Mweru and Katanga. In Katanga, the Nyamwezi offshoot state of Msiri (ruled 1868–91) had been consolidated in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and reached a peak in the 1880s. The leaders and members of irregular military units, *rugaruga*, and many transient traders known in this region as Yeke, had their roots in Tabora–Unyanyembe and returned to it periodically. Before counting Msiri as fully a part of the Swahili system, however, a qualification must be introduced, for after 1870 his economic domain was regularly served by Ovimbundu traders from Bihe in Angola. Msiri watched with increasing apprehension as Swahili roughnecks eroded the imperium of Kazembe on the Luapula, and he eventually preferred the more orderly routes linking him commercially with the Atlantic.

As one Nyamwezi sphere was politically organised by Mirambo in the north, so was another created in the south by Nyungu ya Mawe, a prince eliminated from contention in Unyanyembe. The Kimbu state was organised in what had been a region of commercial uncertainty in 1870 when the Tabora-based Muslim Indian, Amran Masudi, had ambitiously aimed to conquer the Sangu paramount, Merere. With his considerable army, and the full support of a small community of resident Swahili, whose interests were also threatened, Merere decisively defeated Amran. In the following years Nyungu avoided contesting control of those commercial routes, pasture lands or ivory sources that were important to the Sangu, and developed his administrative, military and commercial domain in the bushy plateau country between Lake Rukwa and Unyanyembe. Beyond Nyungu's political control, but moving ivory through the Kimbu capital, Kiwele, was a dissident member of the Sangu royal family, Kimalaunga, who imposed himself as a warlord in the elephant country south of Lake Rukwa. The older Namwanga, Fipa and Mambwe polities therefore came under double encroachment, in the north from Kimalaunga and his *rugaruga* and in the south from the expanding frontiers and raiding activities of the Bemba.

The maturation of the Swahili system was becoming evident by the end of the 1870s. The coastmen were powers to be reckoned with, having proven their capacity to reduce weak rulers or to make alliances threatening or maintaining the *status quo* of a locality. The roughneck function, sometimes performed by armed caravans before and during the 1870s, was taken over increasingly by regional power-wielders concerned to control aspects of trade and extend territorial jurisdiction. This trend toward regional paramountcy was not fully realised everywhere, and could still be deflected by strong external forces.

The leading coastal traders were divided in their policy toward the emergent regional paramounts. A considerable segment of the Tabora community had wished to confront Mirambo, while Tippu Tip and his family adopted a friendly neutrality. By preferring to see strong rulers maintain the peace over wide areas Tippu Tip conserved his own energies for ivory trading and administrative regulatory activities in the commercial provinces west and south of Lake Tanganyika, where no indigenous regional powers emerged to organise resources and provide an umbrella for trade.

As an area economically incorporated into the Swahili system, East Africa in 1880 was as interconnected as it was ever to be. Connectedness had a violent aspect, especially in places of almost institutional violence, where militarised elements with a narrow economic base preyed upon resilient and self-sustaining cultivating communities. For purposes of defence as well as offence, firearms and their suppliers were welcomed far and wide. With extended lines of communication, traders often needed to cultivate the friendship of chiefs by including guns and powder as trade goods, even if credit-giving in cloth, beads and copper remained a pervasive means of engaging to obtain a range of services and access to commodities.

The major regional powers, preoccupied as they were with gathering tribute through subordinate chiefs and with regulating traders, were not the agents of change in everyday life that chiefs over smaller areas were. Local lords, whether tributary to a superior or independent over time assumed more explicit jurisdiction, concentrated greater surpluses, gave refuge to unsettled persons, accumulated women, dispensed patronage and generally enjoyed enhanced authority. Police and armed forces were regularised. For lack of a better term the resultant phenomenon can be labelled ‘seigneurialism’. It flourished especially in a context of mixed regional production and exchange where long-distance trade contributed additional economic resources and small but critical quantities of capital through credit from traders. The seigneurs deserve attention because they formed focal points within the East African economy. They presided over a delicate and never fully institutionalised shift in the deployment of labour, employing strategies of redistribution as well as protective and coercive powers.

If and where there was prosperity in East Africa which entailed more than the transfer of assets from one group or class to another, it was to be found in new levels of productivity and intensification of effort. Seigneurial management deflected labour into more intensive and large-scale production, into military service and into portage. In addition, regional economies became more marked by specialisation. The histories of iron smelting and forging in the Nyasa–Tanganyika corridor and western Usukuma contain evidence of increased manufacturing for trade over extended areas. As salt remained a staple of regional

trade, salt sources became more and more frequented. Each region had its own near-currencies based on generally accepted use values, such as iron, hoes, salt, cattle and goats. Imported cloth was beginning to figure as a near-currency, although it did not diminish the call for the domestically produced units of account. Currencies of a more abstract sort were also regionally specific. In the market-places of the interlacustrine region, cowries were commonly exchanged. Throughout the central and south-western region where the Nyamwezi networks existed, copper wire, often wrapped around fibres as bracelets, constituted the smaller units of currency.

A regional effect of heightened caravan traffic in the late 1870s and 1880s is exemplified by Ufipa near the south-eastern shores of Lake Tanganyika. The economy of this area was rooted in long-standing exchanges between cultivators with different seasonalities, above and below a rift escarpment. Lake Tanganyika and the rivers flowing into Lake Rukwa supplied fish. Iron smelting and weaving of locally grown cotton complemented food production. Goods in trade comprised iron, salt, and tobacco. The ruling family of Ufipa had divided the country into two separate jurisdictions, the western one, Nkansi, being the more affluent, in part because it controlled the principal trade routes north and south from Unyanyembe to Katanga. Of critical importance was the lake crossing from Kirando to Moliro and the ruler of Nkansi profited considerably from the tolls he charged whenever his subjects ferried a caravan across. It was characteristic of the relationship of ruler and ruled in this particular region, however, that the boatmen bargained separately for their fees. Altogether the Nkansi rulers can be said to have drawn lightly upon the resources of their land and people, and avoided intervening greatly in its essentially sound and diversified domestic economy. The apparatus of government nevertheless became strengthened, in part to assure internal order and to remind producers of their obligations of tribute, and in part to contend with the threat posed by Kimalaunga. While the political and military context of Bunyoro in the 1880s spawned a greater degree of military organisation and activity over a wider area, the essentials of the economic bases in Ufipa and Bunyoro were similar.

At the jugular of the ivory trade in 1880 was the community

of Ujiji which stood at the main point of embarkation for Manyema across Lake Tanganyika. There could be no question of the Jiji contesting economic control of the long-distance trade, or exercising social and political control over the traders and their entourages. They made the best of their situation, however, by intensifying agriculture in the rich Luiche river delta until it became a granary for settlements on both sides of the lake. As canoemen, sailors and fishermen, they plied the waters for wages and independent trade. So production, trade and transport made for a diversified domestic economy. The important rôle of the Jiji as producers, their sharp commercial consciousness and unity in the market had effect in counteracting inflation and adverse terms of trade. Just as the rulers of Nkansi confined themselves to moderate tribute, claims to a royalty on ivory, and profits from caravan-servicing, leaving the domestic economy to its own dynamics, so the Swahili leaders in Ujiji did not aim at total control of the Jiji. Again, as with demographic change and greater and more varied employment, the Wangwana, the Nyamwezi and many other social groups became enlarged by absorbing and acculturating people, so the Jiji swelled their number by incorporating strangers and slaves.

A final example of regionalism within East Africa in the early 1880s comes from the southern interior. There the Hehe state formed the dominant element in a balance of power between three military organisations, the others being the Sangu and the Ngoni of Songea. The Sangu and the Ngoni became allied against the Hehe and occasionally co-ordinated their expeditions against militarily weaker but intrinsically wealthy areas, such as Unyakusa. An essentially sound mixed agricultural economy sustained the state and very little is known of Hehe ties with long-distance traders. The major preoccupation of the rulers was to control the southern highlands by excluding any military rival, although they did gain cattle and pasturelands through military campaigns against the Sangu. Beneath the military ebb and flow of the struggle between the major powers, subordination, displacement and reconstruction took place among lesser groups of the region. In the Mahenge area, the Mbunda people regrouped after being displaced from the area of Ngoni consolidation in Songea to the west, organising themselves into military units which copied the weaponry and tactics of their conquerors. The Bena groups under

TOWARDS A CLIMAX OF WESTERN PENETRATION

Kiwanga, expelled from the highlands in the course of the Sangu–Hehe struggle, also became established in Mahenge, further rearranging the lines of politics and force in this fertile and well-watered but heretofore more sparsely populated and economically less exploited countryside.

Mahenge emerged in the 1880s and early 1890s as the source area of raiding parties which descended upon the mostly Ngindo-speaking populations of the Kilwa hinterland. This activity was triggered by famines, but also aimed to appropriate wealth derived from rubber production and trade, by then the mainstay of Kilwa's exports. The southern interior, even with its social fragmentation, recent political reorganisation and the high premium on military power, was also a zone of Swahili penetration of growing importance. Caravan routes became regularised and traders' settlements sprouted between Kilwa and Lake Malawi. Slaves came from the western shores of Lake Malawi, trade with Ngoni rulers in Songea flourished, and rubber, constantly increasing in volume and price came from this region north of the Rovuma.

TOWARDS A CLIMAX OF WESTERN PENETRATION

For decades, caravans had been organised and porters recruited on behalf of European travellers, whose comings and goings provided the East African economy with a veritable tourist industry. A basic change took place when the African International Association (AIA) and various missionary agencies began to establish continuously occupied stations. The need to maintain supply lines for these resident whites remained a good source of business, but by 1883 the intentions of the AIA were obviously territorial and economic, not merely humanitarian and exploratory. The magnates of the ivory trade perforce treated their incipient rival, the AIA with a measure of diplomacy. On the other hand, missionary outposts fitted into local patterns of politics and economic life, becoming centres of refuge, reconnaissance, and diplomacy. They were, of course, also harbingers of low-paid wage labour and spread Western ideologies and cultural values.

Among the most important Christian agencies in East Africa in the 1880s were the White Fathers, who in 1879 had followed the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to Buganda and spread

around Lake Malawi and Lake Tanganyika, in the latter case taking over the AIA station of Karema. The London Missionary Society (LMS) had become established in Unyamwezi and expanded to Lake Tanganyika and to the south, where they built stations among the Lungu and Mambwe people. The LMS floated the first steam vessels on Lake Tanganyika, but rather than challenging the *status quo* in any marked way the captains tended to build relationships with the Swahili. A rather different situation developed in the south, where a Scottish firm began to organise steamer and overland carriage of goods to service the Scottish and English Protestant mission stations near Lake Malawi and along the corridor running between Lakes Malawi and Tanganyika. The African Lakes Company (ALC), as it was called, did business also with the general public. Soon after it made Karonga a regular depot in 1884, many up-country Muslim traders found it convenient to shorten their own lines of supply and brought ivory to exchange for textiles, beads and other trade goods.

Ivory trading and missionary supplying were also combined in the person of Charles Stokes, who after the death of Mirambo in 1884 became an increasingly important mobiliser of the Sukuma trade and transportation system. Among those businessmen who specialised in expediting for Europeans was Sewa Hadji, an Indian based mainly at Bagamoyo. Other Indians too made their fortunes in this era, in positive alliance with colonial elements, and were favourably placed to extend their own business as the reach of colonial authority lengthened.

The Swahili system also adapted to the new times through an organisation, the HM Company, under the leadership of Tippu Tip.² This venture has been described by Tippu Tip himself as one commissioned by Sultan Bargash. From corroborating sources it is evident that the International African Association had offered Tippu Tip recognition and support if he would agree to become their agent, using his commercial networks and strong points to secure their territorial ends. Whatever circumstances inspired the formation of the HM company, it emerged in 1883 and 1884 as an independent operation, although strongly backed by the coalition of Sultan Bargash and Taria Topan, two central figures in the 'licit' trading sector. Taria advanced large quantities of

² HM was Tippu Tip's mark on ivory, after his initials (Hamed b. Mohammed). See Kaiserliches Bezirksamt, Dar es Salaam, 1895. National Archives of Tanzania, G. 21/920.

goods, with which Tippu proceeded to make an alliance with Mohammed b. Halfan (usually known as Rumaliza), who had a very large following but little capital or access to credit. By so doing, Tippu enlisted in partnership a chieftain of the Muslim brotherhood, the Qādiriyya *ṭarīqa*. The third partner in the company was Tippu's relative and deputy, Mohammed b. Said. So capital and personnel were harnessed in a programme aimed at keeping the ivory trade in Swahili hands and passing through Zanzibar. In the middle 1880s, the HM Company extended itself from Ujiji, where after 1883 Rumaliza was the supreme figure in the Swahili community, to Manyema and its surrounding territory up to Stanley Falls. In the south, the company retained a strong lieutenant, Abdullah ibn Suleiman, who identified himself explicitly as the agent of Tippu Tip and Rumaliza, and acted as a stabilising and disciplining force among the other, more unruly, traders. Eventually, Abdullah dissociated himself from the anti-European Swahili, who in 1887 began to conflict with the African Lakes Company (ALC) at Karonga.

The posture of the HM Company was consistently positive towards the Europeans and cognisant of the mounting realities. Tippu Tip finally agreed in 1886 to recognise the Congo Independent State and become its local governor in the eastern portion where he had commercial hegemony. Tensions over the non-delivery of arms and ammunition and the Congo State's efforts to deflect the flow of ivory eventually mounted and drove the Swahili to opposition, but until the early 1890s, the HM Company continued to facilitate colonial expansion and business interests, especially those which were eastern oriented. Rumaliza, in 1890, proved to be willing to consign a large quantity of ivory to the ALC for transport by their southern routes. At the same time he advised his agents to render every assistance to Captain Swann, the former LMS steamer captain who had entered the employment of the Foreign Office, and sought to make treaties in a corridor from Lake Tanganyika to Uganda.

The religious complexities of East Africa in the 1880s provide fertile ground for discussion from various perspectives. In non-Muslim, non-Christian communities, 'traditional' religious observances were triggered both by normal seasonal changes and natural catastrophe, famine and sickness. Kabaka Mutesa's phy-

sical decline during 1880–4, coinciding with epidemics at the capital of Buganda, gave rise to a rhetoric of traditionalism and renewed respect for the deities and their representatives. Elsewhere, famine gave rise to seers and prophets, whose ambiguous message could be construed as being either against or in favour of the Christian preaching and the new culture of power soon to become overt colonialism. The early African Christian leaders, far more than the white missionaries, looked favourably upon prophecy as a form of legitimation within their localities. They also interpreted their own dreams to arrive at a statement of inner conviction. More often, famine and violence generated purely secular motives for gathering under the wing of missionaries. By a combination of employment and teaching, small nuclei of trusted men emerged at the missions and became community functionaries and disseminators of the new values. Conformity and socialisation, rather than spiritual conversion, thus proved to be the major if not the exclusive means of recruiting adherents to Christianity as well as to Islam.

Frustrated missionaries, whose evangelical passions were not reciprocated, sometimes targeted Muslims as objects of concern. A missionary in Unyamwezi, encountering an unschooled Muslim, became so agitated at the latter's total lack of theological grounding that he undertook to teach him the basic tenets of Islam. Other new cosmologies sometimes fared better than Christianity. The Bachwezi cult, with its abstract deism, spread from the interlacustrine region at this time and took root in Unyamwezi. The missionaries kept their eyes fixed upon Islam, however, tending to discount African religious systems as enduring rivals.

Christian communities exerted a degree of social control, with the goals of modifying family life primarily through the practice of monogamy. They also endeavoured to rebut traditional explanations of disease and misfortune. In the 1880s, missionaries at many stations in the central and south-west regions of the Swahili sphere were still unable to do without Wangwana or Swahili workers, and thus had in their own employ exponents of Islam and polygamy. While the White Fathers accepted this situation as a temporary expedient, the London Missionary Society in 1889 abruptly discharged its Muslim employees, complaining that they misled the local people by claiming that Islam was the equal of

Christianity. The release of the imported personnel was symptomatic of a breakdown in the symbiosis between the resident Westerners and the Swahili commercial system. Furthermore, the move was a withdrawal from the labour market. Local men could be paid much less than the wage- and conditions-conscious Swahili workers.

Dependency among those clustered around mission stations had many degrees. There were liberated slaves deposited by naval or colonial authorities, runaway slaves and refugees. The source of these dependants was not always humanitarian or voluntary. Old and disabled people and infants were sometimes delivered to the missionaries at Karema on Lake Tanganyika by Swahili traders cutting their losses. In other cases, however, sheer security was the attraction; the mission station was sometimes the best-armed and defended of any place in the locality.

The general picture of missionary stations as bastions of paternalism and refuge, while it must stand, simply does not encompass the situation prevailing in the special psychological and political climate of Buganda. The Church Missionary Society and the White Fathers remained close to the capital, under scrutiny but also with access to the highly motivated youths serving the *kabaka* as pages and apprentices for high office. The intimate contact between missionaries and youths and among the youths themselves created a hot-house environment in which allegiances grew rapidly. The execution of allegedly disloyal Muslim pages in 1876 indicated that even a ruler at the height of his power would act radically to remind functionaries that their first duty was to him. The accession of Mwanga on the death of Mutesa in 1884 brought to power a young man who had grown up in an era when court education had become intimately associated with Islam and Christianity, Protestant and Catholic. The desire to assert control over external factors, anxiety about those seeking to penetrate from the unshielded east around the northern shores of Lake Victoria, and a crisis of loyalty culminating in a second purge, this time of Christian pages in 1885–6, all set the tone for Mwanga's troubled reign. His actions had much to do with a new ruler's initial insecurity and desire to rivet the attention of his political world, but in the context of advancing colonialism, a process of personal consolidation was never carried through. Those who escaped execution were

afterwards organised into three companies, Muslim, Catholic and Protestant, thus deepening the division of the élite along denominational lines. These special companies also had licence from the *kabaka* to spread awe and terror.

While missionaries in Buganda promoted the vision of a Christianised state, the illicit sectors of the East African economy also received great publicity. In 1884, just as the powers convened in Berlin to decide on the rules for Africa's partition, Bismarck recognised treaties made by the colonial adventurer, Carl Peters, and in 1885 these became the basis of a German protectorate on the mainland opposite Zanzibar and Pemba. Slave trading had surged upward in 1884, meeting a sustained demand by plantations. More than before, the supply came from people of the coastal hinterland, including Zaramo, Mijikenda and Pangani–Taveta groups from the near interior. Humanitarians denounced the continuing slave trade and invoked imperial intervention. Within East Africa, increased ill-feeling poisoned relations between the Mijikenda and the coastal communities which had exploited conditions of famine and entrustment by selling pawns.

Under close examination, the theory that there was a Muslim conspiracy against Christians at the end of the 1880s cannot be confirmed. The supposed conspiracy was deduced from coincidence. Indeed, Christian traders were engaged in a struggle with Muslim traders at Karonga, a Muslim 'revolution' was under way in Buganda, and the Germans were locked in war with vested interests on the Mrima part of the coast. There can be no doubt that a sense of confrontation and rivalry rippled through the rumour-prone Swahili system, to the particular consternation of those committed to the illicit sector. Numerous owners, attempting to convert their wealth quickly to licit assets, sold slaves and thus generated the first major increase in supply since the 1884 famine. Others took a decision to stand and fight. At Karonga, the Swahili traders' powers was in a somewhat weakened condition as against the solidified Ngonde–ALC alliance. Nervous rhetoric on the Muslim side and an aggressive military response by the allies precipitated a bloody conflict.

In Buganda, Kabaka Mwanga had encouraged the Muslim party at court as a counterpoise to the rapidly increasing numbers of Protestants and Catholics. A desperate attempt to eliminate prominent men in all three factions failed in September 1888 and

THE INITIAL COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

Mwanga was forced into exile. The subsequent distribution of offices according to religious identity was followed by a coup carried out by Muslims who aspired to a more radical revolution to bring the country under a Muslim theocracy. The subsequent civil wars, conducted under religious banners, sealed a pattern of political partisanship which had been brewing in Buganda since the 1870s and carried on until the mid-twentieth century.

There was no co-ordinated conspiracy to prevent the establishment of Christianity and Western imperialism. Only in Buganda was Islam militant. What brought about such widely separated altercations in the years 1887 to 1889 was nothing less than the militancy of the new colonialism, often cloaked in theology and humanitarianism, but nevertheless on the offensive, engaging in the first instance with opposition which presented itself as Muslim. The outstanding examples of colonial provocation came with the German occupation of the Mrima.

THE INITIAL COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

After 1885, East Africa became both balkanised and subject to new generalisation. Germany had precipitated its partition by declaring a protectorate over a portion of the hinterland of Bagamoyo on the basis of treaties made by Carl Peters. By 1890, international recognition was given to Italy's claims to the Somali coast as far south as the Juba river, Britain's sphere from the Juba river to Vanga, and Portuguese extension up to the Rovuma in northern Mozambique. The Congo Independent State hulked an ungainly giant in the trans-Tanganyika area, acquiescing for the moment in the necessity of Swahili and even missionary management. In the later 1880s, indeed, colonial ambitions were pursued indirectly through the economically feeble chartered companies, or other organisations already present and able to operate within well-established infrastructures, even where they did not coincide with the intended boundaries of the colonial states. The active conquest of East Africa took place between 1888 and 1900 through sporadic and sustained military campaigns best called colonial wars. The context for the colonial wars was shaped by two other kinds of profound dislocation and adversity, an ecological crisis and a collapse of the old commercial system. These three elements may be treated separately; their full

importance however can only be assessed when they are seen in conjunction.

The colonial wars in East Africa began in German territory, for the simple reason that agents of the German East Africa Company were the first to take over control with a view to establishing a new political entity. Colonial wars were not distinguished by the immediate issues or the colour of commanders and personnel, but rather by their context of the new imperialism as it came to terms with foregoing conditions. The specific task of state-building stood behind colonial wars, but the idea of a colonial state in East Africa was still an abstraction in 1887. When the Swahili fought the Abushiri war on the Mrima and its hinterland in 1888, they acted as much to carry out a longstanding determination to prevent encroachment by the sultanate of Zanzibar as they did to strike at the Germans in themselves. Liberty was a slogan of Swahili self-determination not created by the partition of Africa. Abushiri was the scion of the al-Harthi clan, whose long enmity with the Busaidi dynasty made his resistance to any intervention on the coast predictable. Furthermore, his trading operations and large community of followers in Pangani had involved him deeply in the illicit sector of the commercial system. The Zigua chief of Sadani, Bwana Heri, who opposed concessions by the Sultan and the overbearing behaviour of the new Europeans, joined in the war. The unity of Abushiri and Bwana Heri was incomplete and the terms of their defeat different. The Germans executed Abushiri and confirmed Bwana Heri in office.

The Abushiri war was a highly strategic one, as it affected the entire status of Zanzibar and the main thoroughfares of caravan trade. The German victory guaranteed acquiescence of the Swahili notables and commercial system. At the same time, the war left a strong residue of essentially African colonial forces, Swahili raised locally and Shangaan 'Zulu' and Sudanese recruited abroad. The German East Africa Company's charter was terminated and direct responsibility was assumed in 1891 by the German Foreign Ministry. Measures of careful accommodation to the cultural values of Islam followed the pacification of the coast, and the new administration made efforts to incorporate Swahili elements into the colonial state. While the coastal districts became models of future administrative practices, the main towns anchoring the caravan routes were occupied by garrisons.

The crumbling of the Swahili sphere was evident in 1891. Credit for the interior trade was reported to be sharply reduced and old networks of trust, both the licit and illicit, were soon in dissolution. The local commercial crisis reached its depths in 1893. Among the many contributory factors, the partition of East Africa figured in several ways. It could be predicted that the handling of ivory in the extremities of the sphere would become a matter of contention increasingly to be taken under the control of colonial régimes. Closer to Zanzibar, profit margins were badly affected by the double customs imposed in 1891, when both the German East African and British Zanzibar officials taxed goods passing through Zanzibar to and from German East Africa. Zanzibar was soon declared a free port in order to retain as far as possible its rôle as entrepôt for all of East Africa, but for some months before the decree of February 1892, dhow traffic had been at a virtual standstill. The hiatus in commercial affairs hastened a reappraisal by the principal family firms of banker-brokers.

A prime example of withdrawal followed upon the death of Taria Topan in late 1891. Settlement of such a complex estate called for examination of many business relationships. Almost immediately, Tippu Tip was sued for the balance of his credit account. The outcome was favourable to Tippu, however, for he had delivered ivory worth substantially more than the goods advanced to him. Rumaliza dropped his attitude of resistance to the Germans, claimed his rights as a German subject, and sued Tippu Tip for a share of this wealth. The court in Dar es Salaam found that Rumaliza had been a partner of Tippu Tip and awarded him property owned by Tippu in German East Africa. The sequence of events thus illustrates how the new colonial situation turned the balance of relationships, and it underscores the primacy of economic interests in fixing attitudes towards colonial régimes.

For the Zanzibar-based ivory traders in Manyema, there was no possibility of surviving the Congo Independent State's military campaign against the 'Arabs'. Tippu had written to Rumaliza in 1893 urging him to retire peaceably, but at that time Tippu was enjoying his estate in Zanzibar and Rumaliza was still at Lake Tanganyika with a large number of dependent retainers and followers who had to be found alternative employment.

The old complementarities had become contradictions. The desire of traders to disentangle their assets from those of chiefs led to various actions of local consequence in the early and

mid-1890s. In the south-west, contracts were promoted by the drawing of an international boundary. On the German side, favoured by an administration which supported commercial claims, the Swahili creditors were able to impoverish the new chief of the Fipa, who resorted to force to obtain increased tribute from his subjects. Beyond the frontier toward Lake Mweru, Chief Chungu was able to stall in making good his debts and kept the local trader virtually an economic prisoner. Nevertheless Chungu, like many chiefs, faced economic erosion and a shrinkage of control over people and resources. By the turn of the century, he was willing to let several of his discontented wives go off with other men, receiving a compensation in a quantity of 'good cloth'.

Conflicts emerged in Zanzibar itself. The sultans since Sayyid Sa'id's time had been among Zanzibar's greatest merchants, and Bargash and Taria had been prime movers in the licit accommodation. Sayyid Sa'id's successors necessarily reflected the dissolution of the Swahili system, the sultan being accused, for example, of diverting to Arabs the ivory that was owed to Indian firms. In 1893, the personal access of the sultans to the revenues of the state ended when a prince from Muscat was brought in by the British and placed on an annual salary of \$120,000.

After the islands had come under closer British administration following the declaration of a protectorate in 1890, officials who had been trained through experience in Egypt began to design policies whereby Zanzibar could live upon its own agricultural production. The clove industry clearly had to be supported, and to this end an order was issued in 1891 prohibiting the recruitment of labour in Zanzibar for work outside the islands. Consternation reigned, for many professional porters who would not have been clove pickers had considered Zanzibar a home resting place between journeys and knew well that wages offered for transporters enlisted in Zanzibar were higher than on the coast. Although the Germans were scrupulous in seeing that slaves were not forced against their will to move back or forth across the channel, they favoured the free movement of workers and sought to preserve, not balkanise, the labour market of East Africa. The Zanzibar controls ultimately had no major effect on the mainland supply of labour; by the later 1890s, a new labour system for the clove industry took shape, in which the ex-slaves resident on the estates had the privilege both of secure occupancy and disposal

of their labour to the highest bidder. Because the pay was seasonally very good, better than anywhere else in East Africa, Zanzibar and Pemba once again, by economic suction, drew in migrants.

The Anglo-German Treaty of 1890 had generally settled the colonial jurisdiction of the two major powers in East Africa, yet there was still much fluidity within the British sphere. Momentarily, the northern interior fell entirely under the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC). Much has been made of the difference between company and formal colonial rule. From the standpoint of both African perceptions and political economy, however, the colonial situation unfolded in broadly similar phases, regardless of the auspices. The first may be called the era of armed caravans, whose relations with local people were similar to those of large Swahili expeditions. Thereafter came the establishment of strong-points, with small but significant arsenals and concentrations of uniformed soldiers and auxiliaries, often gaining strength through alliance with a pre-existing regional power. From these garrisons, colonial officers engaged in alliances and feuds, often carving out districts and ruling in a highly personalised way. An official like John Ainsworth at Machakos in Ukambani was in effect a colonial seigneur.

Personal rule of all sorts diminished when, at the end of the 1890s, the major indigenous military powers in East Africa had been neutralised through alliance or campaigns of conquest. The ending of company rule, of the German East Africa Company in 1890, of the IBEAC in Uganda in 1893 and the IBEAC in what became the East African Protectorate or British East Africa (Kenya) in 1895 occasioned discussions of the ultimate shape of the colonial state. In the event, however, expediency prevailed. Nevertheless, direct ties with the metropolitan state did have important consequences for the availability of capital and the overall capacity to bring about infrastructural changes, above all through railway construction.

The Uganda railway, which eventually defined the political economy of colonial Kenya, was authorised on the basis of entirely external, strategic considerations. From its start in Mombasa in 1895 to its completion at Kisumu in 1901, it was the work principally of imported Indian contract labourers. There were no planned and specified economic goals. Yet the progress

of the construction had continuous commercial implications, above all generating boom markets for produce which encouraged local agricultural peoples to grow and market a surplus. The line of rail was also a central nerve governing military reflexes and conveying a logic of armed conquest.

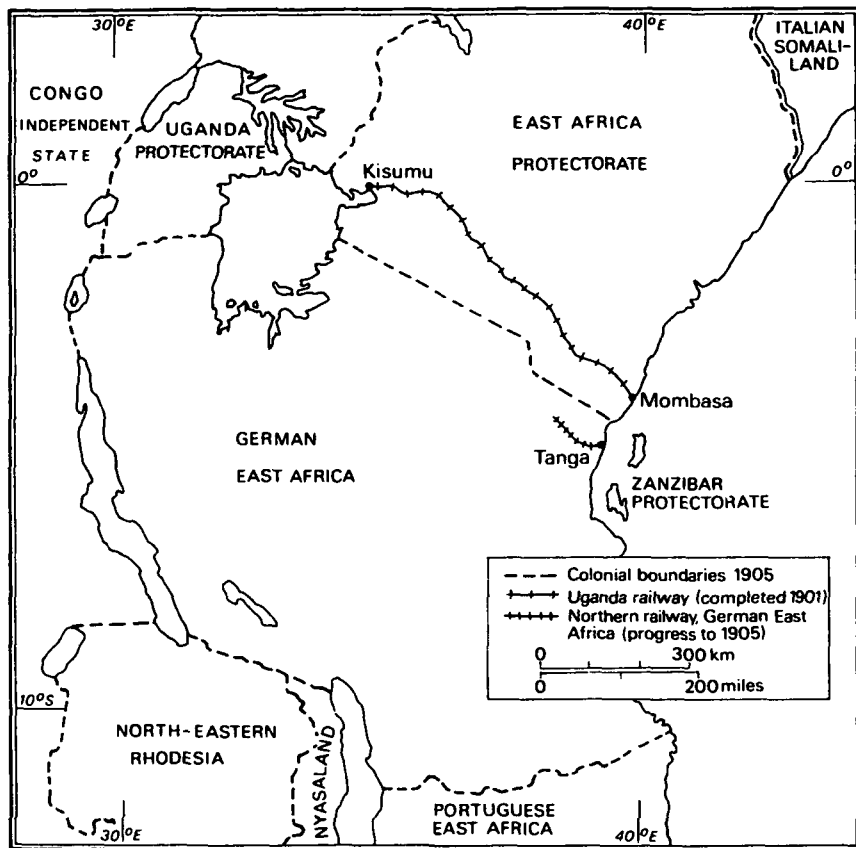
MILITARY CONQUEST IN A CONTEXT OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

The founders of colonial régimes recognised the utility of existing military formations and exploited them and the antipathies that earlier warfare had inculcated. In certain circumstances, therefore, the military conquest was ‘soldier to soldier’. In other cases, however, the context of military conquest was shaped by conditions profoundly modified by ecological crisis. Locust, rinderpest, drought, smallpox, sleeping sickness, and other diseases and pests invaded the countryside and compounded the turmoil created by colonial military and political activities.

The most intensive military campaigns in East Africa took place between 1893 and 1898. Of one type were the wars against the ‘Arabs’, rising to a peak in 1895 but sputtering on thereafter as well. Rearguard actions were undertaken by the Swahili in the face of colonial military operations in the Congo Independent State and British Central Africa. Also on the coast of British East Africa, the colonial power made a great victory out of the final suppression of Mbarak’s Mazrui and saw the elimination of Arab resistance as the turning point in the history of the colony. The turmoil of early colonial conditions elsewhere on the coast could be seen in the sustained resistance of the sultan of Witu and the challenge of Hassan b. Omari in the hinterland of Kilwa. Each occasioned a strong but transitory military presence before the ligaments of Swahili commerce were allowed to reassert themselves as the principal organising factor in these zones of comparative indifference to colonial strategists. In this perspective the conquest of the Mazrui can be seen not as an ‘Arab war’ but as one of the early examples of the piecemeal conquest of British East Africa aimed at clearing the line-of-rail from Mombasa to Kisumu.

The logic of regional power struggles of the 1870s and 1880s carried over into the strategic thinking of the Germans in the southern highlands of their colony and the British in the conquest

MILITARY CONQUEST AND ECOLOGICAL CRISIS



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of Uganda. The Hehe wars (1893–8) and the war against Bunyoro (1894–8) had marked similarities; major rulers continued in opposition as guerrillas after the enemy occupied their capitals, and the colonial forces included an ensemble of pre-colonial rivals deployed by European dictate but often with their own officers. The guerrilla phase was combated with scorched earth policies, using famine as a means of subjugation. Finally, in both cases allies were rewarded with territory at the expense of the resistant and defeated state.

Ignorance of the Hehe and of the recent history of the southern highlands prevailed among the Germans until one of their expeditions was mounted towards the Iringa plateau and was demolished. A quick appraisal of the regional balance of power

soon led the way to a strategy of encirclement; the Ngoni were treated with diplomatic care in order to postpone any test of military strength, while other hostile or displaced rulers were cultivated actively. The most positive alliance was contracted with the Sangu, who supplied the principal auxiliaries in an advance from the west. The prearranged reward was the restoration of Chief Merere as the paramount African ruler in Usangu and parts of Ubena and Uhehe. Meanwhile, within central Uhehe, the colonial authorities identified councillors who would accept the military administrator as the supreme authority, thus building a secure core while dealing with the continuing resistance in the countryside. A wide region became mobilised through requisitions for food. In Mahenge, for example, this demand set in train a process of local differentiation and commerce that continued and became compounded by colonial tactics during the Maji Maji war. Altogether, the war against the Hehe amounted to a war for regional control.

In Buganda at the end of the religious–civil wars, commanders with large followings, such as Samei Kakunguru, turned from domestic struggle to colonial warfare. F. D. Lugard, the officer in charge, had signed on some remnants of the former Egyptian forces in Equatoria, but the Ganda so dominated the colonial forces that opponents sometimes assumed that the British were merely mercenaries assisting in Buganda's further expansion. The principal colonial war in Uganda was a long campaign to subdue Bunyoro. Little room was left for diplomacy, as Lugard was determined to punish Kabarega for attacks upon Toro. Strategic outposts overlooking the salt works at Katwe and focal points of trade provided a cordon intended to seal off Bunyoro, especially from supplies of firearms. Surrounded but not helpless, Kabarega gave sustained resistance from 1894 to 1899.

On the British side, Kakunguru was rewarded with a post as a semi-autonomous administrator, at first in an occupied part of Bunyoro, then in a large territory in the east centred on Mbale, near Mount Masaba (Elgon). Ganda contingents were not only allowed to colonise new areas in this way in the 1890s, they also took part in the extension of missionary occupation as armed retainers and local traders at stations as far away as Rwanda.

Religious affiliation continued to be vitally important in determining access to power, employment and resources. The Muslims,

who on the whole were losers in the competition, formed a militant group among Kabaka Mwanga's following. Mwanga was politically disregarded from 1893 onward, and he displayed his hostility to the British in a number of ways. These protests culminated with a fracas at Buddu in December 1897, and an active rebellion a year later, when Mwanga and many Muslim Ganda joined Kabarega for a last stand. Among the Sudanese units in the British military service in Uganda, there had always been awareness of Islam as a common denominator. Some Sudanese had joined with Muslim Ganda in the crisis of 1893, when the Muslims tried to force a more favourable distribution of land and offices. Yet the Sudanese were professional soldiers, not religious zealots. Their mutiny in 1897 and 1898, creating an emergency for the weak Uganda administration, was brought on by unremitting campaigns, long marches, and erratic pay. The mutiny complicated and delayed the conquest of Bunyoro. At the final surrender of Kabarega and Mwanga in April 1899, the colonial forces were composed largely of Ganda irregulars, some Sudanese and Swahili regular units, and a new component, Indian troops who were rushed to Uganda to patch the frayed cloak of imperial control.

After 1898, the incorporation of Uhehe and Bunyoro took place in the absence of a reigning paramount chief. That an interregnum or exile of rulers was expedient for colonial consolidation is well illustrated throughout eastern and southern Africa. In the Zulu and Ganda cases, most notably, the absence of a supreme leader allowed for the encouragement of oligarchies, sometimes raised from subordinate groups, sometimes reasserting anti-monarchical ambitions. In Uhehe and Bunyoro, the totality of defeat led to passivity in economic and political life and it was only after the First World War that sharp irritidism surfaced with the restoration of a modified monarchy and in the ideological climate of 'indirect rule'.

When turning to the ecological crisis as a context of militarism, it must be noted that natural disaster is a constant theme in the history of East Africa from 1870 to 1905. Cholera and smallpox had been alarming events just prior to 1870; drought struck periodically, with perhaps magnified consequences in areas of active commercial penetration and indebtedness, and cattle diseases (such as bovine pleuro-pneumonia in about 1880 and

rinderpest in several waves beginning in 1887) decimated herds, dispersed populations, caused compensatory raids and encouraged cultivation not only for subsistence but also as a means to generate wealth to exchange for livestock. Yet the physical assault on the East African economy and society as it occurred in the 1890s formed part of a devastating conjuncture. Some diseases were new; many were endemic but had been encouraged by population movement and concentration in pursuit of one or another anti-famine tactic. Colonial manoeuvres and commercial traffic contributed further to these patterns of concentration and mobility.

Smallpox was the more deadly and became more epidemic as famine called for the transfers of people and grain from place to place. Mortality of victims was higher among the malnourished. Estimates for the Kikuyu range from 50 per cent to 95 per cent population loss from smallpox and, even if these figures describe only some of the more closely observed and densely populated areas, the tragedy was nonetheless great. One of the two consequences of smallpox was a reduction of labour power at a time of expanded demand and commercial opportunity. Another was a compounding of ambiguity about the advantages of the colonial presence, for vaccination carried out by missionaries and officials helped to stem the spread of the disease and reinforced a message about the potency of the foreigners as therapists as well as militarists.

Cattle-keepers were devastated by rinderpest in particular. While certain insulated zones were spared, the disease spread rapidly along the commercial networks of the region, killing up to 95 per cent of the herds. Depending upon the role of cattle in the diet and the maintenance of social relations, the consequences were various. The immediate effect was levelling, in that those portions of society whose subsistence was tied to cattle were compelled to starve if they could not shift their source of nutrition. Such was the case with some Masai, whose situation was desperate. In many situations, however, the emergency was met by forgoing milk and blood and surviving on cereals and other vegetables. The Tutsi became more dependent upon the Iru, Masai upon their Kikuyu or other farming affiliates, and so forth. Relationships symbolised by the exchange of cattle were potentially open to redefinition. Some examples of how cattle

losses affected societies can be drawn from the experience of the Langi of Uganda, the kingdom of Rwanda, the Masai, and the Jie.

The rinderpest epidemic intervened in telling ways in the political life of both Lango and Rwanda. In Lango, the regional leadership bred by the military conditions of the previous decades had perpetuated itself through ownership of cattle and management of unusually large and productive communities. The colonial war in Bunyoro disrupted regional trade, and rinderpest extinguished assets in cattle, to the point where the economic focal points disintegrated and more localised ties were reasserted. In Rwanda, on the other hand, the sudden loss of cattle herds led to an exercise of royal power to lay claim to all the surviving cattle. The terms of clientship governing their redistribution, *ubuhake*, specified direct obligation to the king himself. Intermediate allegiances that had been secured by the alternative *umubeto* clientship were depreciated. So rinderpest hastened the decomposition of regional leadership in the decentralised society of Lango and furthered centralisation in the kingdom of Rwanda.

The impoverishment of the Masai increased their propensity to use violent means to provide for daily needs. In German East Africa, where the government had established a footing among agricultural peoples, the Masai were cast as enemies, while in British East Africa they were vital allies in a tenuous colonial occupation. As a result of the clustering of Masai around the outpost forts of the Imperial British East Africa Company, they were available to provide a ready source of military recruitment in the campaigns against the Kikuyu, which produced a harvest of enduring enmity between the two peoples that has tended to obscure the extent of more peaceful social and economic exchanges in a preceding era. Punitive raids by the British–Masai alliance were paralleled by Kamba brigandage which became widespread as a scramble for cattle was prosecuted by every means available within a relatively weak and conflicted political situation.

Not all societies enduring cattle diseases were at the same time contending directly with colonial intervention. The Jie, in an as yet unclaimed part of eastern Uganda, lost virtually all their herds to rinderpest and another disease tentatively identified as blackwater. Thereupon, they altered their attitude towards Swahili ivory traders, whom they had merely tolerated earlier, and became

willingly engaged in both transport and hunting. As an inducement, the traders brought in cattle from Turkana country to exchange for ivory and services. In the process, a new orientation of Swahili activity was strengthened, as caravans moved from the Somali (Benadir) coast through the ambiguous frontier zone between Menelik's Ethiopia and the East African Protectorate. As the Kamba had lost control of the ivory trade in the decades before 1870 in the Mombasa hinterland, so the Somali in the 1890s ceded their monopoly of trade between Brava and other ports on the coast and the Boran country in the interior. The retraction of Swahili caravan and ivory trade in the areas of strong German and British occupation in the Tanga and Mombasa hinterlands seems to have coincided with the new initiative on the northern peripheries. The ivory that had once been carried out via Kilimanjaro emerged instead at the 'Italian' ports, and north-eastern Uganda saw unprecedented commercial activity.

High prices for cattle resulted from their shortage. At the turn of the century, colonial punitive expeditions carried off booty in cattle and furthered their redistribution by paying off African leaders who provided support and also by facilitating a transfer of stock from African to European settler control. Captured stock from the Nyanza zone were delivered to the Nairobi cattle market, where the administration auctioned them to settlers. In a truly long-distance trade in cattle, agents from Southern Rhodesia bought cattle in Burundi which they herded south through Ufipa, across the Nyasa–Tanganyika corridor, down Nyasaland and into Rhodesia, to be sold in Salisbury (Harare).

Locust and drought, as opposed to epidemic diseases of humans and animals, did not follow the beaten path of commerce. They could strike anywhere and did so over extensive areas of East Africa. Drought of course affected pastoral activities as well as arable agriculture, while locusts attacked grain crops most disastrously. Locusts, therefore, struck at cultivators who had various reasons to be anxious about the condition of their economy. These very cultivators had sometimes suffered a loss of labour power through disease, or were under pressure to sell their surpluses to famine areas or colonial posts, and so on. Aside from raids and other coercive exactions, there was also a market and motive to acquire livestock which prompted expanded cultivation. Locusts deflated the efforts of a whole agricultural cycle in certain years, but did not have the generalised consequences that came

from drought prolonged over several years. The 1890s were on the whole dry. The climax in semi-arid areas of Kenya came from 1898 to 1901, when people in desperate conditions welcomed all forms of relief. In parts of coastal Kenya where transport of food could be organised by the colonial government, it was given out in return for allegiance to missionaries or to those willing to perform public works, thus advancing the influence and installation of essential colonial elements.

Conquest amounted to an interplay of military expeditions, political alliance and contracting for auxiliaries, domestic social and economic conditions, and crisis-stimulated regional activities that differed from time to time and from locality to locality. While interpretations of conquest must entertain all these complexities, the rendering of the history of conquest within a single area may depend further upon the social group being held in focus. The situation on the southern side of Kikuyuland was grave in 1893–5 when cattleless and famine-stricken Masai joined forces with the British. These incursions, painful though they were, took place in a time of prosperity and resilience when compared with 1898–1900, when the crisis of famine and depopulation among the Kikuyu was most severe and armed bands spread terror. The colonial forces of the time were inadequate to impose order. It was only after the turn of the century that the police and military organisations of the East Africa Protectorate became reorganised, delivered the initiative to the colonial state and enforced systematic administration and tax collection.

The period from 1888 to 1899 has frequently been discussed in terms of collaboration and resistance. Resisters were the heroes of later nationalist writers, while collaborators had to be carefully explained if not condemned. The era is now coming into its own as a fuller historical drama, fraught with contradictions within African societies, overshadowed by economic disaster and filled with minute calculations of advantage as well as gross adjustments in balances of power.

At the turn of the century, with pacification nearly complete in the primary areas of colonial occupation, questions of an institutional nature came to the fore. The necessity of political hierarchy, a reliable chain of command and effective management of

productive economic activities was clear to every government, but the exact outcome of the search for a stable and productive social order was not entirely predictable. Upon the conclusion of the 1900 Buganda Agreement, an oligarchy in Buganda, composed mainly of Christians, with Protestants in the strongest position, achieved one of the most impressive settlements in the annals of sub-imperialism. This agreement guaranteed that the Bakungu chiefs would be the principal class mediating between the colonial power and the common people. A legislative capacity was given to a council of chiefs, the *lukiko*, and the principle of freehold land tenure was conceded as a veritable endowment of the political oligarchy. The Ganda continued to be regarded as skilful administrators to be employed in extending the Buganda model of county and sub-county government to other parts of the protectorate as they were brought under political control. The sub-imperialism emerging in Uganda, then, was an outgrowth of alliances made in the conquest period, which were subsequently entrenched. This entrenchment of privilege – through recognition of the Ganda political agency, landed oligarchy, legislative powers, and access to state-related wage employment – serves as a prototype against which the experience of other African and non-African groups within early colonial social hierarchies can be measured.

Harry Johnston had not expected to institute a landed oligarchy in Buganda when he became Special Commissioner in 1899. The practical situation, together with the strong position sustained by the élite and their official and missionary advocates, obliged him to retreat from his determination to vest land in the British Crown. As early as 1893, British officials had noted a great confusion over land ownership, with buying and selling in some places and inalienable clan lands in other places. Estates were tied to offices and certain major chiefs held them in more than one county. Lastly, the religious compromise ending the civil war had tended to parcel out counties as quasi-preserves to each of the contending denominations.

The 1900 Agreement created uniform freehold rights, called *mailo* after the square miles in which estates were to be measured. It was expected that the claimants would be the 1,000 most important chiefs. The number soon exceeded 1,000, however, and

land ownership became coveted as the seal of enfranchisement in the political oligarchy. When cotton and coffee spread as cash crops after 1905, land-owners mobilised their tenants as primary producers. Before 1904, however, the chiefs were mainly useful for their ability to command people to move or to perform public works. Shortly after 1900 the exigencies of the disastrous sleeping-sickness epidemic and the campaigns of control through evacuation of the tsetse-infested lake shore and islands were handled expeditiously by the *bakungu* chiefs.

Outside Buganda, the foundations of the British–Ganda alliance continued to rest on expediency. Jealousy on the part of some British officials and divergence of goals affected the durability of arrangements. Kakunguru could be charged with seeking to make himself *kabaka* of Bukedi. In 1906 his authority was curbed by reassignment to Busoga. James Miti, the key administrator in Bunyoro, performed in a more suitably disciplined manner, and survived the 1907 Nyoro rebellion against ‘foreign’ Ganda officials. The Nyoro drive for home rule and oligarchic privileges was thus temporarily thwarted and its ringleaders were deported. In more subordinate administrative capacities, too, the Ganda agency persisted, with the networks of Protestant and Catholic schools in Buganda constantly renewing the supply. Formidable figures like Apolo Kagwa, the *katikiro* and a regent of Buganda, continued in non-official ways to extend and reinforce the outward movement, not least by supporting evangelisation through the (Anglican) Church of Uganda. Luganda thus spread as the language both of the administration and of the church. The networks of Protestant and Catholic schools in Buganda constantly renewed the ranks of proselytisers and political agents.

The Swahili agency in German East Africa followed a somewhat different trajectory. As in Buganda, so on the Mrima, the colonial occupiers found a situation of turmoil and faction. Hermann von Wissmann, as commander and imperial commissioner, built his armed forces around a premise that African Muslims were the necessary cadre. Arabs were to be eliminated. Emerging from the Abushiri war, the German administration concentrated its efforts on establishing social policy and the rules for land tenancy along the coast. While the interior went through a period of military

administration, the colonial state gathered itself as a bureaucracy on the coast, acting on the whole conservatively, confirming freehold titles to land and adopting a very gradualist approach to slavery and emancipation.

The German officials who took over from the chartered company, wishing to perpetuate the infrastructure and commercial life of the Swahili system, were not quite so anti-Arab as Wissmann had been. They did, however, build their alliance with the Swahili, men of small if any property. The principal means of promoting this relationship was a secular state school system which extended from the first and ultimately the highest school at Tanga, to the other main coastal towns where urban central schools were fed by district primary schools. By 1902, the governor was ready to carry the state school system into the interior both for positive bureaucratic reasons and also to challenge the Christian missionaries to conform in curricula and supply candidates for the civil service. The state schools, missionaries alleged, retained a Muslim bias.

The fostering of Swahili as the language of schools and of colonial administration had much to do with the integrated government that became more and more evident as military districts came under civil rule, garrisons were reduced or replaced by police, and the sons of local notables were called upon to attend school and act as clerks in the grass-roots levels of local government. Even if the Germans in 1902 began to hasten this process of political localisation and homogenisation, they retained as strong elements of direct rule through *akidas*, district officers and tax collectors who very often had served in the colonial army (*Schutztruppe*) or were trained in the state school system. Abrasion between the African élite and local peoples was as natural in German East Africa as it was in Bunyoro or elsewhere in Uganda, where hostility to sub-imperial agents surfaced during the early years of this century.

The Germans and the Swahili established an alliance in state service which carried over into commercial life. District officers at Pangani, once a seat of resistance, became actively involved in preserving the commercial networks which sustained the port. Nyamwezi and Swahili traders in Tabora also received the full backing of the German authorities as they pursued their business, and German firms employed many Swahili agents. As the church

proved to be a complement to state employment for the Ganda, so for the Swahili commerce continued alongside a much enlarged employment in government, and formed part of a constellation of allied interests in the colonial situation.

The discipline of the caravan porters from Unyamwezi and Usukuma was an invaluable human resource which was appreciated and rewarded in German East Africa. When the early settlers encountered resistance to their labour demands, in Shambaai, missionaries advised a system of registration and obligatory wage labour which was installed at Lushoto as a unique attempt at labour control for the benefit of private interests. Slavery continued to be legal, but slaves could go to court, buy their freedom, or be awarded it because of proven abuse. To be legal, slaves transferred from owner to owner had to agree to the change before an official. High tolerance for the retention of captives as dependents and servants of askari in the *Schutztruppe* added to the attractions of military service. Nyamwezi as well as Swahili were recruited into this élite well-paid armed force. The Nyamwezi were everywhere sought as workers, at the highest wages offered, and nowhere more than in the Pangani valley where they formed a significant part of the labour force constructing the first German-built railway, and establishing sisal estates. They were permanently settled on land of their own and exempted from the ticket system prevailing in Lushoto, which obliged Shambaai men to work for white settlers. It was as an aristocracy of labour, rather than as a landed oligarchy, that the Nyamwezi and Swahili together prospered under colonialism.

In the Zanzibar Protectorate, the diminished but surviving sultanate provided the core of local government. The Omanis retained the highest positions, and plantation owners continued to be closely linked in interests. For the British administrators, the fiscal and economic interests of the state obviously required preservation of the clove industry and its labour force, but they were caught by the anti-slavery rhetoric of high imperialism and received a parliamentary order in 1895 to institute immediate emancipation. A host of countervailing measures and patterns resulted. Slaves were freed, but sharp vagrancy laws followed soon thereafter. By the first decade of the twentieth century the former slaves were largely stabilised as statutory tenants on plantations, free to sell their labour during harvest time to the

highest bidder. The compromise in Zanzibar thus assured the preservation of the clove-planter oligarchy and a comparatively benign labour system. A social and political consequence of this reformed labour system was a continuation of under-class attitudes of dependency and low expectations. Education remained the preserve of Shirazi, a high-status Swahili group, and the Arabs, and with education came access to the civil service. The state in Zanzibar thus confirmed economic and political privilege among the old upper orders.

The Indian communities had been a key part of the Swahili commercial system. They continued to operate as expeditors for colonial supplies and, like traders of other communities, withdrew from unprofitable activities and turned to new areas of opportunity. This commercial behaviour on the part of Indians, which led to their increasing settlement throughout the interior, was taken for granted by the British and German officials. The British recruited new Indian contingents: the thousands of coolie labourers who were contracted to work on the Uganda Railway construction, the companies of Indian Army soldiers needed to bring colonial forces up to strength, and lastly, the individuals taken into the swelling ranks of clerks and artisans employed by the East African Protectorate. Whatever other advantages Indians enjoyed, they were never allowed to become major land-holders at this time. Since their effective elimination from ownership of clove estates in the 1870s, Indians failed to make headway in land ownership beyond commercial plots and buildings and thus failed to consolidate their sub-imperialism. When the railway was completed, most coolie labour was repatriated. The King's African Rifles became organised at the turn of the century and gradually replaced the Indian forces, and the East African Protectorate seemed bent upon supporting a white-settler oligarchy on the land and in the advisory councils of the central bureaucracy.

The two other allies in the initial colonisation of the East African Protectorate were either unqualified or rapidly superseded in the incipient colonial state. The Masai military alliance did not persist through the entire conquest period: the economic objectives and livelihood of pastoralists inhibited both sides from regular employment or expectations of formal education. The Masai made a treaty in 1904 agreeing to withdraw from the Rift

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Valley railway zone and live within two reserves to the north and south of the line, connected by a corridor. Such a land settlement, whether or not based in a treaty, proved to be more easily alterable than the freehold rights acquired in Buganda or confirmed in the old Zanzibari domains. The Swahili and Arab communities of the coastal strip finally became circumscribed as sub-imperial agents in 1907 when Mombasa was supplanted as the capital by Nairobi. Employment in government at Mombasa had in any event been shared with Goans and Indians, and Swahili recruitment into the other ranks of the state was not systematically fostered by educational institutions as in German East Africa. The small, boisterous community of Englishmen and South Africans, which formed the nucleus of the future polity and protected economy, totalled in 1904 only a few hundred persons. Nevertheless, as a consequence of conquest, the ravages of disease, the policy of evacuation and the diffuse character of African political culture, this white settler group was able to lay claim to a special sub-imperial position as Kenya's landed oligarchy.

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The economy of East Africa at the turn of the century was largely disorganised, owing to the effects of campaigns of conquest, resurgent rinderpest, drought between 1898 and 1902, the spread of sleeping sickness and uncertainty about the viability of capitalist agriculture either on plantations or through peasant production. Established plantation-grown commodities, such as copra and cloves, continued to be substantial contributors to export earnings. Hopes of a new generation of labour-producing plantations had been premature in the 1890s, when poor international prices for cotton, jute and other fibres retarded marketing and investment. By the time conditions improved, the Kenya coast had become a zone of economic indifference in British East Africa. On the coast of German East Africa, on the other hand, efforts at economic development remained vigorous, with private capital moving into sisal and the state promoting cotton through peasant production.

The sector of the East African economy that flourished was commerce, led by the Indians, facilitated by the railway and steamer service which fundamentally altered the cost factor of

transport in the Lake Victoria basin, and sustained in other areas by further sharp increases in rubber demand and price. Once again, in a buoyant spirit, credit became a prime means of engaging middlemen and producers. In the production and trade of vine-grown rubber, furthermore, many of the commercial elements of the old Swahili system were recombined. The very areas of East Africa with an abundance of vine were those of long and intense commercial contact. In the coast-hinterlands of Malindi and Lamu in the north and Kilwa in the south, the rubber boom gave an impetus which renewed relations based on clientage, particularly in the north, and credit in the south.

The commercial revival had much to do with the overall improvement of commodity prices, which in 1900 stood at a high point. In the case of German East Africa, the rapidity of response was great, because many German firms had adapted to the commercial environment so moulded by the Swahili system. Not only Hansing and Company and O'Swald, but also the DOAG (the reformed and more purely commercial German East Africa Company), engaged extensively in credit-giving to networks of commercial operatives. Leading Nyanjembe of Tabora, striving to maintain trade with the south, stood in this relationship to the DOAG.

By 1900 vine-grown rubber – harvested and sorted by Africans in the same way as wax and honey, copal, and other commodities derived from the bush and forest – had become the leading export of German East Africa and a prominent one for British East Africa and Uganda. Some of the highest in quality came from the Mahenge district, where firms based in Bagamoyo and Kilwa competed, and from an area more exclusively in the Kilwa sphere, Ndonge. The label 'Donge', given to the rubber from these two source areas, was consistently high in quality and price.

In Mahenge, the newest district of the rubber frontier, the Swahili from Kilwa and the Indians from Bagamoyo, together with their affiliated local traders, rose in number from 200 in 1902 to between 500 and 700 in 1905. The consequence of this feverish promotion of rubber was that contact men got rich while producers resented what seemed to be a lowering of prices, but what was in effect a very high interest on cash advanced at tax-time against future delivery of rubber. Disparities in wealth were less evident in the Ndonge area, but sensitivity over prices and terms

of trade nevertheless became sharpened through fluctuations in the conditions of trade. There had been a commercial panic over rubber in 1902 and early 1903, when the world price dropped, drought badly reduced production, and firms began to feel that credit had been over-extended. In Ndonde, the local officials saw that popular resentment grew as producers were squeezed to meet their debts, and they endeavoured to centralise marketing to assure that producers knew and received the full going price. More normal relations and terms prevailed as international prices improved; in 1904 they were 70 per cent higher than in 1902. While the men of Ndonde were receiving more advances of cash and cloth for their rubber in 1904, their women were participating in cotton experiments. Reports on the quality were glowing; a Hamburg broker crowed that Donde cotton would soon prevail in the market, at the expense of American cotton. Communal coercion had not been instituted in Ndonde country, as it had been in the Rufiji district, where peasant aggravation ignited the Maji Maji war. The Ngindo of Ndonde did, however, join immediately in the war and attacked the traders and officials at the district headquarters of Liwale.

The entire southern region of German East Africa was in rebellion by the end of 1905. After two successive years without any return for their labour on communal cotton fields, the Rufiji people ignited the Maji Maji war by taking action against the enforcers of the scheme. The call for resistance was spread by messengers of a prophet, Kinjikitili, who distributed medicine which, he promised, would turn bullets into water. This message and medicine were successful in mobilising diverse elements, from the decentralised peoples of the east to the hierarchical Ngoni of Songea. Many factors contributed to receptivity and simultaneity, among them peasant fury at exploitation, charismatic leadership, overbearing administration, cleavages within Ngoni society, and the unequal rewards accompanying commercial penetration. Two factors in its spread deserve special attention. The widespread drought of 1902 had sent supplicants in increasing numbers to the Kolelo cult centre when Kinjikitile officiated. The same drought conditions diminished the harvest of vine rubber and coincided with a drop in the rubber price to create tension among creditors and debtors. A link-up of cultivators' anxieties and rubber-producers' sense of exploitation was not direct, but the atmosphere

of uncertainty was pervasive. In 1904, rubber was once again booming. The outrage of the cotton-growers must have been deepened by the contradiction between the colonial demand that they should bear all the costs of production while their neighbours received payment for rubber in advance. The levels of consciousness in the Maji Maji outbreak area must be seen in terms of the culture of credit.

In 1905, when the Uganda railway first returned a profit, neither military transport nor production managed by white settlers figured very importantly. It was the carriage of goods destined for African consumption and the export of African-produced commodities that provided the primary business. Cultivators and pastoralists were engaged in new ways once the cost of transport had been radically reduced for bulky and lower-priced products. In 1904, it had become profitable to export groundnuts from the Lake Victoria basin, where the market price was so far below that at the coast that the cost of transport was easily absorbed. Exports from Lake Victoria at that time reflected ongoing production of food crops and oil-seeds like sesame, pastoral products such as hides and skins, and ‘natural’ gathered products such as *sansevieria* fibres and vine rubber. Ivory remained a valuable export of Uganda. While it cannot be said that the manner of producing these exports had been altered, the means of inducing production were more co-ordinated. The goad of tax collection pushed people to market their surplus, and the railway and steamer services ensured that commodities would move. Two ‘railway’ steamers called regularly at major ports around the lake, and metal barges were supplied to expedite loading and unloading.

At the forefront of the commercial wave were the Indians. The firm of Alidina Visram outstripped all others, operated all around the lake and maintained its own fleet of eight cargo dhows. There was also a cosmopolitan community of western firms, the Italian, American and German ones concentrating in Uganda and to a lesser extent in the southern and western ‘German’ ports. The German East Africa Company was the dominant western firm at Mwanza, yet its gross receipts and volume of business did not match Visram’s in the same place. In some respects, therefore, the scene was reminiscent of that which had prevailed decades earlier at Zanzibar. Under formal colonialism, however, the adminis-

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tration could tilt the commercial balance by co-operating with certain designated nationals in the development of new commodity production and by regulating trade through the granting of special concessions. The Uganda administration in 1904 gave rubber-marketing rights to a consortium of Italians, Americans and Germans, and placed cotton in the hands of a British organisation.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the eventful thirty-five years that brought East Africa to the threshold of its modern colonial and post-colonial history, the important economic distinction lies in the predominance of commercial rather than industrial capital as the local means of generating products demanded by a wider world. Rubber epitomises the period. Demand for it was promoted by western industrial consumption and its production in East Africa took place through intensified commerce, engaging in established practices of credit-giving to induce production and use of caravan transport networks and semi-autonomous agents. The rubber plantations, which came slowly to maturity in the first decade of the twentieth century, represented on the other hand a different kind of capital, a new mode of production, with a more powerful claim on the colonial state. In the plantation sector, sisal in German East Africa had proven to be a viable forerunner of industrial agriculture. Dimly, there was an outline of the ensuing colonial pattern of regional specialisation, with its characteristic zones of atrophy and growth. The most dramatic shift in the economic organisation of the region before 1905 resulted from the completion of the Uganda railway. This revolutionary infrastructural change, together with an attendant commercial penetration in the Lake Victoria basin, contributed to the preconditions for successful peasant production of such commodities as cotton.

Taxation has often been seen as a major means of generating a colonial labour force, and while it doubtless played a role, a closer analysis of labour in the pre-industrial era indicates that economic participation by young men, the target population of labour recruiters, had been defined and redefined in the 1870s and 1880s by the exigencies of military and portage service. Many

other factors, of customary mobility during dry seasons, scarcity of labour owing to depopulation during the ecological crisis, the strenuous efforts to retrieve the base of subsistence and many subtle changes in regional economies, must be taken into account in evaluating readiness to work for wages. Taxation, rather than reaching the potential worker, was still mainly a political instrument for establishing the sovereignty of the colonial state and the authority of its uniformed forces and political agents. Like forced labour, taxation heightened popular aggravation and figured prominently in movements of protest and rebellion.

The stabilisation of political conditions took place through alliances recognising the privileged position of indigenous leaders, both hereditary and non-hereditary. Colonial administrators were likely to be tribalist and elitist in their conception of African society, but they did not unilaterally shape the neo-traditional settlement. The collapse of the pre-colonial commercial system had taken the dynamic out of many a local economy and undermined the revenues and other assets of kings, chiefs and upstarts alike. They and their associated social elements did everything possible to rebuild wealth and prestige. A particularly telling example is that of the *omugabe* of Nkore, who managed to get more absolute control of cattle than his predecessors had had. The Germans in Buhaya, Rwanda and Burundi fostered aggrandisement among indigenous rulers too, once political compliance was won.

Expediency in alliances gave way to rationalised criteria for defining local political units within the colonial state and in effecting this closer administration, the sentiments of the elders carried increasing weight. This tendency indicated a convergence of interests between colonial administrators and elders, especially in predominantly agricultural societies. The roots of modern ethnicity thus became strengthened as claims to control land, women and youth were made by seniors in the wave of tribal custom and legitimated by administrators.

The contests of the later nineteenth century, for regional and local power, for lucrative niches in the commercial system, for religious and cultural hegemony, had in 1905 become subdued and subsumed by a complicated, comprehensive conquest. The period from 1870 to 1905 had been an age of improvement for some and impoverishment for others, just as the period of stable, systematic

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colonisation was to be. The dimensions of impoverishment, changing sex roles, and belief systems that demand attention have thus far barely been touched upon. Indeed, the study of social discontinuities and continuities and the cross-currents of commercial and industrial capital in East Africa during the transitional period is only at a beginning.

CHAPTER 11

THE NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN, 1870–1908

EGYPT: THE END OF ISMĀ‘ĪL’S REIGN, 1876–1879

In the 1870s Egypt had a population of about 7 million, some 90 per cent of it rural. Its economy was dominated by the production and export of cotton, which had increased fourfold in the 1860s, and by the later 1870s represented 75 per cent of Egypt’s exports by value. Capital inputs, notably Khedive Ismā‘īl’s enormous foreign borrowings, tended further to strengthen the dominant export sector by improvements to water-supply, internal transport and harbours; and by providing this sector with relatively sophisticated banking, brokerage and marketing services. Otherwise, capital flowed into Ismā‘īl’s quest for African empire; and into the development of the new, European-style quarters of Cairo and Alexandria. A little went into the primary processing of agricultural products (cotton-ginning, sugar-refining). But building and primary processing could not initiate an industrial revolution.

Nor had there been a revolution in the actual processes of agricultural production. Egyptian agriculture remained highly labour-intensive. Its equipment was simple, even primitive, and extravagant in its use of human and animal muscle-power. Especially in the *corvée* whereby the irrigation system was maintained, the *fallāḥīn* often worked virtually with their bare hands. In contrast, the financing of cotton production and the marketing of the product had created an exotic and precociously developed financial and commercial superstructure, dominated by foreign residents who were, thanks to the Capitulations, largely exempt from Egyptian taxation and from Egyptian administrative and legal control. By 1880 there were perhaps 70,000 resident foreigners in Egypt.

The land of Egypt was no longer, as it had been in Muḥammad ‘Alī’s time, virtually the private property of the ruler; by the later

1870s land had become a valid security for agricultural loans. But in 1878 the khedive and his family still held directly about 20 per cent of the cultivated area. Rather more than another 20 per cent was held in large estates of 50 feddans or more (sometimes much more) by a small élite of perhaps 10,000 individuals. Many of these large estates had originated as fiefs (*jiflik*) granted by the ruler in return for financial or administrative duties. Such land was still taxed at a preferential rate – theoretically a tenth ('*ushr*'). Most of the smaller holdings were still, in principle, part of the ruler's domain; they paid a tribute (*kharāj*) which was in 1881, on average, over twice as heavy as '*ushr*'.

From the 1850s communal village tenures had given way to individual peasant tenures, a process hastened by the growth of the export economy and the monetisation of agriculture. Less than 20 per cent of the land was held by *fallāhīn* in holdings of under five feddans; and the average size of these holdings by the 1880s cannot have exceeded two feddans and was tending to shrink. The natural processes of economic differentiation were in the 1870s intensified by ruthless fiscal pressure as Khedive Ismā'īl strove to satisfy his foreign creditors. During Ismā'īl's reign (1863–79) the poorer *fallāhīn* may have lost some 300,000 feddans; and by 1880 only about 10 per cent possessed the four feddans needed to support a family. Some 20 to 30 per cent were completely landless. Yet the *fallāh* remained a member of the village community, which in spite of its decay as an economic and fiscal unit, retained its own customary code of ethics and behaviour; and a solidarity which made it 'avant tout réfuge contre la légalité'.¹ This closed world was penetrable to the ruling institution only through its headman (*shaykh* or '*umda*'), who had every interest in keeping it closed, for he used his indispensable intermediary position to enrich himself at the expense of the villagers. Village headmen were well represented among the 'middling holders' of 5 to 50 feddans, who held nearly 40 per cent of the cultivated area.

At the pinnacle of society Khedive Ismā'īl was an autocrat against whose arbitrary will even the greatest of his subjects had no legal protection. His ministers were his creatures; he used his power quite ruthlessly to exile or even to assassinate any who attempted to thwart him. His ministers, senior administrators and higher military commanders were still drawn almost exclusively

¹ J. Berque, *L'Égypte: impérialisme et révolution* (Paris, 1967), 47.

from a small, and by now hereditary, élite of non-Egyptian ethnic origin, conventionally known as Turco-Circassians or *mamlūks*. Although many of this group had become second-generation residents in Egypt, they still regarded themselves, not as Egyptians, but as a branch of the Ottoman governing élite and as the rulers of a conquered people. Their training was primarily military; but they were regarded as omni-competent alike in civil administration and military command. In contrast, the very few native Egyptians who achieved high office were restricted to civil administration; and even there often to a limited field (finance, education, public works) in which they had some specialised skill. High office attracted great wealth, above all in land. The leading Turco-Circassians, collectively known as the *dhawāt* ('grandees'), were predominant among the largest landowners, although by the 1870s a handful of native Egyptians had acquired holdings on a similar scale.

Under Muḥammad Sa'īd, Ismā'īl's immediate predecessor, native Egyptians had been admitted to commissioned rank in the army. In the earlier years of Ismā'īl's reign, when the khedive was attempting to reduce his dependence upon his Ottoman suzerain, Egyptians had been appointed as province governors. But after about 1870 province administration reverted largely to Turco-Circassians. Egyptian officers were treated with hostility and contempt by a Turco-Circassian high command which demonstrated total incompetence in the Ethiopian campaigns of 1875–6, and which usually blocked the promotion of Egyptians beyond the rank of company commander.

Other than the military officers, the most important Egyptian groups were the '*ulamā*' and the so-called 'provincial notables', ranging from prosperous '*umdas*' to very substantial landowners. The '*ulamā*' still enjoyed considerable influence among the population, but very little within the ruling institution. The great offices open to '*ulamā*' (grand *qādī*, shaykh of al-Azhar) were in the khedive's gift: those appointed were well rewarded for their complaisance in clothing the régime with the necessary minimum of Islamic legitimacy. The political influence of the provincial notables, insofar as it existed at all, was purely local, in spite of their heavy representation in the *majlis al-nuwwāb* (Chamber of Deputies) which had been set up by Ismā'īl in 1866. This body, chosen by indirect and open 'elections' heavily influenced by the

administration, was in no sense a check upon the ruler but rather an additional instrument of his administration, a more direct link to subjects thoroughly conditioned to defer to an arbitrary and ruthless despot. The presidency of the *majlis* was always held by a trusted Turco-Circassian. Important legislation was sometimes promulgated when it was in recess. Until the crisis of 1879 it never failed to grant Ismā'īl's financial demands, however exorbitant; and its members took no overt political initiative independently of, still less in opposition to, the khedive.

In 1876 Ismā'īl was forced by impending bankruptcy to give his European creditors oversight of his debt service, and to accept an Anglo-French 'dual control' of his current finance. Ismā'īl undoubtedly hoped to evade effective control by exploiting the complexity and confusion of Egyptian finances. But a catastrophically low Nile in 1877 and a destructive flood in 1878, followed by disease and famine, reduced him to financial desperation. In January 1878 he was driven to set up a commission of enquiry which should in his own words 'faire la lumière la plus complète sur la situation financière'.² All the members of the commission but one were European: its leading members were Rivers Wilson, Ismā'īl's British financial adviser; and, representing the 'native element', Muṣṭafā Riyāḍ. Riyāḍ, an important member of the *dhawāt*, was Ismā'īl's nominee, charged with the protection of the khedive's financial sovereignty. But Riyāḍ concurred in the commission's recommendations, which were unwelcome not only to the khedive but to large landowners generally. There was to be a surtax on the privileged '*ushurī*' land and an end to the private use of corvée labour. The khedive's vast holdings were to be nationalised and he himself placed on a civil list; and his autocracy was to be limited by the creation of a 'responsible ministry'.

In August 1878, as a safeguard against further European pressure, Ismā'īl appointed as prime minister Nūbār Būghūs, a Christian Armenian of a family which had often been useful to Egypt's rulers in their dealings with Europeans. Riyāḍ became minister of the Interior; Nūbār insisted on Rivers Wilson as minister of Finance; the French 'financial controller' became minister of Public Works. Ismā'īl publicly renounced his personal

² Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (M.A.E.), Correspondance Politique (C.P.), Egypte 60, Ismā'īl to Waddington, 26 Feb. 1878: cited A. Schölch, *Ägypten den Ägyptern!* (Zürich and Freiburg i. Br., n.d. [?1972]), 58.

power, and agreed to govern 'with and by' this so-called 'European Ministry', which promptly adopted the commission's programme of reform. The commission had proposed the repeal of the *muqābala* law of 1871, whereby land-tax was halved in perpetuity on land for which six years' tax had been paid in advance. In emergencies (such as the severe natural disasters which had afflicted Egypt) these arrangements could be modified 'after consultation' with the *majlis al-nuwwāb*. The ministry therefore advised the khedive to summon the *majlis* for January 1879.

This was a miscalculation. By the end of 1878 the rural economy had virtually collapsed, and the *fallāhin* had often been reduced to starvation, by natural disaster and the ruthless extortion of a government living from coupon to coupon. The usually docile *majlis* protested vigorously against any increase in taxation; when Ismā'īl let it be known that he was personally opposed to his European ministry's programme, there were loud demands for a general decrease. Ismā'īl used this opposition to give a 'national' and 'constitutional' colour to his opposition to European control and his struggle to regain personal power. He also mobilised sections of Egyptian opinion not directly represented in the *majlis*: the 'ulamā', uneasy at the proliferation of infidel officials in positions of authority; the small but already vocal coterie of conscious nationalists and Islamic reformers. Some of the latter had already developed rudimentary political organisations in the form of secret societies. So too had the numerous military officers, mainly native Egyptians, whose careers were threatened by savage economies in the military establishment. In February 1879 Nūbār and Wilson were mobbed by a gathering of disgruntled officers. Ismā'īl, who had covertly encouraged this demonstration, was able to pose as the saviour of law and order by dispersing it in person. The outbreak also gave him a pretext to dismiss Nūbār, who was replaced as prime minister by the khedive's son, Tawfiq.

The *majlis*, which was now demanding full participation in the management of Egypt's finances, successfully resisted a rather half-hearted attempt to dissolve it at the end of March. Ismā'īl thereupon drafted his own plan of financial reform, the so-called National Programme (*lā'iḥa al-waṭaniya*) which was adopted by the *majlis* and also supported by representatives of the 'ulamā' and

the Turco-Circassians. In theory, the National Programme 'constitutionalised' Egyptian finances by Ismā'īl's promise to act only through a council of ministers responsible to the *majlis*. In practice, it mobilised the notables in support of an attempt to restore the khedive's personal control. No more was heard of a civil list or the nationalisation of khedivial property; measures unwelcome to notables, such as the surtax on 'ushurī land, were also dropped. Instead, the interest rate on the funded debt was to be unilaterally reduced to 5 per cent. On 8 April Ismā'īl replaced his European ministry by a cabinet of his own choice under Muḥammad Sharīf.

Ismā'īl had shown great skill in unifying diverse élites, both Egyptian and Turco-Circassian, in opposition to foreign interference with their particular interests. This unification did not however imply any loss of political preponderance by the *dhawāt*, whom the khedive evidently continued to see as his most reliable supporters. The new ministry of 8 April, loudly touted as 'purely Egyptian', was in fact purely Turco-Circassian. Muḥammad Sharīf was an able Turk with more than a veneer of French culture, who combined pride of caste with considerable political sophistication. Like Ismā'īl, he was flexible enough to see how constitutional forms could be manipulated to preserve the existing power-structure. But although the new government was a Turco-Circassian monopoly, Ismā'īl did not neglect his Egyptian supporters. The *majlis* was allowed to continue its sittings and to discuss a draft constitution. The military establishment was increased and half-pay officers recalled. Three 'fallāḥ' colonels, among them the future national hero Aḥmad 'Urābī, were appointed khedivial aides-de-camp.

On 22 April Ismā'īl brought the 'National Programme' into force while affecting to welcome continued European co-operation in the management of his finances. But the powers did not confine themselves to protests against the unilateral reduction in the interest rate; by May they were pressing the sultan to depose Ismā'īl in favour of his son, Muḥammad Tawfīq. Sultan Abd ūl-Hamid was not averse to a drastic demonstration of his suzerainty against a *wālī* who had often treated that suzerainty as a formality. But he wished to replace Ismā'īl not by Tawfīq but by Muḥammad 'Alī's youngest son, 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, who had a small clandestine faction in Egypt. However, by 26 June the sultan

had been brought to nominate Tawfiq, in a telegram accompanying that addressed to 'the ex-Khedive, Ismā'īl'.

So long as Ismā'īl seemed likely to retain effective power the Turco-Circassians, led by Sharīf, showed considerable solidarity in supporting him, probably seeing in his personal power the best guarantee for their own privileges. Faction among the *dhawāt* certainly existed; but until the very end of Ismā'īl's reign it evidently had little political significance. Certainly, the 'defection' of Nūbār and Riyād was of major importance, but neither was at this stage the leader of an important faction. Both were anomalous members of the ruling élite: Nūbār, as a Christian, was a tolerated associate rather than a full member, and had few followers outside the Armenian Būghūs clan; Riyād, though a pious Muslim and a patron of Islamic reformers, was widely believed to be of Jewish extraction. But once there appeared to be three rivals for the khedivate (Ismā'īl, Tawfiq and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm), Turco-Circassians far more representative than Nūbār or Riyād found themselves, almost willy-nilly, at the head of politically important factions. By May 1879 Sharīf had aligned himself with the powers in pressing for Ismā'īl's deposition; while Shāhīn Kinj, a 'grandee' of hardly less distinction, was organising petitions in support of Ismā'īl. After Ismā'īl's deposition, factional disintegration accelerated. Muṣṭafā Riyād was for two years (September 1879–September 1881) the real ruler of Egypt. Power attracted followers; Riyād became a major faction leader and a bitter political enemy of Muḥammad Sharīf. Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī, as distinguished a 'grandee' as any, ultimately sought to augment his power-base by links with the increasingly powerful faction of disgruntled Egyptian officers. Within eighteen months of Ismā'īl's deposition, the old ruling establishment had been broken into jarring fragments.

The disintegration of the *dhawāt* was perhaps the most important aspect of the collapse of Ismā'īl's broad anti-foreign front of Turco-Circassian and Egyptian élites. There followed a complex struggle of factions and interests, which neither the new khedive nor the *dhawāt* were able to control. The Egyptian officers were increasingly politicised by their bitter struggle with a Turco-Circassian high command clinging to its military privileges perhaps all the more tenaciously because of the loss of *dhawāt* hegemony elsewhere. The army, under Egyptian leadership,

became a virtually autonomous force, volatile and unpredictable. The vacuum of effective authority could for a time be filled by European pressure and influence, operating through individuals or factions prepared – not necessarily for discreditable reasons – to follow policies acceptable to the creditor powers. But this was an inherently precarious and unstable system; and when it collapsed in September 1881, there was nothing to replace it. 'C'est impossible de dire', wrote the French consul in October 1881, 'où réside le pouvoir effectif.'³

TAWFĪQ, 'URĀBĪ AND THE BRITISH OCCUPATION,
1879–1883

Almost immediately after Ismā'īl's deposition the *majlis al-nuwāb* was dissolved. An attempt by Muḥammad Sharīf to remain in office as the leader of a 'constitutionalist' faction was frustrated by the united opposition of the European representatives and of the new khedive. In September 1879 Britain and France compelled Tawfīq to accept as prime minister Muṣṭafā Riyād, their most effective political collaborator. Riyād's ministry included two distinguished native Egyptians, as well as Turks not of Muḥammad Sharīf's faction. Riyād strove with considerable success to satisfy Egypt's foreign creditors and at the same time to restore productive capacity by easing the intolerable weight of taxation on the *fallāḥ*, at the expense of the rich and privileged. The *muqābala* was annulled and the surtax on 'ushurī land introduced. The clumsy and confused machinery of collection, which virtually invited evasion by influential tax-payers, was rationalised; tax-collectors were given firm central support against recalcitrant grandees and notables. In July 1881 Riyād's government reached a settlement, embodied in the 'Law of Liquidation', with the European creditors. About half of Egypt's normal revenue was earmarked for debt service; the European financial controllers had a consultative voice in the cabinet. These safeguards induced the creditors to agree to a reduction to 5 per cent of the interest on the unified debt.

Riyād's reforms were of genuine benefit to the *fallāḥīn*. There

³ M.A.E., C.P. Egypte 70, Sienkiewicz to Barthélemy St-Hilaire, 4 Oct. 1881: cited A. Ramm, 'Great Britain and France in Egypt, 1876–1882', in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa* (New Haven and London, 1971), 92.

was a sharp fall in the interest rates exacted by village usurers; and the new khedive enjoyed a brief honeymoon of popularity in the rural areas. Egyptian specialists and experts trained in Western skills collaborated whole-heartedly with Riyāḍ. None of them appears in a revolutionary role during the crisis of 1881–2; and their doyen, the engineer and educationist ‘Alī Mubārak, was a member of Riyāḍ’s cabinet. The opposition came from elsewhere: the wealthy and privileged, at first the *dhawāt*, later the rural notables; the nationalist and militantly Islamic *littérateurs* and propagandists; Egyptian officers, their careers once more at the mercy of economies and of their Turco-Circassian superior officers. Riyāḍ’s methods were authoritarian, even dictatorial: a considerable section of the *dhawāt*, led by Muḥammad Sharīf, therefore embraced ‘constitutionalism’ as a weapon against his policies. The coteries of nationalists and Islamic reformers, cautiously patronised by Ismā‘īl towards the end of his reign, now attacked Riyāḍ as they had attacked Ismā‘īl’s European ministry, in the name of patriotism, constitutionalism and religion. The principal mentor of these groups was that enigmatic but extremely influential figure Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who had connections not only among nationalists but also among able young Azharites repelled by the lifeless formalism of their official teachers; and even in the world of freemasonry. Ismā‘īl had tolerated Afghānī, probably hoping to find a use for him: the less confident Tawfīq had him summarily arrested and deported in August 1879. Riyāḍ had once been Afghānī’s patron; but he soon silenced Afghānī’s nationalist and reformist disciples by suspending, and threatening to suppress, publications which printed their views. More constructively, he converted into active supporters of his policy some of the ablest of these disciples, notably Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Sa‘ad Zaghlūl.

The ‘constitutionalist’ opposition of the *dhawāt* had rather more substance than that of Afghānī’s circle of intellectuals. In November 1879 Muḥammad Sharīf and some of his friends published anonymously a ‘Manifesto of the Egyptian Nationalist Party’, attacking Riyāḍ’s government as an agent of foreign interests and demanding the restoration of financial sovereignty to Egypt. It seems very doubtful whether the ‘Egyptian Nationalist Party’ had any real existence before its appearance late in 1879 as a constitutionalist façade for Sharīf’s political

connection. In May 1880 a petition signed by Sharīf and eighty-three others, all wealthy and mostly Turco-Circassian, attacked Riyād's government as representing not Egypt but the house of Rothschild, in whose interests it had annulled the *muqābala* and increased the tax on 'ushurī land. The signatories were intimidated by police surveillance so strict that they began to fear for their lives; Sharīf's French-language newspaper, *La Réforme*, was suppressed; sentences of exemplary severity were passed on less distinguished and more vulnerable petitioners against the government. Sharīf thought it wise to make an extended tour of his cotton plantations; some of his associates hastily fled the country. Given the individual and collective economic strength of the *dhawāt*, this rather ignominious collapse may seem strange. But in khedivial Egypt wealth had never been the slightest protection against the arbitrary power of the ruler. Riyād, with his foreign backing, was virtually a dictator; he seems to have convinced the opposition that he was able and willing to use state power no less ruthlessly and lethally than Ismā'il himself. The grandee opposition was also very narrowly based. It did not gain support from the Egyptian provincial notables, though they were also aggrieved by Riyād's policies. To many Egyptians, the emergence and activity of the 'Egyptian Nationalist Party' seemed a mere intrigue of the Turks.

Nor did the *dhawāt* invoke the assistance of their Turco-Circassian colleagues who still monopolised the army high command; and who were, under the leadership of the War minister, 'Uthmān Rifqī, using the renewed economy drive to force *fallāḥ* officers out of operational command and into retirement. In January 1881 Colonel Aḥmad 'Urābī, as the spokesman of the aggrieved officers, demanded the dismissal of the War minister. Riyād attempted to placate the officers without sacrificing 'Uthmān Rifqī. But 'Uthmān and the khedive planned to crush the officers' movement. On 1 February 1881 'Urābī and two of his colleagues were ordered to the War Office on routine business and, on arrival, were arrested and brought before a court-martial. But their regiments, forewarned of the trap, stormed the War Office and released the arrested colonels. Other troops refused the khedive's orders to intervene. Tawfīq had no alternative but to release and reinstate 'Urābī and his colleagues and to dismiss 'Uthmān Rifqī.

The officer corps then renewed its oath of loyalty, and the incident was officially closed. But the *fallāḥ* officers knew that Tawfiq would seek revenge for his personal humiliation: they believed that not only their careers, but their lives, were now in danger. Having advanced too far to withdraw safely, they sought to protect themselves by pressing more strongly than ever for the destruction of Turco-Circassian preponderance in the army. Riyāḍ saw the danger of this situation, and strove for a peaceful solution. Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī, who had replaced 'Uthmān Rifqī as War minister, was also a Turco-Circassian; but he sympathised with the Egyptian officers, probably hoping to use their support to further his own political ambitions. Already the officers' demands for increased pay and an increased military establishment threatened conflict with the European financial control. The French occupation of Tunis in May 1881 seemed to some officers to foreshadow a British occupation of Egypt. With Ismā'il's deposition Egypt had lost her financial sovereignty; and now Riyāḍ was dismantling the army so as to leave her defenceless against the foreigner and the infidel. The officers' movement developed overtones of militant patriotism and even of jihad.

During the summer of 1881 links were forged between the officers' movement and the provincial notables led by Muḥammad Sulṭān, the richest of the native Egyptian land-owners. The notables saw in the officers a valuable weapon against the Riyāḍ government: the officers looked to the notables and the recall of the *majlis al-nunwāb* for political protection against the khedive's wrath. The dismissal in August of Maḥmūd Sāmī and his replacement by the khedive's brother-in-law was followed in September by orders posting away from Cairo 'Urābī's regiment and two others commanded by *fallāḥ* officers. 'Urābī and his friends saw in these events a design 'to disperse the military power with a view to revenge on us'.⁴ On 9 September the three regiments marched on the khedive's palace and demanded the dismissal of Riyāḍ's ministry, the recall of the *majlis* and an increased military establishment. Tawfiq, again lacking all support from other troops, again had to comply.

A new government was formed under Muḥammad Sharīf,

⁴ Public Record Office (P.R.O.), Foreign Office (F.O.), 78/3324, translation of 'Urābī to Egyptian War Minister, 9 Sept. 1881, in Malet to Granville, 11 Sept. 1881. Cited Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid, *Egypt and Cromer* (London, 1968), 11; cf. Schölch, *Ägypten*, 147, 325 n. 137.

whose reputation as a constitutionalist appealed to the officers. Sharīf recognised the weakness of his position and demanded guarantees, which were given by Muḥammad Sulṭān, of the army's loyalty to the new government. Maḥmūd Sāmī was reinstated as War minister. The leading provincial notables successfully petitioned for the recall of the *majlis*. It met in December 1881, and at once began to discuss a draft constitution. 'Urābī was given credit for these developments, seen as the dawn of a new era, and rapidly became the hero of most politically conscious Egyptians. British representatives toyed with the idea of Ottoman military intervention; but the French promptly rejected this proposal, fearing its repercussions in Tunisia. British alarm gave way to cautious optimism when it became clear that 'Urābī and the *majlis* were anxious to avoid a collision with the financial control. But the situation remained dangerously unstable. The khedive was by now almost powerless, but had not given up hope of regaining power, either by political intrigue or by Ottoman military intervention, which he had vainly requested in September. The army had a monopoly of organised force; but its spokesman, 'Urābī, by now the idol of the populace, held no ministerial office until February 1882.⁵ The *majlis* was influential but had no authority over the government. Sharīf was a compromise leader with no effective following; his authority depended on the maintenance of a complex and precarious balance of political forces.

In January 1882 this balance was destroyed by the Anglo-French 'joint note', whereby Britain and France offered (or threatened) their total support for the khedive's authority. The note was primarily a French initiative, probably an attempt to enhance French influence in an Egypt where British advice and advisers were becoming all too preponderant. In the interests of Anglo-French unity of action, Gladstone and Granville concurred, without enthusiasm and with no inkling of the note's likely repercussions in Egypt. The nationalists in fact saw the note as a thinly-veiled threat of military intervention; but they were not intimidated. The *majlis* promptly demanded control over that portion of the Egyptian budget not earmarked for debt service – an issue on which they had previously seemed willing to compromise. Sharīf, at heart a conservative Turk sceptical and

⁵ However, he became *wakil* (under-secretary) at the War Ministry in January 1882.

contemptuous of the political capacity of Egyptians, refused to support this demand. On the petition of the *majlis*, Tawfīq dismissed Sharīf and appointed in his place Maḥmūd Sāmī, with ‘Urābī as War minister (February 1882). Maḥmūd Sāmī’s ministry was the first ever to contain a majority of native Egyptians – mostly technical experts, with one or two rural notables.

The new ministers were neither militarists nor fanatics; but their stand over the budget gave notice of their refusal to accept foreign control outside the special sphere of the debt-service. France and Britain now had to decide whether it was safe to leave the complex of European interests in Egypt to a government dominated by unfamiliar and unpredictable political forces. Gladstone had not been averse to this experiment; but the real or supposed imperatives of Anglo-French relations had led him to acquiesce in the joint note – a policy of ‘bluff and swagger’ which had not intimidated the ‘Urābists but had provoked them into an open confrontation with the foreign financial control. After January 1882 the British (and often the French) representative in Egypt began to see armed intervention as the only solution to this crisis. Auckland Colvin, the British financial controller, now began to press this view very strongly; and he converted to it Edward Malet, the consul. Henceforth British official reporting on Egypt increasingly (and misleadingly) emphasised the threats of ‘anarchy’ and ‘fanaticism’.

In London the Gladstone government strove to avoid an occupation, either alone or in partnership with France; and at the same time to keep British policy in step with the French. This involved a policy of intimidation which provoked precisely the revolutionary instability which the British wished to obviate. In June 1882 the French abandoned this policy; but by that time British interests seemed so seriously threatened by the upheaval in Egypt that London saw no alternative but to persevere in intimidation, even in isolation from France, and when intimidation failed yet again, to launch an isolated military occupation. The British tried to escape from this rake’s progress by sponsoring an Ottoman intervention. This course was always thwarted by French opposition; but it was in any case based on a total misunderstanding of the relationship between the sultan and Egypt. The sultan would willingly intervene only to draw tighter the links between Istanbul and Cairo, perhaps through the

appointment of 'Abd al-Ḥalīm as khedive. He had no intention of being 'the mere instrument of European action in Egypt'.⁶ 'Urābī, for his part, assured the sultan that 'Egypt for the Egyptians', for all its opposition to Turco-Circassian hegemony in Egypt, did not imply any weakening of proper Islamic loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. The sultan replied that he would support any leader who could break the infidel grip upon Egypt; and until 'Urābī's cause was virtually lost he tended to lean towards 'Urābī rather than towards Tawfiq who was, after all, the nominee of the European powers.

Early in 1882 'Urābī, now War minister, had begun to break the Turco-Circassian monopoly of high military command. Aggrieved officers protested; 'Urābī believed that there was a 'Circassian conspiracy' to assassinate him. Suspects were arrested and court-martialled; on 30 April forty Circassian officers were sentenced to be cashiered and deported to the Sudan. The sultan refused to confirm the sentences; the khedive then rejected his ministers' proposal for milder penalties not requiring the sultan's confirmation, but accepted a similar proposal from the British and French consuls. The khedive had preferred foreign advice to that of his own ministers upon an issue which was very remote from finance – ostensibly the sole legitimate foreign interest in Egypt. The ministers broke off relations with the khedive and, usurping his prerogative, reconvened the *majlis al-nuwwāb*. Although there was no general disorder, and no threat to foreigners, Malet and his French colleague called for the despatch of an Anglo-French naval squadron to Alexandria. The ships arrived on 17 May; the consuls now demanded the dismissal of the Sāmī-'Urābī ministry; a further joint note from London and Paris suggested that 'Urābī should go into 'voluntary exile'. Thereupon the ministers resigned in protest; but Tawfiq was compelled by popular pressure to reinstate 'Urābī as War minister with responsibility for public security (28 May).

On 11 June riots in Alexandria caused loss of life among both Egyptians and foreigners. The riots were probably a spontaneous result of tension and excitement; but to Gladstone they appeared as a 'massacre' of Christians, probably instigated by 'Urābī. Gladstone could now move with an easier conscience towards armed intervention, to which he was being pushed by anxiety for

⁶ Ramm, 'Great Britain and France in Egypt', 103.

the security of the Suez Canal. He was also troubled by a marked rapprochement between the French and the Urabists, probably in reaction to the increasingly exclusive British influence over the khedive; he feared a Franco-Urabist entente which would effectively exclude British influence from Egypt. On 7 July Tawfīq hinted that he would welcome action from the European warships; the British admiral, Seymour, was authorised to demand under threat of bombardment the disarming of the Alexandria forts. The mere presence of the ships had been worse than useless: by 14 June even Malet had admitted that 'the fleet [was] a menace likely to lead to disturbance, not to protection'.⁷ Perhaps a bombardment (even though the French refused to participate) would at last topple 'Urābī and obviate the necessity for full military intervention.

The bombardment took place on 11 July, and was followed by a collapse of public order in which much of Alexandria was looted and burned. The Urabist army retired from the city; Tawfīq took refuge with the British squadron; and on 17 July Admiral Seymour, having landed British troops, publicly assumed responsibility for law and order 'with the permission of the khedive'. Elsewhere in Egypt the Urabists were in control; and the khedive's authority, and British influence, could now be restored only by a military occupation of Egypt. The alternative was simply to abandon Egypt to the Urabists, and quite possibly to the French. On 25 July Gladstone secured a vote in the House of Commons of £2.3 million for military operations in Egypt.

'Urābī now proclaimed jihad against the British. Immediately after the bombardment there had been a pogrom of Christians in some delta towns, but there was no general collapse into 'anarchy'. As the khedive and most of his ministers were now in the enemy camp, in Cairo a council of notables (*majlis al-'urfī*) assumed responsibility for civil administration. 'Urābī's jihad showed no tendency whatever to develop into a social revolution. The populace was mobilised mainly by its traditional leaders – village shaykhs, '*ulamā*', local notables – who invoked traditional Islamic loyalties. Even the more sophisticated nationalist orators spoke of defence of faith and homeland, hardly of Egypt as a nation. Indeed, the Urabist slogan 'Egypt for the Egyptians' did not

⁷ P.R.O. 30/29/160 (Granville Papers), Malet to Granville, 14 June 1882, cited in R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians* (London, 1961), 103.

imply the creation of a totally independent national state. The Urabists still saw Egypt as part of the Ottoman Empire, the sole legitimate Islamic polity. 'Urābī commissioned a board of *'ulamā'* to pronounce on Tawfiq's legitimacy as a ruler for Muslims; but only the sultan, as the highest earthly judge of that legitimacy, could declare the khedive deposed.

Egyptian 'national unity' was moreover still deeply flawed by ethnic and social cleavages. The Turco-Circassians, including Sharīf and his 'Egyptian Nationalist Party' of 1879–80, defected to the khedive and the foreigner. So did many of the wealthier provincial notables, led by the enormously rich Muḥammad Sulṭān, as soon as the popularisation of 'Urābī's movement seemed even remotely to threaten the social order. The major revolutionary effect of the movement was to damage beyond repair the authority and solidarity, already severely shaken, of the old ruling élite. British military intervention destroyed any early possibility of its effective replacement by a new élite.

'Urābī had concentrated his better troops inland from Alexandria, and was slow to recognise the threat from British forces based on the Suez Canal. The Egyptian force routed by Wolseley at Tell el-Kebir on 13 September consisted largely of untrained *fallāḥ* recruits. Immediately after the battle the *majlis al-'urfī* announced its capitulation, and Cairo was occupied without a fight. As a military operation, British intervention had been a brilliant success; but its political objectives were quite incapable of realisation. It was impossible to restore the pre-'Urābī situation, and then quickly to withdraw the British troops. The old régime was an irreparable ruin. The British now found themselves taking over political and administrative functions which demolished it further. Even before Tell el-Kebir, Malet had imposed upon the khedive a 'reliable' ministry under Muḥammad Sharīf. Immediately afterwards, the British took over the railway administration and the training of a 'gendarmérie' to replace the Egyptian army, dissolved by khedivial decree. The convenient absence of the senior French officials enabled them to monopolise control of Egypt's finances. Major administrative reforms on British–Indian lines seemed necessary before Egyptians could be entrusted with political responsibility; and much of this programme was anything but welcome to the khedive and the 'pashas' – the crumbling pillars of the edifice which the British

hoped to restore. Tawfiq's puppet status was perhaps most glaringly revealed, especially to Egyptian eyes, by the British 'arrangement' of 'Urābī's trial and sentence so as to spare his life. In May 1883 the British introduced a dummy constitution evidently intended as a plaything for political children: a mainly nominated legislative council with no powers of initiative, or even of disallowance except for proposed new taxes; and an elected assembly which met briefly and infrequently to 'émettre des vœux'.

Evelyn Baring, who replaced Malet as British consul in September 1883, soon discovered that the old régime had collapsed and that the British programme embodied a fundamental contradiction. To withdraw before reforms had time to take effect would be to invite a relapse into 'anarchy', so that the British would either have to return or to 'stand aside while others, probably the French, take up the work'.⁸ Nevertheless, until December 1883 Baring still hoped for evacuation within two years. News was then received that the Sudanese Mahdi had annihilated an Egyptian expeditionary force under a British commander. This expedition had drained the last resources of Egyptian military manpower. There seemed a real danger of the invasion of Egypt by Mahdist revolutionary 'fanatics'. The British suddenly found themselves saddled with responsibility for Egyptian defence, which destroyed any hope of early evacuation, as well as for Egyptian finance.

Finance was problem enough. The 1883 budget was a million pounds in deficit. The unfunded, 'floating', debt exceeded £5 million and was rising. Reforms, or even solvency, were impossible if Egypt continued to pour resources into the bottomless hole of the Sudan. Baring persuaded London to insist on the complete abandonment of the Sudan, except for the Red Sea ports which were of strategic importance to Britain. To strengthen Baring's hand against the reluctant Egyptian ministers, London asserted – in a despatch (4 January 1884) that became the foundation-charter of the 'veiled protectorate' – the doctrine that in 'important questions' Egyptian ministers must either accept British 'advice' or resign. But Muḥammad Sharif preferred to resign rather than accept so bitter a humiliation. Baring had doubted whether any Egyptian would be willing to succeed him, and was preparing to

⁸ Baring to Granville, 28 Oct. 1883, in Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (London, 1908; reprinted London, 1911), 738–41 (of reprint).

impose upon the khedive a ministry of British officials. But Nūbār Būghūs agreed to form a government. Although a Christian Armenian, he was at least preferable to a British official; and his very marginal status as an Egyptian relieved ‘genuine’ Egyptians of responsibility for the abandonment of the Sudan.

THE MAHDIST REVOLUTION IN THE SUDAN, 1874–1885

The destruction of the Egyptian expedition under William Hicks in November 1883 was the crucial event in the successful insurrection of the Sudanese Mahdi, Muḥammad Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdallāh. Belief in a Mahdi, as a divinely guided restorer of justice and equity, had existed for many centuries in popular Islam, though it had never been an official tenet of the *sunni* faith. Muḥammad Aḥmad’s own conception of his mission is well set out in a letter which he wrote, shortly before his death in June 1885, to the Christian Yohannes IV of Ethiopia. He asserts that Islam had not paused in its universal expansion until

...religion fell into the hands of the Turks, who... replaced it by *kufur*. They annulled the laws of the Merciful and revived the ways of Satan after their own inclinations. When God determined to cut short such a state of things, he called me forth as Mahdi... God has manifested His goodness to you in causing you to be present at this age of prophecy in which we have appeared as a *khalīfa* to our Prophet Muḥammad... Become a Muslim [or] you will undoubtedly fall into our hands, as we are promised the possession of all the earth.⁹

The Ottoman empire by its apostasy (which venal ‘*ulamā*’ had condoned) had lost its Islamic legitimacy not merely in the Sudan but universally. Muḥammad Aḥmad was the sole existing legitimate successor (*khalīfa*) of the Prophet. It was his mission to restore the Islamic community (*umma*) to its pristine purity, as it existed in the days of the Prophet and his Companions. The restored *umma* would be extended, by the sword if necessary, not merely throughout *Dār al-Islām* but throughout the world. The Mahdi was indeed a cosmic figure. His manifestation was one of the ‘signs of the Hour’ – a prelude to the end of the created universe and the Last Judgement. These eschatological overtones seem, on the whole, to have been rather lightly emphasised in Sudanese Mahdism. But the role of the Mahdi as the ‘Expected

⁹ Central Record Office (C.R.O.), Khartoum, Mahdia 1/34/11, the Mahdi to Yohannes, 1302 A.H. (can be dated to Apr.–June 1885).

Deliverer', who would break oppression and inaugurate a Golden Age of equity and righteousness, was very strongly emphasised, and of obvious revolutionary potential.

The Mahdiyya is hardly explicable simply as a belated protest against two generations of Turco-Egyptian oppression and fiscal extortion. The sedentary cultivators of the northern riverain Sudan, who had been longest under Egyptian rule and were most accessible to the tax-collector, were as a group tardy and unenthusiastic Mahdists. Moreover, they had often reached a satisfactory *modus vivendi* with the ruling institution. By the 1870s many of them had become members of the bureaucracy, at all levels up to and including province governor; and this relationship still survived in spite of Ismā'il's harsh fiscal pressure. The early centres of revolt were on the southern and western periphery of the Arab and Muslim Sudan, in areas only recently brought, or still being brought, under effective khedivial administration. Nor were the insurgents in these regions particularly pious Muslims; rather the contrary. Nor were they protesting at inveterate generalised 'oppression', but rather against specific grievances of comparatively recent origin. The Mahdist message gave these protests a unity and a holy legitimacy which would otherwise have been lacking.

The core of the Mahdist movement was of course the group of dedicated puritanical pietists who were the Mahdi's immediate disciples. This group was indeed drawn mainly though not exclusively from the riverain Sudan. Devout and ascetic Sudanese had long been scandalised by the luxury and laxity of the 'Turks'. But here again in Ismā'il's reign new factors appear, factors which gave special point to the charge of apostasy from Islam. The increasing appointment of European infidels to positions of authority over Muslims, culminating in Gordon's first governor-generalship (1877-9), was not merely objectionable but uncanonical. Another inadmissible innovation was the establishment of a Catholic mission in Khartoum itself. Direct proselytisation among Muslims was of course forbidden, but the missionaries were active in medicine and education. The 'Turks' went beyond mere tolerance; the administration maintained friendly, even cordial, relations with the missionaries. The mission building was the finest in Khartoum, more imposing even than the governor-general's palace. The Mahdi was also well aware of

Khedive Tawfiq's subservience to unbelievers. In these circumstances, the Mahdi's 'call to assert the unity of God, ... in all ages the rallying-cry of Muslim rigorists and reformers', was particularly necessary and apposite. And the conclusion that 'preaching will not purify the Turks; only the sword will purify them' was to Muḥammad Aḥmad inescapable.¹⁰

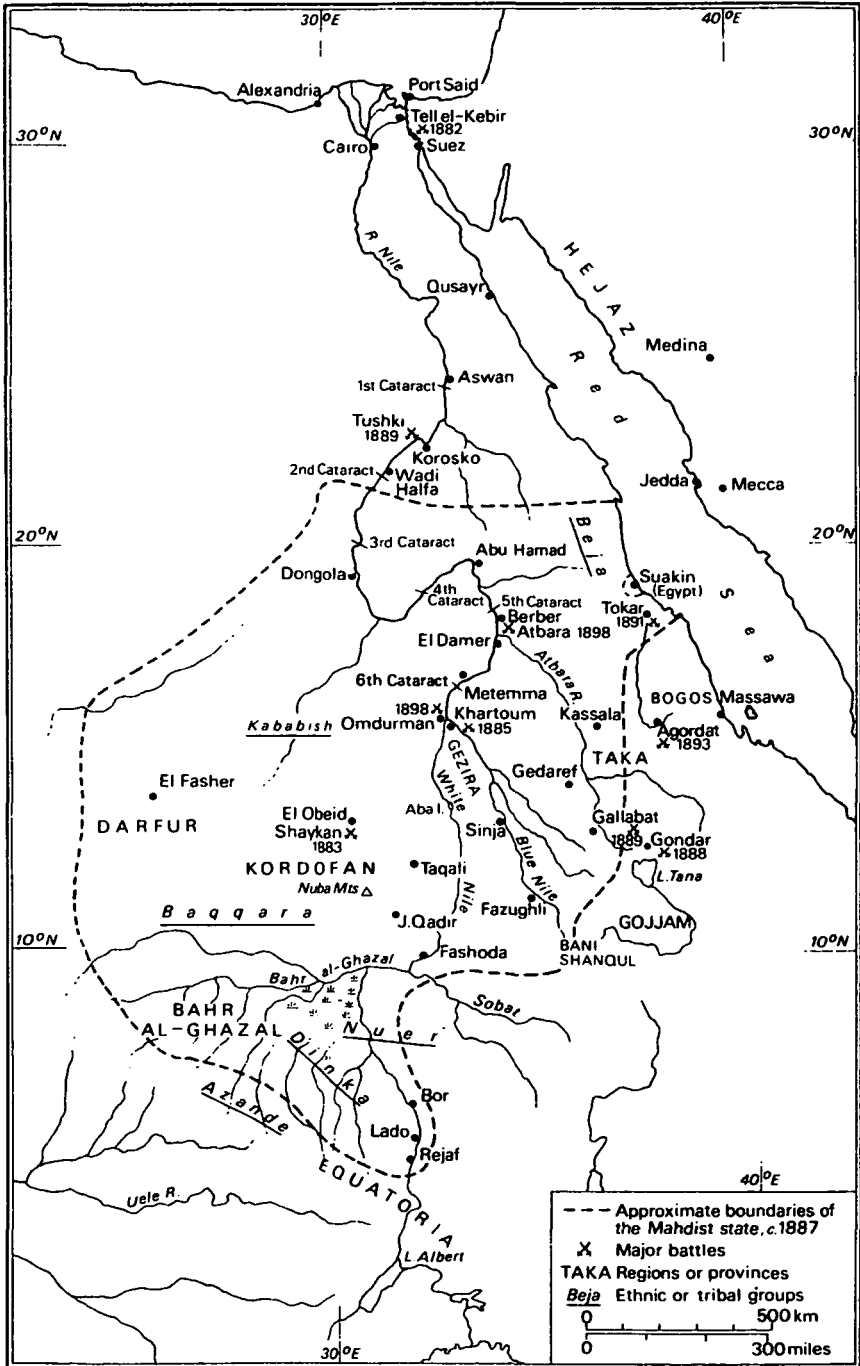
The more material grievances which recruited support for the Mahdi on the periphery of the Muslim Sudan were also generated by developments in the later years of Ismā'il's reign. The conquest and occupation of Darfur (1874) led to resistance not only from the Fūr, but more importantly from the nomad cattle-Arabs (Baqqāra) of southern Darfur, who found that they had exchanged the light and intermittent suzerainty of the Fūr sultan for the detested encroachment of a tax-collecting bureaucracy. To the Baqqāra, the Mahdi's call was simple: 'Kill Turks and stop paying taxes.' It transformed these notoriously easy-going Muslims into the unlikely shock-troops of a puritan revolution.

Ismā'il's attempt to assert effective control over the non-Muslim southern Sudan was unwelcome to the diaspora of northern riverain immigrants who dominated this region economically and politically. Yet more unwelcome was his attempt to suppress the slave trade, the economic base of this community of tough and enterprising frontiersmen. Khedivial troops and officials, many of whom also profited by the trade, sympathised with the traders. Opposition to khedivial policy was given a religious colour by the employment of Christians (Charles Gordon, Romolo Gessi) to enforce an alien and ruinous code of business ethics. By the late 1870s the Bahr al-Ghazal, now the main centre of the trade, had become ungovernable. In 1878, as a measure alike against the trade and its insurgent organisers, Gordon encouraged the Baqqāra to expel the northern Sudanese merchants (*jallāba*) who supplied the rebels with arms and ammunition in return for slaves. The plight of the *jallāba*, not merely expelled but plundered, aroused further resentment among the northern diaspora.

The administration of the Sudan was, in the late 1870s, in poor shape to cope with a major emergency. Ismā'il's grandiose programme of conquest and expansion had grossly overloaded it after a period of neglect and deterioration under his immediate

¹⁰ P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1970), 117; 110, citing the Mahdi to Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Ḍarīr, 28 Sha'bān 1299/15 July 1882.

THE NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN



24 The Nile Valley in the Mahdist era, c. 1880-c. 1900

predecessors. The appointment of European officials to stiffen the administration in frontier areas was not an unqualified success. Whatever their virtues of honesty and efficiency, they were ignorant of local languages and customs and often (like Gordon) illiterate in Arabic, the language of administration. They were resented, not only as aliens and infidels, but as interlopers who blocked the promotion of Egyptians and Sudanese. Even Gordon was a mixed blessing. His harrying of the *jallāba* left the south-west ready to explode at the slightest shock. His capricious appointment and dismissal of senior officials did not improve morale. And the collapse of the khedivate under European and Urabist pressures damaged the authority of the administration as a whole.

Muḥammad Ra'ūf, who succeeded Gordon as governor-general, was neither an ally of the slavers nor a mere incompetent *fainéant*. He knew the Sudan; his previous career had been creditable; his taking of Harar in 1875 had been the solitary success of Ismā'il's invasion of Ethiopia. After Gordon's dynamic but disturbing régime, there was a case for ruling the Sudan with a lighter rein and avoiding provocatively energetic policies. In other circumstances, this strategy might have been successful. But Ra'ūf was certainly slow to appreciate the danger of Mahdism, perhaps because his attention was first drawn to it by a rival religious leader whose testimony was discounted. When he did move to action, his tactics were sensible but over-deliberate and poorly co-ordinated. He thereby enabled the Mahdi to win 'miraculous' victories which rapidly transformed him from a voice crying in the wilderness to the leader of a formidable insurrection.

Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Mahdī was the son of a boat-builder from Dongola whose family migrated first to the Khartoum region and then in 1870 to Aba island in the White Nile, a region which had been beyond the 'frontier of Islamisation' twenty years earlier. Like so many of his followers, Muḥammad Aḥmad too was a frontiersman. After a religious education in the Sudan, he became the disciple of Shaykh Muḥammad Sharīf Nūr al-Dā'im of the Sammāniyya *ṭarīqa* (religious brotherhood). In 1878 the disciple found his master wanting in puritanical rigour, and remonstrated with him. Shaykh Muḥammad Sharīf thereupon dismissed his disciple, in spite of Muḥammad Aḥmad's repeated pleas for forgiveness. After this deeply disturbing crisis (for the

bond between master and disciple was normally inviolable), Muḥammad Aḥmad visited Kordofan, preaching the renunciation of this world and forming links with notables and holy men, especially those of the faction opposed to the province governor and his local Sudanese supporters. He then returned to Abā, where he built up his own circle of disciples.

Early in 1881 this circle was joined by a novice from south-western Darfur, ‘Abdallāhi ibn Muḥammad. ‘Abdallāhi, a diviner and soothsayer of the Ta‘āisha tribe of Baqqāra Arabs, had for some years been seeking the ‘expected Mahdi’. ‘Abdallāhi’s faith and devotion reinforced Muḥammad Aḥmad’s growing conviction of his own divine election, which he confided to his disciples in March 1881. He then revisited Kordofan, privately revealing himself as the Mahdi to adherents both old and new, none of whom betrayed his secret. His public manifestation followed in June, in letters from Aba to notables and to his adherents, urging them to join him in *hijra*. *Hijra* (emigration, flight) implied a total repudiation of the corrupt society of infidels and apostates; and the creation, beyond their reach, of a militant stronghold of the purified Faith.

In August 1881 an attempt to arrest the Mahdi was so mismanaged that two companies of Muḥammad Ra‘ūf’s troops were routed by the Mahdi’s *anṣār* (‘helpers’, adherents). The Mahdists then made their *hijra* to Jebel Qadīr in the south-eastern Nuba mountains, a turbulent frontier region of Kordofan not under settled administration. Travelling light, they out-paced the troops which attempted to intercept them. In December 1881 and again in May 1882 the Mahdists defeated ill-organised military expeditions launched against them from Fashoda. Inspired by these miraculous victories, visionaries and malcontents flocked to the Mahdi’s stronghold. Local and tribal risings were fomented virtually throughout Kordofan; and in August 1882 the Mahdi, now commanding an organised army, advanced upon El Obeid, the province capital. In September, however, a Mahdist assault upon El Obeid was repulsed with heavy casualties. Breaking with Prophetic precedent, the Mahdi now authorised the use of firearms. He also embodied in his own army the government troops taken prisoner. These were trained professional soldiers, usually islamised Blacks. Known as the *jihādiyya*, they formed a

third element in the Mahdi's forces, neither tribal warriors nor religious enthusiasts. El Obeid finally fell to the Mahdists in January 1883.

During 1882 there had been Mahdist risings on the west bank of the White Nile and in the Gezira region between the White and Blue Niles. The former were contained, and the latter effectively suppressed, by a new and more energetic governor-general, 'Abd al-Qādir Ḥilmī. 'Abd al-Qādir recommended a Fabian policy: consolidation in the Gezira and the riverain Sudan; and a defensive screen, based on the White Nile, against the Mahdists in the west. Instead, Muḥammad Sharīf in Cairo insisted on a major offensive – an all-or-nothing gamble with Egypt's last military resources, a scratch force of ill-trained and reluctant soldiers. The expedition was annihilated at Shaykān, south of El Obeid, on 5 November 1883.

It was now no longer possible to isolate the Mahdi in Kordofan. Darfur, already cut off from Khartoum since the fall of El Obeid, promptly fell to the Mahdists in December 1883, thanks to Mahdist-inspired risings and the defection of the government troops. After Shaykān, the hasty withdrawal of the dangerously exposed White-Nile garrisons left the south isolated. In Bahr al-Ghazal there were risings both of the northern diaspora and of the southern Sudanese peoples. The latter were not usually Mahdists or even Muslims, but made common cause with the Mahdists against a government seen as a mere predator. The province finally fell in April 1884 to an invading Mahdist army from Darfur.

Meanwhile, towards the end of 1883 Khartoum had been cut off from the coast by the insurgent Beja of the Red Sea Hills. The Beja were camel nomads who did not speak Arabic, were not remarkable for their religious fervour and had reached a *modus vivendi* with government as transport contractors on the Berber–Suakin route; but to the Beja, as to other nomads, all settled government was fundamentally unwelcome. They were raised for the Mahdiyya by 'Uthmān Diqna, a Suakin merchant of part-Beja descent who had an old grudge against government. But 'Uthmān's Beja blood was less important for the success of his mission than the endorsement of his call to jihad by the religious leader al-Ṭāhir al-Majdhūb of El Damer, the head of a holy family

to which the Beja attributed supernatural powers. By early 1884 Suakin itself was under such heavy pressure from 'Uthmān Dīqna that British troops had to be committed to its defence.

After Shaykān, Baring had suggested that a British officer should be sent to Khartoum to organise the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrison and if possible to set up a successor government. British opinion pressed for the appointment of Gordon, whose influence and popularity in the Sudan it over-estimated. Baring stifled his misgivings about Gordon's suitability; and in January 1884 Gordon was commissioned by the cabinet primarily to report and advise on the Khartoum situation and not to organise an evacuation. He was however authorised 'to carry out such other duties as... may be entrusted to him by Sir Evelyn Baring'. Baring thereupon instructed Gordon to withdraw the troops and, if possible, 'to establish some sort of rough government under the tribal chiefs'. Gordon was permitted temporarily to retain such troops as he needed to organise an efficient withdrawal; but emphatically warned that they were not to be retained for the support of the successor government.¹¹ Baring had however significantly changed the emphasis of the original cabinet directive. Moreover, if Gordon was not merely to report, but to organise the evacuation, he needed overriding authority; he was therefore appointed governor-general. But he undermined his own position and encouraged waverers to defect to the Mahdi by prematurely divulging the khedivial decree of abandonment, 'not knowing well its contents'.¹²

On arrival at Khartoum in February 1884, however, Gordon decided, contrary to his instructions, not to withdraw the troops until the Sudan had been made safe for a successor government, and he urged Baring to send a British expedition to 'smash up the Mahdi'. By March the Mahdists controlled the country immediately to the north of Khartoum; by the end of May they had taken Berber. Evacuation was now impossible without British military assistance, which London refused to provide. Gordon attempted, at first with some success, to expel the Mahdists from the vicinity of Khartoum; but he had to abandon a plan to retake Berber. He then resolved to defend Khartoum

¹¹ P.R.O., F.O. 78/3662, Granville to Baring, no. 40, 18 Jan. 1884; F.O. 78/3666, Baring to Granville, no. 100, 28 Jan. 1884; F.O. 633/6 (Cromer Papers), no. 23, Baring to Granville, 21 Jan. 1884. Cf. Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, 343-6.

¹² Elton (Lord), *General Gordon's Khartoum journal* (New York, 1961), 176.

until relief arrived or the city fell. In September he learned that a relief expedition was after all being organised. Khartoum was by now under heavy Mahdist pressure; by the end of October it was closely besieged, and in growing distress for lack of supplies. Gordon organised a defence of legendary resource and valour, but Khartoum fell on 26 January 1885 and Gordon was killed, 'a brave soldier who fell at his post'.¹³ Advanced elements of the relief expedition arrived in two steamers two days later. The approach of this force had caused the Mahdists considerable uneasiness; but it was too weak to have effected anything but the personal rescue of Gordon – to which he would certainly not have consented.

By January 1885 the Mahdi had already laid the administrative and legal foundations of his 'new order'. Perhaps even before the *hijra* to Jebel Qadīr he had appointed four *khalīfas* – the equivalent, in the forthcoming ultimate universal triumph of Islam, of the four 'orthodox Caliphs' who had presided over its early expansion. 'Abdallāhi ibn Muḥammad of the Ta'aīsha Baqqāra, the Mahdi's closest confidant, took the place of the Prophet's immediate successor Abū Bakr; the pious and ascetic 'Alī wad Hīlū that of 'Umar; the Mahdi's own kinsman Muḥammad Sharīf, that of the fourth Caliph, the Prophet's son-in-law, 'Alī. The place of the third orthodox Caliph, 'Uthmān, was offered to Muḥammad al-Sanūsī, the leader of a powerful religious brotherhood in North Africa; but the offer was ignored and 'Uthmān's place remained vacant. 'Abdallāhi soon became by far the most important of the *khalīfas*. He held overall command of the Mahdist army, as well as 'divisional' command over his own fellow-countrymen, the Baqqāra levies embodied in the 'Black Flag' regiment. In January 1883, immediately after the fall of El Obeid, the Mahdi had conferred plenary powers upon 'Abdallāhi in all 'matters of the Faith' – which under the Mahdist dispensation included all public affairs. The *anṣār* were strictly enjoined never to question 'even silently' 'Abdallāhi's orders and decisions, on pain of punishment in 'this world and the world to come'.¹⁴

The Mahdi administered his territories through machinery which did not differ greatly from that of the Turco-Egyptian

¹³ Holt, *Mahdist State*, 103, citing Slatin's words.

¹⁴ Proclamation of the Mahdi, 17 Rabī' I 1300/26 Jan. 1883; cited Holt, *Mahdist State*, 122-3.

régime – which was indeed the only model known to him. Many of the changes were of nomenclature rather than of substance. The function of the Mahdist treasury (*bayt al-māl*) was not however merely to create a revenue by collecting – always with difficulty from the Baqqāra – a share of the booty seized from unbelievers. The early *bayt al-māl* had an important role in maintaining the solidarity of the Mahdist *umma* by relieving needy brethren. ‘He who has but little...shall be allotted sufficient from the Treasury...If the Treasury is empty, have patience until God gives the Treasury sufficiency.’¹⁵ Taxation, stigmatised as *jizya* (canonically payable only by unbelievers) when levied by the Turks, could now be sanctified as *zakāt*, the primitive Islamic alms tax. The Mahdi’s legislation on the relations between the sexes was also concerned to promote stability and solidarity by removing the occasion of *fitna* (dissension, mischief).¹⁶ All communication between the sexes, even formal greetings, was forbidden outside the family and the marriage bond. Unmarried women were an important source of *fitna*: the Mahdi therefore encouraged early marriage by strictly limiting both the dower paid by the husband and the traditionally lavish expenditure on marriage feasts.

To the Mahdi, the *sharī‘a* was of course the sole acceptable body of law; but he did not regard himself as bound by the jurisprudence of the ‘*ulamā*’, which had been superseded by his own special revelation. The authoritative sources of law were therefore limited to the Koran, the *sunna* of the Prophet, and the Mahdi’s own proclamations. In this and other ways he created wellnigh insuperable difficulties for Muslims conscientiously unable to accept him as Mahdi. He added to the Muslim confession of faith the words ‘Muḥammad Aḥmad is the *khālifa* of the Apostle of God’; and he blazoned this amended *shahāda* on his banners. He at least implied that *hijra* to the Mahdi had superseded pilgrimage to the Muslim holy places; and, by equating with infidels Muslims who denied his mission, he created in Sudanese Islam a schism which still exists in a muted form. It has been muted by a tacit consensus which accepts Muḥammad Aḥmad as a great and holy *mujaddīd* (‘renewer’ of Islam), and as a Sudanese national hero – indeed as *abū l-istiqlāl*, the father of independence. In fact, there

¹⁵ Undated proclamation (May 1884–June 1885), cited *ibid.*, 127.

¹⁶ *Fitna* can mean both ‘dissension’ and ‘infatuation’.

is no trace of Sudanese nationalism in the Mahdi's propaganda or policy; on the contrary, he is at pains to emphasise the universal claims of his mission. The origins of Sudanese nationalism may more profitably be sought in the later transformation of the Mahdiyya from a universal movement to a territorial state.

In June 1885 the Mahdi died, probably of typhus. A few weeks later, the last Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan, except at Suakin and in Equatoria, had either capitulated or been withdrawn. The expedition for the relief of Khartoum retired to the Wadi Halfa region, where it soon assumed a purely defensive role. A half-hearted British attempt to advance from Suakin to the Nile was quickly abandoned. The British turned their backs on the Sudan in order to grapple with the problems of Egypt.

The least of the problems for the British was Egyptian resistance. There is no trace of the 'fanaticism' which Baring frequently invoked to justify continued British occupation. There was little, if any, popular support for Mahdism. Some have seen a quasi-political protest in the rural 'brigandage' of the 1880s; if so, it was a pretty feeble one, compared with the *fallāh* risings of Ismā'il's reign. The élites were as quiet as the masses. By 1885 Khedive Tawfiq had tacitly accepted his puppet status. The Turco-Circassian *dhawāt* were by now a mere débris, discredited as a ruling élite and shattered as a coherent political force. Baring's conviction that the native Egyptian notables were incapable of replacing them was of course self-interested; but it was not groundless. Not only were most of these notables politically and administratively inexperienced; their sorry record of desertion and delation, as the sands had run out for 'Urābī, gave point to Baring's strictures on their lack of political stamina and 'civic virtue'. Western-influenced intellectuals had seen themselves largely as Ismā'il's auxiliaries in a drive for the regeneration of Egypt by selective borrowing from the West; and the collapse of the khedivate had shattered their still frail self-confidence.

The silence was broken only by the voice of Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh, who had ultimately thrown in his lot with 'Urābī and been exiled from Egypt after 'Urābī's fall. In collaboration with his old mentor Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī he published in 1884 the

short-lived but immensely influential periodical *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqā* ('The Indissoluble Bond'). Muḥammad 'Abduh believed that foreign, and especially British, domination could not be effectively resisted by Egypt alone, but only by the Islamic world as a whole. But the Islamic *umma* must first be regenerated by a return to the true and eternal principles of Islam, long obscured by the static formalism of the '*ulamā*' and by the 'corruptions' of popular devotion. Islam demanded, not the passive acceptance of the faith in its current imperfect form, but the active exertion of believers for the rediscovery and dissemination of these true principles, which could alone give the *umma* strength and vitality to resist the betrayal of Islam by worldly and venal rulers – such as Tawfiq. Baring took *al-'Urwa* seriously enough to forbid its circulation in Egypt. He always took 'Pan-Islam' far more seriously than 'secular' nationalism, which he dismissed as exotic and artificial, and therefore harmless.

Before 1892, however, the most pressing problems faced by the British were international, not internal. Britain's position in Egypt was ultimately dependent upon the absence of German opposition; and until 1888 Bismarck exacted a high diplomatic price for this favour. By the London Convention of 1885 Egypt's 'floating' debt was restricted to a million pounds, and full international control would be restored unless Egypt were solvent by 1887: provisions which the French hoped would lead to loss of financial control by the British and so to early evacuation. The 1887 budget was in fact 'balanced' only by ingenious accounting expedients. But by 1889 Egypt was genuinely solvent, and thereafter Baring built up a considerable reserve. This was achieved by rigid control of expenditure, not by heavier taxation; the land tax was in fact reduced in the less prosperous provinces. The shortfall was made good by a heavy customs duty on tobacco, combined with prohibition of its cultivation in Egypt. After about 1895 the revenue benefited from the general buoyancy of the economy, although the land tax was not increased.

Until 1892 internal politics amounted to little more than the adjustment of relations between the British and their more distinguished collaborators. Nūbār Būghūs had been indispensable during and immediately after the Sudan crisis of 1884–5. He used his unique position to prevent what he called an 'administrative occupation'; and in particular to force the resignation of

Clifford Lloyd, the 'inspector-general of reforms', who was attempting to bring the Ministry of the Interior and the provincial administration under direct British control. But Nūbār over-bid his hand when in 1887-8 he attempted, in collusion with the khedive, to undermine Baring by direct complaint to Lord Salisbury in London. Tawfiq, who had more to lose than Nūbār, was warned that his position as khedive depended upon his willingness to accept British advice. He took the hint, and dismissed Nūbār at a time diplomatically convenient to London (June 1888).

Nūbār was replaced by Muṣṭafā Riyād; a genuine 'Turk' could now accept office without incurring the stigma of having surrendered the Sudan. Riyād was a less unrepresentative figure than Nūbār and a man of generally admitted ability. He was therefore a useful veil for the 'veiled protectorate', in spite of his aggressive and autocratic personality and the inclusion in his political circle of some comparatively outspoken opponents of the occupation. Like Nūbār, he opposed the development of an 'administrative occupation'. But there was no room for two autocrats in Egypt. In April 1891 he resigned, having fallen foul of Baring over the appointment of a British judicial 'adviser' with administrative powers. He was succeeded by Muṣṭafā Fahmī, a wealthy and politically colourless Turk who had held the dummy portfolio of foreign affairs in almost every ministry since the deposition of Ismā'īl. Muṣṭafā Fahmī was, in Baring's words, a 'very facile instrument'.¹⁷

So long as the British retained any serious intention of withdrawing their troops from Egypt it was obviously undesirable to rely upon mere nullities as Egyptian ministers. But from about 1888, as a result of changes in the European and Mediterranean power-balance, the British 'official mind' became convinced that the diplomatic disadvantages of remaining in Egypt were outweighed by the strategic dangers of withdrawal. Egyptian ministers were still of course necessary, lest the powers be affronted by too blatant a demonstration of British control. But their competence was now of minor importance, provided they were prepared to be 'facile instruments'. Muṣṭafā Fahmī accepted this role; but not 'Abbās Hilmī, who succeeded his father as Khedive in January 1892 at the age of seventeen. 'Abbās was

¹⁷ Cited al-Sayyid, *Egypt and Cromer*, 78.

determined to assert his independence against Baring (now Lord Cromer). He could expect some support in Egypt, for the voice of opposition was at last becoming audible. There was of course as yet no organised 'national party'; but there were oppositional groups among certain members of the old élites, the more active elements of the *'ulamā'*, and the younger generation of the intelligentsia. The newspaper *al-Mu'ayyad* ('The Supporter') acted as a mouthpiece for these circles. Founded in 1889 by the Azharite shaykh, 'Alī Yūsuf, a protégé of Riyāḍ, it was the first newspaper to be edited by an ethnic Egyptian and consistently to present an Egyptian point of view. By 1892 *al-Mu'ayyad* had become a well-informed and effective critic of the occupation régime.

For 'Abbās Hilmī, as later events were to demonstrate, the embryo nationalist movement was little more than an instrument whereby he hoped to restore his own personal power. But his patronage of the movement brought him a popularity which disconcerted Cromer, who was soon forced to revise his view that it was 'absurd to suppose that any lad of nineteen could seriously influence native opinion'.¹⁸ 'Abbās took his stand on his legally unassailable right to choose his own ministers. In January 1893, without consulting Cromer, he dismissed and replaced Muṣṭafā Fahmī. Cromer reacted by a 'tumultuous storm of sinister telegrams'¹⁹ to the Foreign Office. If 'Abbās succeeded, ten years work would be thrown away, and a new and more serious Egyptian question would emerge. More, 'Abbās was the agent of an international conspiracy, involving France, Russia, the sultan and the ex-khedive, Ismā'īl. Cromer demanded authority to use the British troops to mount a putsch and install the British advisers as ministers. All this was too much even for Rosebery, Cromer's one reliable supporter in Gladstone's Liberal government. However, the Cabinet supported an ultimatum to the khedive giving him twenty-four hours to reconsider his choice. After consultation with Cromer (this was, of course, the crucial point) the khedive agreed to appoint Muṣṭafā Riyāḍ. The results were not to Cromer's liking. Egyptians knew that Riyāḍ, whatever his faults, was too spiky a character to be the mere puppet of anybody; and Riyāḍ found himself for a moment in the unfamiliar role of a popular hero. There was a hostile demonstration outside

¹⁸ F.O. 141/297, Cromer to Rosebery, 9 Jan. 1893, cited *ibid.*, 103.

¹⁹ Rosebery to the Queen, 18 Jan. 1893: *The letters of Queen Victoria*, 3, ii (London, 1931), 207-8.

the offices of the British-sponsored newspaper *al-Muqattam*. In Egyptian eyes, 'Abbās had won.

Cromer then threatened to resign unless the British garrison was reinforced: he alleged that Riyād had 'recently taken a strong religious turn', and was hatching a 'fanatical' movement on Urabist lines.²⁰ Cromer got his reinforcements, but the Egyptians were not impressed, and Cromer was dismayed by the rapid development of anti-British feeling in the course of 1893. Even the hitherto docile legislative council was coming to life. In December 1892 it had refused to discuss the budget on the ground that it had been given insufficient time to do so. A year later it was to oppose the appropriation for the expenses of the occupying troops. Indeed, as early as January 1893 Cromer feared that control had already 'slipped out of [his] hands'.²¹ But 'Abbās over-reached himself by his efforts to undermine the authority of British officers over their Egyptian troops. In January 1894 this campaign culminated in a public rebuke to the British Sirdar, Sir H. H. Kitchener, at a review of the Wadi Halfa garrison. The khedive was unwise to raise the spectre of an insubordinate army; on this issue Cromer could expect unconditional support even from a Gladstone government. 'Abbās was forced to publish an 'order of the day' praising the British officers. Riyād was faced with the thankless task of persuading 'Abbās to comply with Cromer's demands. His relations with the khedive deteriorated, and when he resigned in April 1894, 'Abbās was unable to resist Cromer's nomination of Nübār Būghūs. An attempt by the khedive to dismiss Nübār in February 1895 was frustrated by an almost open threat of deposition. By this time even the most high-handed British action would have carried no serious diplomatic penalty. French opposition was already so strong that (short of war, which was not seriously contemplated) it could hardly be stronger; other powers, including Russia, now saw in the occupation their best guarantee against an Anglo-French entente. When in April 1895 Nübār resigned on (genuine) grounds of ill-health, the total defeat of 'Abbās was demonstrated by the return of the pliant Muṣṭafā Fahmī as prime minister – a position which he continued to hold until his death in 1908.

²⁰ F.O. 78/4517, Cromer to Rosebery, 19 Jan. 1893; cited *al-Sayyid, Egypt and Cromer*, 110.

²¹ F.O. 141/297, Cromer to Rosebery, 30 Jan. 1893, cited *ibid.*, 115.

In March 1896 Cromer was taken aback by London's sudden decision to advance in the Sudan. In 1890 he had believed the Mahdist state to be crumbling; but in 1891 he had been unpleasantly surprised by the strength of Mahdist resistance at Tokar on the Red Sea coast. Thereafter he had consistently opposed any early attempt at reconquest. Lord Salisbury's decision of March 1896 was essentially a move in his European policy, intended to achieve closer relations with the Triple Alliance and Germany by a gesture of assistance to Italy, supposedly under dangerous Mahdist pressure in Eritrea after her shattering defeat by Menelik of Ethiopia at Adowa. The advance was planned as no more than a gesture, a 'demonstration' in the Nubian desert and a thirty-mile advance up the Nile to an objective of no value or importance. The published objective of Dongola was a mere bluff, intended to alarm the Mahdists and distract them from Eritrea. Cromer protested that 'native anglo-phobe opposition', including the khedive, would denounce the operation unless territory of some value were recovered for Egypt; any open expression of the khedive's disapproval would have a disastrous effect on the Egyptian troops. In June 1896, after a sustained struggle, Cromer extorted from Salisbury permission for Kitchener to advance to Dongola.

Dongola was taken in September 1896; Kitchener was then permitted to advance as far as he could without incurring any military risk. His advance was brought to a halt at Berber in October 1897. There was at first no question of his resuming the advance with British reinforcements. Cromer and Salisbury were agreed that 'no sufficiently important British interest is involved to justify the loss of life and money'.²² British troops were nevertheless committed in January 1898 because it was believed, quite erroneously, that Kitchener's Berber position had become so insecure that he risked sharing the fate of Hicks and Gordon. The political consequences – international, Egyptian, domestic – of yet another 'Sudan disaster' were obviously unacceptable. In June 1898 the presence of British troops enabled Salisbury to extinguish Egyptian rights in the Sudan arising out of previous possession: he now asserted a joint British and Egyptian right of conquest over a sovereign 'Mahdi State' extending 'from Halfa

²² Salisbury Papers, Cabinet memoranda, Cromer to Salisbury, 20 Oct. 1897.

to Wadelai'.²³ In January 1899 he forced upon Egypt a Sudan settlement whereby the Egyptian 'right of conquest' was transformed into the liability to provide the military and financial resources which enabled the British to rule the Sudan. This was unforgivable, even to Egyptians who did not take a wholly negative view of the British presence in Egypt itself.

The British take-over in the Sudan was facilitated by the disarray of the Egyptian opposition. After his defeat by Cromer in 1894-5, 'Abbās relied heavily on support from France. He sponsored the propaganda in France of the young nationalist orator and journalist Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874-1908), who held a law degree from Toulouse. Muṣṭafā's literary and social success in certain anglophobe French circles led to dangerous delusions. There were indeed French publicists who outdid any Egyptian nationalist in indiscriminate denigration of the British in Egypt;²⁴ but no serious French statesman was willing to put his policy 'à la remorque des cafés indigènes du Caire'. The collapse of the French position in the Nile valley in 1898-9, followed by the Anglo-French entente of 1904, left the khedive politically bankrupt. He was also disconcerted by his increasing inability to manipulate the young nationalists whom he had covertly encouraged in the later 1890s. Admitting defeat, he moved towards a rapprochement with Cromer, thereby further alienating the nationalists.

Of these the most prominent, until his death in 1908, was the khedive's former protégé, Muṣṭafā Kāmil. An orator and publicist of genius, Muṣṭafā's intensely emotional 'patriotism of the heart' moved Egyptians deeply; there were overtones of *šifī* language in his call for the 'self-annihilation' of the patriot in love of his country. In 1900 he founded the newspaper *al-Liwā* ('The Standard') which rapidly achieved the relatively enormous circulation of 10,000 copies. His was the first influential voice openly to attack British policy in the Sudan and to proclaim the 'unity of the Nile valley'. His organisation in 1906 of a student strike at the School of Law inaugurated half a century of militant student politics. His following was above all among the increasing number of educated, or at least literate, Egyptians who had been

²³ F.O. 78/5050, Salisbury to Cromer, tel. no. 47, 3 June 1898.

²⁴ E.g. E. Chesnel, *Plaies d'Égypte: les Anglais dans la vallée du Nil* (Paris, 1888); Octave Borelli in *Le Bosphore égyptien*.

exposed to, but not deeply influenced by, western ideas. For this constituency, still fundamentally Islamic in its modes of thought, there was no inconsistency in Muṣṭafā's combination of fervent Egyptian nationalism with support for the Ottoman Empire as the symbol of Islamic solidarity.

In the 'Taba Incident' of 1906 – a Turco-Egyptian frontier dispute in the Sinai peninsula – Muṣṭafā Kāmil strongly supported the sultan, as a legitimate Muslim ruler, against an Egyptian government upheld by the armed force of infidels. Cromer was alarmed by this resurgence of 'pan-Islamic fanaticism'; this and other symptoms of 'unrest', including the Law School strike, seem to have convinced British official opinion that drastic action was needed to quell the 'insubordinate spirit' of Egyptians. A fracas between *fallāḥīn* and pigeon-shooting British officers at the delta village of Danishway (Dinshawai) led to the more or less accidental death of one officer and the injury of several others, and became the occasion for a display of judicial terror. After a scandalously summary trial before a special tribunal, four sentences of hanging, and fourteen of flogging, were carried out in public at Danishway. To all politically-conscious Egyptians, Danishway was profoundly shocking and humiliating: Muṣṭafā Kāmil thought that it did more to arouse anti-British feeling than ten years of agitation.

After Danishway, nationalism ceased to be the virtual monopoly of Muṣṭafā Kāmil. It was no longer possible for any Egyptian group overtly to support the occupation. The well-to-do and the well-educated also became nationalists, in principle at least. Disillusioned with the khedive, and uneasy at Muṣṭafā's demagogic style, they formed an independent group whose principal ideologist was the scholar-journalist, Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid. Aḥmad Luṭfī had in the mid-1890s been a colleague of Muṣṭafā Kāmil in the clandestine nationalist circle sponsored by 'Abbās Ḥilmī; but his dislike of the khedive's autocratic tendencies soon led him to break with this group. Aḥmad Luṭfī and his friends were strongly influenced by Muḥammad 'Abduh, who since his return to Egypt in 1888 had begun to see some at least of Cromer's reforms as helping to create the 'civic virtue' without which Egyptians could never liberate themselves. Aḥmad Luṭfī took a similar view, and he and his friends were often called 'the Imām's party'; but Aḥmad Luṭfī's political thought, as opposed to his

political practice, was in an Islamic society far more radical than that of 'Abduh or even of Muṣṭafā Kāmil. He did not see Islam, even in Muḥammad 'Abduh's ideal revitalised form, as either a necessary or a sufficient basis for a just polity. Islam did not give Muslims any privileged access to the principles of political justice, which were similar in all civilised societies and could be discovered by empirical investigation. Aḥmad Luṭfī concluded from his own investigations that the foundations of a healthy political life were freedom, interpreted as the absence of arbitrary rule; and the rule of law – in the western rather than the Islamic sense. In Egypt, arbitrary rule had bred servility and stifled initiative; Egyptians were alienated from government, yet excessively dependent upon it. He attacked British control not because it was alien or infidel, but because an autocratic régime based on armed force could only aggravate the political diseases from which Egypt suffered.

Aḥmad Luṭfī saw Muṣṭafā Kāmil's pan-Islamic Ottomanism as the negation of true nationalism. His opposition to Muṣṭafā's policy during the 'Taba Incident' induced him in 1907 to found a newspaper (*al-Jarīda* – 'The Newspaper') and to organise his political connection as the *Hiżb al-Umma* (People's Party), to which Muṣṭafā promptly riposted by organising the *Hiżb al-Waṭani* (National Party). In spite of Aḥmad Luṭfī's radically 'modernising' principles, his political practice was profoundly unrevolutionary. Muṣṭafā Kāmil called for mass action, and is the father of popular militance in modern Egyptian politics. Aḥmad Luṭfī called for cautious constitutional advance under the guidance of property and education. It is not surprising that the 'list of [*al-Jarīda*'s] shareholders read like a *Who's Who* of the notables of Egypt'.²⁵

The impact of the British occupation under Cromer is sometimes discussed in terms of 'modernisation'. This seems to pay Cromer an undeserved compliment. Politically, the occupation at first halted, then stunted and distorted, development of any kind. The economy expanded, but did not develop. Legal and educational modernisation long pre-dated the British occupation, and was not significantly accelerated by British control. Cromer of course did not see himself as 'developing' or 'modernising' Egypt. To Cromer, Egypt was simply a corrupt and inefficient despotism, recently threatened by anarchy, whose stability happened to be important to Britain. So long as early evacuation

²⁵ al-Sayyid, *Egypt and Cromer*, 168.

was seriously contemplated, reforms were necessary so that evacuation could take place without an immediate relapse into anarchy. Later, reforms were still necessary to allay material discontents and inhibit the growth of disaffection. Hence the crucial importance of hydraulic improvements. Cromer believed that, in the short run at least, the irrigation engineer could do more than the judge or the administrator to gain Egyptian goodwill. In 1885, at a time of desperate financial stringency, he earmarked a million pounds for irrigation. Technological improvement especially in hydraulics, and administrative improvement especially in taxation, were the most important and positive aspects of modernisation.

Cromer ultimately gave cautious encouragement to Aḥmad Luṭfi's *Hiżb al-Umma*, mainly as a counterpoise to Muṣṭafā Kāmīl's more radical opposition; but he remained sceptical of the possibility of political modernisation. In his view 'Islamism as a social and political system [was] moribund'.²⁶ It could therefore no more give rise to a genuine nationalism than it could generate 'civilised principles' of public administration. What it could generate was 'fanatical' pan-Islamic movements, which were dangerous and had to be suppressed. But nationalism was a mere sham, a front for the machinations of 'Abbās and the ambitions of self-seeking *poseurs*. Cromer was almost as hostile to political modernisation as the most reactionary 'Turk'. Nor did Cromer's régime provide any training in administrative responsibility for Egyptians. The early system of British 'advisers' acting through Egyptian agents was steadily replaced by direct British bureaucratic control; the British bureaucracy increased from 170 in 1883 to 662 in 1906. Expansion was coupled with a decline in quality, or at least in experience. Many of the earlier British officials had been distinguished members of the Indian Civil Service; by 1906 youths not long down from university were being placed over experienced Egyptians.

During Cromer's period access to western-style education remained very limited. In 1910, with the population of Egypt at about 11.5 million, there were still fewer than 60,000 pupils in western-type schools. And of these less than 20 per cent were in government schools; the remainder were in mission, community and other 'private' schools. The government system was essen-

²⁶ Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, 727.

tially a machine for producing junior bureaucrats. The official title of the department – Public Instruction – reflects its objectives and ethos. Its British teachers were mostly non-graduates, poorly paid and regarded as social inferiors by other British officials. Its director, Douglas Dunlop, became a by-word for authoritarianism, mechanical rigidity and lack of educational vision. Quantitatively, however, the neglect of education was not quite so complete as is sometimes supposed. Between 1881 and 1907 educational expenditure increased five-fold, and from under one per cent to 2.7 per cent of the budget. Between 1890 and 1910 enrolment in all government schools doubled; secondary enrolment trebled. But with only 11,000 pupils in all, government education was hardly a major modernising force; and girls' education was left almost entirely to the private schools. Nevertheless, the cumulative effect of westernised education did lead to social change. Its products, touched but not deeply influenced by western ideas, and employed above all in the middle and lower bureaucracy, became a new social group, whose political consciousness and aspirations gave it great importance in spite of its small absolute size.

Cromer's policy of economic *laissez-faire*, combined with technological improvement and greater administrative efficiency, gave free play to the economic forces that had generated the export-dominated economy and made it more dependent than ever on cotton. From the later 1890s, high agricultural prices and reduction of the land tax inhibited urbanisation and industrialisation, and would probably have done so even without Cromer's rigid refusal to protect 'infant industries'. Thanks to the boom in cotton prices and the rise in population, Egypt was by 1907 sometimes a net importer, rather than an exporter, of cereals and pulses: the contribution of cotton to exports rose from 76 per cent to 93 per cent between 1880 and 1910.

The resident foreigners, whose numbers had doubled from about 70,000 to over 150,000, still dominated the commercial and financial superstructure of the economy. Out of a hundred directors of companies listed in 1901, only fourteen can be identified as certainly Muslim and probably Egyptian. Foreign ownership of land had increased from under 5 per cent in 1884 to 12 per cent in 1907. Otherwise, the general pattern of land-ownership showed little change. British attempts to create a class of prosperous smallholders, by (for example) providing

small loans on easy terms, were necessarily stultified by population increase and total respect for the existing distribution of property. The overall share of the *fallāḥīn* had indeed increased (but at the expense of 'medium', not of large, holdings) from under 20 per cent to 25 per cent by 1910; but the increase in population had halved the average *fallāḥ* holding to scarcely more than one feddan. Although down to 1907 the proportion of totally landless *fallāḥīn* does not seem to have much increased, the proportion holding sufficient land to support a family had now shrunk to well below 10 per cent.

In spite of continuing heavy debt service, which more than cancelled out the very favourable balance of trade, Egypt was a prosperous society in the early 1900s. The sustained rise of agricultural prices, above all of cotton, coincided with the effects of technological and administrative improvement. Between 1884 and 1898, greater efficiency in the collection of the land-tax enabled government to reduce the amount collected per feddan by nearly 20 per cent without damage to the revenue. Even Muṣṭafā Kāmil, warning Egyptians of the weight of 'golden chains',²⁷ had to admit the material benefits of British control. But these benefits were very unevenly distributed. The *fallāḥ*, unless he was completely landless, got his tiny share; his lot was improved by the gradual abolition of the corvée; his life was certainly less hard – and less precarious – than in the last appalling years of Ismā'īl's reign. The main Egyptian beneficiaries were of course the rich and well-to-do notables. In spite of Aḥmad Luṭfī's hatred of autocracy, so long as prosperity lasted the *Ḥizb al-Umma* was less than militant in opposing the occupation.

The Egypt Cromer left on his retirement in 1907 was still essentially Ismā'īl's Egypt, managed more efficiently and – on the whole – more humanely. British 'modernisation' was largely confined to technology and the all-important fiscal administration; its not unworthy monuments are the Aswan dam and the great cadastral survey of Egypt. Otherwise, Cromer was a more cautious moderniser than Ismā'īl. 'Modernisation' had no impact whatever on the attitudes and mentality of the masses, and quite failed to penetrate the 'closed world' of the village community. The sole significant social change, the emergence of the 'western-

²⁷ Muṣṭafā Kāmil, open letter to Campbell-Bannerman, *Le Figaro*, 14 Sept. 1907: cited al-Sayyid, *Egypt and Cromer*, 161.

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educated', was certainly unwelcome to Cromer; his policies tended, perhaps consciously, to inhibit it by feeble educational expansion and the imposition of school fees. In the early 1880s the British had in effect filled the gap created by the collapse of an old ruling élite. But the rapid development of a quasi-colonial British administration frustrated the development of any new ruling élite, above all by depriving its potential members of any significant political or administrative responsibility.

THE MAHDIST STATE UNDER KHALIFA 'ABDALLĀHI, 1885–1898

The revolutionary phase of the Mahdiyya ended with the Mahdi's death in June 1885. His successor, Khalifa 'Abdallāhi, created a new established order in the very process of securing and consolidating his own succession. 'Abdallāhi's authority was challenged not only by a dissident Mahdist faction who wished to replace it by their own; but also by those groups who had, like the Baqqāra, seen the Mahdiyya as a protest against all 'government'. He responded by the creation of a strongly centralised autocracy, supported by an elaborate bureaucracy employing the techniques, and sometimes even the personnel, of its Turco-Egyptian predecessor. No less importantly, it was supported by an army which was no longer an amalgam of religious visionaries and tribesmen hungry for loot, but an increasingly specialised and professional defence force for a territorial state, and an instrument of 'Abdallāhi's autocracy. Its senior officers ultimately wore the Mahdist patched *jubba*, the symbol of holy poverty, in an elaborately decorated and stylised form – a hybrid of military uniform and ecclesiastical vestment.

After 1889, offensive jihad was tacitly abandoned for the defence of 'Mahdism in one country'. Indeed, a defensive entente was ultimately reached with Christian Ethiopia. Its existence was widely known, but there is no evidence of 'fanatical' opposition to it. Officially, external enemies of the state were still of course 'the enemies of God'; but by the 1890s they were, to many Muslim Sudanese, also the alien assailants of an indigenous régime which for all its shortcomings had achieved a considerable degree of acceptance, at least as a lesser evil than conquest and domination by outsiders. The Mahdist state claimed an allegiance which

superseded that of tribe or region; in his later years the khalifa had striven, not entirely without success, to hold the balance evenly between rival tribal groups. It is in the shared service and defence of the Mahdist state, rather than in the propaganda of the Mahdi himself, that the origins of modern Sudanese nationalism may perhaps be sought.

At the Mahdi's death the great offices of state and the provincial commands were held mainly by the *awlād al-balad*, Sudanese of riverain origin who included the Mahdi's kinsmen, the *ashrāf*. These groups hoped to secure the succession for the Mahdi's young kinsman and fourth *khalīfa*, Muḥammad Sharif. But since the proclamation of January 1883 'Abdallāhi had been pre-eminent among the *anṣār*; moreover the Mahdi had just before his death publicly denounced and disowned the *ashrāf* as incorrigible worldlings. The pietists in the Mahdist inner circle took the lead in acknowledging the succession of 'Abdallāhi; the *ashrāf* reluctantly followed their example. Armed resistance to 'Abdallāhi's succession was impossible. Troops loyal to him garrisoned Omdurman; those of the *awlād al-balad* were widely dispersed. 'Abdallāhi's authority as the 'guidance'²⁸ of the movement was authenticated by his mystical colloquies with the Mahdi. He was also able to secure the allegiance of the army of the west and replace its commander, the Mahdi's cousin, Muḥammad Khālid Zuqal, by his own client, Ḥamdān Abū 'Anja. The junior *khalīfas* were then compelled to surrender their military resources to 'Abdallāhi's Black Flag regiment, and most of the Mahdi's province governors were replaced by 'Abdallāhi's nominees.

Down to 1889 'Abdallāhi attempted to maintain the Mahdist jihad against Egypt and, with some reservations, against Ethiopia. Quite apart from his own fundamental Mahdist convictions, successful jihad would distract the *anṣār* from their internal dissensions and would be the strongest possible validation of 'Abdallāhi's authority as Khalifa of the Mahdi. By November 1886 a Mahdist expeditionary force under 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nujūmī had been assembled at Dongola, and early in 1887 *indhārāt* or letters of warning were dispatched to the sultan, the khedive and Queen Victoria. But active jihad against Egypt was delayed until May 1889 by problems on the western and eastern frontiers of the Mahdist state.

²⁸ *Hidya, bidāya*: from the same root as the word *mabdi*; cf. Holt, *Mahdist State*, 139–40.

The problems on the western frontier were essentially a continuation of those experienced by the Egyptians. The Fūr, and those Baqqāra who had remained in their homeland, resisted the new government as they had resisted the old. By 1888, however, this 'tribal' resistance had been suppressed. Among the most troublesome of the Baqqāra were the Khalifa's own kinsmen, the Ta'āīsha. Immediately after the crushing of the Fūr, 'Abdallāhi ordered the Ta'āīsha to migrate *en masse* to Omdurman, on pain of harrying by the Mahdist army. In May 1888 they bowed to this ultimatum; early in 1889 they were beginning to reach the metropolitan area, where they were settled in Omdurman and the northern Gezira, with important consequences for the development of the Mahdist state. Other dissident or suspect nomad groups were treated more harshly; the Kabābīsh of northern Kordofan were harried and broken in 1887. By mid-1888 tribal dissidence had been crushed virtually throughout the Muslim Sudan; but in Darfur the Mahdists were now being challenged by a messianic religious leader, known as Abū Jummayza, who claimed to be the Mahdi's rightful third *khalīfa*. He gained a large and enthusiastic following of Fūr and Baqqāra dissidents. By the end of 1888 he had driven the Mahdists from western Darfur; but the movement collapsed when the rebel army was routed outside El Fasher in February 1889.

The jihad against Ethiopia was constrained by respect for Ethiopian military strength, most recently demonstrated by the victories of Yohannes IV over the 'Turks' in 1875 and 1876. In June 1884 Egypt had agreed to retrocede the Bogos (Keren) region to Yohannes in return for his assistance in extricating the Egyptian garrisons in the eastern Sudan. These operations led to incidental clashes between Ethiopian troops and the Mahdists; but Yohannes recognised the Mahdist governor of Gallabat and attempted to establish diplomatic relations with the Mahdi. The Mahdi replied in the *indhāra* already cited (above, p. 609); but the Mahdi's death and the succession-crisis of 'Abdallāhi limited immediate Mahdist action to small-scale raiding, or at most to the penetration of debatable borderlands. In January 1887 Negus Takla Haymanot, the ruler of Gojjam, drove the Mahdists from Gallabat, plundered the surrounding country, and retired.

'Abdallāhi despatched an army to re-occupy Gallabat; but in February 1887 he sent to Yohannes a letter which, though an

indhāra in form, was in substance an offer of peace on the frontier provided the Ethiopians ceased to harbour defectors from Mahdism. Receiving no reply, in October he posted to the frontier reinforcements under his ablest general, Ḥamdān Abū ‘Anja. Religious dissidence in the Mahdist army delayed the offensive until January 1888. Jihad was then formally proclaimed in Omdurman: the Khalifa announced a vision in which the Prophet himself had promised victory over the Ethiopians. The jihad was successful as a large-scale raid rather than as a war of conquest; the Mahdists took and sacked Gondar and then retired with their booty. The presence in the Lake Tana region until May 1888 of a large army under Menelik of Shoa deterred the Mahdists from further raiding until June. A second raid then ravaged the Gondar region: it withdrew in August as the rains brought disease to the Mahdist forces.

In December 1888 Yohannes addressed to Ḥamdān Abū ‘Anja an eloquent plea for peace and co-operation against ‘our common enemies the Europeans’. Abū ‘Anja replied, probably without consulting the Khalifa, in provocative and insulting terms.²⁹ Yohannes thereupon decided to eliminate the Mahdist danger before moving to a major internal confrontation with Menelik (below, pp. 654–5). The Mahdists made no offensive move, but strengthened their fortifications at Gallabat. On 9 March 1889 the Ethiopians stormed and took Gallabat, but victory was turned into defeat by Yohannes’ death. This providential victory over the dreaded Ethiopians was greeted with relief and rejoicing at Omdurman, but ‘Abdallāhi did not resume the jihad. Instead he reduced the Gallabat garrison and permitted the development of an ‘undeclared peace’ on the frontier, when Menelik, Yohannes’ successor, made it clear that he wished to avoid conflict.

The jihad against Ethiopia was a complex phenomenon. It was in part a continuation of the struggle for debatable borderlands which had begun in Muḥammad ‘Alī’s time. Some Mahdist commanders, especially Baqqāra, seem to have seen in it little more than a sanctified version of traditional raiding. Even the major invasions of 1888 look more like *ghazwa* than jihad, apart

²⁹ C.R.O. Khartoum, Mahdia 1/34/16, Yohannes to Abū ‘Anja, 17 Kiyahk (= Tahsas) 1881 (E.C.)/25 Dec. 1888. Mahdia 1/55/13, Abū ‘Anja to Yohannes, Jumādā I 1306/Jan. 1889; cited S. Rubenson, *The survival of Ethiopian independence* (London, Stockholm and Addis Ababa, 1976), 384. There was evidently hardly time for Abū ‘Anja to consult the Khalifa; moreover, the style of his reply is very different from that of ‘Abdallāhi’s chancery.

from the Mahdist zeal in destroying churches. 'Abdallāhi was evidently reluctant to engage in full-scale war with so formidable an enemy. In February 1887 he had quoted to Yohannes the *ḥadīth*: 'Avoid the Abyssinians so long as they avoid you'.³⁰ The Mahdists always retreated, or remained on the defensive, when confronted by the armies of Yohannes or Menelik; and 'Abdallāhi used his victory at Gallabat simply to escape from the Ethiopian adventure without loss of reputation.

Gallabat was followed by the long-delayed jihad against Egypt. An advance by al-Nujūmī's force was indeed by now the only alternative to its withdrawal from the Dongola region, where the low Nile of 1888 had brought famine, and the starving troops were plundering the local inhabitants. In May 1889 the advance into Egypt began, without rations and along a route remote from the Nile. The Mahdists quite failed to find the support they had expected in Egypt. On 3 August the expedition was virtually annihilated by an 'Anglo-Egyptian' force at Tūshkī: over 5,000 Mahdists were taken prisoner or gave themselves up as refugees. The Khalifa responded by an attempt to intensify the jihad on the Suakin front. But the Beja now lacked their old offensive spirit, and 'Uthmān Diqna failed to revive it. In February 1891 an Anglo-Egyptian force took Tokar, on the coastal plain south of Suakin. Thereafter, jihad against Egypt was confined to hit-and-run raids on isolated oases and desert outposts.

After the military disasters of 1889–91, jihad was tacitly abandoned in favour of the territorial defence of 'Mahdism in one country'. 'Abdallāhi attempted to foster internal solidarity by making his rule more generally acceptable to his subjects. In this he was initially frustrated by the fatal coincidence of his 'calling-in' of the Baqqāra with the catastrophic famine of 1889–90. Security demanded that the Baqqāra should have the first call on supplies: the commissioner of the *bayt al-māl* was imprisoned and executed when he showed insufficient zeal in stripping the famine-stricken Gezira of corn to feed them. 'Our Lords the Ta'āisha', as the *awlād al-balad* sardonically called them, were both feared and despised as violent and uncouth barbarians. Yet, as a power-base for the Khalifa, they were far from satisfactory. Undisciplined and unreliable, in a crisis they were more likely to devote themselves

³⁰ 'Abdallāhi to Yohannes, Jumādā I 1304/Jan.–Feb. 1887. Translation (with an erroneous Gregorian date) in F. R. Wingate, *Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan* (London, 1891), 332–3.

to plunder than to give 'Abdallāhi effective support. In 1890–1 the Khalifa attempted to conciliate the *awlād al-balad* by reinstating their leaders as province governors in the north, and by encouraging agriculture and foreign trade. In November 1891, however, the *ashrāf* attempted a coup against 'Abdallāhi. In Omdurman, their leaders openly defied the Khalifa's authority. The Khalifa wished to avoid an armed conflict in which the Baqqāra might get out of control. 'Alī wad Ḥilū, the leader of the pietist group, in his usual role of mediator and peace-maker, persuaded the *ashrāf* to surrender their arms in return for the political and military reinstatement of the *khalīfa* Muḥammad Sharīf. Once the immediate crisis was over, 'Abdallāhi invoked the Mahdi's authority, vouchsafed in a vision, to break the terms of this agreement, and to execute or imprison suspect notables.

Once again the *awlād al-balad* were removed from high office; but the Khalifa persisted in a conciliatory policy towards merchants and cultivators, and his public speeches emphasised peace and agricultural production. In spite of heavy taxation, the inevitable result of bureaucratic elaboration and an enormous unproductive army, the Khalifa's rule was by now widely accepted, even by the *awlād al-balad*. Refugees from Egypt returned to the Sudan. Moreover, at all levels except the very highest, the *awlād al-balad* continued to play a major part in administration. Indeed, without their clerical and technical skills the Mahdist state could not have operated. A Ja'alī, Muddathir Ibrāhīm al-Hajjāz, served the Khalifa from first to last as confidential secretary and seal-bearer. *Awlād al-balad*, and domiciled Egyptians, were prominent in the administration of the general and specialised treasuries, and as clerks to the major military formations. The régime was comparatively broadly based; the ordinary cultivator was not molested and was reasonably content with his lot. Acquiescence was widespread; and some Sudanese are reported as feeling that an attempted reconquest would be 'an interference with their independence'.³¹

The Khalifa's supreme authority and his independence of specific tribal support were emphasised by his increasing isolation from his subjects. He now attended the great Friday 'mosque parade', a major symbol of the militant Mahdist state, only four

³¹ Intelligence reports, Egypt, no. 9 (1892), statement by Muṣṭafā al-Amīn. Cf. Holt, *Mahdist state*, 203–5.

times a year. The Baqqāra, as the main military instrument of his autocracy, were superseded by the *mulāzimīyya*, which from a group of 'orderlies' had grown by 1895 to a corps d'élite of 9,000 men, a judicious amalgam of *jihādīyya*, Baqqāra and Ja'aliyyūn, financed from its own special treasury. This force, from which the Khalifa's bodyguard was drawn, was stationed close to his residence and to the major offices of state; and in 1893 the whole complex was surrounded by a great wall. 'Abdallāhi evidently aspired to found a dynasty. His brother Ya'qūb became his closest confidant; his son 'Uthmān was groomed for the succession and dignified with the honorific *Shaykh al-Dīn* ('Elder of the Faith').

In the southern Sudan the Mahdiyya is important not for any positive achievement but for the consequences of its failure to impose any effective overrule after the collapse of the Egyptian administration. The Bahr al-Ghazal, conquered in 1884, was lost in 1886 when the Mahdist army was called away to deal with insurgents in Darfur. The Mahdists were entirely unsuccessful in their attempts to re-establish themselves in the Bahr al-Ghazal between 1893 and 1895. Their forces melted away from disease and constant skirmishes with southern Sudanese: one Mahdist expedition was virtually annihilated by the Dinka. Equatoria, though isolated from Khartoum since 1883, remained in the hands of its governor, Emin (Eduard Schnitzer), until 1888. A Mahdist invasion from Bahr al-Ghazal in 1884-5 was frustrated by the vigorous resistance of the garrison and a mutiny of the Mahdist *jihādīyya*. It was H. M. Stanley's 'Emin Pasha relief expedition', rather than Mahdist pressure, which ultimately destroyed Emin's authority in Equatoria and sowed active dissension among his troops. 'Umar Šālīḥ took Rejaf for the Khalifa in October 1888, but was forced to retire to Bor in 1891 by southern resistance. Southern Sudanese were by now no less hostile to a Mahdist 'government' than they had been to the Egyptian administration. As 'Umar Šālīḥ told the Khalifa: 'This religion of ours is very difficult for them to understand and follow, and so they desert us'.³²

In 1892-3 a Belgian expedition from the Congo, with the co-operation of a remnant of Emin's troops, precariously occupied some of the former Egyptian posts in western Equatoria. It, too,

³² C.R.O. Khartoum, Mahdia 1/34/58, 'Umar Šālīḥ to the Khalifa, Muḥarram 1307/Sept. 1889; cited R. O. Collins, *The southern Sudan, 1883-1898* (New Haven and London, 1962), 77.

was forced to retire by local resistance, especially that of the Azande. In 1894 the able Mahdist commander, 'Arabī Dafa'allāh, who had now taken over in Equatoria, destroyed the remaining Egyptian troops. He then followed the retreating Belgians over the Nile–Congo divide, and until the end of 1894 gravely threatened the whole Belgian position in the Uele valley. He then fell back on Rejaf, now almost completely isolated from the north by the closing of the Bahr al-Jabal sudd. In February 1897 his dwindling garrison was driven from Rejaf by the Belgians, who had by now overcome Zande resistance. He retired to Bor, from where he continued indomitably to harass the Belgians, nearly succeeding in recovering Rejaf in June 1898.

In spite of 'Arabī Dafa'allāh's skill and valour, the Equatoria Mahdists remained essentially a beleaguered garrison, capable sometimes of major offensive sorties, but not of government or 'settled administration'. The garrison had to raid for its supplies; foraging parties were usually harassed, and sometimes destroyed, by local resistance. Like the intermittent Mahdist incursions into the Bahr al-Ghazal, its presence intensified, and was quite unable to control or even moderate, the extremely violent local competition for power and resources unleashed by the collapse of the Egyptian administration. Firearms, in the hands of *jihādīyya* deserters and Zande irregulars armed by the Belgians, catastrophically disrupted the local 'balance of power' in many regions. Some of the smaller peoples were reduced to a mere handful of dispirited survivors. Other groups, displaced by the aggression of the Azande and the Nuer, struggled desperately to recover their vital lost ground.

One important casualty of this violence was the development, sometimes even the survival, of the Arab and Islamic influences discernible in certain southern regions in the 1870s. The most powerful islamising agency had been the Egyptian garrison, consisting mainly of locally recruited black troops who became Muslims as a matter of military routine and who of course married locally. The Mahdist garrison, as 'Umar Šāliḥ pointed out, was quite ineffective, indeed counter-productive, as an instrument of islamisation. Moreover, in 1880 Muslims had been the effective power-holders over wide areas of the south; thereafter Muslim political control was confined to the immediate vicinity of the Mahdist garrison, ultimately reduced to the single isolated station

at Bor. Except in the north-western Bahr al-Ghazal, where the Feroge (Farūqī) and other groups had been under Islamic influence from Darfur for two generations, the Mahdiyya saw a sharp set-back to the expansion of Islam in the southern Sudan.

By the mid-1890s the Mahdist state was under considerable European pressure. Defeat at Italian hands at Agordat in December 1893, followed by the loss of Kassala to the Italians in June 1894, caused alarm and foreboding at Omdurman. The Anglo-Egyptian advance of March 1896 was perhaps less of a surprise to the Khalifa than it was to Cromer. Once Kitchener had been authorised to advance to Dongola, he had little difficulty in doing so; shortage of supplies strictly limited the strength of the Mahdist forces on the northern frontier. Early in 1897, as Kitchener continued his advance up the Nile and began his railway across the Nubian desert, the Khalifa moved to Omdurman the army of the west under Maḥmūd Aḥmad; and he began to respond less coldly to the proposals of Menelik II of Ethiopia for a formal peace on the frontier and co-operation against Europeans. Ethiopian diplomatic missions were honourably received in Omdurman; and in 1898 'Abdallāhi ceded to Menelik the gold-bearing Banī Shanqūl (Belā Shangul) region, which had however already shaken off Mahdist control. In June 1897 the Khalifa stationed Maḥmūd Aḥmad's army at Metemma, the capital of the Ja'aliyyūn. The Ja'aliyyūn resisted; their revolt was crushed in blood, the last and most disastrous clash between 'Abdallāhi and the *awlād al-balad*.

At Metemma, the morale and discipline of the Mahdist army was eroded by an increasingly severe shortage of food. Maḥmūd Aḥmad's lack of decision and initiative as a commander lost the Mahdists Abū Ḥamad and Berber, which fell to Kitchener in August and September 1897. In December, 'Abdallāhi mobilised the central Mahdist army at Omdurman. He may have intended to despatch it to the north; if so, he was deterred from doing so by reports of Maḥmūd Aḥmad's desperate supply situation. But this mobilisation caused the utmost alarm in Cairo and Berber, where Kitchener was doubtful of his ability to handle even Maḥmūd's force. The hasty commitment in January 1898 of British troops, scarce resources which could not be retained indefinitely in a merely defensive rôle, prescribed a new objective

for Kitchener's campaign – the early and total destruction of the Mahdist state.

In January 1898 Maḥmūd Aḥmad rejected the Khalifa's proposal for withdrawal to a defensive position at the sixth cataract, and was permitted to advance against Kitchener. Maḥmūd's famine-stricken army reached the Atbara in March; after considerable hesitation, Kitchener attacked and destroyed it on 8 April. The final advance upon Omdurman was then delayed until August, when the Nile flood permitted Kitchener to pass his gunboats and river transport through the sixth cataract. On 2 September 1898 the main Mahdist army was destroyed outside Omdurman. The battle was a triumph for technology over heroism: the *anṣār* were martyred in thousands as they repeatedly strove, with superb courage and devotion, to pierce Kitchener's lethal curtain of musketry and fight at close quarters.

THE BIRTH OF THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN, 1898–1907

After Omdurman, the victors had to suppress the terminal resistance of Aḥmad Faḍīl on the Blue Nile and of the Khalifa himself in Kordofan. These operations were not complete until November 1899; meanwhile it was necessary to occupy and garrison very large tracts of territory, and to open up and maintain lines of communication and supply. Until 1900 civil administration was merely incidental to military operations; it was a part-time responsibility of the Egyptian army intelligence branch, as the military agency best acquainted with the geography and politics of the Sudan. Its finances were hardly distinguishable from the general expenses of the occupying army. The British officers commanding the province garrisons became *mudīrs* or province governors; in March 1899 Kitchener's 'memorandum to mudirs' had prescribed a rather sketchy scheme of province and district administration. District administration was entrusted to Egyptian captains and subalterns with the title of *ma'mūr*. In each province two British officers with the title of Inspector (*mufattish*) were to inspect and report on the administration of the *ma'mūrs*, who were however directly responsible to the British *mudīr*; inspectors were explicitly forbidden to act as their 'channel of communication'.³³

³³ Kitchener's *Memorandum to Mudirs*, printed Muddathir 'Abd al-Raḥīm, *Imperialism and nationalism in the Sudan* (Oxford, 1969), 237–40.

And that was all. It was left to Kitchener's successor, Reginald Wingate, to grapple with an increasingly chaotic situation and provide an effective central organisation for the 'civil side', as it was called.

Kitchener as governor-general was a capricious despot, concerned almost exclusively with his career and personal prestige, and often callously indifferent to the welfare of his Sudanese subjects and indeed of his Egyptian troops. The Condominium Agreement of January 1899 had originally been devised by Cromer not only as a means of excluding Egyptian political influence from the Sudan, but as a means of controlling the governor-general from the Cairo Agency. But Kitchener exploited his position as a national hero to remove from the draft agreement those provisions limiting the governor-general's legislative omnipotence and financial discretion, and then to ignore the supplementary financial and other regulations whereby Cromer attempted to reassert his control. Kitchener's departure for South Africa in 1899 was greeted with relief by Cromer: and indeed by some of his own senior officers, who feared that Kitchener's total lack of system would lead to administrative collapse.

Cromer regained control with the appointment of Wingate, whom he supervised very closely and treated as a mere executive subordinate. Although Cromer professed to be concerned only with 'big questions' of general policy, in practice he constantly intervened in day-to-day administrative detail. The Sudan budget was now drafted in minute detail in Cairo; and the 'financial secretary of the Sudan', stationed in Cairo, was Cromer's agent, not Wingate's. Yet in relation to his own subordinates, Wingate's administrative practice was essentially autocratic. Very few of his colleagues shared the extensive knowledge of the Sudan that Wingate had acquired as director of military intelligence. Province governors were seldom consulted on major questions of policy; and Wingate trained them to keep him very fully informed. Only Rudolf Slatin, appointed inspector-general of the Sudan in September 1900, had any significant share in policy-making. Slatin's Sudan experience, as governor in Darfur from 1879 to 1884, and then as an unwilling *mulāzim* of the Khalifa until 1895, gave him unique knowledge and authority.

By 1900, except in the southern Sudan, there was emerging a fairly clear distinction between military operations and civil

administration. Wingate's early administration was essentially that of an improvised 'civil affairs branch' of the Egyptian army. The 'civil secretary', a British military officer responsible for the routine functioning of this branch, though not yet for its policy, became a key man in the system. In spite of the – very sparing – recruitment of British civilians as administrative probationers, British officers continued regularly to serve in civil administration. For most of them, this work was merely a brief interlude in a normal military career; but a few carefully selected officers were retained on quasi-permanent secondment to the 'civil side', as a cadre of skilled administrators holding senior appointments.

In the northern Sudan, the administration seemed by 1900 to be taking hold. The Omdurman and Gezira Baqqāra had been repatriated to the west. All the leading Mahdist notables, including all the Mahdi's sons save 'Abd al-Raḥmān, a youth of fifteen, were either dead or in prison. Darfur, a perennial source of resistance and 'fanaticism' which government lacked the resources to occupy effectively, had fallen into the able hands of a reliably anti-Mahdist sultan, 'Alī Dīnār, who permitted no interference with his internal administration but acknowledged the government's suzerainty. Yet security remained fundamentally precarious. The Egyptian army was not an unconditionally reliable instrument. When Wingate arrived in Khartoum, some units were mutinous, the result largely of Kitchener's neglect. Wingate had to overcome this crisis by tact and diplomacy rather than by force; his British garrison then consisted of a mere 250 men, who were withdrawn to Egypt in summer. Not until 1902 did Wingate obtain a permanent British garrison of about 800 men.

It was, moreover, soon evident that the destruction of the Mahdist state had not extinguished popular Mahdism. It was widely believed that the Mahdi's dispensation would be followed by that of the 'Antichrist' (*al-dajjāl*), who would be overthrown only by the second coming of the Prophet Jesus (*al-nabī 'Isā*). 'False prophets' dedicated to the overthrow of *al-dajjāl*, easily identified as the new government, appeared almost annually between 1900 and 1912. Most of these were quite ineffective; but two of them, down to 1907, seem to have been a real danger to government. In 1903 a miracle-working *fakī* from Bornu, Muḥammad al-Amīn, built up a following at Taqālī, an islamised statelet in the still unadministered Nuba mountains. His movement

remained, disturbingly, quite unknown to the government until he was denounced by the *qādī* of Taqalī. Muḥammad al-Amīn was arrested by a military patrol and summarily hanged at El Obeid. There were fears of a general rising of the Baqqāra, with whom he had been in contact, should he 'miraculously' escape from custody. In 1904 Ādam Muḥammad, a Dunqulāwī of the diaspora living at Sinja on the Blue Nile, came out openly against the government as *al-nabī 'Isā*. His movement attracted considerable local support; but before it could gain momentum it was crushed by the prompt action of the Egyptian *ma'mūr* of Sinja.

The *nabī 'Isā* cult probably never enjoyed much support among the more sophisticated Mahdists, who increasingly looked for politico-religious leadership to the Mahdi's posthumous son, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, now growing to manhood. Meanwhile, many former Mahdists were willing temporarily to accept the *de facto* authority of a powerful government that showed respect for Islam; some were not averse from tactical collaboration with it. Wingate did not initiate a heresy hunt against Mahdism simply as a set of beliefs. He was content to suppress its outward manifestations, such as the sale, circulation and 'congregational' use (but not the mere possession) of the Mahdi's *rātīb* or manual of devotions. But Wingate found it almost impossible to assess the real strength of militant Mahdism. The persistence of *al-nabī 'Isā* movements convinced him that the bulk of the Muslim population were clandestine militants; and that any visionary who could gain an initial 'miraculous' success against police or troops might well ignite an uncontrollable conflagration.

Wingate's abiding conviction of fundamental insecurity profoundly influenced his administrative policy. His vigilance against 'fanaticism', and his determination to crush it ruthlessly 'in its inception', became almost obsessive. But Wingate also sought to blunt the edge of fanaticism by ostentatious deference to 'orthodox' Islam, by gaining the goodwill of '*ulamā*' and secular notables, and by promoting the material well-being of the mass of the Muslim population. A semi-official board of '*ulamā*', constituted in 1901, advised the government on policy towards Islam. Christian proselytisation was rigidly forbidden in the Muslim Sudan; even in the pagan south, where Wingate was opposed to islamisation, he was very careful to avoid any public alignment of government policy with missionary objectives. In

the northern Sudan, government also supported the influence of 'tribal' shaykhs and other secular notables and offered them a role as administrative auxiliaries. Anxious to reassert their authority after its eclipse under the Mahdiyya, the shaykhs and notables were usually willing to co-operate.

Very light taxation was seen as the best guarantee of a contented populace. All military expenditure, and about half the civil expenditure, was in the early 1900s defrayed by Egypt. Wingate could therefore afford to be lenient where strictness might lead to disaffection. Unpopular forms of taxation were sometimes abandoned. In 1901 the herd tax on nomads was replaced by a light 'tribute' – a symbol of submission to government rather than a serious financial levy. A progressive tax on uncultivated irrigable land was introduced in 1906, but abandoned in 1908. Wingate was also concerned to protect Sudanese rights in land, and to restrict the alienation of land to foreigners. In 1905 sales of rural land to non-Sudanese were forbidden save with the consent of province governors, which was very sparingly granted; Wingate refused to register the title of unauthorised purchasers. Meanwhile, scarce resources were lavished on the investigation and registration of Sudanese freehold (*mulki*) titles. Wingate's land and taxation policies meant that Sudanese were the principal beneficiaries of the expansion of the economy which followed the extension of the railway to the Red Sea and the construction of a modern harbour at Port Sudan. The capital for these improvements, amounting to nearly £4 million by 1907, came as interest-free loans from Egypt.

'Progress' and material improvement soon became for Wingate a very positive commitment and not a mere strategy for 'killing fanaticism by kindness'. Unfortunately, this commitment was virtually confined to the northern, Muslim, Sudan. The southern Sudan, except for its contribution to the Nile waters, was seen as 'useless territory'.³⁴ British policy-makers saw an urgent need to defend its still debatable frontiers against the encroachments of Ethiopia and King Leopold's Congo; but only exceptionally any need to 'waste' precious funds on the administration of its 'savage' inhabitants. Government expeditions, hastily pressing on towards distant frontiers, burst into and further exacerbated

³⁴ 'Large tracts of useless territory which it would be difficult and costly to administer properly' – Salisbury Papers, Cabinet memoranda, Cromer to Salisbury, 5 Nov. 1897.

ETHIOPIA: REIGN OF YOHANNES IV, FROM 1875

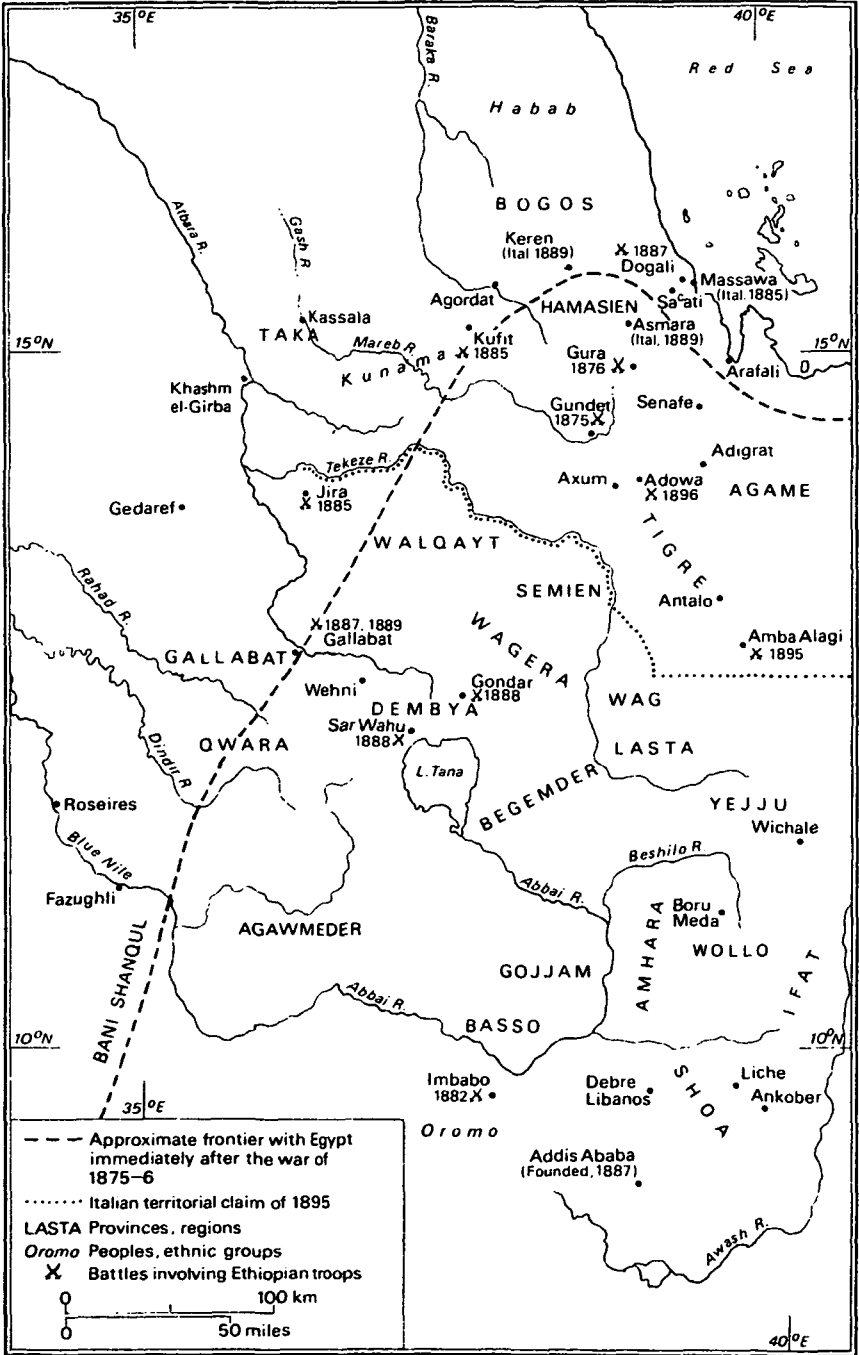
an extremely violent and confused situation of which British officers had no knowledge or understanding. Their presence, and their demands upon southern Sudanese, soon provoked resistance from the more powerful and confident peoples.

The strategic imperatives of this local epilogue to the scramble for Africa implied the immediate use of force in crushing this resistance. But of those who resisted, only the Azande, situated near the sensitive meeting-point of Sudan, French and Congolese territory, were effectively conquered and, after 1905, brought under full administrative control. An attempt was made to control other recalcitrant groups, especially the Nilotic Dinka and Nuer, by punitive expeditions which were not usually followed by settled administration. This attempt to use fire and the sword as a cheap substitute for administration was a disaster. Punitive expeditions, though sometimes of almost genocidal severity, quite failed to crush resistance permanently; they tended rather to extend it and to increase its scale, with a corresponding increase in the scale of 'punitive' violence. From this vicious spiral, which long survived the final settlement by 1906 of the southern Sudan's international frontiers, there was no escape save by settled administration, for which Khartoum would not pay. In 1907, and indeed for nearly two decades thereafter, 'administration' in much of the southern Sudan was still virtually synonymous with military operations. The peculiarities of southern administration in this period do not of course reflect any long-term plan to separate the south from the northern Sudan. They reflect rather the almost complete dereliction by Khartoum of its administrative responsibilities in the south; and its refusal to provide resources for anything but 'punishment'.

ETHIOPIA: THE REIGN OF YOHANNES IV, FROM 1875

The military successes of Negus Yohannes IV against Egypt in 1875 and 1876, spectacular though they were, did not solve his political problems. The Egyptians remained in control of the Bogos (Keren) region and above all of the sea-board, where at Massawa they obstructed Yohannes's external trade and the import of arms. Yohannes and his great general Ras Alula – who had risen from peasant stock by sheer military ability – continued to harass the Egyptians in Bogos; but Ethiopian pressure was

THE NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN



25 Northern Ethiopia under Yohannes IV and Menelik II

never strong enough to expel them from Massawa; and Yohannes's pleas for assistance from the 'Christian Powers' of Europe, especially Britain, were for long quite fruitless. Intermittent and indecisive negotiations continued until June 1884, when Britain constrained Egypt to retrocede Bogos (but not Massawa) in return for Yohannes's assistance in evacuating the Egyptian garrisons from the eastern Sudan.

Nor did Yohannes's victories put an end to dissidence in Ethiopia. The response to his call for holy war against the 'Turks' had been impressive, but by no means unanimous. Some of the northern magnates continued in active rivalry. Ras Wolde Mikael of Hamasien defected to the Egyptians; Wolde Sellassie, the great magnate of Begemder, whom Yohannes had made *ras* and governor in 1875, wavered in his support and his son rose in open rebellion. In the south, Menelik of Shoa, who had never clearly recognised Yohannes's imperial title and regarded himself as a rival 'King of Kings', had given no more than token support against the Egyptians. In April 1876, Yohannes deposed Wolde Sellassie, and replaced him as governor of Begemder by Ras Adal Tessama of Gojjam, a former opponent who now became a reliable ally, not least because he aspired to challenge the hegemony of Menelik in the south.

Begemder rose in rebellion on the deposition of Wolde Sellassie. Menelik seized this opportunity to consolidate his position in the Oromo-dominated and heavily islamised region of Wollo, immediately to the north of Shoa. In September 1876 he publicly repudiated hostility to Islam in Wollo, and appointed the most powerful Wollo magnate, Muḥammad 'Alī, as his governor of Wollo and Amhara. He also appointed a governor to Yeju, well within Yohannes's sphere of influence. Early in 1877 Menelik and Muḥammad 'Alī together invaded Gojjam and Begemder. But Ras Adal was supported by Yohannes; and Menelik's army, which had recently suffered severe casualties in operations against the Gurage to the south of Shoa, had little enthusiasm for the northern campaign. The Shoans received little local support, accompanied as they were by the Muslim Oromo (Galla) of Wollo. In May, however, Muḥammad 'Alī and his troops returned to Wollo, ostensibly to put down an anti-Shoan rising – of which, on arrival, he promptly made himself the leader. Meanwhile in Shoa there was a conspiracy, fomented by Menelik's wife Bafana,

to replace Menelik by one of Bafana's sons. In June 1877 Yohannes formally proclaimed Menelik a rebel; but Menelik was already in full retreat from the north. By November he had regained control in Shoa; but his position in Wollo had collapsed. Menelik's attempt to assert himself in the north had been dangerously premature.

In January 1878 Yohannes invaded Shoa; and Menelik decided to treat for peace. Yohannes was not unwilling; his troops were ill-supplied and far from their base. But his terms were intended to demonstrate, and consolidate, his own hegemony. Menelik was to recognise Yohannes as king of kings, and to perform a personal act of submission; he was to pay a very heavy tribute, evidently designed to drain the resources of Shoa; he was to renounce all claim to sovereignty over Wollo. He was however to assist in the christianisation of Wollo, and in the imposition of doctrinal unity upon the Ethiopian Church. He was to expel the Catholic missionaries, whom he had permitted to proselytise among pagans and Muslims; and generally to discourage the residence of Europeans. In return, Menelik was to be formally invested by Yohannes as *negus* of Shoa, and to be granted the governorship of Wollo.

The ceremony of submission, reconciliation and investiture took place at Liche in Shoa on 26 March 1878. Thereafter, Yohannes emphasised particularly the imposition of religious uniformity, which he possibly saw as a means to political unification. The chiefs and people of Wollo were compelled to convert to Christianity: Muḥammad 'Alī became Ras Mikael. In May 1878 the Shoan clergy were compelled at the Council of Boru Meda to accept the 'two births' variant of Ethiopian mono-phylitism. Menelik could not avoid the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries; but he evaded Yohannes's frequent demands for the expulsion of all Europeans, whom Menelik regarded as the bearers of useful knowledge and techniques. The punctual payment of tribute he dared not evade – he usually proffered it personally – and in February 1879 he performed a further act of personal submission to Yohannes. By 1881 the burden of tribute had led to a severe shortage of currency in Shoa and a consequent depression of the trading economy.

After 1878 Menelik disengaged himself as far as possible from the politics of northern Ethiopia, and concentrated upon the

conquest and exploitation of the Oromo and Sidama territories on the 'open' southern frontiers of Shoa. Only in this way could he hope to escape permanent impoverishment by the payment of tribute and to procure sufficient firearms, for use when the time came for a more powerful Shoa to re-enter the competition for hegemony throughout Ethiopia. But Menelik's penetration of the Oromo and Sidama kingdoms of the south-west brought him into conflict with Gojjam – a conflict which Yohannes seems to have encouraged as a means of distracting his two most powerful vassals. In 1880 Gojjam still dominated the southern trade: Basso in Gojjam was the great mart where southern products (gold, ivory, civet, skins, coffee and above all slaves) were exchanged for salt (in the bars known as *amole* which were used as currency) and for manufactured goods of European origin – textiles, hardware, glassware and of course arms and ammunition. Gojjam controlled an established trade; Menelik's forcible intervention inevitably disrupted it and initially reduced its profitability. Moreover, Menelik's financial difficulties compelled him to levy higher tolls upon merchants than Ras Adal. By 1880, Menelik's Oromo general, Ras Gobana, was asserting Shoaan control over Jimma Abba Jifar, the most important of the Muslim Oromo kingdoms which lay between the Gibe (upper Omo) and Didessa rivers; but further to the south, beyond the Gojeb river, Gojjam was already dominant in the kingdom of Kaffa, the richest and most powerful of the non-Muslim Sidama states of the south-west. Kaffa was a sacral kingship of respectable antiquity, and had been an imperial power, ruling or receiving tribute from the smaller Sidama groups. In January 1881 Yohannes crowned Ras Adal, under the royal name of Tekla Haymanot, as *negus* of both Gojjam and Kaffa.

However, early in 1882 Ras Gobana stripped a Gojjamese army of its loot from Kaffa, whose king, Gaki Sheroko, he placed under tribute to Shoa. Menelik then annexed Oromo territories immediately to the south of Gojjam; and in June, at Imbabo to the south of the Abbai, he defeated the main Gojjam army under Tekla Haymanot, who was taken prisoner and compelled to make an act of submission to Menelik. Yohannes riposted by supporting Shoaan dissidents, and by depriving Menelik of his governorship of Wollo. But Yohannes's policy of balance between Gojjam and Shoa was in ruins. He now recognised Menelik as king of Kaffa

(which was not however brought fully under Shoan control until 1897); and he accepted a virtual partition of hegemony between himself in the north and Menelik in the south. The agreement was sealed by the betrothal of Menelik's daughter Zawditu to Yohannes's only acknowledged son, Ras Araya Sellassie, and by Menelik's recognition of Araya as Yohannes's imperial heir. As a means of strengthening 'northern' influence at Menelik's court, Yohannes also insisted that Menelik should marry Taitu, an able and ambitious princess of the Yejju ruling family.

In spite of Menelik's major success in 1882, Shoan expansion southwards, especially in its early stages, was difficult and sometimes hazardous. Immediately to the south of Shoa, the Arussi Oromo maintained a vigorous resistance until 1886, and the Gurage until about 1889. These were not in themselves particularly rich areas (they provided loot in the form of livestock, but apparently not much else), but their subjugation was essential to the security of more remunerative conquests further afield. Between 1880 and 1885 the Muslim Oromo kingdoms between the Gibe and the Didessa were subjugated. Jimma, by far the most wealthy and powerful of these, was maintained as a client-kingdom under its young ruler, Abba Jifar II, who paid a heavy tribute with exemplary regularity, and assisted Shoa in the conquest of the smaller Oromo kingdoms, which were subjected to plunder and to direct Ethiopian rule and settlement. Conquest of these kingdoms provided not only plunder and tribute, but a permanent source of wealth from tolls on their external trade, now channelled through Shoa. Gold and ivory were Menelik's personal monopolies; otherwise the most profitable commodities were civet, furs and skins, and above all slaves. In Jimma particularly, the slave trade, whose victims were mainly the neighbouring negroids and pagan Oromo, had long been highly organised. Abba Jifar promoted and protected it to the ultimate profit of Menelik, who took a toll on every slave entering Shoa or sold there. Menelik's refusal to subject Jimma to the usual destructive processes of direct Ethiopian rule and settlement was a far-sighted and very rewarding departure from tradition.

As well as new resources with which to purchase arms, Menelik needed a secure route to the coast for his trade. At Zeila, Shoa's traditional coastal outlet, the Egyptians did not encourage the arms trade with Ethiopia; would-be traders suffered plunder and

extortion at the hands of the governor Abū Bakr. Menelik therefore attempted to open up alternative routes to Assab and Obok. Both routes were however dependent upon the goodwill of Muḥammad Anfārī, the Danākil sultan of Awsa – who had demonstrated the need for his co-operation by permitting the massacre in May 1880 of an Italian trading caravan from Assab. By 1883, however, satisfactory arrangements had been reached with Muḥammad Anfārī; and in April 1883 Pietro Antonelli delivered to Menelik 5,000 rifles from Assab. Assab had meanwhile (June 1882) been proclaimed an Italian colony, thereby giving Italian merchants a secure coastal base. The need for such a base was demonstrated when in 1883 Abū Bakr of Zeila forcibly removed the French merchants at Obok who had opened up the route to Shoa. However, in 1884–5 France acquired the Obok–Tajura region in full sovereignty, primarily as a staging-post on her route to Madagascar and Indo-China. Paradoxically, these European acquisitions were in the short run very advantageous to Menelik; and Franco-Italian rivalry virtually guaranteed that one of the alternative routes would always be open to him.

Until 1885, however, the volume of trade between Shoa and the coast was not large. Only comparatively small quantities of firearms had so far reached Shoa; and Menelik's keen demand forced up prices to a point where he had difficulty in paying for what he did receive. In spite of Abba Jifar's sumptuous presents at the wedding of Menelik and Taitu in April 1883, Menelik had not yet effectively mobilised his newly conquered resources. A consignment which Menelik sent to the coast in 1882 was worth only about £15,000; and of this more than 80 per cent consisted not of commodities, but of scarce Maria Theresa dollars. In 1884–5 Menelik evidently faced a severe cash-flow problem. In June 1884 he had to ask Antonelli for extended credit; a year later Léon Chefneux, trading from Obok, was paid in ivory instead of coin. But in 1891 Menelik sent commodities worth some £200,000 to Obok. By this time the massive influx of firearms into Shoa had created a buyers' market, which Menelik exploited to force down prices and to buy only up-to-date rifles.

Nor were Menelik's problems exclusively economic. As late as 1886 Arussi resistance compelled him to reinforce personally the army of his uncle, Ras Dargie. Indeed, during this period the bulk of Menelik's forces, and his most reliable commanders – close

relatives like Dargie, Wolde Giorgis and Makonnen, and 'king's men' like Ras Gobana – were heavily committed in the south; and he was potentially very vulnerable to pressure from Yohannes, whose military superiority was regarded as axiomatic in Shoa. 'Northern' influences, headed by Taitu, were strong at the Shoan court; nor could Menelik expect whole-hearted support against Yohannes from metropolitan Shoan magnates who would be the first to suffer in an armed conflict. Down to 1887, he was very careful not to give Yohannes cause for alarm or suspicion. He paid his tribute punctiliously and usually in person, and gave Yohannes considerable military assistance, notably in Wollo.

In sharp contrast to Shoa, remote from foreign interference, Yohannes's base in Tigre was an exposed salient of the Ethiopian polity. Its immediate neighbours were not small African kingdoms or loosely organised tribal communities, but hostile major powers – Egypt, Italy, the Mahdist State. Preoccupied with external problems, Yohannes was unlikely to intervene in the south unless provoked by a direct challenge that Menelik was still careful to avoid. Instead, he sought to keep Shoa at arm's length by maintaining his position in Wollo and by a close and supportive relationship with Tekla Haymanot of Gojjam. The 'Hewett treaty' of June 1884, whereby Yohannes recovered Bogos from Egypt, was no solution to his external problems. Egypt retained Massawa; and Yohannes was right to distrust the British guarantee of free transit for arms and ammunition. In February 1885 London permitted the Italians to occupy Massawa. Meanwhile, Yohannes's fulfilment of his Hewett Treaty obligation to extricate the Egyptian garrisons had involved him in unwanted hostilities with the Mahdists; and about May 1885 the Mahdi rejected Yohannes's peaceful overtures in an elaborate and intransigent *indbāra* (above, p. 609). By this time the Italians were obstructing Yohannes's imports of arms at Massawa and were advancing to localities (e.g. Sa'ati) within the territory retroceded by Egypt in 1884. At the end of 1885 Yohannes called upon Menelik for unity against the Italians. Menelik answered evasively; his secret treaty of friendship and commerce with Italy, concluded through Antonelli in May 1883, was now bearing fruit in a steady stream of arms to Shoa.

Yohannes's relations, both with Menelik and with the Italians, seemed to improve in 1886. In January 1886 Menelik personally proffered a heavy tribute; and thereafter assisted Yohannes in

suppressing a major Muslim revolt in Wollo. Meanwhile, the Italians seemed prepared to negotiate a settlement, and Yohannes appears to have contemplated a major offensive against the Mahdists. Indeed, Tekla Haymanot may have been acting with Yohannes's encouragement when in January 1887 he replied to the local depredations of the Gallabat Mahdists by storming Gallabat and ravaging the Gedaref district. The Khalifa responded by a letter (February 1887) which was indeed an *indbāra* in form; but in substance an offer, under reasonable conditions, of an armistice on the frontier (above, p. 633–4). Yohannes appears to have ignored this communication. Meanwhile, the negotiations with Italy collapsed when the Italian commander at Massawa launched a further forward movement. Ras Alula, impotent against the Italian fortified posts, riposted by destroying an Italian detachment. This so-called 'massacre of Dogali' (January 1887) evoked a cry for 'revenge' in Italy and general rejoicing in Ethiopia. But neither Yohannes nor Menelik rejoiced at the prospect of full-scale war with Italy. For Yohannes, faced with Mahdist hostility and Menelik's evasiveness, it carried formidable risks; for Menelik, it implied either the abandonment of his valuable Italian connection or an open breach with Yohannes which would be far from popular in Shoa. Yohannes appealed for British mediation, but began to mobilise a large army. Menelik offered assistance to Yohannes but almost simultaneously (October 1887) secretly concluded a 'convention of neutrality' with Italy, which was in all but name an alliance against Yohannes.

Menelik's freedom of action, in contrast to the increasing constraints upon Yohannes, is well illustrated by Shoan expansion both eastwards and westwards between 1886 and 1889. The subjugation of the Ittu and Arussi Oromo in 1885 and 1886 was followed by the capture of Harar in January 1887. Since its evacuation by the Egyptians in May 1884 the previously brisk trade of Harar had stagnated under its local ruler, 'Abdallāh Muḥammad 'Abd al-Shakūr, who combined hostility to Christians (both Ethiopian and European) with a recklessly predatory fiscal policy. Menelik now controlled the junction of the routes to Assab, Obok and Zeila; Harar once more became a major centre of trade, especially with Obok, which Menelik increasingly favoured in the 1890s. Harar also became the base for Ethiopian expansion yet further eastwards, into Ogaden and other Somali

regions. In the far west, Ras Gobana had occupied Wollega, where in October 1888 his army, supported by the local ruler Moroda Bakari, routed a Mahdist invasion from Banī Shanqūl.

Meanwhile, Yohannes was further than ever from solving his Mahdist and Italian problems. British 'mediation' through the Portal mission at the end of 1887 was simply an attempt, for 'European' reasons, to persuade Yohannes to cede to the Italians territory to which his title had been recognised in 1884. Yohannes scornfully refused; and prepared to attack the Italian coastal positions. However, in January 1888 Khalifa 'Abdallāhi, probably aware of Yohannes's preoccupation with the Italians, launched Hamdān Abū 'Anja into north-western Ethiopia. The forces of Negus Tekla Haymanot were overwhelmed; Gondar was sacked, and the provinces of Dembya and Begemder were ravaged. As Menelik, on Yohannes's instructions, moved with a Shoan army towards Begemder, the Mahdists retired (above, p. 634); but Menelik was accused of having deliberately delayed his advance. In March 1888 Yohannes moved his armies to the coastal plain against the Italians; but his losses from starvation and disease were so severe that he was soon forced to withdraw, having accomplished nothing.

These military disasters seriously undermined Yohannes's political position. By April 1888 Tekla Haymanot was attempting to negotiate a separate peace with the Mahdists; while Menelik, instead of attacking them, was offering to 'mediate' between Yohannes and Abū 'Anja. Menelik's military presence in the north now seemed a threat rather than a support to Yohannes, who curtly ordered him to return to Shoa. In June, on his way back through Gojjam, Menelik concluded an alliance with Tekla Haymanot, evidently directed against Yohannes, at the very moment when the death of Yohannes's son, Araya Sellassie, reopened the question of the imperial succession. Yohannes retaliated by a merciless ravaging of Gojjam and prepared for war against Shoa. In November Menelik proclaimed general mobilisation against Yohannes, but the Shoans showed little enthusiasm for offensive war, and Menelik himself feared to take the offensive unless his Italian allies also moved against Yohannes. But Yohannes found the Shoan defences unexpectedly strong, and his own troops were suffering from smallpox. A major war with Shoa, in the face of Italian and Mahdist hostility, seemed an

unacceptable risk. The Mahdists had demonstrated their hostility by a second raid into Begemder in the summer of 1888. In February 1889, in response to the eloquent plea for peace and co-operation against aggressive 'Turks' and Europeans which he had addressed to the Mahdists in December 1888, Yohannes received Abū 'Anja's intransigent and contemptuous reply: 'You are a great fool to ask peace from us before you enter the religion of God.'³⁵ (Above, p. 634.) Yohannes decided to attack the Mahdists, counting on a victory that would disable one of his external enemies and restore his damaged military reputation. He gained his victory at Gallabat on 9 March 1889; but it was transformed into defeat by his own death from wounds, which opened the way to Menelik's succession as king of kings and an Italian occupation of northern Ethiopia.

With Menelik's accession, the political centre of Ethiopia shifted far to the south of its earlier location. But Shoa was now ceasing to be a frontier territory. Thanks to Menelik's conquests, his new capital at Addis Ababa, founded in 1887 and the first permanent capital since Gondar, was by 1900 approximately at the geographical centre of his empire. The new territories were not merely conquered but colonised, by the settlement in them of Amhara and assimilated Oromo as a military garrison, and as great and small land-owners to whom the local cultivators were enserfed as tribute-paying *gabbar*. Much of the conquered south was more agriculturally productive than the historic northern core of Ethiopia; its products, agricultural and other, sustained a lucrative external trade to which there was no northern parallel. Although Shoan conquest was often initially destructive, the naturally poorer north had suffered even more severely from the ravages of almost continuous warfare.

From about 1880 famine became widespread in northern Ethiopia. In the provinces of the Lake Tana region – Begemder, Dembya and Gojjam – famine was aggravated by the repeated depredations of Ethiopian and Mahdist armies alike; and these provinces never regained their earlier political importance. By the mid-1880s famine, accompanied by rinderpest and devastating human epidemics (dysentery, smallpox, cholera) was spreading southwards; between 1889 and 1892 it was general throughout

³⁵ C.R.O. Khartoum, Mahdia 1/55/13, Abū 'Anja to Yohannes, Jumādā I 1306/Jan. 1889, Cited Rubenson, *Survival of Ethiopian independence*, 384.

Ethiopia. But it was most prolonged and severe in the already impoverished north, of which many regions could pay only nominal tribute to Menelik in 1893; while the richer territories of the newly conquered south escaped comparatively lightly. These catastrophes accelerated and confirmed the economic preponderance of the south; they also confirmed Menelik's control of it, by driving southwards a diaspora of 'Amhara' peasant refugees.

ETHIOPIA: MENELIK AS EMPEROR, 1889-1907

After the death of Yohannes in March 1889, Menelik was quickly recognised as king of kings virtually everywhere except in Tigre, where Ras Mangasha Gugsa, whom Yohannes on his death-bed had recognised as a legitimate son, maintained a rival claim. In May 1889, by a treaty signed at Wichale, Menelik ceded Asmara, Massawa and the Bogos to Italy in return for Italian recognition of his imperial title. Wichale was an insurance against an Italian recognition of Mangasha; it also made Mangasha and the Italians virtual rivals for the control of northern Ethiopia. In October a further convention was signed, fixing the Italian-Ethiopian border on the basis of actual possession; but in the next few weeks the Italians advanced southward into Tigre up to the river Mareb, which they then claimed as their frontier. Menelik protested; but not very vigorously. In his famous circular of April 1891, in which he notified to the powers 'who come forward to partition Africa',³⁶ frontier claims which extended to the White Nile and Lake Turkana (Rudolf), he did not contest the 'Mareb line'. The Mareb advance was an immediate problem for Mangasha rather than for Menelik; indeed, it strengthened Menelik's position by increasing the difficulty of any sustained and whole-hearted collaboration between Mangasha and the Italians.

Much more serious was the threat to Menelik's independence created by Italian deception in the notorious Article xvii of the Wichale treaty. The Amharic version of this article empowered Menelik, if he so wished, to deal with European Powers through the King of Italy. In the Italian version Menelik bound himself

³⁶ Menelik II, Circular, 14 Miyazya 1883 (E.C.)/21 Apr. 1891 (the Gregorian date usually cited, 10 Apr., is erroneous). Translation in F.O. 1/32, Rodd to Salisbury, no. 15, 4 May 1897; printed, R. Greenfield, *Ethiopia: a new political history* (London, 1965), 464-5.

to the exclusive use of this procedure; and Rome therefore claimed a protectorate over Ethiopia. Menelik resisted this claim as vigorously as he could short of an open breach with Italy, which he could hardly risk under the appalling famine conditions of the early 1890s and so long as Ras Mangasha remained available to the Italians as a rival imperial claimant. Down to February 1891, when Antonelli finally lost patience and quitted Shoa, Menelik showed great skill and tenacity in avoiding the traps set for him in various Italian proposals for the ‘modification’ of Article xvii. He mastered the ‘code’ of European diplomatic language so rapidly and completely that by the later 1890s he could beat the Europeans at their own game – not the least of his ‘modernising’ achievements.

Menelik’s protests to other European powers were predictably rejected by Italy’s informal ally Britain and her formal ally Germany. France and Russia supported Menelik, but with different nuances. ‘Orthodox Moscow’ explicitly refused to recognise Wichale; but was not at this stage in close touch with Menelik and gave him little practical help. Paris silently ignored Wichale, but facilitated the massive import of arms through Obok and maintained close relations with Addis Ababa. The Italians, finding Menelik intractable, gave rather half-hearted support to Mangasha in 1891–2; then, in 1893, renewed their attempt to ‘reason’ with Menelik, who replied by a formal denunciation of the Wichale Treaty. In June 1894 Menelik’s position was greatly strengthened when Mangasha ‘came in’ and submitted in person; while Ras Alula, the real power behind Mangasha, transferred his allegiance to Menelik.

During these years there was, apart of course from Tigre, comparatively little internal dissidence. Menelik maintained close and friendly relations with Negus Tekla Haymanot, who dominated the north-central provinces. This relationship seems to have been temporarily disturbed late in 1892, when Menelik began to impose his own taxes throughout the empire; but it had evidently been completely restored by February 1894, when he ceremonially recrowned Tekla Haymanot as king of Gojjam. Shoan expansion maintained its momentum. There was deep penetration into Somali and southern Oromo country; the Sidama kingdoms of the Rift Valley and Gibe–Gojeb basin were eaten up one by one. In 1894 the powerful Sidama kingdom of Walamo

‘The map which appears here in the printed edition has been removed for ease of use and now appears as an additional resource on the chapter overview page’.

was subjugated. Only Kaffa now maintained a precarious independence; but even Kaffa sometimes paid tribute, and had by 1892 been compelled to export all its coffee through Shoa.

Early in 1895 there was a clash between the Italians and their former protégé, Mangasha of Tigre. The Italians advanced beyond the Mareb; they now began to demand the cession of all Tigre and an explicit recognition by Menelik of their protectorate over Ethiopia. In September, after careful preparation, Menelik proclaimed a general Ethiopian mobilisation against Italy. He enjoyed no direct European support. In July 1895 France had rejected his offer of an alliance, hoping for a prolonged conflict 'pour dégager d'autant la politique européenne'.³⁷ But down to the end of 1895 (at least) the French continued to supply Menelik with arms. In this and other ways Paris, for its own reasons, sought to create difficulties for Italy while avoiding an open alignment with Ethiopia. For this Menelik evidently owed the French no thanks; but their policy nevertheless served him well. Menelik's position was also strengthened by improved relations with Omdurman. Ever since 1889 he had been at pains to promote and safeguard the 'undeclared peace' which the Khalifa had accepted. By 1894 there was a considerable trade across the frontier at Gallabat; the local Mahdist and Ethiopian governors even discussed concerted action against Kidana Mariam, a *shifita* leader who preyed on the caravans. In the summer of 1895 Menelik sent an envoy to Omdurman with verbal proposals for the formal conclusion of peace. 'Abdallāhi's reply, though cold and discourteous in tone, was no *indhāra*; it was a request for detailed proposals in writing. Unlike Yohannes in 1887–8, Menelik could challenge the Italians without fear of hostile Mahdist intervention.

In the Adowa campaign Menelik was able to concentrate forces from all over Ethiopia; and, thanks to his establishment of imperial granaries in the central provinces, to keep this enormous army adequately victualled for just long enough to strike its blow – a telling contrast to the Khalifa's almost complete logistic failure during his defensive campaign of 1896–8. Every important Ethiopian magnate brought his troops to the support of Menelik. Some of the great men of course reinsured, in time-honoured

³⁷ *Documents Diplomatiques Français, le série (D.D.F.)*, xii (Paris, 1951), no. 99, note by Hanotaux, 'Question du Harrar et Obok', 23 July 1895.

Ethiopian fashion, by private contacts with the Italians; but there can be no doubt where their primary loyalties lay, or that Adowa was an impressive demonstration of Ethiopian national solidarity. Although the Ethiopians greatly outnumbered General Baratieri's force, Adowa was not simply a victory for numbers and 'barbaric' courage. The Italians, although only 100 miles from their base, were forced to give battle as the only alternative to a humiliating retreat for lack of supplies. Menelik, through Ras Alula as his chief of staff, maintained some overall control of the battle – which is more than Baratieri did. The Italian troops, advancing by night through tangled mountainous terrain, lost contact with one another; and each of Baratieri's brigades fought an isolated action.

Menelik's crushing victory (1 March 1896) was followed by intense Anglo-French competition for his goodwill. Even the Russians, though never quite sure what they wanted in Ethiopia, now became very active – but in competition rather than collaboration with the French. The French were first off the mark: in June 1896 President Félix Faure offered to negotiate on the basis of Menelik's 1895 alliance proposal. Menelik was now in no hurry; but agreement was reached in March 1897. The French accepted very restricted frontiers for their Obok–Jibuti enclave. They were not interested in territory, but in gaining 'influence' based on their control of Ethiopia's main outlet to the sea; and above all in securing Menelik's collaboration with the Marchand mission to the upper Nile. The 'Convention pour le Nil Blanc' of 20 March 1897³⁸ partitioned the southern Sudan between France and Ethiopia along the line of the White Nile; and Menelik promised to assist French missions to reach the upper Nile from Ethiopia. The British, who arrived in Addis Ababa in April 1897, were anxious to dissuade Menelik from supporting the Mahdists, and to negotiate favourable frontiers in the Nile valley and Somaliland. Although Menelik was by now in friendly negotiation with 'Abdallāhi, he was pleasingly willing, in a treaty of May 1897, to denounce the Mahdists as 'enemies of his empire'.³⁹ On frontiers he was less forthcoming. He exhibited his circular of April 1891 and convinced the British negotiator, Rennell Rodd, that his 'effective occupation' already extended almost to the White Nile.

³⁸ *D.D.F.*, XIII (Paris, 1953), no. 159.

³⁹ Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 14 May 1897, Art. VI: E. Hertslet, *The map of Africa by treaty* (revised edn, London, 1909), no. 99.

In fact, Menelik's occupation hardly extended beyond the western ramparts of the Ethiopian massif; but Rodd was so disconcerted that he preferred to postpone discussion, and Menelik was later to assert that the British silence in 1897 implied the acceptance of his 1891 claims. But in Somaliland a more substantial Ethiopian occupation forced Rodd to concede the Haud.

Menelik fooled the French no less completely than he fooled the British. His support for the French missions to the upper Nile was purely verbal; he secretly encouraged his agents to put every possible obstacle in their way. The arrival of Europeans from Ethiopia on the upper Nile would have cost Menelik the confidence of Khalifa 'Abdallāhi, which since July 1896 he had been at great pains to gain. Menelik's objective was 'to strengthen the Khalifa against the [Anglo-Egyptian] troops, whom he feared as neighbours, preferring the Dervishes'.⁴⁰ Perhaps prompted by the French, Menelik became convinced in 1896 that the Anglo-Egyptian offensive in the Sudan was ultimately directed against Ethiopia; his fears were increased by the movement of the Macdonald mission from Uganda towards Lake Turkana in 1898. But if 'Abdallāhi could be relieved of all apprehension on his eastern frontier by a firm peace with Ethiopia, he could concentrate exclusively on Kitchener; and if he could then deal with Kitchener as the Mahdi had dealt with Hicks, Ethiopia's 'European problem' would indeed be solved.

Throughout his arduous but ultimately successful wooing of 'Abdallāhi, Menelik hammered away at a theme which had been introduced by Yohannes IV when he had offered peace to the Mahdists in December 1888: that *all* the European Powers were the common enemies of Ethiopia and the Sudan; and that religious differences and traditional enmities should not be allowed to frustrate co-operation and solidarity against the European menace. Earlier Ethiopian rulers – Tewodros, and even Yohannes before his bitter disillusionment in the mid-1880s – had called upon, and apparently expected, the assistance of the Christian powers of Europe against 'Turks' and 'Ishmaelites'. Menelik's correspondence with 'Abdallāhi bears witness to a revolution in attitudes which (as other evidence shows) was no mere personal idiosyncrasy; and which was important for the survival of Ethiopian independence.

Meanwhile, Menelik was rounding off his empire. In 1897

⁴⁰ Sudan Intelligence report, no. 60 (1898), p. 20, appreciation by Wingate.

Kaffa, the greatest and richest of the Sidama kingdoms, was subjugated after a bitter struggle, and became the fief of Menelik's cousin and close collaborator Ras Wolde Giorgis. In 1898 Ras Makonnen conquered the Banī Shanqūl; and a force under Wolde Giorgis was sent to the Lake Turkana region to assert Ethiopian authority – and also to look for Macdonald and 'check his passport'.⁴¹ Dejazmatch Tessama Nado occupied the upper Sobat (Baro) valley and subjugated the Shanqalla (negroid) groups south-west of Kaffa. In June 1898 a detachment of Tessama's force, accompanied by a Frenchman, a Swiss and a Russian, made a flying visit to the Nile–Sobat confluence, where they planted and immediately abandoned French and Ethiopian flags. This was not however a serious Ethiopian *prise de possession*: the Sobat marshes were of no value to Menelik except as a bargaining counter to be exchanged for the territories that he really coveted in the Gedaref, Roseires and Gallabat regions. But the bargaining counter lost all value when in 1899 the British discovered for themselves the hollowness of Menelik's claim to effective occupation. Meanwhile the British had occupied the more desirable frontier areas where Menelik, to avoid complications with the Khalifa, had refrained from military occupation. Instead, he had sent emissaries bearing the Ethiopian flag – which was usually well received by the local Sudanese, but which promptly disappeared on the approach of the Anglo-Egyptian troops. In the frontier settlement of 1902 Menelik lost to the Sudan all the debatable areas except the Banī Shanqūl, where he had an army and not merely a flag.

In 1898–9 Mangasha, dissatisfied with his status (Menelik refused to make him *negus*), revolted for the last time and was imprisoned after his defeat and submission. Tigre remained turbulent – not even Makonnen could control it effectively; but it was no longer any danger to Menelik. Externally, Britain and France, both of whom preferred to maintain the *status quo* in Ethiopia, were able – especially after the entente of 1904 – to restrain Italian aspirations to territorial control. Menelik, in taking note of the Tripartite Treaty of July 1906, which institutionalised this balance, was careful to declare that it 'in no way limits what we consider our sovereign rights'.⁴²

⁴¹ D.D.F., XIII, no. 386, Lagarde (Addis Ababa) to Hanotaux, 24 Dec. 1897, quoting Menelik.

⁴² F.O. 401/10, statement by Menelik, 10 Dec. 1906: cited H. G. Marcus, *The life and times of Menelik II* (Oxford, 1975), 211.

From 1900 until the collapse of Menelik's health in 1908–9, the history of Ethiopia is comparatively uneventful. The emperor worked steadily and systematically at the consolidation of his administrative control. His power was still based largely on the conquered territories, where previous hegemonies had been destroyed and which therefore lent themselves to comparatively close administration and systematic exploitation by trusted 'king's men'. But after 1900 Menelik was strong enough to destroy or cripple old hegemonies even in historic Ethiopia. Tigre was divided between two rulers in 1900; so was Gojjam after the death of Negus Tekla Haymanot in 1901.

Menelik's position was strengthened, and Shoan man-power reinforced, by the intensive assimilation on favourable terms of those Oromo willing to embrace Christianity and to adopt the Amharic language and Amhara social customs. This assimilation took place at every level, from grandees (like Ras Gobana) to simple peasants or, in the south, soldier settlers. In 1904 Menelik decreed the restitution of their ancestral lands to Oromo notables who had submitted. From peasant to *ras*, the interests of this Shoan–Oromo amalgam were bound up with the maintenance of Shoan hegemony and the imperial power of the Shoan ruler. The socio-political system created by Menelik therefore had its own inherent stability which enabled it to survive his incapacity and death.

There was little specifically 'modern' about the means whereby Menelik consolidated his administration. They were the usual methods of a strong ruler in a feudal (or 'quasi-feudal') society. Detachments of imperial troops under trusted commanders garrisoned strategic points throughout the empire. Taxation payable direct to the emperor, notably the *asrat* or agricultural tithe, was introduced during the 1890s; and fiscal agents were stationed in the provinces to collect and account for the imperial dues and revenues. The primacy of the emperor's justice was asserted by the establishment in each province of an imperial court of appeal. There was little in this process of 'efficient medievalisation' which would have surprised – say – Henry II Plantagenet. Of course, Menelik faced far greater problems of distance, of terrain and of ethnic diversity, than a ruler in the medieval West; and he was quick and discriminating in discerning the usefulness of modern western technology, and up to a point

SOMALIA, C. 1870–1910

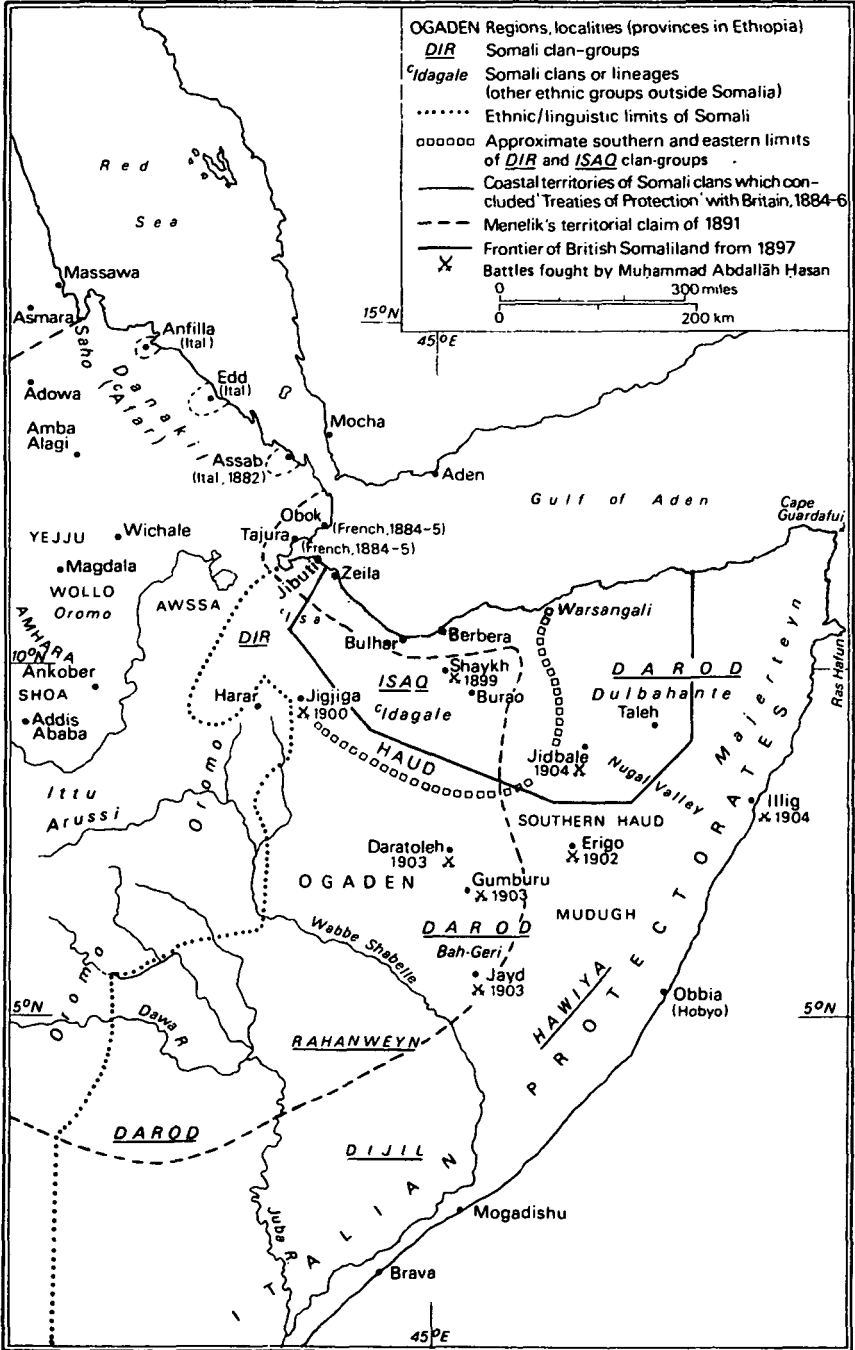
of western organisational techniques, in offsetting these disadvantages. Obvious examples are firearms; and, for a *corps d'élite*, more systematic military organisation and training. Less often cited, but invaluable to the ruler of a vast empire with poor communications, are the telegraph and the telephone. By December 1902 there was a telephone link between Addis Ababa and the main provincial capitals; in the last years of his effective reign Menelik used it as a routine instrument of administration.

Menelik was primarily interested in those 'modern' technological devices which enabled him to rule more effectively. He was however also interested in 'modernising' the image projected by Ethiopia to the West. This 'cosmetic' modernisation had a serious political objective: to strengthen Ethiopia's claim to 'parity of esteem' as a fully sovereign state – a major preoccupation of every Ethiopian ruler since Tewodros. Cosmetic modernisation and practical utility were sometimes combined, as in Menelik's western-style school and his 'cabinet', both inaugurated in 1907. The school emphasised the teaching of European languages; and the 'cabinet' enabled a ruler in failing health to shed some of his crushing burden of work. In administration, as in 'high politics' and diplomacy where he scarcely made a false move after 1878, Menelik understood the limits of the possible, kept his objectives clearly in sight, and had an almost unerring eye for the means best suited to attain those objectives. He left behind him a socio-political system of remarkable resilience, which in spite of catastrophic political vicissitudes survived unchanged in its essentials for two generations.

SOMALIA, C. 1870–1910

In the later nineteenth century the Somali, especially the four great pastoral clan-groups of the north and centre (Dir, Darod, Hawiya and Isaq) were strongly and proudly conscious of their ethnic identity. Ethnic solidarity was reinforced by common socio-legal institutions and by a common language, the skilful use of which was at once a powerful weapon in Somali politics and the major Somali art-form. These unifying forces had not, however, generated any form of political unity, or indeed of political authority, above the level of the individual clan; and even clan-leaders were usually no more than respected dignitaries, not 'chiefs' or rulers with effective institutionalised power. Only in the coastal 'sultan-

THE NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN



27 Somalia, 1884-c. 1910

ates' of the Majerteyn and Hobyó (Obbia) was political authority rather more effective, probably supported by resources derived from sea-borne trade.

Competition for water and grazing, combined with Somali intolerance of subordination, therefore generated major violence, not only between clans but between lineages of the same clan. The losers in any particular conflict kept careful tally of their 'grievances' (*godob*); and the (usually violent) rectification of these grievances was an hereditary obligation of honour. Procedures of course existed for the regulation and composition of feuds; but these procedures were too fragile to resist exceptional political or ecological pressures. Such pressures did not therefore tend to promote solidarity; they tended rather to unleash a 'war of all against all' as clans and lineages struggled for survival or strove to exploit disturbed conditions to settle outstanding grievances. The most stable of Somali 'peace-restoring' institutions was the '*dīya*-paying group', whose members (drawn from the same major lineage) contractually assumed a collective responsibility to pay blood-compensation (*dīya*). But the *dīya*-paying group was a comparatively small unit of a few hundred adult males. It could contain violence *within* lineages; but not 'war' between lineages, still less between clans.

Somali identified very strongly as Muslims; in the local context, 'Somali' and 'Muslim' were often used almost synonymously, perhaps because Islam was the one pan-Somali institution which tended positively to unify the Somali rather than merely to contain their conflicts. The holy man (*wadād*), distinguished by his greater piety and Islamic learning, was normally very sharply distinguished from the *waranleḥ* or warrior. Unlike many Muslim holy men, he was almost exclusively a religious leader and teacher; his sole political function was to exhort conflicting groups to peace by dwelling on the heinous sin of violence between Muslims. He could normally have no rôle as a political leader, for 'politics' by its very nature implied bloodshed and loot, which were forbidden (*ḥarām*) to a holy man.

An important development in Somali Islam during the nineteenth century was the curiously belated introduction, but very rapid expansion, of religious brotherhoods (*ṭarīqas*) offering a specific 'way' to God. The first to be introduced was the Qādiriyya, originally founded in the twelfth century AD. The Qādiriyya emphasised its collective devotions (*dhikr*) as the 'way'

to God; it accommodated itself to Somali customs and even accepted the Somali habit of chewing *qāt*. Its rival the Aḥmadiyya, introduced a little later, had been founded at Mecca by Aḥmad Idrīs al-Fāsī (1760–1837), who had been strongly influenced by the revival of Islamic rigorism during his life-time. The Aḥmadiyya insisted on active piety, and on the formal marks of such piety: regular prayer, the veil for women, the turban for men. Its members were pledged to material austerity; in particular, it forbade the use of *qāt*. Its *dhikers* (devotions) were more austere and restrained than those of the Qādiriyya. The Aḥmadiyya had two branches in Somalia: the small and comparatively quietist Dandarawiyya; and, introduced as late as the 1890s, the Ṣālihiyya, founded by Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ, the nephew and successor of a Sudanese disciple of Aḥmad Idrīs. The Ṣālihiyya, under the leadership of the *wadād* Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan, became after 1899 exceptionally rigorist and intransigently militant. From about 1885 Somali *ṭarīqa* leaders had begun to found cultivating settlements, whose members withdrew as far as possible from the conflicts of their lineages, bound themselves to strict observance of the rules of their order and – in sharp contrast to the normal Somali rejection of subordination – submitted to the authority, in principle absolute, of the shaykh of the settlement.

Other features of Islamic revival were greatly increased Somali participation in the pilgrimage and the migration to Somalia of holy men and religious teachers. The Egyptians during their period of occupation (1870–84) actively fostered Islamic devotion and learning. Somali eyes were opened to the crisis of *Dār al-Islām* under infidel rule or the threat of it. Some Somali began to take an exceptionally rigorous view of Muslim relations with infidels. A Muslim who associated with infidels or served them in any way, even, for example, as a commercial agent, was not merely a lax Muslim, but himself an infidel (*kāfir*), with whom the rigorists refused to pray. The holy man began to emerge from his purely religious and eirenic role and to play a greater part in worldly affairs: Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan is merely the most spectacular example in an era of politically influential ‘shaykhs’.

Egyptian occupation and European partition, c. 1870–1899

Until the 1870s northern Somalia was nominally a direct dependency of the Ottoman empire. The Benadir (Indian Ocean) coast as far north as Mogadishu remained until 1889 a dependency of Zanzibar. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Khedive Ismā'il began to assert Egyptian authority along the northern coast. In 1875, when the Egyptians also occupied Harar (above, p. 613), the Egyptian administration of Zeila and Berbera was confirmed by Ottoman *firman*. Britain, at first hostile to this occupation of a strategic coast opposite Aden, had by about 1875 become reconciled to it as a safeguard against occupation by a rival European power. In 1877 London recognised Egyptian sovereignty as far as Ras Hafun on the Indian Ocean, on condition that Egypt should never alienate these territories to another power. Northern Somalia seems to have prospered under Egyptian administration. Harbour and other facilities were improved at Zeila and Berbera. Overseas trade was active. Livestock and exotic African products, the latter now channelled through Harar, were exchanged for manufactured goods and vegetable foodstuffs. Liaison with the interior was maintained by elders ('*āqils*'), who represented the major *dīya*-paying groups at the centres of administration.

From 1877 to 1883 London actively supported Egyptian authority in northern Somalia; but in 1884, as a result of the Sudan débacle (above, pp. 608–9, 616–7), the British insisted on Egyptian evacuation; and British–Indian troops were landed to cover the Egyptian withdrawal. As a substitute for Egypt, London would have accepted an Italian occupation, as at Massawa. But the Italians hesitated; and between May 1884 and March 1886 the British concluded 'treaties of protection' with the northern coastal clans from the Isa (Dir) on the Gulf of Tajura, eastwards to the Warsangali and the Majerteyn (Darod), the latter extending to the Indian Ocean. These treaties bound the clans never to alienate their territories to another power. Meanwhile, the French, who had 'bought' the Obok region as early as 1862 but had never performed any act of sovereignty there, suddenly revived this dormant claim (above, p. 651). By March 1885 Léonce Lagarde, sent out as governor in July 1884, had concluded treaties of cession with all the groups surrounding the Gulf of Tajura,

including the Isa Somali who already had a treaty of protection with Britain. An Anglo-French boundary (which partitioned the Isa) was agreed in February 1888. In December 1889 British jurisdiction was formally extended to the coastal clans eastward of the new Anglo-French frontier, other than the Majerteyn where Italy had established a protectorate in April 1889. Italian protectorates were also established in 1889 at Hobyo (Obbia) and on the Benadir coast; but until the early twentieth century there was virtually no Italian administration on the coast north of Mogadishu.

After Menelik's occupation of Harar in 1887 (above, p. 653), the Dir and Isaq clan-groups of the Zeila–Berbera hinterland suffered increasingly from Ethiopian raids upon their stock. Indeed, in his famous circular of April 1891 (above, p. 656) Menelik had claimed as Ethiopian the territories of three of these clans. The aggrieved groups appealed in vain for the British protection to which they were theoretically entitled. Having recognised the Treaty of Wichale, London handled the problem by negotiation with Italy. An internal frontier was agreed with Rome in May 1894: it ceded to Italy (and therefore ultimately to Ethiopia) much Dir and Isaq pastureland. A further slice of territory in this region was abandoned directly to Ethiopia by the 'Rodd Treaty' of June 1897 (above, p. 662). In the east, however, the British Somaliland Protectorate as finally delimited included the territory of a large and powerful inland clan, the Dulbahante (Darod), with whom there was no treaty of protection and indeed no official contact whatever.

Even on the coast, administration was rudimentary. British vice-consuls, responsible to the government of India through Aden, resided at Zeila, Berbera and Bulhar. In 1898 the Foreign Office took over the administration. Sir James Hayes-Sadler, appointed as consul-general, reduced expenditure by replacing most of the Indian garrison by an armed Somali constabulary (*ilālo*), who policed the internal trade-routes more effectively. These measures, together with more systematic management of the *'āqils* and friendly relations with the commercial and religious notables of the coastal towns, led to a considerable expansion in trade. This tranquil prosperity was however deceptive. Especially in the Ogaden region south of the locally meaningless Protectorate frontier, destructive Ethiopian pressure steadily increased. The

Ethiopians seem to have destroyed *ṭarīqa* settlements as deliberate policy. Clans and lineages were displaced from their traditional ranges; they sought compensation and indeed survival at the expense of their neighbours. By about 1900 ‘more than twenty lineages were at one another’s throats’⁴³ in northern Somalia. A large back-log of ‘old outstandings’ was built up. Any major disturbance which weakened the administration, or the emergence of a new power-factor whose support might be enlisted, would be eagerly seized upon as opportunities to settle these *godob*.

The resistance of Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan to 1910

In 1899 a new, and profoundly destabilising, power-factor appeared in the person of the *wadād* Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan. Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh was of an Ogaden Darod lineage (the Bah-Geri); but his immediate ancestors had settled among, and intermarried with, the Dulbahante. Sayyid Muḥammad’s early life is obscure; even the date of his birth (1856 or 1864?) is contested. The tradition that he learned the Koran by heart within three years is an indication, among many others, of his outstanding intellectual ability. For some ten years between about 1880 and 1890 he travelled widely within and beyond Somalia in search of Islamic learning. During these years, he evidently became deeply conscious of the infidel threat to Islam. He also gained, either then or later, a shrewd insight into the more material pressures of colonial rule. But in 1899 not even Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh could plausibly stigmatise the ‘aloof and benign’ British administration as materially oppressive. He attacked it simply as infidel rule and therefore *ipso facto* an oppression; and lashed with biting scorn, as cowards and virtual apostates, those Somali who ‘grovelled to the hell-ordained and the Christians’.⁴⁴

The Sayyid had performed the pilgrimage in 1894, and at Mecca had fallen deeply under the influence of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. Under Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ’s spiritual guidance he underwent a profound religious experience, whereafter he was commissioned as *khalīfa* of the Ṣāliḥiyya brotherhood in Somalia. Between 1895 and 1897 he vainly endeavoured to convince the Qādiriyya religious

⁴³ S. S. Samatar, *Oral poetry and Somali nationalism* (Cambridge, 1982), 114.

⁴⁴ D. Jardine, *The Mad Mullah of Somaliland* (London, 1923; reprinted New York, 1969), 49. Samatar, *Oral poetry*, 154, citing Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan.

establishment of Berbera of their reprehensible laxity; and above all to persuade them to accept Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ as *qutb al-zaman* – the spiritual ‘axis of the age’. At this stage the British administration found nothing politically objectionable in the Sayyid’s teaching; but probably under Qādiriyya pressure it ultimately ‘closed down’ (?1897) the Ṣālihiyya mosque in Berbera. The Sayyid then retired to the Dulbahante country, the land of his maternal kinsmen, where he founded a *ṭarīqa* settlement; and he soon gained a strong following, not only among the Dulbahante but also among two Isaq clans. Feuds between the groups which joined his movement had necessarily to be composed, or at least suspended; the administration therefore considered him a supporter of ‘law and order’.

Early in 1899 Ethiopian pressure reached a climax with a devastating raid into the Ogaden. The Sayyid now began to claim a direct commission from God to deliver the Somali from the destructive and infidel ‘Amhara’. In April 1899 he replied in curt and discourteous terms to an official request for the return of a government rifle believed to have fallen into his hands. In August he appeared with a following of perhaps 5,000 men at Burao, an important watering-centre for the Isaq clans. Some of his followers had visions of taking and looting Berbera, which the Sayyid knew to be impossible; it was perhaps the need to maintain their enthusiasm that decided the timing of his famous letter of defiance to the administration (August 1899). He accused the British of oppressing Islam without cause; and in effect claimed political sovereignty by his demand that they should choose between war and the payment of *jizya*, the tax canonically due to a Muslim ruler from tolerated infidels.⁴⁵ He was at once proclaimed a rebel.

The Sayyid’s earliest call to jihad seems to have been against the Ethiopians rather than the British; and until September 1899 the administration itself believed that his movement was essentially anti-Ethiopian. However, Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh’s first act of war was neither against the Ethiopians, nor the British, nor even the Qādiriyya; but against his own ‘half-brothers’ in religion, the Dandariwiyya section of the Aḥmadiyya, whose cultivating settlement at Shaykh he looted and destroyed in September 1899. Some dramatic action was doubtless needed to impress his

⁴⁵ Facsimile and translation, Jardine, *Mad Mullah*, 42–3.

followers; booty was needed both to satisfy their expectations and as currency with which to purchase firearms. Shaykh seems to have been chosen simply as a soft target. But the *garad* (clan-leader) of the Dulbahante, 'Alī Maḥmūd, now took alarm at the Sayyid's rise to power, and offered his collaboration to the British. He was promptly assassinated by agents of the Sayyid. The Dulbahante thereupon split into supporters and opponents of Muḥammad 'Abdallāh; his opponents were powerful enough to force him to retire to his paternal Bah-Geri lineage among the Ogaden Darod. Here he offered his assistance to the powerful Muḥammad Zubayr lineage, which had recently suffered crippling stock-losses at the hands of the Ethiopians. The Sayyid and his followers recovered much of the looted stock in an action at Jigjiga in March 1900. He followed up this success by a major and very profitable raid upon the Idagale Isaq. Thereafter, certain individuals apart, most of his Isaq followers deserted him; the Isaq clans became his consistent opponents, and therefore the targets for some of his most vitriolic invective.

Meanwhile, the Ogaden Muḥammad Zubayr lineage and its leader Ḥusayn 'Iljēh had, like the *garad* 'Alī Maḥmūd of the Dulbahante, begun to fear and resent the Sayyid's preponderance. However, their attempt to assassinate Muḥammad 'Abdallāh and his inner circle of followers misfired, though they killed the Sayyid's principal adviser. The Muḥammad Zubayr then decided to end the feud and sent a delegation to offer *dīya*. But the Sayyid made exorbitant demands quite unjustified by Somali custom; and when these were rejected, he put to death the entire delegation of thirty-two elders. Pressure from the outraged Muḥammad Zubayr then forced the Sayyid to return to the Dulbahante country. The 'poor man of God' had by now acquired sufficient stock to buy peace by paying full compensation for the killing of *garad* 'Alī Maḥmūd. But the schism among the Dulbahante remained unhealed.

By the late summer of 1900 Muḥammad 'Abdallāh was based in the Nugal valley, the most favoured part of a region rich by Somali standards. From this base, with Dulbahante support prompted by prospects of loot as well as by religious zeal, the Sayyid could threaten the interior pastures of the 'British-protected' Isaq clans in the west. Indeed, the Isaq at once began to withdraw from their

summer ranges and prematurely to consume their winter grazing. The consequent dislocation and over-crowding was a threat that the administration could not ignore.

The Sayyid had by now created a fighting force which completely outclassed the fragile clan and lineage groupings. He organised his 'dervishes' by unprecedented emphasis on the autocratic and totalitarian features of the *ṭarīqa* settlement; and by combining the functions of the *wadād* with those of the *waranleh*, thereby completely repudiating the *wadād*'s traditionally pacific rôle. The *ṭarīqa* settlement tried to be a 'total institution', but in practice its members could rarely if ever escape completely from the obligations of lineage and the *dīya*-paying group. But the Sayyid's adherents had 'thrown over father and mother and tribe'⁴⁶ to follow him. They had in effect cut themselves off from Somali society, as had indeed the Sayyid himself by his deliberate flouting of some of its most binding conventions. Their solidarity was encouraged by a distinctive uniform (the white turban) and, in action, by the continuous chanting as a battle-hymn of the Sayyid's poem in praise of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. Solidarity was enforced by harsh, even terroristic, discipline. In a *ṭarīqa* settlement, the shaykh's ultimate sanction was merely expulsion; but the Sayyid was absolute master of life and death, and he used his powers freely and arbitrarily.

The hard core of his followers, the dervish 'regulars', were religious enthusiasts, pledged to embrace martyrdom for Islam as defined by Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ and Muḥammad 'Abdallāh; encouraged and if necessary compelled to repudiate clan and lineage; and stiffened by a discipline harsh enough to crush even Somali insubordination. No wonder the dervishes were quite invincible in the context of traditional Somali warfare. Besides these 'regulars' – perhaps about 6,000 men – the Sayyid had a fluctuating following of part-time irregulars, often attracted mainly by prospects of booty. The Sayyid's personal bodyguard was however drawn from semi-servile cultivating clansmen or even from former slaves, whom the Sayyid provided with property and wives. 'Slaves on horses' seem to have been a very early development in the Sayyid's movement. Otherwise, it developed very little institutional apparatus apart from the 'inner council' (*majlis khusūsi*) of the Sayyid's chief advisers; and no

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 71, citing Col. E. Swayne (who commanded the first and second expeditions).

machinery for its own perpetuation. The contrast with the Sudanese Mahdist state is striking; but in Somalia there was of course no ready-made state administration for the Sayyid to take over and adapt to his purposes.

Although the British soon learned to respect their fighting qualities, the dervishes did not present an insoluble military problem; sketchily-trained Somali levies were able to defeat them in 1901. They were of course bewilderingly mobile, the result of their ability to survive on camel's milk; while the movements of government troops were always constrained by water-supply. But the Sayyid was a serious menace to the Protectorate only when based in the Dulbahante region, from where he could not only threaten all the British-protected Isaq clans, but also trade livestock for firearms through the Majertejn sultan and the 'British-protected' Warsangali, who were in fact quite outside British control.

Outside the Dulbahante area the Sayyid had no convenient alternative base. The Mudugh oases, separated from British territory by eighty miles of the waterless southern Haud, were too remote. After the Sayyid's unappeased feud with the Muḥammad Zubayr, the Ogaden could never be more than a temporary refuge; and by 1903, with increasing Ethiopian pressure, hardly even that. There was never any serious difficulty in ejecting the Sayyid from the Dulbahante country. Even the 'unsuccessful' second expedition of 1902 succeeded in this. The difficulty lay in preventing his return as soon as the expeditions had retired. The men on the spot repeatedly pressed for the occupation and the administration, however lightly, of Dulbahante territory. This solution was always rejected by London, ostensibly on the ground that, having no treaty with the Dulbahante, the British had no duty to protect them from the dervishes – even though the Dulbahante had since 1894 been within the internationally recognised frontiers of the Somaliland Protectorate. In fact, of course, any extension of so troublesome an administration seemed utterly absurd to London. Yet many, perhaps most, Dulbahante were by now strongly opposed to the Sayyid; but they were quite unable to resist him without assistance.

The Sayyid's move to the Nugal valley late in 1900 prompted the first expedition against him, which brought him to battle by capturing much of his livestock, defeated the dervishes in June

and July 1901, and forced him back to the Mudugh oases. But by October 1901 he had returned to the Nugal valley. The second expedition again drove him out of Protectorate territory (June–August 1902), but it was ambushed and forced to retire when it attempted to pursue the Sayyid into the southern Haud bush. This time the Sayyid remained at Mudugh; but, as his relations with the Majerteyn and Hobyo sultans had by now become precarious, he acquired a port of his own by occupying Illig in Italian-claimed territory on the Indian Ocean.

The third and fourth expeditions (February 1903–early 1904) were elaborate and expensive operations, in which the Somali levies were reinforced by a motley collection of troops from Britain, India and various African territories. The third expedition attempted to destroy the Sayyid by pincer-movements from Berbera and (by arrangement with the Italians) from Hobyo, combined with an Ethiopian advance into the Ogaden. The British columns met in the interior without encountering the Sayyid, who had withdrawn to the western Ogaden. Two detachments despatched in his pursuit were ambushed and roughly handled in April 1903. But in May an Ethiopian advance northward from the upper Webe Shebele river defeated the Sayyid's forces at Jayd and denied him the Ogaden. In a typically brilliant and unexpected manoeuvre Muḥammad 'Abdallāh then doubled back to the Nugal valley across the British line of communication, unimpeded by the troops stationed there (June 1903).

The Sayyid improved this occasion by his second well-known letter of defiance 'to the English', in which he demanded that they should return to their 'own country' and taunted them on their recent discomfiture. He added that they could expect nothing from him but war, because he was a 'poor man of God' without possessions (hardly an accurate statement) and because his 'country' was worthless. 'If you want wood and stone you can get them in plenty. There are also many ant-heaps. The sun is very hot.'⁴⁷ But the Sayyid's position had in fact seriously deteriorated by the second half of 1903. The Ethiopians had denied him the Ogaden even as a temporary refuge, and indeed threatened his fall-back base at Mudugh. 'Uthmān Maḥmūd, the Majerteyn sultan, was now hostile to the dervishes, whom he doubtless saw

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 122–3, translation of the Sayyid's letter.

as a threat to his own position; he would welcome a favourable opportunity to attack them. Thus hemmed in, the Sayyid ventured a pitched battle with the fourth expedition (October 1903-early 1904), at Jidbale in the upper Nugal valley (January 1904). The dervishes were defeated and put to flight. Constantly harassed by the Majerteyn, the dwindling band of dervish fugitives retreated through Dulbahante and Warsangali territory. Now too weak to impose themselves by force, they found no refuge there; and ultimately fell back on Illig, from where they were ejected by a British naval landing in April 1904.

The Sayyid, his movement apparently in ruins and himself a butt for the gloating taunts of his many Somali enemies, still negotiated as if he were victorious; but he could not escape the humiliation of accepting an Italian proposal, in which the British concurred, to settle him at Illig 'under the Italian flag' (March 1905).⁴⁸ The British, believing that Muḥammad 'Abdallāh's movement had collapsed, were content simply to let him go and thank God they were rid of a knave. The Italian motives are less obvious. Perhaps they hoped to use the Sayyid as a buffer against the Ethiopians, who were by now pushing eastward almost to the coast; or as a weapon against their nominally subject sultan, 'Uthmān Maḥmūd, over whom they had in practice no control whatever. But Muḥammad 'Abdallāh simply refused to admit defeat; and at Illig between 1905 and 1908 he recreated the dervish movement almost entirely by his gifts as a poet and propagandist. Previously, most dervish poetry had been composed by the Sayyid's court poets. But from 1905 Muḥammad 'Abdallāh himself poured forth poems of defiance against the British, and of insult and invective against the British-protected Somali, which have earned him his reputation as the greatest of Somali poets; the power of these poems is discernible even in the dim reflection of translation.⁴⁹

He was soon able to encourage some Dulbahante and Warsangali lineages (who doubtless needed little encouragement) to raid the protected Isaq clans; he almost guaranteed success by detailing dervish detachments to organise and lead these raids. There was still no British administration or occupation among the Dulbahante to offset the Sayyid's rapidly reviving influence

⁴⁸ For the terms of the Agreement, Hertslet, *Map of Africa*, no. 347.

⁴⁹ Samatar, *Oral poetry*, 145-81; B. W. Andrzejewski and I. M. Lewis, *Somali poetry* (Oxford, 1964), 66-102.

there. He could not indeed directly threaten the Protectorate administration; but his propaganda and the raids he sponsored kept the government clans in so unsettled a state that the attempt to administer the interior, where Britain had no direct interests, seemed increasingly pointless and financially wasteful, especially to a Liberal government in London. After the failure of the 1909 Wingate mission to reach an accommodation with the Sayyid, in November 1909 London ordered complete withdrawal from the interior. Only the strategically important coast was to be retained. By April 1910 the evacuation was complete. The results were catastrophic. It was hoped that the Isaq would combine in self-defence against the Sayyid. Instead, they used their government-issue firearms to settle outstanding *godob* on an enormous scale, in an orgy of uncontrolled violence and stock-destruction which led to general famine – the ‘time of eating filth’ – and appalling mortality. Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh soon returned from Illig to the Dulbahante country. Here he built at Taleh a massively fortified headquarters from which he dominated the hinterlands of both northern and central Somalia. Not until early 1920 was the Sayyid dislodged from Taleh by the British. A harassed fugitive, but defiant and undaunted to the last, Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan died of influenza about December 1920.

Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh Ḥasan never claimed to be the Mahdi, although the British believed him to have done so and his Somali opponents sometimes accused him – perhaps mockingly – of Mahdist pretensions. True, he sometimes saw in European and Ethiopian pressure a presage of the ‘last days’; but so did other Somali quite unconnected with his movement. What Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh offered to the Somali was not a ‘golden age’ of perfect equity as a prelude to the Last Judgement; but membership of a purified, rigorist Islamic community under his own absolute sway and totally dedicated to the expulsion of the infidel. For those Somali who rejected this offer, he had nothing but total hostility and contempt.

The immediate effect of the Sayyid’s movement was to divide rather than to unite the Somali. The Isaq clans, who had either never supported him or had deserted him in 1900, feared and hated him. They preferred British protection; and not only because their trade was conducted through British-controlled ports. He

exploited Somali internal divisions for his own ends; he created new and bitter internal dissensions among Ogaden Darod and the Dulbahante. He prejudiced for two generations the peaceful co-existence of Qādiriyya and Ṣālihiyya in Somalia. The disruption of ‘clan balances’ caused by dervish raiding, and the Sayyid’s deliberate flouting of the conventions that normally regulated conflict, certainly contributed to the uncontrolled, almost genocidal, violence of the ‘time of eating filth’. Many Somali were profoundly shocked by Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh’s total repudiation of the pacific rôle of the traditional *wadād*; to them, a ‘learned shaykh [who] raids the people ruthlessly’ was an evil aberration. ‘Alī Jāma’ Hābīl (admittedly an Isaq poet) denounced the Sayyid as a butcher of pious Muslims and a robber of orphans; but even the Dulbahante ‘Alī Dūh condemned him as ‘a worthless ruffian’. Another Isaq poet, Jēni ‘Ade, dared to say the unsayable: ‘Better than a murderous Muslim is a Christian who protects your woman and child.’⁵⁰

Yet the Sayyid intended that, under his inspired leadership, the Somali should forget their divisions of clan and lineage and become *ikhwān* (brothers) united by jihad and an uncompromisingly rigorous version of Islam. True, his concept of Somali nationalism hardly went beyond acceptance of his own leadership. He insisted that his followers call themselves dervishes, not Somali. ‘Somali’ he used as a term of opprobrium for opponents and doubters, mere dead wood that had to be destroyed. But his organisation of the Ṣālihiyya as a militarised religious autocracy gave Somali the unprecedented experience of a powerful centralised authority that transcended all the traditional divisions of Somali society. Above all, he incarnated three qualities deeply admired by Somali: genius as a poet; total refusal to admit defeat; and the superbly arrogant *panache* with which he defied and taunted the mighty British. His twenty years of defiant and successful resistance were undoubtedly an example and an inspiration for modern Somali nationalists. Retrospectively at least, he has been very widely accepted as a Somali national hero. But Somali have rejected the Sayyid’s claim to unique religious authority: today few Somali invoke his spiritual aid (*madad*) as a ‘saint of great blessing’.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Samatar, *Oral poetry*, 119, 138, 163–7.

⁵¹ I. M. Lewis, *The modern history of Somaliland* (London, 1965), 84.

CHAPTER 12

THE EUROPEAN SCRAMBLE AND CONQUEST IN AFRICAN HISTORY

African history has been too much dominated by blanket terms, generalisations which prompt comparisons rather than contrasts. For the sake of clarity Africa's historians have dealt in universal currencies, African despotism, an African mode of production, African nationalism, the African worker, and so on. Without common themes, it is true, differences would be impossible to define, and advances in understanding come from realisations that existing general models make an awkward fit for particular cases. Equally, historical shorthand can be a substitute for thought, and whole decades be passed off in a phrase. That has long been the case with 'the scramble for Africa' or 'the colonial conquest'. It is the period of Africa's history which has been most written about and, almost for that very reason, perhaps the least actually understood, smothered in high abstraction and wide generality. Alien rule seemed to impose on Africa a crushing uniformity of rulers' intentions. But the querulousness of the particular has now been pressed long and insistently enough for this volume, and this chapter attempts a new synthesis more accommodating to the complex processes of time and the local spirits of place. Few Africans were easily crushed by conquest; and they proved thereafter to be but awkward subjects.

Partition and conquest together took a long time, much longer than the period covered by this volume. Almost a century elapsed between the French capture of Algiers in 1830 and the final defeat of Abd al-Karim in the Rif mountains of neighbouring Morocco. The French employed wooden-walled sailing ships in the first enterprise, aeroplanes and tanks in the second. There was likewise a hundred years' war between colonists and Xhosa on the eastern frontiers of Cape Colony which started in 1799 – even if, like the hundred years' war between England and France, it was punctuated by periods of peace. Ethiopia was not conquered until 1935; and parts of northern Mozambique were not finally

occupied by the Portuguese until they were forced to take steps against Frelimo's nationalist guerrillas in the 1960s. Conversely, Angola's independence in 1975 came on the fourth centenary of the first Portuguese military incursion on its territory. But even if the conquest is confined, as largely it was, between 1874 and 1905, that is still three decades, a space for processes rather than events.

Two complementary processes, the obvious ones, shape the argument of this chapter. African authorities lost the race for power and, as they did so, became increasingly divided. Europeans accumulated power, but were not much less divided over how to convert it into authority. The perplexities of rulers, conquered and conquerors alike, stemmed in large part from their shared difficulties in securing the more profitable obedience of those whom they tried to rule. Many Africans resisted conquest, but more Africans evaded the forms of work which were then devised for them.

In the mid-1880s the first scramble for Africa took up a number of threads of African history. Along Africa's coasts the men on the spot, black and white, intrigued against each other, tested each other out as allies and made informed calculations about each other's intentions from within a long history of commerce and conflict. Some European claims, those of Leopold or Bismarck for instance, had no sort of local connection. But the second scramble in the 1890s, which combined steeplechases into the far interior with the forcible conversion of existing European predominance into new control, was a more fantastic invasion altogether; from most local perspectives it was 'incomprehensible, firing into a continent'.¹ It is true that the sternest conflict of all, between Boer and Briton, was also the least blind, bringing to a barbarous conclusion what Boer propaganda did not greatly exaggerate in describing as a 'century of wrong'. But elsewhere the knowing African compromises of the past era of informal empire could be as aghast as previous African ignorance of the Europeans at the new white impatience for formal rule which was armed now, as it had not been a decade earlier, with field artillery, moral certainty, and some notion of how even tropical Africa might, with railways, be turned to profit. This rupture with the past, with its expensive wars and punitive expeditions, its tax

¹ Joseph Conrad, *Heart of darkness*, Penguin edn (Harmondsworth, 1973), 20.

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demands and enforced cultivation, its slave flights and its rebellions, its epidemic mortality, social misery and disorder, ruined both African production and European trade. In the first years of this century the new colonial rulers everywhere tried to repair the damage with civil reconstructions of government, seeking, if with often unintended consequences, to make their peace with the lords of the land.

FRONTIERS OF CHANGE

This common reciprocal process of the diminution and accumulation of power was anything but a uniform experience. For it was not the only process which was unfolding at the time. At least three other frontiers of change were on the move: the frontiers of trade and belief, of white settlement, and the linked scourges of famine and epidemic disease. These processes divided Africans, politically, socially and regionally. Their divisions sharpened in face of the trauma of conquest and alien overrule, with its combination of opportunity and menace.

Many African rulers had lived with external trade for centuries; its control was one of their sources of wealth and power. It is nevertheless useful to distinguish North and West Africa from the rest of the continent by the intensity of the foreign commercial involvement, the extent to which merchant capital and outside finance rivalled political power in shaping relations of production, the degree to which, in short, local sovereignty was already compromised by extra-territorial privilege. By 1870 Mediterranean Africa's rulers were deep in debt; their wealthiest subjects – and, in Egypt, even the poorest – were beholden to European merchants and bankers; their advisers and clerics were tormented by the question how far Islam was compatible with Western science and modes of government. Western Africa was divided between two contrasted frontiers of trade and belief. The savanna states of the Sudan, recently revolutionised by Islam, were orientated to internal trade and the northern outlets over the Sahara. Their respective statehoods were challenged by local rivals, not by European power, capital or ideas. The Guinea forest states on the other hand were open to the Atlantic, European traders, gunboats and the subversive moral community of Christianity. Their internal social inequalities differed accordingly,

and so did their forms of expression. In the savanna political opposition was couched in the language of Islam, in competition between brotherhoods, in the apocalyptic hopes of Mahdism. Slave populations, so greatly expanded in the warfare and drives for intensified production of the nineteenth century, were sometimes unable to communicate in the language of their African masters, let alone in the idiom of the Europeans who were to come. They were *baibayi*, pagans, who, as captive outsiders, are remembered as speaking 'by gesture as if they were deaf'.² In the forest kingdoms and coastal city-states on the other hand, political dissent was beginning in places to be tinged with Christian doubt. In the English city-state of Lagos, wives of the African Christian élite taught, sewed and held soirées, while some of the labouring poor had by the 1880s subscribed to a Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Mutual Improvement Association; others in 1897 defeated the colonial government in a concerted strike.³ The first colonial rulers faced therefore quite different forms of African opposition in West Africa – external, culturally alien in the savannas, but on the coasts often expressed in the language of the conquerors, internal, legitimate, and difficult to ignore, however much the African intelligentsia might be increasingly despised.

Such differences made a lasting imprint on the ways in which men and women interpreted their world, their obligations towards and their rights over their fellows. Even within the forest trading frontier, one can distinguish between those societies which for centuries had been penetrated by outside credit, and inland peoples whose rulers managed for longer to control the terms of exchange. The coastal Akan or Fante people to this day hold a concept of honour clean contrary to that of the Akan of the interior, the Asante. By the mid-nineteenth century the Fante were already known as 'a nation of pedlars', and they still admire the independently wealthy and educated gentleman. But for the Asante, whose intimate contact with the coast dates only from the 1830s, the model of excellence remains the chief, a wealthy man certainly, but also a status inseparable from its eighteenth-century

² Poly Hill, *Population, prosperity and poverty: rural Kano, 1900 and 1970* (Cambridge, 1977), 214.

³ Kristin Mann, 'The dangers of dependence: Christian marriage among elite women in Lagos Colony, 1880–1915', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1983, 24, 1, 37–56; A. G. Hopkins, 'The Lagos strike of 1897: an exploration in Nigerian labour history', *Past and Present*, 1966, 35, 133–55.

origins in military service for the state.⁴ By the late nineteenth century, Fante resistance to British claims took the form of political argument; the Asante knew how to argue, but they still had recourse to guns.

A similar contrast between coast and interior, but with quite opposite implications for African reactions to conquest, can be observed in East Africa. Earlier in this volume it has been argued that the Maji Maji rising of 1905 behind the coastlands of German East Africa was fired by the indignation of cotton-growers who received worse market terms than rubber-tappers. Their sense of injustice is incomprehensible save within a social culture dominated by traders' credit.⁵ But in the far interior, when the peasants of Buganda started paying cash rents to their landlords, they persisted in seeing the transaction as *okusenga*, rendering service to their chief, a term linguistically akin to 'forming a line of battle'.⁶ Three paradoxes emerge from this disparity of perception, each illustrating the complexities of conquest. The intensity of East Africa's export trade in ivory, slaves and latterly in rubber, was a quite recent phenomenon; its commercial morality was provided by Islam, not Christianity; and its network of goods and alliances had provided the means for new men to assemble power over the interior's stateless societies more often than it afforded old authority. Trading relationships therefore, for all these reasons and more, stimulated frontiers of resistance against European intrusion rather than, as on many of West Africa's coasts, possible channels of accommodation. Moreover, the Europeans with whom the coastal African traders had to come to terms were not the English or French, with their long-standing connections with Zanzibar, but newcomers, first the emissaries of the Belgian King Leopold and then the Germans, who had to break rather than exploit existing relationships if they were to make good. The 'scramble' cannot everywhere be explained in terms of a forcible European solution to a local crisis of informal empire; at this local level it was by no means necessarily a part of African history. The third paradox is that in East Africa, pre-

⁴ Kwame Arhin, 'Rank and class among the Asante and the Fante in the nineteenth century', *Africa*, 1983, 53, 1, 2-22; T. C. McCaskie, 'Accumulation, wealth and belief in Asante history, 1: To the close of the nineteenth century', *ibid.*, 23-43.

⁵ See chapter 10, above, pp. 586-8.

⁶ John Iliffe, *The emergence of African capitalism* (London, 1983), 33. I am indebted to Dr Iliffe for saving me from much error.

colonial Christianity was associated less with the expansion of trade than with the intensification of war. The first missionaries arrived in the kingdom of Buganda, four months' march into the interior, in 1877 – an event of which the centenary was to be marked, shockingly, by the martyrdom of Archbishop Janani Luwum at the hands of President Amin. After little more than a decade their adherents had been transformed from the fire-armed agents of royal despotism into the arbiters of power. A further decade of warfare, this time in alliance with British conquest, saw them transformed again, into the landlord chiefs to whom rent-service was due. Insofar as Christianity in Buganda was linked with trade, it was through the import of guns, ten thousand at least by the 1880s, and so with the rearmament of African statehood rather than with the accumulation of European power. The advancing frontiers of external trade and new belief were not always harmoniously linked.

To the north and south of the tropics, white settlers were by the 1870s hostile to all forms of African belief, whether indigenous or universal. It was not simply that the settlers' need to justify their seizure of African land and exploitation of African labour made them peculiarly receptive to the general hardening of European racial attitudes which, except for a still liberal evangelical minority, converted hopes for a civilising mission into the nightmares of a defensive domination.⁷ For settlers, whether in Algeria or South Africa, were not mere farmers, traders or artisans, individuals facing Africa. They were at once the strategic core and the most dangerous opponents of the colonial states which protected them. The treatment of African Islam or Christianity was subject as much to the changing structures of local states as to the changing currents of overall European perceptions of the non-European world. The settlers of Algeria had from the start been the auxiliaries of conquest. They were there to hold ground won by the military. And by the 1870s the French army had a fixed image of the hostility of all those Muslims who were not subject to a strict administrative patronage. It was not possible to admit Muslims to citizenship of the Algerian state, which was an overseas province of France, unless they renounced their culture by a public act of apostasy. And yet in 1870, when

⁷ Ronald Hyam, *Britain's imperial century, 1815–1914* (London, 1976), 78–85.

metropolitan authority was smashed by defeat in war and the deposition of the emperor, it was the local citizens, the French settlers, who proved themselves able to paralyse the local government – something which the Muslim revolts of the following year could never do. The internal rebels were moreover appeased by being given a free hand to plunder the lands of the external ones. Muslims therefore suffered a twofold exclusion from power. They were feared while they remained beyond the pale of citizenship; they faced still stronger rivals within it.

It was much the same for Africans in South Africa. By the 1870s ‘the Christianity of free trade’, an alliance for progress with property-owning Africans, was being questioned from within the Cape Colony by whites who were beginning to envisage a future in which Africans were no longer a differentiated peasantry amenable to co-optation but, rather, a proletariat, a sullen alien mass.⁸ The Boer republics and the English colony in Natal had never had any use for educated blacks. Nor had independent African rulers, except where, as among the Tswana or in Basutoland, the external threat of white conquest was yet more dreadful than the internal wound of religious strife. Mission Christianity did not offer a convincing model of political assimilation on either side of the many frontiers between black and white in the late nineteenth century; to rulers both black and white, African Christians were *amaggoboka*, men and women with a hole in the heart, full of treasonous thoughts. Where missions did flourish, it was only as the patrons of minorities which had been broken up by conflict, either in the wars of European conquest on the eastern Cape frontier, or else in the wars of African state-building beyond the northern border of Natal.⁹ South Africa resembled Algeria also in the fact that its white settlers had shown themselves to be the more formidable antagonists of the local agents of imperial authority, whether as in the 1830s they had trekked beyond its grasp or, as in 1849, infected by the ‘revolu-

⁸ Stanley Trapido, ‘“The friends of the natives”’: merchants, peasants and the political and ideological structure of liberalism in the Cape, 1854–1910’, in Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore (eds.), *Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa* (London, 1980), 247–74.

⁹ Philip Mayer, *Townsmen or tribesmen* (Cape Town, 1961), 30; N. Etherington, *Preachers, peasants and politics in southeast Africa, 1835–1880: African Christian communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand* (London, 1978).

tionary genius of the age', they had tried to prise it open, at the Cape, from within.¹⁰ African Christians were, by contrast, neither prospectively loyal enough to be rewarded with, nor demonstrably dangerous enough to be placated by, the construction of constitutional bridges of accommodation across the gulf separating black and white.

Nor was there any possibility that the local version of the informal imperialism of free trade would long continue, by which independent African rulers provided an external proletariat to white farmers, planters and mine-owners. African labour was certainly forthcoming, and it was supplied in as diverse ways as the vegetable products of the West African traders' frontier. Some young men (but no young women) walked hundreds of miles to work in order to escape parental and chiefly authority, others went as loyal citizens to earn the price of a rifle for their king's armoury, but most were probably despatched under custody as war captives, in transactions difficult to distinguish from the old Atlantic slave trade.¹¹ By the 1870s supplies were beginning to fall short of what expanding colonial capitalism needed, and Boer farmers often poached labourers whom planters and miners had hoped to hire. But it was almost certainly for another reason that African independence became intolerable. As late as 1879 it was still possible for black South African armies to slaughter European troops in open battle; the extraordinary number of Victoria crosses then issued to the British expeditionary force paid indirect tribute to Zulu valour. And African rulers were devoting their earnings as labour recruiters to the purchase of guns; the Zulu alone bought twenty thousand rifles in five years in the mid-1870s. They, and others like them, had to be subjugated not because they were predatory systems incompatible with white purposes,¹² for

¹⁰ Stanley Trapido, 'The origins of the Cape franchise qualifications of 1833', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1964, 5, 1, 37-54.

¹¹ Peter N. St. M. Delius, 'The Pedi polity under Sekwati and Sekhukhune, 1828-1880', Ph.D. thesis, London, 1980, chs. 3 and 6; Charles Ballard, 'The role of trade and hunter-traders in the political economy of Natal and Zululand, 1824-1880', *Afr. Econ. Hist.*, 1981, 10, 3-21; Patrick Harries, 'Slavery, social incorporation and surplus extraction: the nature of free and unfree labour in South-East Africa', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1981, 22, 3, 309-30; Philip Bonner, *Kings, commoners and concessionaires: the evolution and dissolution of the nineteenth-century Swazi State* (Cambridge, 1982), 80-4, 90-2.

¹² As might be inferred from R. E. Robinson and J. Gallagher, 'The partition of Africa' in F. H. Hinsley (ed.), *The new Cambridge modern history*, XI: *Material progress and world-wide problems 1870-1898* (Cambridge, 1962), ch. 22, especially pp. 617-20.

their pillage was compatible enough, but because they were feared to be growing too strong.¹³

The third frontier of change which moved across Africa in these years, that of famine and disease, was certainly more complex and perhaps also more profound in its effects than the frontiers of either trade or white settlement. Research on the history of famine and disease, especially on their intellectual, therapeutic and political history, is in its infancy. It is plain that for many parts of Africa the era of colonial conquest was also an era of ecological catastrophe; but it may not have been a uniquely catastrophic time. In many African societies famine is an *aide memoire* to past history, more regular than the cycle of age-sets, as certain as the death of kings. Rituals of chiefship warded off drought precisely because it was to be expected, and drought-famished people, all Africans knew, were particularly susceptible to disease. Refugees from drought might take their afflictions with them; they might equally encounter new disease environments against which they had built up no immunities. As the Himba of Angola observe, 'hunger does not kill, it is sickness that kills'.¹⁴ Armies and caravans were hospitable to disease, and their movements were not restricted to the late nineteenth century. The demographic disaster which accompanied conquest may therefore not have been unprecedented but it was not for that reason any the less terrible.

Smallpox was a well-known camp-follower, so were typhoid and cholera. It was not only white troops who succumbed to malaria. Even measles was a killer for the young and starving. Quite new scourges could appear from nowhere. The sandfleas, called jiggers, which were inadvertently imported to the Congo coast from Brazil in the 1870s, spread right across Africa in little more than two decades. In the brief interval between their first appearance in a new area and the improvisation of simple defences against their burrowing and egg-laying beneath the skin, they could literally cripple seedtime or harvest, maiming those cultivators who did not die of gangrene. It is not possible to draw up any general rules about the causal connections between

¹³ C. F. Goodfellow, *Great Britain and South African Confederation 1870-1881* (Cape Town, 1966), 159.

¹⁴ Joseph C. Miller, 'The significance of drought, disease and famine in the agriculturally marginal zones of West-Central Africa', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1982, 23, 1, 23.

ecological or epidemiological affliction and political action. In Angola alone, drought could variously inflate political power through the voluntary enslavement of the famished to the well fed, destroy its credibility by dearth, or brutalise it by encouraging raids on the grain or livestock of neighbours. Political opposition likewise could be stifled as well as goaded by famine.¹⁵

It is therefore rash to suggest that there is nonetheless an illuminating correlation to be seen between disaster and politics if one measures the southward sweep of the great rinderpest epizootic of the 1890s against the final forward push of European conquest. Rinderpest came to Africa in the late 1880s, almost certainly with European quartermasters. It seems that infected cattle from Russian or British Asia were disembarked at Red Sea ports to feed the Italian forces invading Eritrea.¹⁶ Entering Africa at the Horn, the hinge of Africa's savanna belts, rinderpest struck both west, along the Sudanic corridor between the desert and the forest, and south, down eastern Africa's pastoral highlands; it reached the Atlantic in 1892, the Cape in 1897. Rinderpest can literally devastate not only herds of domestic cattle, killing anywhere between 30 and 90 per cent, but also many varieties of game animals, antelope and buffalo especially. Domestic small-stock, sheep and goats, are unaffected. It moves like a forest fire, consuming almost everything at the first encounter, but patchily, allowing free room for rapid regeneration by any livestock left standing in the wake of its destruction. Cattle have been observed to recover their numbers at an annual rate of 15 per cent, at least for the first few years after devastation.¹⁷ If one assumes a 90 per cent loss and a constant recovery rate uninterrupted by drought, other cattle pests or raids from neighbours, up to twelve years would still be needed for herds to recoup half their original size,

¹⁵ Jill R. Dias, 'Famine and disease in the history of Angola, c. 1830-1930', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1981, 22, 3, 349-78.

¹⁶ John Ford, *The role of the Trypanosomiasis in African ecology: a study of the tsetse-fly problem* (Oxford, 1971), 138. Ford later (p. 394) gives support to speculation that diseased cattle may also have been imported to supply the British expedition of 1884-5, in relief of General Gordon besieged by the Mahdists at Khartoum. The official history of the campaign shows that the main force, up the Nile, was rationed with tinned beef. The secondary expedition, based on the Red Sea port of Suakin, was supplied with Russian (and therefore potentially infected) cattle. However, while the army's veterinary officers were concerned about sickness in camels and horses, they appear to have noticed nothing amiss with the store cattle. See H. C. Colville, *History of the Sudan campaign* (London, 1889), especially vol. II, 189-94.

¹⁷ Ford, *Trypanosomiasis*, 165.

and seventeen for their full restoration. For Africa's savanna peoples, whose cattle furnished much of the means of subsistence and still more of the working capital of family alliance and political power, that was too long to sit out the recession in equality of misery. Recovery was sought at other people's expense, if not by stealing then by borrowing. This was everywhere the intention. The outcome had at least four variations, depending upon the sources of capital available and its terms.

Where the disaster struck beyond the frontier of European power, rulers of people whose herds were not totally destroyed could exploit or redefine their prerogative claims on the remaining cattle, redistributing them as the working capital of sovereignty. The rulers of Bulozzi and Rwanda did as much. Menelik of Ethiopia did the same, and more; his continuing conquest of the surrounding Oromo plains, often noted as pre-emptive of European empire, was equally a reaction to rinderpest and drought. Such rulers could face the European invasion with rejuvenated authority, their actual power commensurate with its ritual claims to ecological management. But there were other rulers and sectional authorities who were too enfeebled to recover on their own. If the rinderpest coincided with invasion, then an astute alliance could give them borrowing rights on European military resources. Cattle then became the working capital of white conquest, seized from opponents and redistributed to allies. The recovery from disaster of the northern Masai, the chief auxiliaries of the British conquest of Kenya, provides the classic example. Further south, however, the European conquest came first. Then any vigorous African effort to claw back well-being lost to locusts, drought and rinderpest could only take the form of rebellion, as in Rhodesia's *chimurenga*. It was the irony of rebellion here, as with the Kabylia uprising of 1871 in Algeria, itself in part an attempt to recover from drought, that defeat resulted in a still more ruthless denial of resources to the rebels. Finally, in South Africa, rinderpest devoured pastoral economies, white as well as black, which were in any case being displaced to the margins of power by the rapid growth of mining. With their vastly superior resources entirely unaffected by rinderpest, the mining magnates could convert the remaining cattle into the working capital of the labour market, as their recruiters paid out

livestock in advances of pay to migrants' families.¹⁸ Industrial capitalism expanded like chiefship, by rewarding the voluntary submission of the poor.

The relationship between rinderpest and trypanosomiasis or sleeping-sickness – the Black Death, as it has been called, of colonial Africa¹⁹ – remains controversial. Within little more than a decade of conquest, sleeping-sickness had wiped out terrifyingly large numbers of the population in a ghastly swathe from the mouth of the Congo to the eastern shores of Lake Victoria. The tsetse-fly, the vector of the trypanosomes, was first reported in Africa in the days of the prophet Isaiah.²⁰ What caused the new and deadly expansion of contact between the fly and man is uncertain. Each of the rival explanations has difficulties. It could be that the disruptions of conquest, and the freedom of movement encouraged by the colonial *pax* or demanded by employers all upset the caution with which men had previously insulated themselves from fly zones – but then war, long-distance trade and large-scale population movements were scarcely new in Africa. It may be, alternatively, that rinderpest destroyed the previous balance between the civil, humanized environment and the wild, since bush and game, hosts to the tsetse, moved faster than man and cattle to reclaim the vacant pastures.²¹ This looks convincing for the savanna but can scarcely be true of the forest. Whatever the explanation, sleeping-sickness was the culminating disaster of the early colonial period. African societies had been divided against themselves and against their neighbours by an apparently unprecedented concatenation of change. New sources of wealth and power overturned or strained existing constitutions while new beliefs questioned their cosmological bases; new misfortunes, aweful in scale, mocked conventional explanations of evil and

¹⁸ Gwyn Prins, *The hidden hippopotamus. Reappraisal in African history: the early colonial experience in western Zambia* (Cambridge, 1980), 85–7; Richard Pankhurst, 'The great Ethiopian famine of 1888–92: a new assessment', *J. Hist. of Medicine*, 1966, 21, 2 and 3, 95–124, 271–294; Richard Waller, 'The Maasai and the British 1895–1905: the origins of an alliance', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1976, 17, 4, 529–53 – I am indebted to Dr Waller for his advice in the writing of this chapter; T. O. Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia 1896–7* (London, 1967), 113, 147; C. van Onselen, 'Reactions to rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896–97', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1972, 13, 3, 473–88; William Beinart, *The political economy of Pondoland 1860–1930* (Cambridge, 1982), 54–63.

¹⁹ See above, chapter 6(B), p. 355.

²⁰ Ford, *Trypanosomiasis*, 466.

²¹ Both explanations are presented in *ibid.*, which favours the latter one.

their therapies; Europeans everywhere became uncontrollable. It was an age of anxiety,²² of sudden witchcraft panics, a time when the politics of survival seemed to demand desperate tyrannies. It was also an age of enquiry, when the excesses of old régimes raised hopes for the new. Europeans were apprehensive too; they would not otherwise have embarked on the unknown territory of the scramble. Nor did they find security there, for military conquest bred its own disorders. Civil administrations only shifted the source of threat; early colonial regulations on everything from rural trade to urban sanitation could look very much like witchcraft accusations, treating the poor not so much as objects of misery but as the baneful agents of affliction. Rituals of cleanliness segregated the rulers from the ruled.²³

THE CAUSES OF CONQUEST

An examination of these several frontiers of change can help to illuminate the wide variety of the African experience of colonial conquest; it can begin to suggest how much was changed by conquest in each particular case, and how little. It can do nothing to explain the causes of conquest, the main concern of most previous analyses of the scramble. The chief difficulty has always been to devise answers of wide explanatory power which also tread delicately the maze of special cases. Plainly, the scramble for Africa occurred because the European world was changing; Africa's place in it was changing too. Economic explanations, which insist that the world powers of the time were less specifically European than characteristically capitalist, fail, in most of their classical Marxist forms, to explain why capitalist imperialism, a primarily economic phenomenon, should have given way to European colonialism, an essentially political one; nor do they have anything at all to say on African history. Explanations which stress not the long-term tendencies of capital but the short-term predicaments of capitalists get us much further, particularly over the matter of timing. Hopkins' analysis of the ways in which European traders tried to cut their costs during

²² Elizabeth Isichei, *The Ibo people and the Europeans* (London, 1973), 105.

²³ John Dunn and A. F. Robertson, *Dependence and opportunity: political change in Abafo* (Cambridge, 1973), 96–121; Maynard W. Swanson, 'The sanitation syndrome: bubonic plague and urban native policy in the Cape colony, 1900–1909', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1977, 18, 3, 387–410.

the Great Depression of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the severe limits to any remedial measures which were not reinforced by political action, was very persuasive; moreover, it showed how African authorities were similarly put under strain. It was a regional analysis, addressed to the well-established trading frontier of the Guinea coasts. It is employed more generally in this chapter.²⁴

Robinson and Gallagher's earlier explanation was continental in scale and attracted attention because they took changes in Europe and in Africa equally seriously. They showed how increasing flows of trade and credit could induce insecurity on both sides. African rulers were challenged from within; locally established Europeans alarmed their rivals from without, since any steps which they might take to repair their African relations could only look like measures to exclude other European powers. Their argument has been proved wrong in its single-minded emphasis on the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 as the starting-pistol for the scramble north of the Zambezi. More generally, their explanation of the different African reactions to conquest was functional rather than historical. Africans, they believed, confronted or accommodated European initiatives by reason of their contrasting societal constitutions rather than as the outcome of a conflict between political classes who had been divided by their experience of the moving frontiers of change. They failed to appreciate that such conflicts might be sharpened by commercial depression. A large gap in the Robinson and Gallagher thesis was repaired by Sanderson, who showed that the defensive aggression of British imperialism, their main interest, was symptomatic of the crumbling of the global British hegemony. British aggression in the 1870s was the spur, Britain's weakness the opportunity for the imperialism of younger industrial states, although one of them, France, was an old colonial rival. More recently, the growing literature on the particular, and crucial, South African case has stressed the growing importance which almost all contemporaries of any influence, even in a Britain bound by popular prejudice to *laissez faire*, attributed to the state in the management of the ecology of capitalism.²⁵

²⁴ A. G. Hopkins, *An economic history of West Africa* (London, 1973), ch. 4.

²⁵ Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: the official mind of imperialism* (London, 1961); G. N. Sanderson, 'The European partition of Africa: coincidence or conjuncture?' *J. Imp. C'wealth Hist.* 1974,

All these analyses have their own power. In their combination there lies an explanation of the scramble or, preferably, scrambles, for Africa. But even when combined they do not adequately consider the growing intensity of conquest as the nineteenth century ended, nor do they ask how far Africans were competing in the same field as Europeans, rather than merely reacting to a series of crises in their mutual relations. There is also a hiatus between explanations of the scramble and analyses of early colonial government, which is often seen as a makeshift solution to the unanticipated problems of rule, the problems, especially, of making Africans pay taxes and making Africans work for wages.

It is possible to put forward a more connected view than this of the thirty and more years of partition and conquest, one which does away with the false distinction between politics and economics that has baffled so much of the historiography of the scramble. The international history of the later nineteenth century was shaped by what can only be called a revolution in power. It was a European phenomenon, with global ramifications. European nations became industrial states; they underwent a competitive and uneven industrialisation of statehood. Non-European powers were obliged to try to follow suit. Japan was the most conspicuously successful in this world-wide competition to meet the rising costs of sovereignty. The Chinese gave it a name, self-strengthening, but found it altogether too subversive of established authority to give it substance. African polities failed too, for this and for more fundamental reasons as well. It was an enormously complex process, difficult enough to grasp today, impossible to understand then. Statesmen were constantly bewildered by the unprecedented expense both of diplomatic bargains and, even more so, of war, except when it was war against non-European, pre-industrial peoples. Of the many aspects of industrialisation the most relevant to our theme seems to be the contrast between the rather unsystematic interventions which states undertook in production or trade, in order to give specific assistance to particular interests in their moments of difficulty, and the growing coherence of public policies for coping with the

3, 1, 1-54; and chapter 2 of this volume; Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South African state', *History Workshop*, 1979, 8, 50-80; Norman Etherington, 'Theories of imperialism in southern Africa revisited', *African Affairs*, 1982, 81, 324, 385-407.

domestic dislocations and international rivalries of capitalist expansion. The lack of co-ordination in economic policy reflected the difficulty of balancing claims from the competing proprietary interests which were vocally represented in new liberal institutions. The growing purpose in social policy acknowledged the interest of the proprietary and professional classes as a whole in maintaining the allegiance of the rapidly growing and potentially dangerous mass of urban workers.

The first characteristic of industrialising states had two implications for imperialism. First, to protect particular industrial or commercial interests in overseas markets was an easier political option than any partisan intervention in the workings of the political economy at home.²⁶ This observation reinforces the significance of the Great Depression in stimulating calls for imperial measures. The second implication made it all the more likely that such calls would be heard. For the industrialisation of land and naval warfare since the 1840s had been largely the business of private enterprise. Internationally competitive manufacturers were principally responsible for the development of mass-produced infantry weapons of growing accuracy, reliability and speed, and of ever more advanced means of propulsion and destruction at sea. National arsenals were continually outstripped in the techniques of killing, and the international arms trade could not be subjected to national controls. The nerves of international diplomacy were increasingly raw. There was a succession of infantry, artillery and naval scares from the 1860s onwards. The French decision in the late 1870s to outdo Britain in new naval technology ensured that any new French empire would not be defenceless; and the diplomatic destruction of Britain's African paramountcy at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 was completed against the background of British public alarm at the obsolescence of the Royal Navy.²⁷

The European powers found that they had to come to terms not only with the competitive demands of their domestic capitalists and the mechanisation of warfare, but also with the social corrosion of industrial life. This second feature of the industrial-

²⁶ W. G. Hynes, 'British mercantile attitudes towards imperial expansion', *Hist. J.* 1976, 19, 4, 969-79; P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, 'The political economy of British expansion overseas, 1750-1914', *Econ. Hist. Review*, 1980, 2nd series 33, 4, 485.

²⁷ William H. McNeill, *The pursuit of power: technology, armed force and society since A.D. 1000* (Oxford, 1983), chs. 7 and 8.

isation of statehood meant that states and municipalities assumed increasing powers of social management, while middle classes took on increasing skills in managing. New, or newly expanding professions – factory inspectors, teachers, civil engineers, civil servants, military and naval officers – acquired a self-interested faith in enlarging the sphere of public competence. It was symptomatic that one of the earliest dreamers of formal African empire, Charles de Freycinet, was both an engineer and a minister of Public Works. He had reorganised the French railway system; railway building in French Africa would merely extend it. More than any other innovation, railways symbolised the links between profit and power. By the 1870s they had begun to convert the howling wildernesses of prairie and pampas into farms and ranches producing cheap food for Europe's millions; in Asia they were transporting grain from the populous Deccan. But railways had also carried Prussia's armies to a series of stunning victories. There was no reason why they should not have the same twin effects in Africa, defended by but also defending European control.²⁸ The engine of empire, on land and sea, was driven by steam. Medical science was another servant of military power. Government-sponsored economic botany, botanical burglary indeed, had broken the South American monopoly on the cinchona bark used for quinine, the victor over the malaria which laid colonial armies low.²⁹ If conquest and its ecological disturbances made Africa a more dangerous environment for Africans, white men's graves at least would not be dug so often. Repeating rifles meant that not so many had to be put at risk.

Europe's industrial states were acquiring the capacity to reduce not only their own populations to order but the outside world as well. Their official classes, if not yet their politicians, had long had the appropriate attitudes. From the 1850s humanitarian hopes for the free adaptation of Africans to European conceptions of civil order began to fade. Thereafter, the view that Africans were doomed to barbarous poverty unless rescued from without gained an increasing hold upon the conventional official wisdom. Consul

²⁸ A. S. Kanya-Forstner, 'Military expansion in the western Sudan – French and British style', in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa: imperial rivalry and colonial rule* (New Haven and London, 1971), 409–41; G. N. Uzoigwe, 'The Mombasa-Victoria railway, 1890–1902: imperial necessity, humanitarian venture, or economic imperialism?', *Kenya Hist. Review*, 1976, 4, 1, 11–34.

²⁹ Lucile H. Brockway, *Science and colonial expansion: the role of the British botanic gardens* (New York, 1979).

THE CAUSES OF CONQUEST

William Plowden's blast against Ethiopia's wretched rulers was typical.

The wasteful government of a military oligarchy, the incessant struggles for mastery, and uncertain tenure of all power, the careless sensuality of the chiefs, the wretched administration of the law, the utter decay of learning, and the selfish corruption of the priesthood have ruined a nation... Individuals are found who feel that their nationality is lost... But it is to be feared that this decay cannot be checked by any efforts of their own.'

Ten years later, on the opposite side of the continent, Faidherbe, governor of Senegal, similarly called for reforms to end the misrule of warrior chiefs, the *tyeddo* 'who under the influence of alcoholic drinks commit all sorts of crimes, and who are a very real calamity for the country they dominate... a country daily destroyed by its chiefs'.³⁰ Similar censures could be read in almost any report reaching Paris or London over the following twenty years. Officials became convinced that Africa's latent productivity could never be fully released until it was made more directly subject to their own efficient probity. But it was not these self-interested beliefs of the men on the spot, however endlessly reiterated, which caused the scramble and the growing intensity of conquest thereafter. For that one has to return to the more general theme of the internationally competitive industrialisation of statehood.

Two main trends are immediately noticeable over these three decades: first, the growing purposefulness of European intervention in African affairs; next, the changing nature of the perceived African threats, from military confrontation to social disorder and the collapse of export production. Three interrelated considerations help to explain these trends: changing political attitudes and capacities in the industrial states, their sharpening international rivalry, and the consequences for Africans of their own largely unsuccessful attempts to emulate the European revolution in power.

European purposes and methods in the 1890s were very different from the earlier phase of the scramble in the 1870s and early 1880s.³¹ There were really two successive scrambles. The

³⁰ *Report on northern Abyssinia*, 9 July 1854 (Foreign Office confidential print, no. 483, 1854), 26–7; Faidherbe to Ma Bâ, 23 May 1864, quoted in Martin A. Klein, *Islam and imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum, 1847–1914* (Edinburgh, 1968), 81.

³¹ For a full discussion see chapter 2 by G. N. Sanderson.

first scramble may well have gathered up otherwise unrelated reactions by special capitalist interests to the onset of the financial and trading slumps of the mid-1870s. But it is the relative disconnectedness of commercial interest and political action which remains striking. British political action anywhere, it is true, was bound to defend material British interests, since there was scarcely any part of Africa in which they were not already privately engaged; and British attempts to repair the security of existing colonies and African client states were undoubtedly the first forward moves in the 1870s. But the new European forces which then joined in were anything but sensitive to threatened capitalist interests. Belgian capitalists, institutionally the most advanced in Europe, were quite indifferent to the imperial dreams of their king, Leopold II, who had been shopping unsuccessfully for colonies in the Far East since the 1860s before turning, thwarted, to Africa.³² There was almost constant hostility between French traders in West Africa and the soldiers who took it upon themselves to advance French power. Merchants loathed the disruption of war, especially when they then had to pay for it. The military had an altogether loftier self-interest. They believed themselves, like the new professional classes all over Europe, to be the 'vigilant guardian of the general interest', opposing their 'calm and equity' to the 'passion and greed' of commerce.³³

Once all the diplomatic alarms had been soothed by the Berlin Conference colonial officials did almost nothing to organise Africa for capital, except to protect their metropolitan exporters with discriminatory tariffs. Even this minimal external obligation was banned by treaty from the Congo basin and East Africa. Outside South Africa, where capitalists were in any case shaping the local political institutions, the only vigorous economic policy to be pursued was in Egypt, and in the circumstances that was the doctrinaire and deflationary liberal policy of solvent government and sound money. In tropical Africa, Britain and Germany tried to banish the awkward problems of the proper relationship between government and business by putting public power into private hands, getting capitalists to organise their own salvation through chartered companies. The French and Belgian concessionary régimes in equatorial Africa showed the same desire to

³² See chapter 6(B) above, pp. 321–2.

³³ Governor Brière de l'Isle, 21 April 1878, quoted in Klein, *Islam and imperialism*, 124n.

disown any public responsibility for private profit or loss, while the hostility of the British government in Lagos for its over-mighty neighbour the Royal Niger Company was notorious.

This relative distance between colonial governments and local business interests was scarcely surprising in the economically depressed conditions of the time and is in any case not the only relevant area in which to look for connections between state and capital. Official coolness towards commerce had two sources. Local colonial governments were obliged to be deaf to traders' protests as they looked to fresh duties to maintain their own depressed revenues; and at home the traders' distress was music to metropolitan manufacturers. The depression lowered the costs of their raw materials; and African suppliers now had to compete with rivals all round the globe, who were brought into production by Europe's investments in shipping and foreign railways. In this first scramble then, statesmen had no need to safeguard supplies; they were plentiful enough; it was markets that were threatened. During these same years governments were beginning to protect their own domestic markets; and overseas protection needed little enough of a state machine, one's own port officials rather than those of some industrial competitor, and African promises of open roads. Rivalry over the disposal of the crumbling Ottoman empire in the Balkans had already given European powers the taste for diplomatic bargains in other people's property. There was little new in the first scramble for Africa.

The second scramble in the 1890s was a different matter; it was altogether a new imperialism. The world was being transformed. The Great Depression was ending, but not before it had created a swelling flight from the land into Europe's cities. Urban populations needed cheap food, and that came increasingly from overseas. Industrial employers also required ever larger quantities of raw materials. Commodity prices rose quite sharply from the middle of the decade; trade was picking up and America's young industries were buying raw materials which the New World had previously exported to the Old. Europe had already suffered one cotton famine, during the American civil war. There had been surprisingly little worker unrest then. But there were millions more workers now and they were becoming organised. Their proletarianisation caused international diplomacy to become

obsessed with safeguarding supply. This final consequence of industrialisation was responsible for the 'geopolitical claustrophobia' of the time, the 'feeling that national expansion was running out of world space',³⁴ and for the colonial scrambles and naval races which that claustrophobia evoked.

The exploitation of Africa now required overseas production as much as overseas markets. European officials had previously denounced the oppressions of Africa's rulers; they now asked themselves what other than slavery would make Africans work. Masterless Africans, they anticipated, would be as dangerously demoralised as the urban unemployed at home. Conquest turned into a struggle for the control of labour. With textiles everywhere the leading sector of Europe's industrialisation, by 1900 almost all colonial governments thought that economic development meant making Africans grow cotton for export.

THE AFRICAN RACE FOR POWER

Africans had long grown cotton, whether as free villagers or slaves; African handloom weavers sold their cloth in bulk to merchants, many of whom had sunk capital in indigo pits; rural Kano was the Lancashire of West Africa.³⁵ But unlike Europe, no nineteenth-century African kingdom underwent an industrialisation of statehood. Many attempted self-strengthening. That seemed essential in order to keep up with Europeans, so as to keep them out. None succeeded. Few got as far as the Chinese in discovering just how corrosive of political order the process could be.

On all the frontiers of European rule and trade, Africans attempted 'to maintain independence by borrowing and adapting western institutions'.³⁶ African peoples in the interior had long employed the same political and cultural smuggling in order to confront or, failing that, to domesticate the power of their own stronger neighbours.³⁷ From Europeans they borrowed with a

³⁴ Robinson and Gallagher, 'The partition of Africa', 626; see also C. C. Wrigley, 'Neo-mercantile politics and the new imperialism', in Clive Dewey and A. G. Hopkins (eds.), *The imperial impact: studies in the economic history of Africa and India* (London, 1978), 20-34.

³⁵ P. Shea, 'The development of an export oriented dyed cloth industry in Kano emirate in the nineteenth century', PhD. thesis, Wisconsin, 1975.

³⁶ Thomas Hodgkin, *Nigerian perspectives, an historical anthology* (London, 1960), 49.

³⁷ Aidan W. Southall, *Alur Society* (Cambridge, 1956), ch. 8.

canny eclecticism. Kings and chiefs well knew the power of ideas; they themselves continually manipulated the ideas of power. But literacy, one of the most obvious advantages of Muslims or Europeans, had its own 'great and hidden powers' unlicensed by chiefly authority. So Tlhaping chiefs in South Africa were prepared to welcome resident missionaries as conduits of knowledge of the outside world only on condition that they neither taught nor preached religion. King Eyo of Calabar's Creek Town became quite fatherly in comforting missionaries for their failures in an evangelism he was determined to prevent. The *asantehene*, Mensa Bonsu, for all his passion for self-strengthening, refused to select prospective school pupils in 1876, 'for Ashantee children have better work to do than to sit down all day idly to learn hoy! hoy! hoy! They have to fan their parents, and do other work, which is much better.' Moshoeshoe of Basutoland, diplomatic to the last, managed to die just two days before his baptism in 1870, putting off for ever what he had been postponing for years.³⁸

Apart from Liberia, there were only three attempts at christianised African independence beyond the European frontier – the Methodist-inspired Fante Confederation on the Gold Coast, the Anglican Egba United Board of Management in Yorubaland and the Congregationalist Griqua captaincies in South Africa. The first attempted a federation of established chiefdoms, the other two were refugee settlements. All of them were foredoomed to extinction by the advance of white rule, but none of them looked like resolving their own conflicts between centrally financed authority and the individual commercial or farming interests of their most prominent supporters. King Khama's apparently reckless Christian renovation of his Nguni people was rational only because he was a factional leader dependent upon external Christian support before he became a national one. And his reform programme succumbed to the danger that his more cautious contemporaries all feared. In seeking to control intrusive white power by harnessing it to his

³⁸ T. C. McCaskie, 'Innovational eclecticism: the Asante empire and Europe in the nineteenth century', *Comp. Studies in Soc. and Hist.*, 1972, 14, 32; Anthony J. Dachs, 'Missionary imperialism – the case of Bechuanaland', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1972, 13, 4, 648; J. F. A. Ajayi, *Christian missions in Nigeria, 1841–1891: the making of a new élite* (London, 1965), 100–5; David Kimble, *A political history of Ghana: the rise of Gold Coast nationalism, 1850–1928* (Oxford, 1963), 75; Leonard Thompson, *Survival in two worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786–1870* (Oxford, 1975), 323.

own interests he was using a lever which turned in his hands. White concessionaires moved in. More Africans with ploughs, waggons and education made their own private contracts with them. The refusal of self-strengthening in the outsiders' idiom yielded no better results. Protected by distance in the far interior from the most palpable effects of white power, King Lewanika of Bulozhi might seem to preserve his own hidden resources of authority in the ritual allegiance of his people by a carefully preventive accommodation with the Europeans; but the independence which he retained by working on the outsiders' misunderstandings was itself no more than a conceptual illusion.³⁹

The first demand made of most missionaries was that they should supply guns. Ethiopia preserved her independence into the twentieth century because she had guns, not because she was a Christian nation. Menelik's victorious army at Adowa in 1896, one hundred thousand strong, was composed largely of firearmed infantry. Most of the soldiers doubtless carried muskets, but as many as twenty thousand may have been issued with breech-loading rifles. Africans imported enormous quantities of guns in the nineteenth century, over one hundred thousand per annum by the 1860s, and a scarcely credible total of 16 million for the continent as a whole by 1907.⁴⁰ Comparatively few of these were rifles, a new tool of destruction which became available to Africans only as European armies discarded earlier models for still more lethal versions. African rulers had armouries rather than arsenals. Their military technology was improved, not as part of an internal process of the industrialization of statehood, but as a rearmament of statehood by imports from without. They strove to emulate the most obvious effect of industrialisation, without undergoing its ordeal. There were exceptions. Muḥammad 'Alī came nearest to being an African Peter the Great, mobilising all Egypt's resources in his attempt to industrialise by forced

³⁹ Adu Boahen, 'Politics in Ghana, 1800-1874', in J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (eds.), *History of West Africa*, vol. II (London, 1974), 242-59; Saburi O. Biobaku, *The Egba and their neighbours, 1842-1872* (Oxford, 1957); Robert Ross, *Adam Kok's Griquas: a study in the development of stratification in South Africa* (Cambridge, 1976); I. Schapera, *Tribal innovators: Tswana chiefs and social change 1795-1940* (London, 1970); Neil Parsons, 'The economic history of Khama's country in Botswana, 1844-1930', in Robin Palmer and Neil Parsons (eds.), *The roots of rural poverty in Central and Southern Africa* (London, 1977), 113-43; Prins, *Hidden hippopotamus*, 3.

⁴⁰ R. A. Caulk, 'Firearms and princely power in Ethiopia in the nineteenth century', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1972, 13, 4, 626; Gavin White, 'Firearms in Africa: an introduction', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1971, 12, 2, 182.

marches. Successive sultans of Zanzibar tried without much success to foster sugar-refining, shipbuilding and coconut oil-milling.⁴¹ 'Abd al-Qādir in Algeria, Samory in the western Sudan, Tewodros in Ethiopia, the kings of Imerina in Madagascar, Ibadan's war captains, all created the beginnings of independent arsenals. None got very far. Africa's relative technological backwardness was rooted in underpopulation and the obstacles which this presented to political exploitation.⁴² More fundamentally, its metallurgy, capable enough of producing high-quality iron, even steel, was quite unable to break through the ecological constraint on its development which Europeans in a similar predicament overcame in the eighteenth century by turning from charcoal to coal as the source of energy. Africa's iron-working remained tied to small units, immensely costly in the labour which they employed, not only in smelting and smithing but also in felling trees and charcoal burning.⁴³ Imported iron bars were increasingly used to substitute for labour, but they were of inferior quality. They were no answer to the Bessemer process or mass production precision-engineering, nor yet did they multiply backward linkages in domestic production. Africans had only two options in rearming. They could continue to import muskets, what today would be called an 'appropriate' or 'intermediate' technology of destruction, inefficient but able to be repaired locally, and for which powder and shot were also easily made. Rifles were not only more expensive, they implied a greater technological dependence. They were not easily repaired, their cartridges had to be imported. The military rearmament of African statehood turned out to be as vulnerable as its constitutional and cosmological renovation to its external suppliers. It had four varieties of consequence for African societies before the conquest, three of them – debt, disintegration and tyranny – being disastrous to self-strengthening.

The first consequence was external debt and political dissolution within. Egypt and Tunis provide the classic cases, but they were very different ones. Nor were their troubles due entirely to their

⁴¹ C. S. Nicholls, *The Swahili coast: politics, diplomacy and trade on the East African littoral 1798–1856* (London, 1971), 82–3, 366–9.

⁴² Jack Goody, *Technology, tradition, and the state in Africa* (Oxford, 1971); Hopkins, *Economic history of West Africa*, 8–77; William Ochieng', 'Undercivilisation in Black Africa', *Kenya Hist. Review*, 1974, 2, 1, 45–57.

⁴³ Candice L. Goucher, "'Iron is iron 'til it is rust': trade and ecology in the decline of West African iron-smelting", *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1981, 22, 2, 179–89.

rearmament; their governments had wider ambitions, forced on them by proximity to Europe. Both were hit by the general commercial and financial crises of the 1870s and, in Egypt's case, by the collapse of the cotton boom when American suppliers re-entered the market after the end of their civil war. Investment in government reforms and public works toppled into over-capitalisation. External borrowing and the penetration of European merchant capital put growing sectors of economic activity under consular protection, exempt from fiscal controls. Both countries suffered political crises, but of divergent sorts. Tunis presents the purest example of the inability of a pre-industrial but increasingly open political economy to bear the weight of increased government spending in face of the European threat. Its producers were not only increasingly tied to European rather than indigenous capital, they suffered extraordinary demographic reverses in the first half of the nineteenth century with a succession of droughts, famines and epidemics of cholera and plague. Typically, the articulation of two forms of economic life, non-capitalist and capitalist, did not eradicate old hazards but added a new one, the trade cycle. The beylical government then submerged its subjects in a 'tide of taxes' and judicial reforms which removed decisions from local competence. The doubling of the deeply regressive *majbā* or poll tax in 1864 provoked all the parochial divisions of the unreformed state to rise in arms against the new tax – but also, as the revolt collapsed, to fight against each other.⁴⁴ Egypt's opposition was based not on the old but the new, army officers and larger landowners, some of them attracted by the ideas of Islamic reformers. Egypt's army was no longer especially large. It took up less than 10 per cent of government expenditure in the mid-1870s, by comparison with the 60 or 70 per cent devoured by the external and internal debt. But the army was more susceptible to retrenchment than the debt, and when colonels protested and the government split over how to apportion taxes, then something like a national movement was born.

None of this explains the European invasions of the early 1880s, the French in Tunis, the British in Egypt. The causes of conquest

⁴⁴ Lucette Valensi, *Fellahs Tunisiens: l'économie rurale et la vie des campagnes aux 18^e et 19^e siècles* (Paris, 1977), 281–347, quotation from p. 358; Bice Slama, *L'insurrection de 1864 en Tunisie* (Tunis, 1967).

are to be found more in Europe's Mediterranean squabbles for the rotting scraps of the Ottoman empire and the self-serving panics manufactured by European officials on the spot.⁴⁵ The point is, rather, that governmental reform and its collapse had created increasingly self-conscious coalitions of new men, Islamic modernists and army officers in Egypt, the westernised graduates of the Sadiqi college in Tunis. Such men took part in the general resistance to European financial control. They then dared to hope that imperialism might, by other means, continue their own nationalist opposition to the traditional autocracies which had first created and then turned on them. Finally, they were bitterly to disown imperialism when, by its alliance with old notables, it proceeded to betray their dreams.

The second effect of guns was the disintegration of African power, whether by decentralisation or fragmentation. Royal power could be eroded as the increasing flow of guns, like other imported commodities, outstripped the capacity of rulers to enforce monopolies on their supply. They got into the hands of those who were able to pay, or of subordinates who then used them on their own account. Elsewhere, the fragmentation of already fragile, stateless, authorities followed upon the expansion of the traders' frontier in the tropical African interior. Gun imports financed the spread of commercial hunting and gathering, 'a type of slash-and-burn or "swidden" commerce' which with little capital and much destruction thrived on elephant hunting and the collection of wax, gums and rubber.⁴⁶ The characteristic European figure was the trader Kurtz, hacking his way into his, and Africa's, heart of darkness. Instruments of the chase for hunter bands, guns were instruments of protection for merchant princes and, for political bands, of power.

Decentralisation can best be seen in Morocco and in the interlacustrine kingdoms of Uganda. Morocco provides a third variant of failure in self-strengthening, or *tanẓimat* as it was known

⁴⁵ Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, 'The transformation of the Egyptian elite: prelude to the 'Urābī Revolt', *Middle East J.*, 1967, 21, 3, 325-44; A. Schölch, 'Constitutional development in nineteenth-century Egypt: a reconsideration', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1974, 10, 1, 3-14; Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World economy 1800-1914* (London, 1981), 122-52; A. Schölch, 'The "Man on the Spot" and the English occupation of Egypt in 1882', *Hist. J.*, 1976, 19, 3, 773-85.

⁴⁶ A. G. Hopkins, 'Imperial business in Africa. Part II: Interpretations', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1976, 17, 2, 280.

in North Africa, after the usage of the Ottoman Turks. Successive sultans tried to achieve what so many of their contemporaries were also attempting with scarcely more success, to lay hands on more internal resources and to use them to transform not production but the basis of power. Their objective was to construct a coherent political class which would be protected from faction by the denial of regional privilege, from out of the old mosaic of exemptions and obligations which had previously been sustained by civil war and intrigue. Morocco's failure in this project was more spectacular than any; it was riddled with contradictions. *Tanzimat* enlisted with external borrowing and contracts for supply the very Europeans it was designed to exclude. It scandalised the clerics but established no new learning. It antagonised the military tribes, the *jaysh*, but could not afford a new model army. It expropriated from office notables who then recouped their power by commercial brokerage between their followers and foreign buyers. Loyal tribesmen became disgruntled peasants. Searching for a bureaucracy, the sultan found an alliance with the overmightiest of his subjects. New taxes could not keep pace with the military drain on his treasury as he fought off rivals for favour who protested in arms. Dissident highlanders on the periphery could afford rifles as well as the city-dwellers of the plain. By 1912 the French could take over from within, their protectorate quite literally a deliverance of the sultan from the rebels encamped about his walls.⁴⁷

In Morocco the French occupation worked, with however ill a grace, to the strengthening of the sultanate. The pre-colonial decentralisation of power in the south-western kingdoms of Uganda had quite the opposite colonial outcome. There the British came to terms with subordinate power-holders rather than with kings. In Uganda it has also been the historiographical tradition to look to a different context of explanation. Self-strengthening was certainly important, in face of the Egyptian advance up the Nile. And, as elsewhere, kings began to lose control over the guns and ideas brought in by Arab traders and Christian missionaries. But the rearmament of these kingdoms must also be understood

⁴⁷ Edmund Burke III, *Prelude to protectorate in Morocco: precolonial protest and resistance, 1860-1912* (Chicago and London, 1976); Ross E. Dunn, 'Bū Himāra's European connexion: the commercial relations of a Moroccan warlord', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1980, 21, 2, 235-53; David Seddon, *Moroccan peasants: a century of change in the eastern Rif, 1870-1970* (London, 1981).

in the context of the unceasing conflict between monarchy and aristocracy in the enjoyment of tribute, and between young kings and their fathers' chiefs, each party often strengthened against the other by the resources which they had mobilised in succession war. Two kingdoms in particular were involved, Buganda and Bunyoro, each competing with the other for land, subjects, and access to external trade. Their kings had each created what have been called new-model warbands by the 1880s, Buganda copying Bunyoro's innovation. Royal pages and alien adventurers alike were enrolled in standing regiments of fusiliers, to outgun the nobility's militias. They lived by loot and had a dreadful reputation. In Buganda they were nicknamed the *bapere*, 'those who had tarnished or gone bad'; in Bunyoro they were called *abarusura*, the casually brutal thieves. They were designed to subdue provincial chiefs but, under the stresses of British conquest, most of their leaders turned against their kings. Their internal factional disputes, clothed in Buganda in denominational division between Muslims, Catholics and Protestants, determined the politics of colonial state-building. In the late 1890s the British hunted down the fugitive kings, Mwanga of Buganda and Kabarega of Bunyoro, assisted by turncoat African regimental commanders. Under the Uganda Protectorate, kingship was to become a legal fiction, no more than an ideology to be exploited by and against the new oligarchies over whom kings had lost control.⁴⁸

Many African kingdoms and chieftaincies have traditions of genesis in which the founding hero is a hunter. Looking at the nineteenth century one can see why. Hunters must be well armed, capable of organising associations of men over large territories, and cunning in their understanding of the hostile environment out in the bush, the frontier wildernesses between one settlement and another. The chase provided many articles of use and exchange, food, clothing, and regalia; it protected agriculture and grazing

⁴⁸ Michael Wright, *Buganda in the heroic age* (Nairobi, 1971), 27; G. N. Uzoigwe, 'Kabalega's Abarusura: the military factor in Bunyoro', *Proceedings of the University of East Africa Social Science Conference 1968-69* (Nairobi, 1969), 308. Richard Waller, 'The traditional economy of Buganda', M.A. (SOAS), London, 1971; Michael Twaddle, 'The Muslim revolution in Buganda', *African Affairs*, 1972, 71, 282, 54-72; D. A. Low, 'Warbands and ground-level imperialism in Uganda, 1870-1900', *Hist. Studies*, 1975, 16, 65, 584-97; Edward I. Steinhart, *Conflict and collaboration: the kingdoms of Western Uganda 1890-1907* (Princeton, 1977), 73-97.

from depredation; it was a sport. In the nineteenth century hunting acquired a huge new market in the European and Indian demand for ivory; if elephants were shot out, one could hunt men. The demand for labour never slackened; if slaves could no longer be legally exported overseas, African and, increasingly, local European producers had an insatiable demand for workers on plantations and in portage – although it was also in portage that wage labour seems first to have emerged.⁴⁹

These remarks are especially relevant to central Africa, from the Congolese and Angolan coasts across to the Indian Ocean, and the Sudan south of Khartoum. The expansion of Africa's firearmed hunting frontiers was too short-lived a phenomenon for one to determine whether, but for European conquest, the nineteenth-century pioneers would have come to dominate the traditions of political genesis recounted in future ages. Their immediate achievements were almost entirely destructive, but that is generally the way with processes which can, after the event, be seen as the early stages of state-building, especially when the material base of power is also being revolutionised.

Four stimuli to the competitive rearmament of power can be seen on Africa's hunting frontiers, as the export staples of ivory or rubber became locally exhausted, as the frontier of production moved on into the interior. When a local superiority in production was lost to competitors elsewhere, hunting communities or their rulers tried to seize greater hold on the external trading system, seeking to extract from transit dues what they had previously earned from export sales. This was the motive behind Mirambo's drive to control central Tanganyika; his name, 'corpses', was coined by his *rugaruga* warbands, kinless teenage hooligans with guns. More generally, rulers deprived of ivory duties turned to export the asset which remained to them, subject men and women or prisoners of war. Internal justice became more cruel, dependent relationships more exploitative. In the 1870s and 1880s civil wars destroyed such previously coherent polities as the Lunda and Luba states of southern Zaïre or the Mangbetu kingdom in the north.

These were rulers' reactions. For their part, long-distance traders compensated with two other devices, seizing power and

⁴⁹ Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the nineteenth century: the structure and evolution of a political order* (Cambridge, 1975), 195; Iliffe, *Emergence of African Capitalism*, 7–18.

controlling production. Their access to the capital which was advanced by coastal exporters, European and Indian, allowed them to organise larger caravans of porters and to arm them with guns. They made their depots into stockaded strongpoints. As export prices fell in the 1870s they enforced harder bargains with their suppliers. African and Arab merchants in the interior were doing for themselves what European traders on the coasts were demanding of their governments. Trading diasporas became networks of political control; trading became raiding. Armed force was an investment. It reduced operating costs, at the expense of the local inhabitants. The effects can most brutally be seen in the southern Sudan, on the upper Nile. Raids provided porters, guards and agents with slaves in lieu of pay. Local harvests were commandeered to feed trading posts, cattle were seized to supply the working capital of the ivory trade. By similar means Tippu Tip built up his trading state to the west of Lake Tanganyika. These were very primitive exercises in capital accumulation.

Finally, there was a potentially more constructive development. As the power of existing rulers was fragmented by faction, as the broken channels of tribute then ceased to generate the articles of trade, as reserves of ivory or rubber became exhausted, so external traders, lacking now the producer partners whom their competition had destroyed, turned to the direct control of production themselves. They did so in two distinct ways, by involuntary mass migration and the deliberate imposition of overlordship. The Chokwe people of northern Angola provide the best example of the first. By the middle of the century their colonising settlements were obliged to become ever more mobile, as the hunting, wax-collecting and rubber-tapping frontiers advanced. Chokwe populations expanded as they moved, absorbing wives from other populations who pawned their women in return for partnerships in trade. As the Chokwe men's trading frontier enlarged, so too did their control of women's agriculture. From this productive base they hired out their guns in civil wars; by the 1880s they had destroyed their Lunda hosts' patterns of power. Nyamwezi merchant adventurers from the east probed into the same area of what is now southern Zaïre. Their methods were more direct than the agricultural infiltration of the Chokwe. When they had ransacked the Luba empire's ivory, their leader Msiri carved out an outlying province, to control its copper production, instead.

Thus, a conquest-state was born, one of many at the time. Samory Ture's 'Dyula revolution' in the far west of Africa, in the interland of Sierra Leone, is the most famous example of this transition from trade to dominion. By threading together a military coalition along the commercial network of the Dyula diaspora, he was able to monopolise both the export of ivory and the import of more and more guns, rifles among them.

In this violent and discordant welter of the disintegration of old tributary powers and the imposition of new autocracies on previously stateless societies it is possible to discern a particular variant of the common process called, at the time, the opening up of Africa. No African societies had previously been entirely closed. Ethnic identities were mutable bargaining counters to be used in the external relations of trade, tribute or marriage as well as being the cultural celebration of men's domestication of their parochial botanical environments. Nor was political violence new. What was unprecedented in nineteenth-century central Africa was both the volume of the commodities traded and the destructive power of guns when handled by quite small bands of men practised in their use. All previous equations of profit and power were upset. All branches of domestic production became more profitable in their expanded linkages, not just hunting but farming, herding, mining and smithing too; and power was potentially released from political responsibility. It degenerated into force in response to economic stress, whether drought, depletion of the export staple, or declining export values. The 1870s and 1880s were not short of all these forms of crisis. Traders repudiated alliances with chiefs, chiefs broke faith with their people. Political and commercial power not only combined, it became militarised. It was resisted. Cultivators, like traders, took to stockades. They turned into villagers, against the insecurities of Africa's opening out.

What was being destroyed in this process were the unstable but workable oppositions which underwrote previous dispensations of power, between kings, their officers, and free kinsmen; between these citizens and the unfree; between tributary hierarchies and market exchange; between customary or ritual constraints and the individual agency of big men. All social categories and their inherent rights were put in question, vulnerable to forcible redefinition. Elaborated political structures gave place to a

single-minded African imperialism of unfree trade. Merchants constructed their own authorities, armed plutocracies, one-party states which ruled without consent. Preying on the connections between the many branches of production, they represented none. Samory's fruitless attempts to create a more inclusive political order are symptomatic. He tried to use Islam as a unifying instrument of political discourse only to find that it provoked sharper opposition; he was obliged to pack his councils with his own men. Other merchant adventurers also failed to make their peace with the land. They relied less on citizen militias than on alien mercenaries, small bands of ruffians scarcely more numerous than the colonial troops by whom they were later defeated. Under the shock of conquest these new autocracies disappeared almost, but not quite, without trace. They left behind no political communities with which colonial rulers might come to terms but diasporas of traders and porters once again, and sometimes colonial Africa's first migrant workers. Their agricultural populations generally resumed older identities. One reason for the extinction of these secondary empires, as they have been called, was that colonial states jealously represented rival means of articulating or yoking producers to overseas accumulation. But, more fundamentally, these African merchant states had created not citizens who could cling to differentiated traditions of past freedoms, only subjects differentiated by intensities of extortion.⁵⁰ Their true successors were the concessionary companies which operated within the early colonial régimes in much of this same central zone of Africa, in French and Belgian equatorial Africa or in Portuguese Mozambique.

Some of Africa's older kingdoms survived the European conquest, at least in a resurrected form powerful enough to inspire and divide the twentieth-century politics of colonial nationalisms. As elaborated structures which bound together the holders of competing material resources into collective ruling classes, they

⁵⁰ John Iliffe, *A modern history of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), 62; David Birmingham, 'The forest and the savanna of Central Africa', in John E. Flint (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Africa*, v: c. 1790-c. 1870 (Cambridge, 1976), ch. 7; Richard Gray, *A history of the southern Sudan 1839-1889* (Oxford, 1961), 46-69; Yves Person, *Samori: une révolution dyula*, 3 vols. (Dakar, 1968, 1971, 1975); Joseph C. Miller, 'Cokwe trade and conquest in the nineteenth century', in Richard Gray and David Birmingham (eds.), *Pre-colonial African trade* (Oxford, 1970), 175-201. Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson and Jan Vansina, *African history* (London, 1978), 339-43, 357-9, 389.

succeeded in coping with the mounting contradiction between the costs of rearmament and the subversions of external capital. Their rulers had to overcome two levels of difficulty. They required state servants to trim the powers of the provinces, new men with a self-interest in centralising older, more diffused, rights to the hierarchical management and enjoyment of the goods of their political culture. But kings could not rest there; they then had to decide whether they could fight the temptations of their new officials. These were minded to enforce a further redefinition of the bargains between private wealth and communal welfare. They could see that fortunes might be made in handling the external commerce which funded self-strengthening. As the global terms of trade began to turn against primary producers in the 1860s, so conflict intensified between the public interest of states and the private ambition of their ruling classes. Meanwhile, European traders were becoming more impatient, the politics of African survival more desperate. Internal and external anxiety bred tyrannies of rule. Not all African kingdoms became tyrannical and not all African tyrannies were the same. They faced up to European conquest crippled by very different rivalries between crown, officials, and community. Three examples illustrate the various possibilities, the Muslim theocracy of the Mahdiyya, and the kingdoms of Imerina in Madagascar and Asante in West Africa.

Tyranny is a term to be used with caution. European observers at the time naturally seized on any evidence they could for African misrule. Conquerors prefer to be seen as liberators. The Mahdist state in the Sudan was possibly the most traduced. But there is good internal evidence for the self-destructiveness of its autocracy. Under Khalifa 'Abdallāhi, successor to the Mahdi, there was irreconcilable conflict between the Mahdi's earliest and most dedicated followers who were drawn from the farmers and traders of the Nile's riverain margins, and the strong men of the revolution, the Khalifa's own nomadic pastoral following. Faced with the great famine of the late 1880s – and all three of these polities were weakened by demographic decline – the Khalifa was prepared to foster a neo-mercantilist accommodation between his treasury's monopoly of ivory exports and private Egyptian grain importers. His officials were not prepared to tolerate free trade on the part of his own farmers and merchants; requisitioning was

all they could expect. Having put down their rebellion, he feared to arm them against the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest in the 1890s. Indeed, General Kitchener enlisted some of the riverain peoples as auxiliaries against their ruler. The suppression of commercial freedoms was no guarantee of political survival.⁵¹

Nor was salvation to be found at the opposite end of the spectrum, by giving free rein for the monopolists of office to become the magnates of trade. The nineteenth-century kingdom of Imerina was torn by an unfinished conflict for control of the crown between the noble guardians of the talismans which protected the old confederal freedoms of its *demes* or clans, and the commoner officials raised by King Andrianampoinimerina's revolution in government, 'the princes who came up with the pigs'. Mission Christianity became an alternative ideology of opposition to autocracy, parallel with but scarcely sympathetic to the old talismans. The commoner oligarchs' coup of 1869, with their official adoption of Christianity and burning of the talismans, restored the disrupted unity of power and cosmology, and so ushered in a terrible period of more cohesive repression. Churches became the most effective arms of state, mobilising labour and taxes. Commoner oligarchs helped themselves to public funds for private investment in the cattle, rice and slave trades, mocking the popular Christian doctrines of self-help. They then made up for the commercial slump by working their forced labourers harder and by investment in peasant debt. Popular Christianity and a revived love of the old talismans both formed an underground geography of resistance. They needed only the approach of the French invasion of 1895, which made good the paper protectorate of 1885, to come out against the official Christianity of the kingdom, effectively paralysing Imerina's resistance. Rebels against both French conquest and domestic tyranny, they adopted pseudonyms from *Pilgrim's progress*. One guerrilla praise-name, 'Mr Does-not-love money', summed up a half-century of moral outrage.⁵²

Asante's experience lay somewhere mid-way between that of the Khalifa's Mahdiyya and Imerina. Its government's balance between public service and private gain was overturned, as the

⁵¹ P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898: a study of its origins, development and overthrow* (Oxford, 1958), 173-84, 214, 221.

⁵² Stephen Ellis, 'Collaboration and resistance in Madagascar 1895-1899, with special reference to the kingdom of Imerina', D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1980.

century advanced, by the declining profitability of war – indeed, its escalating costs in both blood and treasure – and the growing attractions of trade. Public funds and private war loans to the treasury, speculations in booty and captives, had once complemented each other. By the middle of the century, access to Fante and British capital on the Gold Coast and awareness of the greater freedoms given there to traders had made the *asikafo*, the big men of Asante, restive. To lead a nation of pedlars looked quite attractive. Previously they had invested, whether voluntarily or not, in their public reputation, by replenishing the hierarchy of which they were part. Now they began to invest in property and their families' future. They began to see kings as extortioners. Kings began to doubt their loyalty. State and ruling class broke their mutual understandings. The conflict came to a head after the British invasion of 1874 had exposed Asante's vulnerability and finally discredited its generals, its conservatives. As Sir Garnet Wolseley somewhat unnecessarily pointed out to the *asantehene*, 'Your Majesty...can no more prevent an army of white men marching into your territory...than you can stop the sun from rising every morning.'⁵³

In the aftermath of defeat Mensa Bonsu was enthroned as the candidate of the peace party among the councillors, the Cobdenites of Kumasi, who favoured free trade rather than confrontation with the British colony, and a corresponding relaxation of Asante's own regime. But Mensa Bonsu's reign was as riven with contradictions as any Moroccan sultan's. He pursued self-strengthening through reform and ended by unleashing reactionary terror. His liberalisation of the penal code, especially the abolition of many capital crimes, angered the conservatives. His employment of mission-educated officials unsettled some progressives. His creation of a standing fusilier corps, perhaps to assuage the growing clamour against conscription among Asante's poor, antagonised the rich; it was expensive, and might be used against them. State exactions increased, but did not cover expenses. The *asantehene* enlarged his revenues with his own version of neo-mercantilism, auctioning off trading and mining concessions to Europeans. They seemed less of a threat to him than his own *asikafo*, who were beginning to invest privately in the new rubber boom. His increasingly beleaguered government resorted to ever

⁵³ Wilks, *Asante*, 508.

more violence. Asante collapsed into a civil war in which no political coalition, no rival vision of the future, could long secure ascendancy. A new king, Agyeman Prempeh, could reconstruct the kingdom only at the cost of much decentralisation. Meanwhile, Mensa Bonsu's tyranny had already handed to the expectant British the levers of Asante discontent with which to open the way to a bloodless take-over in 1896. Disaffected provincial chiefs and an exile community at the coast were quite ready to help the British in reconstituting Asante to their private profit, whatever other ideas of greater state protection for European capital the British may have intended.⁵⁴

Neither the centralising rearmament of statehood nor the attractions of foreign capital for public servants forced these African governments to break faith with the political understandings which underwrote their states. Rather, it was their contingent and contradictory combination. Neither the revolution of modes of domination nor the articulation of modes of production, both terms of crushing generality, can stand alone in historical explanation. The particularity of each local history demands respect; there are no laws of conquest. It is arguable, for instance, that those African peoples who remained most united in face of European power were those whose leaders shunned both rearmament and mercantile concessions, the Hehe of Tanganyika or the Lozi and Ndebele of Zambezia. Their spearmen could be mobilised effectively only by political institutions which retained legitimacy. And it must be remembered that spears often proved to be more effective in battle than guns until very late in the nineteenth century, when muskets were abandoned for rifles. In the 1820s, Shaka Zulu had good reason to scorn guns; his assegais needed no time for reloading. The Nandi of Kenya likewise knew how to draw fire and then charge in after a volley of muzzle-loaders; it was not until 1895 that they learnt that this tactic had become bloodily obsolete against riflemen.⁵⁵ But it is also arguable that the kingdom which most successfully resisted the opposing

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 477–724; T. C. McCaskie, 'Office, land and subjects in the history of the Manwere *feku* of Kumase: an essay in the political economy of the Asante state', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1980, 21, 2, 203; *idem*, 'State and society, marriage and adultery: some considerations towards a social history of pre-colonial Asante', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1981, 22, 4, 488; *idem*, 'Accumulation, wealth and belief', 32–9.

⁵⁵ James Stuart and D. McK. Malcolm (eds.), *The diary of Henry Francis Fynn* (Pietermaritzburg, 1969), 81–2; A. T. Matson, *Nandi resistance to British rule, 1890–1906*, vol. 1 (Nairobi, 1972), 46, 143.

tendencies of decentralisation and tyranny, which best maintained a negotiable equilibrium between kings and their highly complex administrations, and which then mounted the most effective military resistance to conquest was Dahomey, one of the longest involved in external trade and one of the largest importers of guns. The paradoxes do not end there, for the peoples who often proved most difficult to subdue, like the Xhosa on the Cape Colony's eastern frontier, were precisely those who had no elaborate state structure, such as Dahomey's, which Europeans might prise open or take over. Conversely dynastic kingdoms, like those of the Swazi or the Zulu, which had not created staffs of the sophistication of Asante or Imerina, proved desperately vulnerable to the defection not of classes but of princes, who hired European allies for succession wars with the promise of damaging concessions. And it is difficult to argue that the two nations which most successfully pursued self-strengthening, the Ethiopians and the Boers, achieved anything very remarkable in terms of state-building, let alone the industrialisation of statehood.

It is conventional to maintain that Ethiopia's sovereignty would never have survived the scramble had not her highland provinces been hammered back into statehood after a century of civil war and puppet emperors, the era of the princes. But the unity reconquered by the emperor Tewodros II collapsed under its own weight before the scramble started; his successor Yohannes IV, emperor through the 1880s, was obliged to resume the old habit of government by civil war; and Menelik II defeated the Italians in 1896 before embarking on any radically new and questionably successful measures of centralisation.

The bandit noble, Kassa, rose to become the emperor Tewodros through his dashing command of cavalry, only to become obsessed with guns. He created a standing army he had no means to supply. He destroyed his promising friendship with the church, the only other possible national institution, by confiscating such of its lands as he could lay hands on. The obduracy of his nobility sent him mad; he even imprisoned Queen Victoria's consul. When the British punitive expedition defeated him in 1868 and provoked his suicide, Europeans may have considered Ethiopia easily defeated; but Ethiopia had already gone rotten again from within. Nearly thirty years later Menelik of Shoa as crushingly defeated

the Italians, but it is not at all clear that he did so as the emperor of a markedly more united Ethiopia. He had resumed Tewodros's project of self-strengthening but by entirely different methods. He did not attempt to seize the internal privileges of church or nobles; he expropriated the resources of outsiders instead. In their competitions for influence Europeans were touchingly ready to be despoiled. The Suez Canal had conferred on Ethiopia a strategic importance as tempting as Morocco's or Egypt's; rifles and bids for trade and influence flowed in from many quarters; only the Italians overplayed their hand. And Menelik had something more than strategic geography to offer; his conquests of Ethiopia's southern marchlands, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, enabled him to control their staple exports, ivory, gold, musk, coffee and, more discreetly, slaves. Here, in the lands of the Oromo, who had plagued the highlands for centuries, was Menelik's second external resource. Far from engrossing the fiefs of his rivals he was now able to double their supply, with grants to his supporters, ecclesiastical and lay. He did not transform Ethiopia's political system, he expanded it. He rewarded Amhara notables, he co-opted Oromo, both old devices, and Ethiopia's modern history has been soured by the memory: 'Menelik gave the land to the Amhara, and other people to the birds.' His response to the twin disasters of rinderpest and drought was entirely traditional, opening his granaries to the destitute and giving out to notables such breeding stock as he could capture. Moreover, although his huge army at Adowa was well supplied with modern weapons, it was not a modern army. It did not tolerate discipline, it was ravenously hungry, and on the morrow of victory it wanted to go home. He was unable to follow up his success except by exploiting still more strongly the continuing European competition for influence. And when he suffered his first stroke in 1906 his rudimentary cabinet government proved to be no more than a new term for traditional court intrigue.⁵⁶

What Ethiopia did enjoy in greater measure than any other African kingdom or people was a national tradition of recurring unification about the lawgiving and ritual institutions of empire and church in face of outside threats, but the case of Afrikaner self-strengthening clearly illustrates the limits of national senti-

⁵⁶ Sven Rubenson, *The survival of Ethiopian independence* (London, 1976); John Markakis, *Ethiopia, anatomy of a traditional polity* (Oxford, 1974), 137.

ment as a social construction. In 1899 most Englishmen probably believed Afrikaners to be 'a single, solid, and compact body of obstinate and reactionary farmers'; and it suited British imperial policy to claim, as Consul Plowden forty years earlier had almost but not quite said of Ethiopia, that 'progress from inside' was therefore impossible.⁵⁷ Moreover, the Boers of the (Transvaal) South African Republic embarked on an expensive programme of rearmament after the local and metropolitan imperialists had clumsily shown their hand in the Jameson Raid of 1895; they reinforced their burghers' rifles with imported machine guns and German artillery. Unlike other African countries the Republic also had good manufacturing and repair capacity in mine and railway workshops. It had the social cohesion, again in contrast to virtually all other African states, but comparable to the Nama of South West Africa, to engage in people's guerrilla war after its formal battlefield formations had been defeated. The Boers were therefore vastly expensive to conquer. Britain picked up new tropical African subjects at the bargain price of about 15 pence each; even that sum was mostly spent on railway-building in support of conquest, not on directly military expenditure. The Transvaal Boers cost £1,000 a head or £250 million in all to subdue, over 14 per cent of Britain's net national income in 1902, a grim foretaste of the material costs of industrialised warfare.⁵⁸ It must then seem as if Boer self-strengthening was supremely successful; with 300,000 troops in the field, Britain had had to commit more manpower than the total Boer population of the Transvaal. But appearances deceive; by 1902 no less than 20 per cent of the Boers under arms were fighting against their own nation on the British side.

Afrikaner disunity was manifold. Afrikaners were no more a unified descent group than any African tribe; the original Dutch settlers had long since been joined by French Huguenots and Germans. They had little commonality of culture. By the 1880s the children of richer families were being educated in English, even in their church schools; the twelve-year-old Jan Smuts first caught his teacher's notice by reciting the names of all the counties

⁵⁷ J. A. Hobson, *The war in South Africa: its causes and effects* (London, 1900), 15.

⁵⁸ Trevor Lloyd, 'Africa and Hobson's imperialism', *Past and Present*, 1972, 55, 142; Clive Trebilcock, 'War and the failure of industrial mobilization: 1899 and 1914', in J. M. Winter (ed.), *War and economic development* (Cambridge, 1975), 141-3.

of England.⁵⁹ Meanwhile the children of the poor, four-fifths of the Cape Dutch, could not read even their own language in the 1870s. English was the language of money. In the Cape there were old gentry as well as the newly noticed poor. Even before the mineral discoveries there were great disparities of power and wealth in the Boer republics as well. Public office went to those who could afford it, and it yielded private dividends, both in credit on the colonial British banks and in privileged access to state allocations of the best sort of land, land with resident Africans on it who could be charged rent in labour and kind. Land speculation created landlessness more effectively amongst poor whites than amongst blacks.

Nor were Afrikaners united at the political level. Within the republics the politics of notables bred personal rule and factional opposition. At the level of interstate as much as individual social relations, economic development, as usual, divided men before it provided the resources for political consolidation. In the 1880s the gold of the Witwatersrand overturned South Africa's economic geography, tipping the Anglophile gentility of the Cape into the pocket of the ragamuffin republic. There were endless rows between interior republics and coastal colonies over tariffs and railway rates, with Afrikaners aligned on both sides. Even within the South African Republic the political vision of the future was divided. The older political generation, cultural conservatives, looked upon gold-mining as a subversive incubus, to be exploited only to the extent that it strengthened their control. They were opposed by a younger generation whose skills they needed, professional men and commercial farmers, English-educated where they were not new immigrants from Holland. These 'progressives', secular nationalists, were prepared to co-opt international mining capital as the revenue-bearing foundation of a modernised Anglo-Afrikaner state but on their own, not imperial, terms. In the 1890s, the years of crisis, it became clear that the Boers had been as sharply divided as any of Africa's peoples by the penetration of capital and the rebuilding of states. Investment and markets had already separated them into big men and clients. The food market at the mines and rinderpest's destruction of their herds now disengaged the fortunes of the big men from their

⁵⁹ W. K. Hancock, *Smuts*, vol. 1: *The sanguine years, 1870-1919* (Cambridge, 1962), 11.

clients. Unfree African farm tenants, who could be made to labour, became a better proposition than dependent white herders, free citizens who could not. The defensive nationalism which might have bridged this growing gap with a common ideology was fatally compromised not only by the obvious commercial utility of English but also by the lingering attractions of British representative institutions. Afrikaner nationalism was necessarily as ambiguous as Africanus Horton's or Edward Blyden's, the first prophets of the African personality. Even import-substituting industrialisation, to supply the mining community's consumer needs, divided where it was intended to unite. Landless Boers were given some employment, but their bosses were the same political notables who had pushed them off the land.

All these divisions were opened up under the privations of a particularly brutal war. The older political generation was soon shouldered aside by the new, but the young men themselves divided. Many Anglophone officials were quick to collaborate with the British occupation, kissing the rod which scourged them. The most determined guerrilla leaders, the *bittereinders*, were also to be found among the progressives. But the 'joiners', those who fought for the British, were disproportionately recruited from the landless poor, the *bijwoners*. 'In some sense this treason', it has been said, 'was a rebellion against class exploitation.'⁶⁰

The argument hitherto has suggested that the divisions of self-strengthening and capitalist penetration were divisions between politicians, between kings and their staff, between monarchies and tributaries. But conflicts between power-holders have a habit of unlocking the normal fetters on the freedom of the powerless to express their discontents.⁶¹ Africa's contradictory

⁶⁰ Donald Denoon, 'Participation in the "Boer war": people's war, people's non-war, or non-people's war?', in B. A. Ogot (ed.), *War and society in Africa* (London, 1972), 109-22; Stanley Trapido, 'Landlord and tenant in a colonial economy: the Transvaal, 1880-1910', *J. S. Afr. Studies*, 1978, 5, 1, 26-58; *idem*, 'Reflections on land, office and wealth in the South African Republic, 1850-1900', in Marks and Atmore (eds.) *Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa*, 350-68; C. T. Gordon, *The growth of the Boer opposition to Kruger 1890-1895* (Cape Town, 1970); Hermann Giliomee, 'Processes in development of the South African frontier', in H. Lamar and L. Thompson (eds.), *The frontier in history: North America and Southern Africa compared* (New Haven and London, 1981), ch. 4 - p. 112 for the final quotation. I am indebted to Dr Giliomee for his advice.

⁶¹ I have discussed this interplay between 'symmetrical' and 'asymmetrical' politics in 'States and social processes in Africa: a historiographical survey', *African Studies Review*, 1981, 24, 2-3, 139-225.

experience of rearmament and opening-out raised taxes and sharpened grievance; it also gave some of its common people and some of its slaves new opportunities for political action. Some traded with strangers who broke royal or chiefly controls on the flow of goods; some villagers could afford to buy guns. Some had access to new ideas, Islam, Christianity, cults of affliction or anti-witchcraft movements which tried to combat the pestilence and envy that accompanied external trade, all of them embodied in alternative communities, with alternative protectors. The possibilities of subverting existing inequalities of power were by no means necessarily translated into revolutions. Those who could actually visualise revolution, Muslim clerics or christianised chiefs, generally used it to authorise claims on the services of their followers which are not easily distinguishable from the exploitations which they destroyed.

Nevertheless, there are many indications of social disorder and uncertainties in the prerogatives of power in the cases which have been presented here. In Tunis and in Egypt there was what can properly be called peasant violence against landlords and traders. On the ivory and gun frontiers of central Africa there was much localised resistance to slavers and their allies among chiefs; it sometimes took the form of flight and further fragmented power. The Mahdist revolt gathered up everybody who suffered from Egyptian taxes. The kings of Asante and the oligarchs of Imerina alike faced popular hatred of military service or forced labour. Menelik's programme of granary-building attempted to forestall traditional peasant murmurings against the quartering of his troops. But the hidden history of the Boer war suggests that discontent was most to be expected when power was most dislocated, at the moment of conquest.⁶² The *bijwoners'* revenge against their landlords was not the only revolt which the Transvaal faced from within. Africans seized control of farms whose owners were absent on commando service against the imperial forces. Many Africans suffered as bitterly as the Boers in the war; they died in equivalent numbers in Kitchener's concentration camps. But many other Africans sold their services to the British as scouts, town guards or transport riders, they

⁶² Peter Warwick, *Black people and the South African War 1899-1902* (Cambridge, 1983); William R. Nasson, 'Black society in the Cape Colony and the South African War in 1899-1902: a social history' (Ph.D. Cambridge, 1983).

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provided vast quantities of food to the army, and all at a profit which outraged colonial conventions of African servility. It was by no means only a white man's war.

Everywhere the conquests of Africa brought similar paradoxes of public disaster and private profit in their train, confusions of established orders which colonial rulers had everywhere in some fashion to put back to rights.

CONFRONTATION AND DISORDER

There were literally hundreds of European conquests of Africa, not one. They occurred at very different stages in European and African relationships, at different levels of European and African military capacity. In the first phases of the French conquest of Algeria, in mid-century, both French and Muslims died in their thousands, the French remembered in Berlioz's gargantuan *Grand messe des morts*. By the end of the nineteenth century Europeans were almost invulnerable against all Africans save the Ethiopians, and small colonial wars were sentimental music hall. But Africans died in their tens of thousands, notably the Khalifa's *ansār* at Omdurman, and the Herero and Nama of German South West Africa, three-quarters of whose total populations perished, mostly of thirst. The British expeditionary force in Asante, in 1874, was the first not to be decimated by malaria. Gatling machine-guns were first tested out, and first jammed, against the Zulu; observation balloons were employed in the Sudan. The Hehe chief Mkwawa's stone fortress of Iringa was like a house of cards before Colonel Schele's shrapnel storm. 'There is nothing which can come in here', the Hehe had only too truly sung, 'unless perhaps there is something which drops from the heavens.'⁶³

Some invasions pushed up the existing trade routes, like those of the British in West Africa and the Germans in East Africa: others, like the French advance in the western Sudan, cut right across them. Some conquests were scarcely to be distinguished from a whole series of earlier clashes, strung out over a half-century or more, as between Britain and Asante or the French in Senegal. But for many peoples in the interior the first European they saw was the political officer with his police, demanding taxes. Some

⁶³ Daniel R. Headrick, *The tools of empire: technology and European imperialism in the nineteenth century* (New York and Oxford, 1981); Iliffe, *Modern history of Tanganyika*, 112.

conquests were occupations from within, as Europeans took sides in local succession wars, or recruited and drilled runaway slaves. The British took advantage of the first sort of opportunity in Buganda, Boers and British used the same in Zululand; while the French advance across the western Sudan was almost a creeping slave revolt, but scarcely an emancipation, under a foreign flag. Most conquests were doubly from without. Alien white commanders were generally accompanied by a swarm of African auxiliaries seeking to profit by a raid on neighbours, whether they were vengeful tributaries, such as the Tswana or Shona who helped Rhodes against the Ndebele; competitors for pasture, like the Masai against the Nandi in Kenya; or levies provided by locally dominant rulers who seized the chance to convert their sphere of influence into a sub-imperialism, whether by allying with British arms like the Ganda or, as did the Lozi, by a deft exercise of political judo,⁶⁴ guiding Western preconceptions of the proper nature of African kingship to underwrite claims to a wider paramountcy than the Lozi were able to enforce themselves. Some conquests were the continuation of diplomacy by other means, others were bleakly uncomprehending. In southern Africa and on the west African coasts, within the missionary fringes of white power, African leaders could appeal for protection or denounce subjugation in French, English or Afrikaans, languages in which they had been adept for a generation or more. In the interior, Europeans and Africans were often obliged, metaphorically at least, to communicate 'by gesture as if they were deaf'. The sheer number and variety of conquests is not the only reason why they are so difficult to analyse as a whole. For they were both extended processes and sudden, shocking events.

As processes, the European conquests generated their own political systems, barbed alliances between formal holders of power, white and black. As events, European victories destroyed or discredited African political structures; they loosened the allegiance of subordinates, they offered alternatives to submissive labour among the poor, whether slave or free. There was a dynamic relationship between these two qualities of conquest; one can trace it in three phases. In the armed diplomacy of the years preceding the first scramble, and during the 1880s too, African rulers and chiefs used their European alliances for self-

⁶⁴ I owe this concept to Dr Gwyn Prins.

strengthening; and in the commercial slump they batted more on their own producers while they also challenged the European terms of trade. When in the second scramble European officials forcibly converted clientage into control, the subsequent decomposition of African power opened the possibility that discontent could become opposition, the evasion of tribute or flight by slaves. These threats of social dissolution, finally, obliged the conquerors to reconstruct the very alliances which they had so brusquely overturned, and on conditions which they could not freely dictate. For Europeans were divided in their answers to the crisis in authority, and rival Africans looked to them for mutually incompatible bargains in sharing out power. All such post-conquest reconstructions, moreover, writhed between the public constraints of metropolitan treasuries and the private goads of merchant, mining, or plantation capital.

This dynamic sequence of conquest compelled Europeans to become concerned with control over ever deeper levels of African society. Historians have tended to follow them. A scholarly preoccupation with states and trade, royal diplomacy or the struggles for survival by African coastal middlemen, has been superseded by investigations into the changing relations of power and obedience, the shifting oppositions between holders of office and producers of commodities. The first direction of enquiry would be more appropriate to the first scramble, the latter to the second, if only history were ever quite so conveniently simple.

In the long decades of British paramountcy over Africa's coasts, and during the few hectic years of the first scramble, one may observe a dual process of political accumulation.⁶⁵ European consuls and trading factories were only one local power among many, and not always the most formidable. They had their own external resources, credit and naval bombardments or landing-parties on call. But they were ignorant, they needed supplies, they looked for allies. Consular establishments and expeditionary forces were markets for intelligence, food, labour, and political reputation. Their needs enlarged the local flows of power, those daily transactions which were premised upon mutual responsibility between contracting parties over time. Mundane relationships became formalised. The road to empire was paved with treaties.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ J. M. Lonsdale, 'The politics of conquest: the British in Western Kenya, 1894-1908', *Hist. J.* 1977, 20, 4, 841-70, for a discussion of this concept.

⁶⁶ C. W. Newbury, *The western Slave Coast and its rulers* (Oxford, 1961), 49.

European needs were guaranteed by the recognition of African statehood. Demands for abolition of the slave trade or the mitigation of import duties were exchanged against the instruments of power, annual subsidies to kings and gifts of muskets. Initially, then, Europeans increased their own security, their minimum necessary power of control and prediction over the immediate political environment, by recognising African power – including the continuing power to own slaves – and by giving away some of their own. The process was by no means indiscriminate. Allies had domestic rivals and enemy neighbours; self-strengthening, it has been shown, multiplied such divisions. Europeans had to choose between the expense of supporting their friends and the cost of losing them. There came a time when cutting losses, whether incurred by trader constituents or by public administrations, seemed to be best achieved by enlarging European control at the expense of African power. Whatever the cause of forward political action, whether it was a local crisis of mistrust between Europeans and Africans who were formerly allied, or a precautionary claim staked out against European competitors, the repudiation of existing conventions of doing business faced Africans with a moment of choice. They could stand by, and contemplate dying for, the public cause of self-strengthening; they could try to make a new private accommodation with the opportunities of Africa's opening out. African ruling classes divided over this choice, so did Africa's poor; how each reacted to crisis is often taken to be a good guide to their societies' internal tensions. But it has to be remembered that for the most part internal divisions were closely aligned with external contacts by the 1880s; scarcely any African people came to their hour of trial as a closed community with a consensus, even among their leaders, about what it was that they might be called upon to defend, let alone among their followings and slaves. And their freedom of decision was increasingly constrained. The great depression had caused political accumulation to become more and more one-sided; as Europeans took greater liberties, so Africans found that they could take less, except along paths smoothed by European power.

European traders became increasingly impatient of paying tribute or road tolls to chiefs; they ceased to regard losses by pillage as a normal business risk; they turned more readily to their

consuls for redress.⁶⁷ But their African partners and competitors came to feel very much the same; Senegalese traders valued their rights to representation in the four coastal communes; Fante commercial opinion towards the Asante oscillated between force and conciliation in much the same rhythms as English opinion; Yoruba traders took care to secure membership of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce. Political allegiances wavered on all the frontiers of contact long before any formal European acts of annexation. To the Asantehene the British forts on the Gold Coast must have looked infuriatingly like asylums for all sorts of malcontents, whether criminals fleeing from his justice or subordinate chiefs who wearied of their responsibilities; the Zulu kings felt the same about Natal. However much the Egba demonstrated their Yoruba loyalties by expelling missionaries after a dispute with the British colony of Lagos in 1867, they still wanted English taught in their schools. The first thing the Niger delta rebel Jaja did on his defeat in 1869 was to appeal for a British protectorate against his king, George Pepple, who had himself called for British intervention in Bonny's civil war.⁶⁸ Consular courts were looked to for judicial decision along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, and in Zanzibar the rulings of the British consul, Sir John Kirk, were increasingly influential. The Native Affairs secretary, Theophilus Shepstone, gradually insinuated himself as paramount chief beyond the borders of Natal. King Kabarega of Bunyoro failed to bring his uncle Ruyonga to heel, protected as the latter was by Egypt in the persons of Samuel Baker and General Gordon. This growing inability of African rulers to bring internal disputes to a final conclusion was a factor in their increasingly anxious tyrannies; it was also an indication of creeping conquests from outside.

By the 1890s European conquests were increasingly wilful, taking their cue from the French advance inland from Senegal. Recognitions of African statehood ceased to be the condition of European security and became instead the bargaining counters of European sovereignty. Treaties became fraudulent prospectuses, guaranteeing African rights only for their European protectors to flaunt them as their own. For the Frenchman Gallieni his treaty of Nango with Ahmad's Tukolor empire in 1880 was never

⁶⁷ Klein, *Islam and imperialism*, 61, 124.

⁶⁸ K. Onwuka Dike, *Trade and politics in the Niger delta 1830-1883* (Oxford, 1956), 186-8.

intended to be anything but a sham; Italy's treaty of Wichale with Menelik was similarly two-faced. Perhaps the sequence of Rhodes' relationships with Lobengula is the most revealing, not so much of white duplicity, although there was plenty of that, but of the growing white appreciation that Africa could not be made more profitable without greater control over African production. In 1891 Rhodes asked his shareholders to see the British South Africa Company's costly police force as 'a capital outlay for the purpose of rendering productive and interest-bearing the valuable assets' which he had acquired for them by treaty. Two years later he deployed this capital to do just that, to seize Matabeleland and its supposed second Witwatersrand; his conquest of Lobengula's kingdom turned out to be a trial run for his attempted takeover of Kruger's republic. Conclusive political accumulation, unfettered control, seemed necessary for capital accumulation, and not in mining alone. African friendship was no longer enough. African land was now the object. The outward forms of treaty-making were retained; getting territory in Africa remained very simple, as Bismarck said. 'For a few muskets one can obtain a paper with some native crosses.'⁶⁹

Why and how Africans gave such very different answers to the choice which Europeans forced upon them in the second scramble has long fascinated Africa's historians. African reactions to conquest do link in often dramatic ways their subsequent colonial histories with their more distant past; but which colonial history and which pre-colonial past is more and more in question. Historians first focused on the calculations of Africa's established leaders, their capacity to rouse their people to war, their ability to guide them in the industrious path of peace. Our growing knowledge of pre-colonial Africa's often harshly unequal political economies has prompted new realisations of how its social divisions were often, but not always, sharpened under the test of European invasion. Popular perceptions of conquest were not only very different from their rulers'; they were frequently, and deliberately, opposed. The first historical accounts were structured by the assumed dichotomy between resistance to conquest and

⁶⁹ A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *The conquest of the western Sudan: a study in French military imperialism* (Cambridge, 1969), 72–83; Lloyd, 'Africa and Hobson's imperialism', 142; Iliffe, *Modern history of Tanganyika*, 90.

collaboration with the conquerors; between the uninstructed and the enlightened or between heroes and traitors, according to taste. These simplicities have long been discarded and can now be replaced. To understand the contrary human intentions one needs first to grasp an underlying process. But the process is, again, a dual one, the building of states and the articulation, or contradictory junction, of pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production.

The politics of colonial state-building involved one set of contradictions, its economics another. In political terms, Europeans had so to construct their African coalitions that erstwhile diplomatic allies could be reduced to administrative agents. Political security 'required powerful allies with obedient followings. Administration required efficient agents who could impose uncongenial innovations.' This is a paradox of all rule. But it was also a transition which early colonial régimes tried to master. Allies had to bend their backs to new demands, the delivery of tax especially. They also had to adapt if they were to profit both themselves and their rulers – to patronise schools, sponsor new export crops, or send out workers. The shock of this transition, which occurred throughout most of colonial Africa, at least in its most accessible regions, somewhere between 1895 and 1905, could provoke violence, sometimes the first real clash of arms between Africans and Europeans, sometimes a rising against the terms, now belatedly imposed, of an earlier conquest. But revolts against this sterner European mastery only served, by their defeat, to strengthen European control still further. In their ruins there remained more committed African partisans of the new order, clearer perceptions of white power, and often stronger military establishments to protect it.⁷⁰

The economics of state-building on the borderlands between European capitalism and non-capitalist Africa created quite different contradictions. The opposition between the politics and the economics of the process forced tiny colonial establishments to shoulder an increasing range of responsibilities. Europeans, representatives of capitalist society if not capitalists themselves, took it for granted that proprietorship in material resources

⁷⁰ This sequence of conquest has been most fully worked out for German East Africa. See, Ralph A. Austen, *Northwest Tanzania under German and British rule* (New Haven and London, 1968), 31–61; John Iliffe, *Tanganyika under German rule 1905–1912* (Cambridge, 1969), 142–9; the quotation is from Iliffe, *Modern history of Tanganyika*, 121.

conferred economic rights and social power. Africans, like all other non-capitalist peoples, knew, to the contrary, that it was authority over the services of men and women which generated economic power, whether within familial, tributary or slave systems of production, or in their various combinations. Property lay in the continual exercise of domination over social processes of production and exchange; it was not a thing. Articulation between these two quite different ways of perceiving and organising the world occurred first in the market and caused few problems for either side. Each put a higher value on the goods supplied by the other than those which they could produce themselves. Europeans had much more use than Africans for ivory or palm oil; Africans had not the technical capacity to turn out in large quantities guns, cheap cloth or domestic metalwares. These market exchanges had generated commercial alliances which were founded on the hidden premise of the productive obedience of each partner's subordinates. African trader chiefs implicitly guaranteed the labour of their wives, or their slaves, or their slave-catching armies, as Europeans laid out for them goods in trust against the future supply of foodstuffs, vegetable oils, or slaves. African power-holders exacted more of such laborious discipline as their external markets expanded, and more still as they contracted on the eve of conquest.

But then the premise of African economic obedience began to collapse as the diplomatic alliances of commerce were first overwhelmed by conquest and then superseded by colonial state-building. Loss of sovereignty could literally mean the loss of mastery over women and men. Superiors, whether chiefs or elders, found that their attempts to profit by the new European demands not only for commodities but also for their subjects' or juniors' labour could be evaded or even turned against them within the new uncertainties of power. Slaves decamped to the communities of their birth. Peasantries deserted their chiefs' stockaded villages, preferring easy access to their fields. Such 'downhill migrations' can be seen everywhere. Forced to pay colonial taxes, family heads became reluctant to pay tribute, and increasingly they took their disputes to colonial courts. Young men who went out to work on railway construction or down the mines at the behest of their chief returned with a sense of private property in their labour and in their decisions for marriage. In

1905 Mafingo, an old Zulu chief in Natal, summed up all these problems with his complaint that colonial officials seemed interested only in his taxes.

They do not help us in kraal matters and the management of our wives and families. Our sons elbow us away from the boiled mealies in the pot when we reach for a handful to eat, saying, 'We bought these, father,' and when remonstrated with, our wives dare to raise their eyes and glare at us. It used not to be thus. If we chide or beat our wives and children for misconduct, they run off to the police and the Magistrate fines us; with the result that our families defy us and kraal-head control is ceasing to exist.⁷¹

The first colonial officials were obsessed with a search for political security, but not to the exclusion of economic productivity. They had all experienced wars or rumours of wars. Political order was self-evidently founded on social hierarchy. Their African agents were worse than useless if they did not have the authority to be obeyed. The articulation of modes of production appeared to be undermining the means of domination, but chiefs had to have an income, taxes had to be paid, merchants and miners had to profit. Few officials had any faith in either the productivity or the reliability of free peasantries. They needed political supervision or the discipline of employment; they had to have chiefs, landlords or foremen. If allies were to be turned into administrative agents, their followers would have to learn again the habit of obedience. Quite how, and with what degree of success, the various colonial governments tried to reconstruct authority depended much upon the nature of their competing white constituents. Established white traders were generally content with the old order of things, but peasant proprietors were conveniently weaker in the market than the old noble brokers. Chiefs and traders nevertheless often found themselves in alliance against the intrusion of the newer clients of the state which threatened them both, concession-hunters, mine promoters, plantation syndicates, farmers, all interested in the managed supply of African wage-labour rather than the free flow of African domestic produce. But colonial reconstructions also had to cope with the recent history of African attempts, from above and below, continually to renegotiate between themselves and with whites the shifting economic bargains of political change. Resistance and

⁷¹ David Welsh, *The roots of segregation: Native policy in colonial Natal 1845-1910* (Cape Town, 1971), 301.

collaboration are best understood as the African side of the competitive politics of state-building. Five conclusions follow.

Armed resistance was almost never 'primary', in the sense of being an instinctive reflex action against an external intrusion. Domestic African and external European politics were in most regions already too interlocked for that. They continued to share a common interest in trade, even in trade devoted to African rearmament. British dealers kept on supplying arms to Samory, Germans sold rifles to King Behanzin of Dahomey, while both rulers were fighting the French. Black mineworkers in South Africa went on buying guns with their earnings long after the white panics of the 1870s about the growing threat from African chiefdoms across the frontiers. Africans took advantage of European divisions as much as their own quarrels were themselves exploited. Virtually all Africans negotiated working accommodations with Europeans until Europeans made it impossible. Even those who fought most fiercely, Samory, the rulers of Dahomey, the Ndebele, the Zulu, the Herero and the Nama, did so only as a last resort, when their European allies betrayed them. The Mahdiyya alone was proof against all overtures, not that any bids for its friendship, save from Menelik, were ever seriously made. Primary resistance must also have been the response of some stateless peoples of the interior, those very few societies which had not become deeply involved in the advancing frontiers of hunting and trade. But everywhere else the concept is inappropriate. It assumes the contiguous opposition of discrete political systems, African and European, but the reality was their interpenetration, Afro-European.

Secondly, therefore, one has to abandon, once and for all, any idea that African 'societies', or even their rulers or leaders, were normally united in their solutions to the European problem. The case studies in the rearmament of African statehood have shown that for the states most fully involved in the European world there was profound disagreement as to their national cause; stateless societies were as chronically divided, if in different ways. Within the trading frontiers, kingdoms were contested between what have been described for Dahomey as 'Ethiopian' and 'Liberian' parties. The former supported monarchies in their attempt to maintain pre-capitalist relations of authority and exploitation;

their opponents tried to convert their official domains into private capital. The one required European recognition, the latter European partnerships. The analysis would apply equally well to the war and peace parties of Asante or the royal, *usuthu*, faction and its opposition in Zululand. Foreign policies veered between the obstructive and the accommodating according to the domestic balance of the parties. Ideological division was perhaps still more marked on the western fringes of Muslim Africa; Senegalese chiefdoms, which had equivocated with Islam for centuries, increasingly found that their tributary exactions were opposed by armed peasantries who enjoyed clerical protection. Neither side had any particular love for the French, but each was prepared to bargain with them against their internal rivals.⁷²

Just as there were no agreed policies, so also, and this is the third conclusion, leaders had very varied capacities to carry their people with them in whatever tactical option they had for the time being decided upon. There were important distinctions here, not only between kingdoms and stateless societies but also between varieties of kingdom. It is a crude simplification, but workable for present purposes, to visualise a continuum in the basis and intensity of African political authority. At one end of the spectrum, authority in stateless societies was founded upon mastery over the ritual and material skills of domestic production but was invested with few powers of enforcement. At the other end, their control of administrative and military establishments granted to the rulers of the western Sudan and the ruffians of the hunting frontier no managerial competence in production other than that given by the power to extort tribute in labour and kind from subject communities of cultivators or pastoralists. The Guinea forest kingdoms and those which survived in central Africa lay somewhere in between. The continuum is related to variables in both modes of production and means of coercion.

Stateless societies were productive communities; their social institutions were most deeply valued and most fully activated as co-operative pathways designed to preserve life against the risks of all but the most savage of natural disasters, those droughts

⁷² Patrick Manning, *Slavery, colonialism and economic growth in Dabomey 1640-1960* (Cambridge, 1982), 14-15; Ivor Wilks, *Political bi-polarity in nineteenth century Asante* (Edinburgh, 1971); Jeff Guy, *The destruction of the Zulu kingdom: the civil war in Zululand* (London, 1979); Klein, *Islam and imperialism*, chs. 4 and 5.

which extended for more than a couple of seasons. Then the desperation of individual survival dictated the repudiation of all reciprocities, and civilised life was at an end. They had no professional armies for Europeans to destroy, only armed citizenries; they had no professional administrators or rival princes to co-opt. In neither sense were they easy, like kingdoms, to crack open. They could be defeated only by assaults on their capacity to reproduce themselves, by the burning of crops or the seizure of livestock. Alternatively, their leaders could be patronised only if they were not then required to exercise much power. Africa's stateless societies and petty chiefdoms fought her longest and most bitter resistances against the colonial invasions; many had seen it all before as zones of tribal dissidence on the margins of predatory kingdoms, enduring the rise and surviving the fall of successive conquering dynasties. They may not have had governments themselves, but that does not necessarily mean that they had no perception of what conquest portended. Conversely, they probably found it less easy to mobilise for war except to repel specific administrative demands. Not only did stateless societies resist longer than kingdoms but their struggles often came later in the evolution of colonial states.

Africa's kingdoms varied enormously in the degree of separation between their state apparatus and their social communities and institutions. This separation seems to have been most marked in the Muslim empires of the western Sudan, but quite why this should have been so is a contentious matter. It was partly because in the nineteenth century they were all new, but that is itself a reflection on the historical instability of ruling régimes in this region. It has commonly been argued that in these open savannas, tsetse-free and with long dry campaigning seasons, large cavalry aristocracies were only too well equipped to cow their subjects, and to communicate orders over long distances. Cavalry raids also captured large numbers of slaves which could be used in production, in administering free communities and in further wars. All that Europeans had to do was to defeat their armies in an afternoon and their brittle superstructures would collapse by evening; the way was then open to negotiate understandings with the submerged dynasties of subject peoples which were thereby raised again to political life. There is much in this, but it probably accords too much military prowess to horsemen and does not take

sufficient account of the centuries-old contradictions between rulers and townsmen – merchant princes, artisans and clerics – communities which supplied armies and sold their slave products, but which also used the dry seasons for long-distance trading only to be harassed by the warriors who rode out to war. Peasantries had their grievances against warrior élites, but so too did African merchant capitalists, and they had more to offer to Europeans by way of supplies and skills in return for peace.⁷³

Elsewhere there was much less sharp a distinction between state and society, whether in the kingdoms of the tropical Guinea forests, the equatorial forest of Zaïre, or in the savanna of eastern and southern Africa. In some of these kingdoms, it is true, the founding heroes were remembered as outsiders, some fabulous, some uncouth, and their successors were symbolically distanced from the ties of the kingdom's component lineages. Nevertheless, the fabric of authority generally seems to have been more complex, more subject to the claims of representation and consultation, altogether more civil than in the western Sudan. Again, it is difficult to explain this contrast in a word. It must be at least in part because the tsetse-fly prevented these from being anything other than pedestrian states. Infantry militias were even less easily centralised than mounted aristocracies. The proceeds of war were correspondingly widely dispersed. Captives augmented the power and, through concubinage, the followings of the 'big men' of local communities as much as they reinforced the wealth and majesty of kings. Lineage slavery was as common as royal. In the forests, domestic agricultural operations required as heavy an investment of labour as did public works. Lineages were probably more often alliances for protection and the management of production than actual descent groups; but while their ideology of descent and kinship may have justified unequal obligations to elders, big men and chiefs, it did also mark off the freedoms of citizenship from the hazards of kinless servitude. The result was a wider popular reservoir of self-interested loyalty for these kingdoms to draw upon in the face of external challenge

⁷³ Goody, *Technology, tradition and the state*; Robin Law, *The horse in West African history* (Oxford, 1980), and the review by Rosemary Harris in *Africa*, 1982, 52, 1, 81–5; Stephen Baier, *An economic history of Central Niger* (Oxford, 1980), 21–56; Richard Roberts, 'Long distance trade and production: Sinsani in the nineteenth century', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1980, 21, 2, 169–88; *idem*, 'Production and reproduction in warrior states: Segu Bambara and Segu Tokolor, c. 1712–1890', *Int. J. Afr. Hist. Studies*, 1980, 13, 3, 389–419.

than appears to have been available to the empires of the western Sudan.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, the self-strengthenings of the nineteenth century did little, if anything, to expand the rights of commoners in any kingdom, except possibly to make them more grateful that they were protected from some of the growing burdens which were heaped upon slaves. While one can point to the relaxation of one or two specific impositions on commoners in Asante for instance, their general security was undermined by the growing risks of its wars. In Muslim areas the stricter application of the *shari'a* stiffened royal administration at least as much as it enhanced citizenship with the concept of the *umma*, the community of the faithful. And it is interesting that Christianity was taken up only by officials or fugitive slaves; ordinary commoners seem to have had little freedom for religious experimentation even in communities in such patent disarray as in Yorubaland. It can be asked therefore, as it has been argued for the Balkans under the Turkish invasions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, how far some of Africa's kingdoms not only divided politically but also fell into ruins as societies before the European advance, so that to some extent their people acquiesced in their own defeat.⁷⁵

A proper answer needs careful distinctions. There were 'crises of monarchy', with falling revenues, rebellious conquered populations and runaway slaves, or subversively selfish high officers of state. There were also elements of a 'crisis of aristocracy', which involved the rise of market competition and therefore of political disobedience among free commoners. It was possible to have the first without the second but not, it seems, the second without the first. These distinctions are best seen in West Africa, where they have already been most interestingly explored.⁷⁶

In some coastal kingdoms there were all the elements of a crisis of monarchy. Like the Mediterranean countries and Imerina, they

⁷⁴ Joseph C. Miller, *Kings and kinsmen: early Mbundu states in Angola* (Oxford, 1976); Jan Vansina, *The children of Woot: a history of the Kuba peoples* (Madison, 1978); *idem*, 'Towards a history of lost corners in the world', *Econ. Hist. Review*, 1982, 2nd series, 35, 2, 165-78; Ivor Wilks, 'Land, labour, capital and the forest kingdom of Asante: a model of early changes', in J. Friedman and M. J. Rowlands (eds.), *The evolution of social systems* (Pittsburg, 1978), 487-534; *idem*, 'The golden stool and the elephant tail: an essay on wealth in Asante', *Research in Economic Anthropology*, 1979, 2, 1-36.

⁷⁵ Wilks, *Asante*, 673, 708; Ajayi, *Christian missions in Nigeria*; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the age of Philip II*, vol. II (London, 1973), 664.

⁷⁶ By Hopkins, *Economic history of West Africa*, ch. 4.

all suffered a collapse of external revenues from the 1860s as the terms of world trade turned against them. This clearly sharpened differences between kings and their trading chiefs. Asante's conquered provinces detached themselves, and some of her slaves fled to the Gold Coast after the British expedition of 1874. The Oyo empire had disintegrated half a century earlier and the successor states of Yorubaland found it impossible to end their civil wars for want of a mediatory king.⁷⁷ Paradoxically however, the most serious monarchical crises were in the western Sudan, the area best protected against adverse commercial conditions, if not against severe monetary inflation, by the internal, regional, focus of its trade. This was because the Muslim empires of the area had their own political history as well as being subject to the fluctuations of the world economy. Samory's régime and the jihad empire of the Tukolors were undergoing their own early crises of state-building at the same time as the French were converting their diplomatic influence into a network of control. Samory's conquests were unfinished, those of the Tukolor were falling apart. They were disputed between rival ruling houses, and between their zealot supporters and subject peoples who did not yet accept that they were defeated. Both aspects of uncompleted state-building gave openings to the French. They recruited large auxiliary forces from among the Bambara subjects of the Tukolor; they also allied with one Tukolor faction against the other, 'so making the collapse of the state look less tragic than it might have been'.⁷⁸

The local history of labour relations was as full of paradox, due to the contradictions within African slavery. Individual slaveholders could not have created and controlled a servile work-force on their own. They needed soldiers and some civil system of coercion, but also an ideology which, however irksome it may have seemed, checked them in their own oppressions while containing the resentments of their slaves. Paternalism came in both Islamic and lineage guises. Large-scale mineworking or plantation slavery, the most alienating form of all, was never the sole element of servitude; for kings and nobles were never the only class of masters, even in the western Sudan. Traders

⁷⁷ J. F. A. Ajayi and Robert S. Smith, *Yoruba warfare in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 1964), 63–75, 123–8.

⁷⁸ B. O. Oloruntimehin, *The Segu Tukolor empire* (London, 1972), 320.

everywhere employed slaves as some of their most trusted agents; and free smallholders often had a handful of farm slaves as well as captive wives. The difficulty for masters was that their slaves did not allow themselves to be treated simply as an economic asset; they were intended to be 'extensions of their owner's will, but they also had wills of their own'.⁷⁹ All slave-owning societies had to make concessions to their slaves' awkward humanity by showing some humanity themselves. African kingdoms, let alone lineages, had few powers of surveillance; they controlled slaves as much by accommodating them. Masters had to grant slaves some rights lest otherwise they seize them, if not by violence then by flight. All African slave-holders went some way to appease their slaves with acts of manumission or processes of incorporation into free society, by according some respect to slave families, by permitting them some rights to land and some enjoyment of the product of their own labour. The manner in which slaves took advantage of the European conquest therefore depended much upon their individual experience of the mixture of constraints and opportunities inherent in their condition. Recent captives or gangs of plantation workers, whose status had not begun to soften from slave to dependant, often saw external conquest as a breach in the walls of coercion and accordingly took flight. Farm slaves, whose owners worked alongside them and whose families were about them, tended to see conquest more as a means to strengthen their claims on whatever customary rights of enfranchisement were locally available, in order to remain where they were.

In the far western Sudan, the small states which bordered the French colony of Senegal suffered a steady drain of fugitive slaves over the frontier for decades, no doubt in part because their aristocracies were distracted by constant civil war. But slave-holders further inland, in the no less disordered region of the Tukolor conquests, continued to send bands of freemen with their slave retainers to the groundnut coasts of Senegambia, apparently confident that they would return with their earnings after as many as three seasons working as share-croppers hundreds of miles from home.⁸⁰ While political disruption therefore preceded

⁷⁹ Frederick Cooper, *Plantation slavery on the east coast of Africa* (New Haven and London, 1977), 233. I am indebted to Professor Cooper for his advice.

⁸⁰ Ken Swindell, 'Serawoollies, Tillibunkas and strange farmers: the development of migrant groundnut farming along the Gambia river, 1848-95', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1980, 21, 1, 93-104.

conquest almost everywhere in the savanna the collapse of social control did not take on crisis proportions until the proximity of European armies made it safe for slave populations openly to acquiesce in their masters' defeat. In the middle Niger region, in both the French and British spheres of control, there then followed classic examples of one very widespread consequence of the articulation of modes of production. Pre-capitalist authorities first strengthened and then lost their direct control over labour; capitalists thereafter failed to subordinate it fully to their purposes. In the more westerly area of the French advance, slave régimes happened to be particularly harsh. Recent African conquests meant that many slaves were newly captured, needing constant reminders of their subjugation. Slave-holders had a further incentive to work their labour harder in the large market for food and fodder provided by French garrisons. In some polities up to two-thirds of the population was slave. As the victorious French destroyed slavers' armies and displaced rulers this vast servile population began to stir. Some became dependants of the French. They enlisted in their army, the *tirailleurs sénégalais*, or accepted involuntary settlement as porters and cultivators in the so-called villages of freedom along the army's supply routes. Very many more, over a quarter of a million, made good their escape back to the homes and peasant citizenships from which they had only recently been abducted. But most stayed behind, becoming the share-cropping dependants of their former owners. In this way they were able to exercise more control over their lives while retaining the protection of patronage in uncertain times.

With this wholesale erosion of their authority, African rulers also lost the basis for independent political action. Their new European overlords were scarcely less dismayed. They anticipated the collapse of agriculture and trade; they feared that the only conceivable African levers of power would fall apart in their hands. Their civilising mission forbade the toleration of slavery, but it was not clear what else would maintain African hierarchies. They resolved therefore not to abolish slavery but to make it invisible, while undermining its sources of long-term reproduction. They stopped the wars and sales which resupplied slave labour; they decreed that children could no longer be born into slavery; but they refused to make it easy for existing slaves to escape their yoke by any means other than those provided by a

liberal interpretation of Islamic law. In British Northern Nigeria comparatively few slaves ran away. This was only partly due to the fact that Lugard and his successors took more care than the French not to discredit the local ruling, slave-holding, class in the Sokoto caliphate. The rapid growth of export agriculture was the more important condition for social stability. It provided acceptable alternatives for both masters and slaves. Masters became traders and rentiers; slaves bought land and freedom in some areas and entered into tenancies in others. An agricultural revolution was under way, but it was not at all the one which the Europeans had intended. The British had hoped that former masters would become active landlords, their former slaves a rural proletariat. But it was not the British who made the revolution, it was the slaves. It was a peasant settlement, not a capitalist transition. It provided a pattern, as will be seen, for much of colonial Africa. Peasants wanted patrons rather than employers; their former masters similarly clung to old relations of authority, the ones with which they were familiar. Dependants owed them more services than employees. So European merchants had to be content to deal not with large plantation enterprises but with African brokers and smallholders, neither of which tolerated interference in their local relations of marketing, credit and production.⁸¹

In the western Sudan, then, it appears that there was no real crisis of aristocracy, no loss of hierarchical control over dependants, until monarchies lost their sovereignty under conquest. Societies fell into ruins not before, but during, the European advance. The crisis of monarchy had come earlier among the coastal kingdoms because their greater exposure to the European trading frontier had stimulated both public self-strengthening and private cupidity. But any crisis of aristocracy, the rise of the small producer to compete with kings and chiefs in the market, seems, like the flight of slaves, to have been a consequence rather than a precursor of conquest. To argue

⁸¹ Richard Roberts and Martin Klein, 'The Banamba slave exodus of 1905 and the decline of slavery in the Western Sudan', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1980, 21, 3, 375-94; Paul E. Lovejoy, 'Slavery in the context of ideology', pp. 11-38 in Lovejoy (ed.), *The ideology of slavery in Africa* (Beverly Hills and London, 1981), 11-38; *idem*, *Transformations in slavery: a history of slavery in Africa* (Cambridge, 1983), ch. 11; Hill, *Population, prosperity and poverty*, ch. 13; for comparable processes in the decline of slavery see, for the West African coast, Manning, *Dahomey, 188-93*; and, for East Africa, Frederick Cooper, *From slaves to squatters: plantation labour and agriculture in Zanzibar and coastal Kenya 1890-1925* (New Haven and London, 1980).

otherwise presupposes a greater degree of political freedom for commoners than is consistent with their available strategies of domestic survival.⁸² Officials became magnates in Asante and Dahomey precisely because their office granted them the powers of market brokerage or political tribute, and a share in road or harbour dues. In Yorubaland the aristocratic mode of production, with its command over slave plantations, guilds of craftsmen and free followers alike, was only too successful in sustaining the civil wars which produced the slaves who, in turn, produced palm oil for export. Ibadan's military-industrial complex may have had no king, but its coalition of landlord-brokers was unchallenged from below. War kept their followings faithful; and the same can be said of Ibadan's most bitter opponents, the Ekiti confederation of north-eastern Yorubaland. British observers in Lagos thought that virtually all Yoruba palm-oil exports were produced and transported by slaves until the 1890s, when British power was finally extended inland. Asante's poor, slaves and debtors, likewise, did not give any organised voice to their discontents until driven to despair by their conscription to fight the British. Although the rubber boom of the closing years of the century did promote economic individualism in Asante, this development again was not widespread until the 1890s, when the creeping British conquest was already far advanced. Even then, Asante and Fante chiefs would grant to commoners the right to tap rubber only in return for a share in the proceeds or the performance of tribute labour. In 1898 the Fante chiefs of the Gold Coast refused to compromise their authority by acceding to British proposals to make their lands convertible to freeholds, but they were quite ready to exercise their power by turning out communal labour on public works instead. And this was in an area where one would suppose that chiefly prerogatives had been most outflanked by colonial jurisdiction.

It is difficult to deduce from these examples that commoners had become a serious challenge to pre-colonial chiefs. Rather, as citizens, they continued to profit and to be protected by their allegiance to the big slave-owning producers who were also their market brokers. If the experience of the Baule of the Ivory Coast

⁸² On this point I prefer the earlier interpretation of Hopkins, 'Lagos Strike', 138-44, to the later one in *idem*, 'Economic imperialism in West Africa: Lagos, 1880-92', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 1968, 21, 3, 588, 604, and in *idem*, *Economic history of West Africa*, 143.

is any guide, free lineage members were able to evade European demands on their chiefs for tribute labour; slaves were picked upon instead. It was not until colonial rule forced open both roads and markets that it became not only economically rational but politically possible for commoners to repudiate the economic privileges of their chiefs. Perhaps the most illuminating example of the transition is to be seen in the origins of cocoa-planting in the Yoruba interior around the turn of the century. It was taken up most eagerly in what had been the more belligerent of the feuding Yoruba states. Here, where commoners had been most closely identified with the aristocratic pursuit of war, they also had most to lose when military allegiances were dissolved by alien overrule. Demobilised soldiers fell back on commercial agriculture, but still within the kin groups which had been forged by self-protection in war, 'to escape the economic consequences of the peace'.⁸³

On the west African coast the complementary oppositions of free smallholder and slave production greatly complicated the capacity of kings to resist unacceptable European demands. Commoners fought in defence of Dahomey, but behind their backs many of their Yoruba slaves took off for home. In eastern central Africa, by contrast, the influence of European trade was not strong enough to sharpen such divisions, while European demands for land and labour as well as commercial concessions impinged upon the least as well as the greatest in African society. It is no accident then that one of the most famous examples of the African capacity to resist conquest was shown by the Ndebele and Shona people of Zimbabwe. How to account for their sustained hardihood has become a matter of illuminating controversy. It was first understood as their response to revolu-

⁸³ Newbury, *Western Slave Coast*, 126; Bolanle Awe, 'Militarism and economic development in nineteenth century Yoruba country: the Ibadan example', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1973, 14, 1, 65-78; S. A. Akintoye, *Revolution and power politics in Yorubaland 1840-1893* (London, 1971); Wilks, *Asante*, 705-10; Raymond Dumett, 'The rubber trade of the Gold Coast and Asante in the nineteenth century: African innovation and market responsiveness', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1971, 12, 1, 93-8; Kwame Arhin, 'The economic and social significance of rubber production and exchange in the Gold and Ivory Coasts, 1880-1900', *Cahiers d'études Africaines*, 1980, 20, 1-2, 49-62; R. E. Robinson, 'European imperialism and indigenous reactions in British West Africa 1880-1914', in H. L. Wesseling (ed.), *Expansion and reaction: essays on European expansion and reactions in Asia and Africa* (Leiden, 1978), 154-5; Timothy C. Weiskel, *French colonial rule and the Baule peoples: resistance and collaboration 1889-1911* (Oxford, 1980), 214-15, 221-3; Sara S. Berry, *Cocoa, custom and socio-economic change in rural western Nigeria* (Oxford, 1975), 53 for the concluding quotation.

tionary, populist, appeals by religious cult authorities who enlarged political loyalties in opposition to secular leaders; these had been morally discredited and materially weakened, first by military defeat and then by enforced acquiescence in the Rhodesian settlers' demands, but were now shamed into resuming the struggle. This was an exciting thesis, an exploration of how, under pressure, popular consciousness can be changed by visionary leadership; but it has been shown to have serious problems as an explanation. It is not that the concept of 'revolution' could not be grasped in these pre-literate societies, for lack either of a critical tradition or of class oppositions such as might inspire a subversive vision of society. The peoples of central Africa were well aware of the distinctions between hierarchical kingdoms and the stateless societies which managed to survive on their fringes; and some territorial cults did embody, in oracular guise, submerged dynasties, alternative political communities. While there is room to doubt whether the Zimbabwean cults and spirit mediums did in fact play such a revolutionary role, there can be no objection in principle to their so doing, especially when popular discontent gave them a potential following to satisfy.

There are two more substantial objections to the original thesis. One is that it did not pay sufficient attention to the non-military networks of co-ordinated authority which all African communities had to have, in order to insure against ecological disaster, to exchange specialised articles of use, and to reinforce with marriage alliances the local authority of big men, chiefs or kings in their control of tribute, trade and the access of their juniors to women, land and cattle. These alliances were expressly designed to be called upon in crisis, and a crisis is what the Zimbabwean peoples faced, a compound of locusts, rinderpest and European claims on what slender material resources remained. Joint action, in short, did not require creative coordination; there had been no fundamental crisis of monarchy or chieftaincy to disrupt such channels of co-operation as already existed. The second objection brings back the question of state-building, European and African. The 'revolutionary' thesis rested on the distinction between resistance and rebellion. Resistance, it was argued, had seen the old Ndebele order of king, chiefs and regiments go down fighting in all their anachronistic splendour. The subsequent rebellion could be organised only by new men, upstarts and prophets, men not

imprisoned by co-optation into the new colonial order. There are two difficulties here. Early colonial rule, even in settler Rhodesia, had not the power to institute so sharp a break; it was always a disputed process. And Ndebele royal successions, brought about in this case by the death of the fugitive king Lobengula after his war of resistance in 1893, were generally lengthy, contested affairs which mobilised all the competing factions of the kingdom. The rebellion of 1896 can therefore be seen as a continuation of resistance once the political coalitions of the kingdom had been put together anew.⁸⁴ Most African rebellions are perhaps likewise best seen as 'delayed resistances', if only because the colonial powers so often delayed the transition between the politics of conquest and the demands of rule.

The fourth point which needs to be made in analysing African decisions and capabilities in the 1890s is, therefore, that even the most shattering events of conquest were merely concentrated episodes in the unfinished and unpredictable processes of mobilising political coalitions. Decisions were reached in battle but they were never final ones, and victories were neither won nor consolidated by firepower alone. European demands enlarged with time, consistent only with the contradictory requirements of military security and minimum cost. The first colonial officials had to extract resources of manpower and food supplies from African allies on terms which demonstrated their own mastery but which were not so mean as to provoke defection. Conversely, they needed their allies' help in subduing the irreconcilables, but not on such a scale as would turn their satellites into their protectors. Such daily political calculations were more influential in shaping local colonial régimes than any imperial blueprint for the controlled exploitation of tropical estates. Even where, as in the colonies of settlement and mining investment, the needs of European clients were paramount, they could not be satisfied to the total exclusion of African agents from the political establishment. The subsequent structures of colonial states were not governed by their economic function; their economic function

⁸⁴ Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* for the original thesis; since criticised in Julian Cobbing, 'The absent priesthood: another look at the Rhodesian risings in 1896-1897', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1977, 18, 1, 61-84; and D. N. Beach, "'Chimurenga': the Shona rising of 1896-97", *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1979, 20, 3, 391-420; Terence Ranger's discussion of these and other critics is in his preface to the first paperback edition of *Revolt* (London, 1979), ix-xviii.

was governed by the political alliances which competing interests, white and black, were able to stitch together in order to press their claims on the allocation of power. Outcomes were not predetermined; colonial officials were participants in the bargaining, not its arbiters. African accommodation or resistance to official impositions were thus equally plausible, and equally risky, means of setting conditions for their inclusion in or raising the price of their rejection from the shifting coalitions of rule. Some early European supporters of conquest were just as liable to suffer displacement from power as their African counterparts. In warfare, in military supply, and in trade the events of conquest were full of surprises.

African military resistance invited defeat and dismemberment, as in the cases of the Shona or the Herero, the Tukolor empire or Bunyoro. But it could as well enforce more lenient bargains upon the Europeans both directly, as the Baule found when they first fought off the French, or the Ndebele when they almost broke Rhodes in 1896; and indirectly, as when the Sierra Leone hut tax revolt of 1898 warned the British off their intention to levy direct taxes on the Gold Coast and in Nigeria. Conversely, European victories were generally but by no means always victories for their African allies as well. Chief Mareale of Marangu was able to eliminate his local rivals with German arms, the Protestant warlords of Buganda used the British against their king. Africans' defence of their own interests could also appear to be a gratifying steadiness on behalf of their European conquerors. The rulers of Sokoto were beaten by the British in 1903; three years later, only the sultan stood between the British and disaster, when the Mahdi of Satiru wiped out a company of the West African Frontier Force. The Mahdi was as subversive of the Fulani sultan's authority as of the British. Their joint suppression of the revolt 'changed relations between the British and the ruling Fulani from superordination based on force to a near parity based on common interests'.⁸⁵ The chiefs of Buganda made themselves even more indispensable as the protectors of the British when in 1897 they helped to crush the mutiny of the British mercenary force of Sudanese. But these were exceptional cases. The more general experience of the African allies of conquest was to find that the

⁸⁵ M. G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau* (Oxford, 1960), 205.

privileges of loyalty were gradually reduced and finally spurned. There were three stages in their rejection. First, colonial officials sought to multiply the number of the allies which they could call upon, in order to reduce their dependence on any one of them. They then recruited individuals into standing armies under direct European command, bureaucratising the use of force in order to limit its delegation to African military contractors. By 1908, the use of African auxiliary forces or native levies was finally banned by imperial authorities who were determined to bring an end to the pursuit of pacification through civil war or, as Winston Churchill put it, disturbing without governing.⁸⁶ The political relations of conquest were finally superseded by the political relations of control. All, allies and recalcitrants alike, had to submit to the symbolic and material obedience of taxation. All, even the staunchest of allies, were required to hand over their guns. Force became a monopoly of colonial states.

The first European agencies of colonial rule fared no better in this gradual process of removing public power from private hands. Imperial authorities disposed of the British and German East Africa Companies when their resources proved unequal to maintaining national prestige against the general costs of conquest or outright African revolt. The British also revoked the Royal Niger Company's charter, for fear that it would not be able to keep out the French. Rhodes' discomfiture at the hands of the Ndebele and Shona was punished by an increase, however minor, in imperial supervision of his company's rule. The Portuguese officials in Mozambique similarly tried to rid themselves of dependence on their baronage, the *prazo*-holders, but with little success; the government of Mozambique remained as honey-combed as any African kingdom with private jurisdictions.⁸⁷ The Congo Independent State and French Equatorial Africa were similarly company regimes, but by intention. To judge by their wretched histories, the alternative to commercial bankruptcy was forced labour, the death or dispersion of African workers, and the destruction of natural assets, rubber especially. They pursued not peace, but profit, through civil war. And even here the era of the

⁸⁶ Margery Perham, *Lugard*, vol. II: *The years of authority 1898–1945* (London, 1960) 248.

⁸⁷ Leroy Vail and Landeg White, *Capitalism and colonialism in Mozambique: a study of Quelimane district* (London, 1980), chs. 2 and 3.

quasi-sovereign concessionary company did not long outlast the disarmament of the scarcely more destructive warlord chief.

The main military problem in the conquests of Africa was overwhelmingly the problem of supply. Local administrative budgets were mostly taken up in food-buying, fuel-cutting and portage; draught oxen succumbed to tsetse and ammunition wagons stuck in the mud.⁸⁸ Outside Egypt and South Africa all of Africa's first railways were built with military requirements uppermost in mind. The military food market consolidated colonial African alliances as firmly as the supply of auxiliary troops. French officers in the western Sudan depended on the network of Senegalese merchants and did all they could to facilitate their trade, reserving their contempt for their fellow French businessmen who profited by the expenditure of French blood. Even when the conquerors tried to reduce the costs of food supply it did not necessarily mean the repudiation of their allies. The chiefs of Buganda, for instance, contemplated refusing exorbitant British demands before they agreed to supply food free of charge. According to the Ganda historian, Batolomayo Zimbe, the British then 'changed their attitude towards the Baganda and favoured the habit of discussing with us any measure they wanted to take'. The Christian leaders well understood the importance of supply. Their superiority as quartermasters rather than gunmen had just won them victory over their Muslim rivals in succession war.⁸⁹ But food supply and portage could also ruin friends and enemies alike. The great rinderpest epizootic was the most catastrophic example of indiscriminate misfortune. Pleuro-pneumonia among slaughter stock, dysentery and pneumonia among ill-fed and ill-clad porters, tested the loyalty of the African allies of conquest in Kenya. The slave-holders of the western Sudan, as already mentioned, stoked the resentments of their slaves in driving them to produce more food for sale to the French, their future conquerors.

In the sphere of civil commerce, as distinct from military supply, conquest and its enlargement of European trading privileges did not necessarily spell the end of capital accumulation by African merchants, or their reduction to mere commission

⁸⁸ The best study of the supply problems of conquest is in Matson, *Nandi resistance*.

⁸⁹ Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest of the western Sudan*, 201; Michael Twaddle, 'The Bakungu chiefs of Buganda under British colonial rule 1900-1930', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1969, 10, 2, 313; *idem*, 'Muslim Revolution', 67.

agents for foreign business houses. This was partly because European commercial interests were so competitive with each other, partly because African trading networks of credit and partnership were irreplaceable. In Nigeria, the smaller British firms were just as determined as their African partners to resist the monopoly claims of the Royal Niger Company. German traders in Togo, like the French traders in Dahomey, managed to defend their established connections with African trading chiefs against the threat of plantation concessions which would have needed monopoly buying rights and the disruption of domestic African labour. Even in South Africa there could be effective alliances of white traders and African chiefs, to delay the expansion of colonial frontiers and their harbour dues. Africans survived in trade not only because of their role in European competitions but also because they had the priceless capital assets of local goodwill and political authority. When British officials decided to destroy the independence of the Niger delta merchant prince, Nana Olomu of Ebrohimi, in 1894, they almost ruined the British traders who had bought their palm oil from him. Only a power like Nana could maintain the huge and intricate network of slave porters and canoe men which kept the puncheons of oil moving down to the delta ports. Six years later the House Rule Ordinance tacitly re-established the old system of servile transport workers. To profit from colonial conquest it seemed necessary to make one's peace with the lords of trade.⁹⁰

Finally, one has to ask how far it was death rather than the Europeans which really conquered Africa at the turn of the century. Only the west African Guinea forest peoples seem to have wholly escaped the dreadful mortality of human beings and their domestic animals. A number of Africans believed that the Europeans had called biological warfare to their aid; sorcery might be the better term. It was thought at the time that one-third of Ethiopia's population died of famine in the 1890s, a harrowing experience in which civilised existence all but vanished. There was even some cannibalism, an unheard-of degradation, when the strong consumed the weak: 'His wife gave him indigestion,' as the Shoans sang. Around 1890, between 10 and 50 per cent of the

⁹⁰ Newbury, *Western Slave Coast*, 151-5; Manning, *Dahomey*, 174; Beinart, *Pondoland*, 31-4; Cherry J. Gertzel, 'Relations between African and European traders in the Niger Delta 1880-1896', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1962, 3, 2, 361-6; Robinson, 'European imperialism and indigenous reactions', 152-60.

people of central Kenya died of famine, dysentery and smallpox not, certainly, because of the conquest but, equally certainly, weakening their defences against white settlers when they arrived little more than a decade later. Three quarters of a million may have died of famine in what is now Tanzania during the 'nineties; over a quarter of a million of sleeping-sickness in Uganda in the six years after 1900, about two-thirds of the population in the affected lake-shore areas. It has been estimated that up to half the people died of sleeping-sickness and smallpox in the lands on either bank of the lower river Congo. By 1912 it was thought that the population of the entire Belgian Congo might have been reduced by 60 per cent, from 20 million to 8 million, in the quarter century since the Berlin Conference; but that was only a horrified guess at the consequences of disorder among diseased populations as they hid from the exactions of King Leopold's rubber collectors. On equally slender evidence it can be suggested that demographic decline was scarcely less catastrophic in northern Nigeria. Depopulation had started in the mid-nineteenth century, as the Muslim emirates harried their surroundings for slaves, disrupted cultivation, precipitated flight to remote areas, and thus allowed room for the expansion of tsetse-fly bush. A study of an aggressively commercial chiefdom in Angola ends with the presumption of its extinction by sleeping-sickness in 1899. Disease stalked all railway construction and mining camps. And it is not impossible that three-quarters of all Africa's cattle died in the 1890s of the great rinderpest epizootic.⁹¹

It is plain that the various African reactions to conquest cannot be properly understood unless they are placed in the context of a literal struggle for survival. The earlier discussion of the relationships between rinderpest and the politics of conquest must serve as a warning that only detailed local evidence can defend such a perspective against false conclusions. There were doubtless many peoples of Africa for whom the annual cycles of planting and harvest or pastoral transhumance continued relatively undi-

⁹¹ Ford, *Trypanosomiasis*, 240, 392-3, 460, 489; Pankhurst, 'Ethiopian famine', 123; Marc H. Dawson, 'Disease and population decline of the Kikuyu of Kenya, 1890-1925', in *African historical demography*, vol. 11 (Edinburgh, 1981), 121-38; Robert W. Harms, *River of wealth, river of sorrow: the central Zaire basin in the era of the slave and ivory trade 1500-1891* (New Haven and London, 1981), 231-32; John H. Harris, *Dawn in darkest Africa* (London, 1912), 208; Jill R. Dias, 'Black chiefs, white traders and colonial policy near the Kwanza: Kabuku Kambilo and the Portuguese, 1873-1896', *J. Afr. Hist.* 1976, 17, 2, 265.

sturbed, people whose drudgery, particularly the labour of their wives, was no more than usually increased by the need to pay the dues of political subordination or ceremonial observance. But for the many unfortunate ones, devastated by drought and pestilence, innovation was mandatory and, with it, new forms of conflict. Necessarily ignoring all cautions against such generalisation, one can suggest a triangular struggle between Africa's poor and their rulers old and new, as the premise of economic obedience not only collapsed but was actively challenged from below. Africa's poor, if they were dissatisfied with the ability of those above them to guarantee their livelihood, or if they were not sufficiently constrained, increasingly took the inauguration and maintenance of their domestic family cycle into their own hands, in ways which have already been outlined. Former slaves, family heads, young men, all explored new avenues of freedom. Their African patrons and rulers sought to recapture their services by sponsoring raids to restock herds, by taking in famished neighbours and pawned women, by hiring out their young men as military auxiliaries or porters for the Europeans or, if it should come to that, by organising their defence against European raids. The colonial invaders tried to turn both sides of this African conflict to their own profit, now employing individual workers, now patronising leaders who kept control of their followings. Armed resistance and armed collaboration alike were the means by which chiefs defended their rights to their peoples' labour. It was one of the many ironies of African history that the European conquest, which first helped to dislocate African livelihoods, then offered the best means available for their reconstruction.

Meanwhile, both beyond and within the frontiers of European control, fresh disorders kept breaking out. In the furthest interior, facing the western slopes of the Ruwenzori mountains, the Bashu people did not encounter the firearms-and-ivory frontier until the 1880s. Their ritual chiefs were quite unable to control this influx of power and, in the eyes of their people, their weakness caused the major drought of the late 1890s. It needed inspired leadership and the borrowing of an alien spirit cult to restore well-being. In similar circumstances other chiefs, less imaginative perhaps, succumbed to despair. Nandi Msulwa, king in Ufipa, committed suicide in 1897. His easy relations with Arab traders had come

to an end with the colonial partition, which disrupted the Zanzibar commercial networks. Traders called in their loans; Msuulwa increased his tribute exactions on his people; his people fled. Political emasculation brought on sexual impotence. It was fitting that it was with a gun that he chose to kill himself. In the northern savanna, trade was similarly disrupted as rifles became more widely available and the French seized hold of the Saharan oases. People responded to all this chaos on the frontiers of colonial state-building by coming together in defensive alliances in remote corners, forests and mountains. Colonies, like kingdoms, were plagued by marcher bandits, protectors of their people who now look like anti-colonial peasant heroes but who were in reality followers of an old tradition of what has been called 'marginal' tribalism, the conscious, structured rejection of the demands of kings.⁹²

Almost everywhere military expenditure continued to outstrip local colonial revenues into the early years of the twentieth century. European governments grew increasingly impatient of the costs of African empire, and military adventures were notorious for disrupting production and trade. Civilian governors who took up their posts around 1900 were all under orders to restrain the enthusiasm of soldiers for hunting blacks. But the fate of Africans was much the worst where, in King Leopold's Congo Independent State, there was no metropolitan treasury to finance the capital outlay of conquest, where, like the Arab traders before him, the king had to accumulate his capital on the spot. The horrors of his régime threatened to discredit all colonial empire in the educated European mind. Economy and morality thus combined to give a powerful impetus to the civil reconstruction of colonial rule.

RECONSTRUCTIONS AND EVASIONS

African colonies were all different. Their new civilian governments faced similar problems. By 1905 they were on the way to becoming very dissimilar colonial states. Past trading history, the

⁹² Randall M. Packard, *Chieftship and cosmology: an historical study of political competition* (Bloomington, 1981), chs. 6 and 7; Roy Willis, *A state in the making: myth, history and social transformation in pre-colonial Ufipa* (Bloomington, 1981), 205–10; Baier, *Central Niger*, 62–3; Allen Isaacman, 'Social banditry in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Mozambique, 1894–1907: an expression of early peasant protest', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1977, 4, 1, 1–30; for marginal tribalism, Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London, 1969), 2–3.

accidents of conquest, natural endowment, the local distribution of kingdoms and stateless societies and their particular divisions of labour, all set each colony apart from its neighbours. But every government had to try to bring about the same transition from the politics of conquest to the politics of control; to create or expand a taxable base; and to cope with the new social disorders which these changes evoked. Governments everywhere found a workable solution by coming to terms with locally dominant classes and interests, the first generally African, the second usually European, those who could cause the most trouble if ignored and guarantee the largest revenues if ministered to. But there was a limit to what governments could engineer and to what dominant groups could achieve. Powerful interests were not always compatible. And those who were apparently deprived of power, the vast majority of Africans, continued to show a remarkable capacity to evade the requirements of the new order or to exploit its needs for their own purposes, the most important of which, for young men at any rate, was personal freedom. Moreover, the paradox of conquest remained the paradox of rule, that power could not be exercised without giving some of it away. Europeans no longer shared out the use of armed force; they employed disciplined soldiers who knew how to ‘tramp, tramp, tramp in their military boots’, instead of barefoot levies.⁹³ But they could not do without the delegated authority of chiefs, labour recruiters, produce traders or tax clerks, nor easily withdraw their implied approval of Muslim and Christian teachers, all, the last especially, with their own private powers of patronage. Colonial states, for all their alien origins, soon developed characteristics common to all states. They were shifting coalitions of interest, often with rival definitions of authority. They were held together by governing institutions with contradictory responsibilities. Governments had to cultivate the goodwill of their most powerful supporters, mainly by ensuring them a ready supply of labour. They also had to see to it that the privileges of the powerful did not dangerously excite the disobedience of the poor.

It is often said that, with the exceptions of Egypt and South Africa, early colonial African trade and investment were altogether insignificant in the global scale. That is true but liable to be

⁹³ Roland Oliver, *Sir Harry Johnston and the scramble for Africa* (London, 1957), 311, quoting Johnston to Lord Salisbury, April 1900.

misleading. There was no shortage of conflicting ideas on how Africa might be turned to better account, no lack of competitors for colonial governments' favours and, since colonial rule rested ultimately upon their acquiescence, the actions or anticipated reactions of Africans were generally the most pressing political consideration. Colonial governments received divided counsels, and with such paltry revenues they had to choose. There were two broad possibilities before them, conservative and revolutionary. Governments could continue to serve the same commercial interests as had been protected by consuls, but even then they could not carry on quite as before. Too much had been disrupted in the politics of conquest, too much invested, and Europeans seemed to have more power. It appeared therefore that they might resolve the crisis of aristocracy and reconstitute the premise of African obedience to their chiefs with administrative sanctions, even if they did not dare to meddle in African methods of production. Even this conservative project demanded tax, and tribute labour on building railways or improving roads. The largest capital investments were all made by African workers. The alternative was to revolutionise the conditions of African economic obedience by rewriting the property relations of production. The strict definition of the ownership of land seemed to be the master key to African labour. Property might variously be vested in African chiefs, in peasant freeholders, in the colonial states, in concessionary companies, in private European farmers. Thus deprived of their customary rights of land usage, their capital, Africans would be obliged to work for more than their customary levels of family subsistence; they would cease to enjoy the privilege of living as 'a sort of naked leisure class'⁹⁴ and become instead a proletariat, clothed in imported cottons, industrious, respectable, the foundation of a capitalist transition.

This second, revolutionary, possibility was almost everywhere the first to be attempted. It seemed to be the obvious way forward, not so much because of the needs of governments' capitalist clients, but because of the mixture of condescension and fear with which virtually all Europeans looked upon Africans. If they were idle, they were also dangerous. Officials feared rebellion as much as they desired taxation. African labour which became self-

⁹⁴ C. W. de Kiewiet, *A history of South Africa, social and economic* (London, 1941), 85.

disciplined by regular work would, it was thought, furnish Europeans with the levers of social control as well as the source of wealth. Moreover, as commodity prices rose from the mid-1890s, European governments became increasingly concerned to safeguard the supply of cheap foodstuffs and industrial raw materials. Their colonial offices were dazzled, if only temporarily, by dreams of scientifically tended tropical estates. This image of the future contained planters and workers rather than peasants; it foresaw units of production which would provide the new colonial railways with freight by the wagon-load rather than in penny packets. This, again, was a strategic rather than a specifically capitalist vision. Nevertheless, the need for changing capitalist strategies did undoubtedly provide a third stimulus to the revolutionary approach. The old 'slash and burn or "swidden" commerce' of the ivory and rubber frontiers was beginning to run into diminishing returns; it wasted its assets, human and natural. Africa's forest resources could not compete in cost and quality with Malaya's new rubber plantations. Mistah Kurtz was dying; William Lever was agitating to be his successor, anxious to invest in palm plantations and oil mills. Lord Delamere, the hero of white settlement in Kenya, first came to Africa in the 1890s like one of her founder-kings, hunting ivory in the bush; he returned in the first years of the new century to try out woolled sheep, dairy cattle and wheat on his private land.⁹⁵ On the Mediterranean coasts of Africa a similar transition was under way. In Algeria the annual cycle of grain-growing by white peasant farmers was giving place to heavy investment in vineyards, which would pay only in the long term; Egypt's cotton landlords were taking out more mortgages to irrigate more feddans. In the south a parallel enlargement of their liabilities was forced upon the magnates of the Transvaal. They had begun to exhaust the easily worked surface outcrops of the gold reefs in the 1890s. In order to exploit the deep levels of the Witwatersrand they had literally to sink capital in mine shafts, pumping equipment, lifting gear, and new methods of processing the comparatively low quality ores.

Long-term investment required political confidence. Colonial

⁹⁵ Robert Harms, 'The end of red rubber: a reassessment', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1975, 16, 1, 73-88; Charles Wilson, *The history of Unilever*, vol. 1 (London, 1954), 165-87; D. K. Fieldhouse, *Unilever overseas* (London, 1978), ch. 9; Elspeth Huxley, *White man's country, Lord Delamere and the making of Kenya*, vol. 1: 1870-1914 (London, 1935), 11-19, 135-78.

governments looked to large-scale production for economic survival. Big producers looked to their own political survival in colonial states. Agents of economic growth at first, they ineluctably became part of the political structure of empire, as fiscal, land and labour policies became clustered about their needs. Colonial reconstructions were therefore competitive processes, not the blueprints of the official social engineers. And the competitors were as much African as European. The recent politics of conquest remained as compelling as the new politics of the capitalist transition. The past exercise of force and the active alliances which it had generated in African society often proved to be less of a midwife of further innovation than its most cautious constraint.⁹⁶ For the pillars of African society needed to be buttressed as carefully as capitalists if they were to be the trustworthy props of colonial rule. Chiefs were unavoidably under attack from above, in the transition from the diplomacy of conquest to the administration of control. They were stripped of their rights to their own public income; they had to turn out tribute in tax and labour for the Europeans instead. But they also stood in danger of being outflanked from below by their fellow Africans, men who took as much advantage of the new order as European merchants and concessionaires.

On the west coast, African rural capitalists, ambitious peasants, showed as much confidence in the future as any mining magnate when they mobilised the resources of their lineages to buy land, invest labour, and plant cocoa trees which would take at least five years to come into bearing. In South Africa too, the mineral revolution of the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the Anglo-Boer war at the century's turn both opened up expanding markets in foodstuffs and transport-riding which stimulated wealthier African peasants to purchase land and labour. These petty capitalists were almost invariably Christians. They shared in the most generous colonial vision of future African self-respect. In these early years it was comparatively rare for their chiefs to be Christian as well. Christian chiefs 'beat the drum' for the alliance for progress between the Bible and the hoe (the plough generally came later) in Buganda, among the Tswana, in some parts of Yorubaland and in some of the Zulu locations of Natal. Colonial authorities elsewhere were more often concerned that the

⁹⁶ G. B. Kay, *The political economy of colonialism in Ghana* (Cambridge, 1972), 10n.

new religious identity of young converts would justify and protect a withdrawal of allegiance from their elders. The expansion of African agricultural production was all the more threatening when it occurred under the sponsorship of Muslim clerics, as happened in Senegal. Here colonial Islam continued its pre-colonial tradition of appealing to those who were most excluded from power; it constituted an internal resistance, a resistance by withdrawal; and a most profitable resistance too, as holy men gave protection and direction to the labours of their otherwise masterless young followers in the groundnut fields. It took some considerable time for the French to accept that their most feared opponents were in fact becoming their firmest friends. It is probably true that African acquiescence in colonial rule was encouraged by the improvement in the global terms of trade for primary producers which lasted from the mid-1890s until the First World War.⁹⁷ But colonial officials were more impressed at the time by the political threat which seemed to be posed by the peasant response to the market.

It was the same with African labour. Seasonal or longer term migrant labour was an African preference before it was confirmed as official policy. Even where outside employment was first encountered as a tributary obligation, it was also embraced as a voluntary opportunity. Young men went out to earn their tax as a duty to their family; they also won their own bridewealth and independence from their fathers. Soon older men went out too, leaving their wives to maintain their land rights and their families' subsistence with their hoes. The intensification of women's work in hut and field was the invisible underpinning of all colonial Africa's economic expansion. Elders raised women's bridewealth to match the growing value of their agricultural drudgery, so as to get a percentage of young men's earnings. The standing conflict between older and younger men became more bitter all over

⁹⁷ Polly Hill, *The migrant cocoa-farmers of southern Ghana: a study in rural capitalism* (Cambridge, 1963); A. G. Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context: African origins of the Nigerian cocoa-farming industry, 1880-1920', in C. Dewey and A. G. Hopkins, *Imperial Impact* (London, 1978), 83-96; Colin Bundy, *The rise and fall of the South African peasantry* (London, 1979); C. C. Wrigley, *Crops and wealth in Uganda: a short agrarian history* (Kampala, 1959), 16-18; James Bertin Webster, *The African churches among the Yoruba* (Oxford, 1964), 113-14; J. D. Y. Peel, 'Conversion and tradition in two African societies: Ijebu and Buganda', *Past and Present*, 1977, 77, 108-41; Etherington, *Preachers, peasants and politics*; Klein, *Islam and imperialism*, ch. 11; Donal B. C. O'Brien, *The Mourides of Senegal: the political and economic organization of an Islamic brotherhood* (Oxford, 1971), 31-57; Hopkins, *Economic history of West Africa*, 183 for the terms of trade.

Africa, mitigated only by their joint exploitation of women. Colonial officials everywhere heard endless complaints from elders, echoing the Zulu chief Mafingo, that outside employment gave their juniors, especially the literate among them, a new-found insolence. The number of workers was enormous. One is accustomed to think of the Transvaal goldmines as the great consumers of migrant labour. And so they were, with around 54,000 in the mid-1890s and over 80,000 a decade later; by no means all of these were turned out as unwilling tribute labour by their chiefs. But the mine-owners were not the only large employers in early colonial Africa, nor was migrant labour a new phenomenon. The involuntary migrants of the western Sudan and elsewhere, the slave populations, had been numbered in millions. But probably 100,000 caravan porters, almost all of them freemen, annually walked the trade-routes from the interior to the Tanzanian coast, from the 1880s until the early years of this century. Similar numbers must have been employed elsewhere. Colonial armies of conquest had depended on armies of porters. While railway construction employed and, notoriously, destroyed many African workers, one effect of the colonial transport revolution was to discharge vast numbers of Africans from portage into less skilled, more menial work. Africa's petty rural capitalists soon created an even larger demand for labour. It has been calculated that by 1911 the Gold Coast's cocoa farms employed over 180,000 people, in a population of about 1.5 million. At that time almost all the labourers would seem to have been members of the farmers' families, but the first trickle of the migration from the savanna interior to the ecologically favoured coasts of West Africa had already begun. By 1970 it would be a flood, up to a quarter of the savanna population.⁹⁸

Africans everywhere, African women especially, were hard at work. Europeans everywhere, government departments prominent among them, were loud in their complaints that African

⁹⁸ Audrey Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1939), 104, 298 and *passim*; Gavin Kitching, *Class and economic changes in Kenya: the making of an African petite Bourgeoisie 1905-1970* (New Haven and London, 1980), 20, 211, 225 and *passim*; Belinda Bozzoli, 'Marxism, feminism and South African studies', *J. Southern Afr. Studies*, 1983, 9, 2, 139-71; Francis Wilson, *Labour in the South African gold mines 1911-1969* (Cambridge, 1972), 70, table 8; Iliffe, *Modern history of Tanganyika*, 129; R. Szereszewski, *Structural change in the economy of Ghana, 1891-1911* (London, 1965), 57; Samir Amin, 'Introduction', 72, in Amin (ed.), *Modern migrations in Western Africa* (Oxford, 1974).

workers were hard to find; they were even harder to keep at work for any length of time. The African work-force challenged the expectations of industrious discipline in at least three disturbing ways. Most of them saw paid labour as a means to accumulate their own capital in land and dependants. This was as true of the resident labourers on white farms in South Africa, Rhodesia and Kenya as of the locally hired workers on the cocoa farms of the Gold Coast and western Nigeria. African farmers and rural notables, even the ex-slavemasters of Zanzibar, had no objections. There was as yet no shortage of cultivable land; their new dependants had permanent obligations; the payment of regular employees would, by contrast, 'waste their savings', except at the busiest times of the agricultural year. European farmers likewise first attracted workers away from chiefs by offering them squatter tenancies on their land, appropriated by right of conquest. Conflicts between white landlord and black squatter arose only when markets expanded, by the 1880s in South Africa but not until the first decade of this century in Rhodesia and later still in Kenya. In the 1890s it was thought that African squatters in the Transvaal marketed twice as much farm produce as their Boer landlords. Not only did this depress white farm earnings and challenge the premise of racial inequality, it also provoked enmity between small white farmers and the larger, especially absentee, owners. The former increasingly wanted farmworkers, but Africans naturally moved to farms with broader acres and easier, tenant, conditions. The first European objection to African agricultural workers was, then, that they mocked the rights of property by exploiting its owners' competition for labour in situations where the land frontier was closed in law but remained open in fact.⁹⁹

The other objections applied to all workers, agricultural labourers, miners and urban employees alike. Thanks to their continuing base in family smallholdings and to the rural social ties which were reinforced by the tributary demands of colonial states, workers were able to assert too much independence, whether as groups when out at work or as individuals when they returned home. Large employers, especially the mines of the Gold Coast and southern Africa, were plagued by their employees right from the start, and the unemployed found it all too easy to exist in a marginal underworld between town and country. Gangs of

⁹⁹ Hill, *Migrant cocoa-farmers*, 188 for the quotation; Trapido, 'Landlord and tenant'.

workers deserted their recruiters when on the way to work; they ran away from work when they got there, often in search of better pay and less appalling conditions; they bargained as labour teams from plantation to plantation or from mine to mine, showing a disconcerting knowledge of working conditions and employers' reputations elsewhere in the region; they pilfered from their employers' property and loafed when the foreman's back was turned. Around Johannesburg the African tradition of marginal tribalism flourished anew among the unemployed who lived on the criminal pickings of an extravagantly disreputable town, and preyed on migrant workers as they journeyed home with their earnings. Far from being individually disciplined by work, Africans were banding together to protect themselves against the labour market's political inequalities; they deliberately claimed identities of which they had previously been only partly aware. Modern tribes were often born on the way to work. But returning workers were not necessarily obedient tribesmen. To the factional politics of rural chiefship, which decided who should be bullied into meeting colonial demands and who exempted by chiefly favour, they brought the independent resources of new knowledge, prestige, and cash. Workers' reconstructions of their lives were as disconcerting as peasant capitalism, 'breaking down tribal systems', as the governor of Kenya warned in 1910, and 'emancipating the peasant from the rule of his chiefs'.¹⁰⁰

What Africans made shift to do for themselves influenced the structures of colonial states as much as the plans which their rulers made for them. By itself capitalist property seemed after all to be no foundation for authority; but serviceable patterns of dominance, if only they could be shored up against dissolution, already existed in most African societies. Officials soon discovered that it was easier to collect taxes or recruit labour by recognising local chiefs rather than by appointing African agents over them, men of the new age like the Christian Sierra Leoneans along the coasts of British West Africa, the Christian Ganda chiefs who were posted out over the surrounding areas of Uganda, or the Muslim *akidas* of German East Africa and the demobilised sergeants of

¹⁰⁰ James B. Silver, 'Class struggle and class consciousness: an historical analysis of mineworkers in Ghana', D.Phil. thesis, Sussex, 1981, chs. 2 and 3; Charles van Onselen, *Cibaro: African mine labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933* (London, 1976); *idem*, *Studies in the social and economic history of the Witwatersrand*, vol. II: *New Nineveh* (Harlow, 1982), 171-201; Sir Percy Girouard, *Memoranda for provincial and district commissioners* (Nairobi, 1910).

the *tirailleurs* in French West Africa. Such men had seemed essential to decisive political accumulation of political power over African society. But they had two defects as a subordinate bureaucracy. In French and British West Africa they were not sufficiently dependent; they exploited their citizenship, actual in French colonies, implied in British ones, in order to voice political opposition, in newspapers and deputations, to administrative demands. Conversely, they seemed to be far too liable to stir up resistance, whether to taxation or the compulsory cultivation of export crops. Unlike local chiefs they had neither the need nor the authority to temper the arbitrariness of their commands with the canny reciprocities of patronage. Many Germans blamed *akidas* for the most devastating colonial rebellion of all, the Maji Maji rising of 1905–07. They were dismissed from the areas of revolt, and more closely supervised as ‘a necessary evil’ elsewhere. Europeans continued to rely on such men only in German East Africa and in those parts of the western Sudan which had been most disrupted by French conquest. Everywhere else they looked for their strategic core of political support not in an African bureaucracy but in an alliance with those whom they increasingly perceived as the ‘traditional’ chiefs, the aristocracy. External recognition removed from chiefs most of their traditional insecurities of tenure. And African traditions became increasingly dignified, to meet the needs of elders, chiefs and colonial officials alike.¹⁰¹

What colonial officials urgently wanted was ‘a class who in a crisis can be relied on to stand by us, and whose interests are wholly identified with ours’. And the evasive subversions of peasant and worker reconstructions meant that, throughout Africa, elders and chiefs did indeed share an interest with colonial administrations in curbing the ambitions of their juniors and subordinates. Dominated classes were exploiting whatever social and material alternatives were opened up for them by the articulation of the various African and capitalist modes of production. Dominant groups, white and black, were intent on recuperating their authority through a closer class alliance. It was not at all a secure alliance, nor was it informed by an agreed vision of the future. Sir Frederick Lugard, its leading British architect,

¹⁰¹ Iliffe, *Tanganyika under German rule*, 181–2; Terence Ranger, ‘The invention of tradition in colonial Africa’, in Eric Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), 211–62.

had to confess to his successor in northern Nigeria that ‘we are groping in the dark, with little knowledge of the systems of the country’. African notables made the most of such uncertainties. They continued to work the misunderstandings of conquest in order to preserve for themselves a sphere of invented tradition, in which their private authority was protected from rather than invaded by European rule.¹⁰² Chiefs also helped to devise modern tribal identities. The ‘underdevelopment’ of colonial Africa is a shorthand term for the three-cornered conflict between the tenacious evasions of workers and peasants and the tributary structures of patronage within which their rulers, white and black, sought jointly to contain them, but which capitalists sought variously to exploit or to dissolve.

The contradictory politics of establishing colonial control and capitalist profit had three broad outcomes. The patterns were taking shape by 1905. Around this date all colonial administrations were alarmed by what they could not then foresee were the final African protests against the terms of the transition from the politics of conquest to the era of control. The massive risings in German East and South West Africa, the reluctant Zulu rebellion in Natal, the Mahdist Satiru revolt and tax resistance by the Tiv in northern Nigeria, the continued expense and uproar of the unfinished business of imposing control over the generally stateless peoples on colonial frontiers, all concentrated official minds on the problem of constructing a more peaceful politics of collaboration. And the scandals of red rubber in Leopold’s Congo persuaded other governments not to delegate any further public responsibility to private companies. In British West Africa the outcome was an accommodation between commerce and uncompleted conquest. In central and eastern Africa there was a series of uneasy compromises between the politics of conquest and a capitalist transition. Only in South Africa did a decisive political accumulation appear to clear a path for capitalist accumulation, and even that was not without its pitfalls.

¹⁰² Both quotations are from Lugard, in 1904 and 1908 respectively. The first is quoted in Robinson, ‘European imperialism and indigenous reactions’, 159–60; the second is from C. W. Newbury, ‘The economics of conquest in Nigeria 1900–1920: Amalgamation reconsidered’, in *Études africaines offertes à Henri Brunschwig* (Paris, 1982), 253; D. C. Dorward, ‘Ethnography and administration: a study of Anglo-Tiv “Working misunderstanding”’, *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1974, 15, 3, 457–77.

The colonial authorities in British West Africa failed to engineer a full transformation from conquest to control. Lugard was not alone in his conviction that political security must rest upon private property. African chiefs, former slave-masters, clearly had to be given a self-interest in supporting British rule. Government, he acknowledged, had 'by the very act of introducing security for life and property, and by throwing open fertile land for cultivation', added to 'the difficulty of the problem which it has to solve, namely the creation of a labouring class to till the lands of the ruling classes'.¹⁰³ But the class consciousness of British officials gave them a false consciousness of the perceptions of African rulers. African peasants and rural capitalists were already striking private bargains of mutual advantage with their chiefs, establishing household production under tenancy or share-cropping arrangements, or by land purchase. On this misunderstanding the whole edifice of the intended capitalist transition collapsed in ruins. Once cautioned by the Sierra Leone hut tax revolt, the British in the Gold Coast and in southern Nigeria failed to press home their plans for direct taxation, for control over the chiefs' disposal of land, and even for much of a say in chiefs' appointments. They continued to preside over contractual agreements between internal notables and external traders. The old frontier of commerce was too well established to be shouldered aside in favour of any new means of intensifying production, whether on European plantations or African estates. Shortly before the First World War the West African Lands Committee conceded defeat and called it principle. It enshrined the nebulous concept of communal land tenure under tribal authority, in order to hide the nakedness of British weakness and ignorance behind the fig leaf of an evolutionary paternalism.¹⁰⁴ Modern tribes were also born as an administrative device for categorising the unknown. Meanwhile, colonial revenues and business turnover were expanding satisfactorily enough, thanks as much to buoyant internal trade as to growing export production.

Central and eastern Africa showed no such clear pattern. In the

¹⁰³ Robert W. Shenton, 'The development of capitalism in northern Nigeria' (Ph.D. Toronto, 1981), 62, quoting from Lugard's political memoranda of 1906.

¹⁰⁴ Robinson, 'European imperialism and indigenous reactions'; Anne M. Phillips, 'The makeshift settlement: colonial policy in West Africa' (Ph.D. London 1982), ch. 4.

Congo and in the Portuguese colonies, governments and companies had yet to extricate themselves from their destructive collusions in coercion. In Kenya and the Rhodesias settler farming had barely begun to challenge the collaborative politics of conquest in the African 'reserves', with its encouragement of peasant production for the market. In German East Africa the Maji Maji revolt had been sparked off by African hatred of enforced cotton cultivation on what were effectively state-owned fields. In its aftermath, officials and settlers competed to define the future. Governor Rechenberg planned to base his revenues and political settlement on free peasant agriculture. The local settlers and their friends in the German Reichstag had other dreams, of plantations well supplied with labour. By 1914 the German settlers had won the battle for reconstruction; they achieved the status to which the white settlers in Kenya were never quite admitted. They had become the core political élite, the one class to be relied upon in a crisis. The Christian chiefs of Buganda had won that position much earlier, by 1900. These leaders of 'something like a million fairly intelligent, slightly civilized negroes of warlike tendencies, and possessing about 10,000 to 12,000 guns' were, Sir Harry Johnston recognised, 'the only people for a long time to come who can deal a serious blow at British rule...'. That is why he garrisoned his Indian troops at their capital. But his special commission was to introduce civilian rule. That is why he concluded his Buganda Agreement. This gave the chiefs, amongst other things, the freehold property which Lugard was soon to propose for the emirs of northern Nigeria. The Christian chiefs took to the role of improving landlords with scarcely more enthusiasm than Muslim emirs; they both preferred the more flexible profits of power. Within a generation almost all the chiefs' followers were peasant smallholders, and in the 1920s the British administration was backing this 'nation of small farmers' against what was now seen as the dead hand of landlord rights.¹⁰⁵ In eastern Africa therefore, by 1905, white settlers were neither convincing capitalists nor yet a reliable strategic élite; African chiefs provided the essential core of political support, but were never to become the dynamic managers of capital.

With the conclusion of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, the British

¹⁰⁵ Iliffe, *Tanganyika under German rule*; D. A. Low and R. C. Pratt, *Buganda and British overrule* (Oxford, 1960), 94; Wrigley, *Crops and wealth*, ch. 4.

in South Africa seemed to have a clear field for rebuilding a society at once thriving and loyal. There appeared to be an obvious political élite, the Randlords of the Transvaal. Only the revival of their prosperity seemed capable of attracting the British investment and immigration which would guarantee a unified South Africa's adhesion to the empire. But because the state and capital were so much stronger here than in the rest of Africa, so too was the competitiveness of the post-war reconstruction; the powerful had more to hope for, the weak had more to fear. The Randlords were not at all disposed to serve as the public treasure chest. Their first responsibility was to their overseas shareholders, not to the local society growing up around the mines. British officials deplored their reluctance to be incorporated as a governing élite within the enlarged municipality of Johannesburg, their selfish desire 'to be exempted from the labour of local government, the combined business of all businesses, and the common interest of all interests'.¹⁰⁶ The alliance between state and capital here was no easier than the alliance between colonial states and African aristocracies elsewhere. The mass of Africans were still more unwilling to play their part in the scheme of reconstruction. They had seized the chance to expand their peasant economies during the Anglo-Boer war. They now refused to be pushed back into the role of mine labour on reduced wages. The new British South African state needed the mines' revenues. The mines needed the labour. It seemed cheaper, both materially and politically, to import the workers from China rather than to recapture the local African peasantries. Neither calculation proved to be correct. The recruitment and transport of Chinese coolies cost twice as much as African migrant workers. And the white mineworkers, Boers and British alike, were frightened that this collaboration between state and capital would depress the price of all labour, their own included. Boer opinion was further inflamed by the aggressive efficiencies of British administration, perhaps especially by its introduction of compulsory education for all whites. To the Afrikaners, their past had been destroyed in the war; their future had been threatened too, by the deaths of their women and children in the concentration camps. Now that future

¹⁰⁶ 'Report of the General Purposes Committee of the Town Council upon the Memorandum of the Chamber of Mines', October 1901, in Lionel Curtis, *With Milner in South Africa* (Oxford, 1951), 290.

seemed likely to be placed in chains. The rural Afrikaner poor were fleeing from the devastations of rinderpest, war, drought and commercialising landlords. They trekked into the towns, into the arms of patrons who were already there, English employers, English trade unionists, English churches and now, it appeared, English-language schools run by the state. Boer notables, landlords, lawyers and preachers, would not let their following disappear so easily. The British imagined that they had gone to war against Afrikaner nationalism, but it emerged instead as another competitor in the post-war reconstruction. And the threat of Chinese labour ensured that it would attract the votes of the English workers whom British officials had thought would be solid for the empire. Nowhere was colonial reconstruction quite so vigorous; nowhere was it quite so confounded.¹⁰⁷

The future of colonial Africa was everywhere undecided, and in 1905 much of Africa was not yet colonial. Ethiopia and Morocco, even the Egba in Yorubaland, remained independent. Colonial boundaries were still frontiers of opportunity for smugglers even where they were no longer being fought for. Nevertheless, the civil reconstructions of government which were in progress signalled the end of the beginning of colonial rule. The inauguration of the French West African Federation in 1905 marked the most comprehensive attempt to suppress the political and fiscal anarchy of military conquest. The characteristic division among rulers was no longer between soldiers and civilians but between political officers and legal departments. The violence of conquest was giving way to the rule of law. However, since African workers had evaded the constraints of property, legal codes themselves bristled with coercions. Labour service had to be forced out where the conditions for free labour could not be imposed. African resistance to tributary labour service or rising rates of taxation periodically demanded a punishment of which the violence shamed the new self-image of colonialism. Natal's ferocious repression of the Zulu resistance to hut tax would have

¹⁰⁷ Peter Richardson, *Chinese mine labour in the Transvaal* (London, 1982); Hermann Giliomee, 'Historical introduction' to A. du Toit and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Afrikaner political thought, 11: 1870-1910* (Berkeley, forthcoming). My conclusion that the South African outcome was not as the British intended is entirely conventional. I would not however dispute that the unintended outcome was in many ways satisfactory to Britain. For this latter view see chapter 8 by Shula Marks; also, Marks and Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the south African State'.

passed without comment ten years earlier. But in 1907 the colony's 'disgusting butchery of natives' earned it the title of 'the hooligan of the British Empire' from Churchill, Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office.¹⁰⁸ On his visit to British East Africa later that year, he found occasion to lecture an exasperated district official on the necessary majesty of the law. It might be infuriatingly pedantic in overruling the official's judgement on a technicality; but in so doing the law, Churchill believed, enhanced rather than reduced his personal standing in the eyes of his tribesmen. It showed that even the district commissioner had to be obedient to the immense and mysterious source of authority by which he was at the same time supported.¹⁰⁹ The peaceful mastery of colonial governments over their subjects now seemed to depend upon the self-restraint of their rulers, except – and the contradiction was fundamental – when they required their subjects' labour.¹¹⁰

It is also possible to see now, as it was not then, the first signs of the beginning of the end of colonial rule. In Mediterranean Africa, colonial powers were already beginning to be submerged by what has been called 'the retaliation of Eastern fertility', as native populations expanded and agricultural yields declined.¹¹¹ In Africa south of the Sahara populations were still reeling, but young men were on the move. Christianity was claiming its thousands of youthful enthusiasts, Islam its tens of thousands. The first modern generation of African nationalist intellectuals, men like Africanus Horton and Edward Blyden in West Africa, Tiyo Soga and Tengo Jabavu in the south, had passed or was passing from the scene. The 'nation' which they had most nearly represented, the African Christian and Muslim officials of the early colonial régimes, was also being cast aside in the reconstitution of African aristocracy. A younger generation now going to school, the second political generation of colonial Africa, was to place its faith in the rule of law. A third generation, the men who would challenge the rule of colonial law and become the elder

¹⁰⁸ R. Hyam, *Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office, 1905–1908: the watersbed of the Empire–Commonwealth* (London, 1968), 251.

¹⁰⁹ Winston Churchill, *My African journey* (London, 1908), 26–7.

¹¹⁰ Kay, *Political economy of colonialism in Ghana*, 9; John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, 'Coping with the contradictions: the development of the colonial state in Kenya, 1895–1914', *J. Afr. Hist.*, 1979, 20, 4, 487–505.

¹¹¹ Jacques Berque, *French North Africa: the Maghrib between two world wars* (London, 1967), 88.

statesmen of post-colonial Africa, was being born. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Hastings Banda, Habib Bourguiba, Felix Houphouët-Boigny and Leopold Senghor were all alive in 1905 or the year after. Albert Luthuli, son and grandson of Zulu Christians and the epitome of the second political generation, became a mission muleteer in 1908. The third generation was not far behind. In 1909 Kamau Ngengi, a Kikuyu teenager later to be known as Jomo Kenyatta, presented himself at his local Church of Scotland mission to become apprenticed as a carpenter.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS

I. AFRICA ON THE EVE OF PARTITION

The bibliographical material relevant to an introductory survey is potentially far more extensive than that for any of the succeeding chapters. Indeed, a full treatment would probably include a major proportion of the complete bibliographical section of volume 5 of this History. What follows is, in contrast, a deliberately selective indication of the items most essential to an understanding of the total African scene around 1870, and those which have particularly influenced the shape and scope of chapter 1.

For the societies living around the shores of the Sahara, the notion of 'desert-side' economies comes from the works of Curtin, Baier and Lovejoy. Curtin (1975) is a study of Senegambia during the time of the slave trade, and therefore deals more with the Atlantic than the Saharan trade, but many of the ideas that emerge from this book have proved extremely useful for the study of the economic and social history of western Africa as a whole. The effects of cycles of drought and recovery on the economies of the central Sudan, and the social ramifications of these economies, appears in the study of desert-savanna trade by Paul E. Lovejoy and Stephen Baier (1975). Another important analysis of a desert-side economy appears in the earlier chapters of Baier (1980). Studies of the social impact of such an economy occur in the chapters by Baier and Lovejoy, and Roberta Ann Dunbar, in Miers and Kopytoff (1977). The theme of desert-side economies is also dealt with in D. D. Cordell (1977) and R. Roberts (1980).

Baier (1980) is also an excellent introduction to the subject of trans-Saharan trade in general. The historiography of this trade is now very large, and has exposed not only its intricacies and ramifications, but also the scale of its operations towards the end of the nineteenth century. One of the earliest studies of the trans-Saharan trade was Bovill (1933, revised 1958 and 1968). Boahen (1964) examines British interests in the trade up to the

middle of the nineteenth century, and the campaign to end the trade in slaves connected with it. The great work by J.-L. Miège (1961–3) is concerned with the western routes of the trade. Boahen's conclusion that the trans-Saharan trade was in decline in the nineteenth century was questioned by C. W. Newbury (1966), which in turn was revised by M. Johnson (1976).

Johnson's series of penetrating and marvellously lucid articles (1970, 1973a, 1973b, 1976) provide many insights into the complex relationships between West African economies and those of Mediterranean Africa and Europe. The chapter by L. Brenner in McCall and Bennett (1971), which concentrates mainly on the mid-century, was a timely survey of the impact of the trans-Saharan trade on sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

In relation to North Africa, Brett (1982) advances the discussion on problems and perspectives (problems echoed elsewhere in Africa, notably South Africa) that has been engaging the attention of historians during two decades or more since the achievement of independence by the Maghribi countries. Earlier stages of this discussion have been Douglas Johnson (1964) and Valensi (1969), also Brett (1972). For Morocco, volumes II and III of Miège deal with the nineteenth century. Trout (1969) is useful on Morocco's relations with the Saharan and Sudanic lands to the south. Ernest Gellner (1969) and Robert Montagne (1973) are excellent books on crucially important elements in the Moroccan situation.

For Algeria during the 1870s Ageron (1968 and 1979) are very useful, and Julien (1964) Vol. I is still of value. The essential introductory book for the 1870s in Tunisia is Ganiage (1968). For the British side of the situation there is Marsden (1971). For the period just before the 1870s, Valensi (1977) offers a brilliant study of rural conditions in the first half of the nineteenth century. Both Van Krieken (1976) and Arnold Green (1978) lead one to the conclusion that Tunisia was capable of a positive response to the processes of modernisation. The most original part of Leone (1957–60) is devoted to Libya. One still turns to the remarkable book by Evans-Pritchard (1949) for a study of the Sanūsi brotherhood.

A comprehensive history of modern Egypt in any language remains to be written. Extremely useful are Holt (1966) and Vatikiotis (1969). Little (1958) is still of value. For the period of Khedive Ismā'īl there is the huge and unfinished study by Douin

(1936–41). Two works by Baer (1962 and 1969) are essential reading. A work of great originality on some of the main themes of modern Egyptian history, which can be traced back to the nineteenth century, is Berque (1967). Landes (1958) was a seminal work, not only for Egypt, but for the whole subject of the European scramble for Africa.

The standard general history of the Sudan is Holt (1961). Hill (1959) is still the best introduction to the history of Egyptian rule in the Sudan. The consequences of the extension of that rule over the Equatorial Nile and the Bahr al-Ghazal are carefully examined by Gray (1961). Holt (1958) takes up the story where Hill leaves off. A Sudanese point of view is Shibeika (1947). For the expansion of Sudanese trade and Islam into northern Equatorial Africa, see Yusuf Fadl Hasan (1971), especially the essay by Robert O. Collins and Dennis D. Cordell (1979). An interesting article which deals with yet another of the 'frontier' situations that has been discussed above is Alessandro Triulzi (1975).

For the main themes of Ethiopian history during the 1870s, Trimmingham (1952) remains one of the best secondary sources for information on the economic history of the country, along with Pankhurst (1968). Crummey (1972) is a study of religious and diplomatic developments just prior to the decade of the 1870s. Hoben (1973) is an important study of land tenure. H. S. Lewis (1965) deals with Jimma, one of the south-eastern border states incorporated by Menelik. The most outstanding study of Somalia is the work of the great Italian scholar, Cerulli (1957–9). I. M. Lewis (1965) includes a controversial examination of the ethnic factors which have determined much of Somali history.

In West Africa the period just prior to partition has been well served by its historians. Many of the general works contain great resources of information, analysis and comment. For example, Hargreaves (1966, 1974), Fage (1969, 1978), and Curtin's own contribution to Curtin, Feierman, Thompson and Vansina (1978); Isichei (1977); Ajayi and Crowder (1974). On the economic side, Hopkins (1973) is of unique importance, while the work of Newbury (1961, 1966, 1969, 1971, 1972) sheds much light upon the economic and social changes of the nineteenth century. The nineteenth-century West African social and political economies have been studied by Marxist and neo-Marxist scholars, many influenced by French Marxist social anthropologists such as

Meillassoux, Terray and Godelier. Law (1978) is a witty and critical analysis of some of the large and expanding literature on African modes of production and class differentiation. Internal slavery is one of the major features of the period, and Cooper (1979) provides an excellent assessment of the literature and of the conceptual problems involved. Further views are developed by Martin Klein and Paul Lovejoy (1979) and by Law (1978).

The literature on specific economies or political societies in West Africa is large and varied: only a few examples can be cited here. In a class by themselves for sustained research and command of detail are the studies of the southern Mande empire of Samory Ture by Person (1968–75) and of nineteenth-century Asante by Wilks (1975). Other outstanding examples are Adeleye (1974), Isichei (1973), Akintoye (1971), Oloruntimehin (1972) and Latham (1973).

In contrast with that of West Africa, the historiography of West Central Africa on the eve of partition is still lacking in any good general work dealing with the region as a whole, and therefore presents a fragmented appearance. For Cameroun, Marion Johnson (1973) is most informative on the economic history of the area during the period just prior to partition. For Gabon there are the studies of Patterson (1975a and 1975b), the latter raising questions of much wider applicability. Avaro (1981) and Martin (1972) are both excellent. Coquery-Vidrovitch (1969) is still very useful on the period prior to the scramble. Vansina (1966) is the indispensable guide to the pre-colonial history of the savanna zone of Central Africa, including some of the areas that stretch northwards into the Zaïre basin; his study of the Teke kingdom (1973) is also highly relevant to this chapter. Harms (1981) is a carefully researched monograph which recounts the rise and fall of the Bobangi trading communities. Harms also contributed an essay to Miller (1980), which includes several other studies relevant to this area and period. There are some informative chapters in Gifford and Louis (1967), and also in Gann and Duignan (1969). Again many of the themes concerning trade, economic change and political instability in eastern and western Bantu Africa on the eve of partition, are studied most authoritatively in the essays edited by Gray and Birmingham (1970).

The most informative introduction to East African history during the pre-colonial finale is contained in the relevant chapters

of Oliver and Mathew (1963). This can be supplemented by Ogot (1974), especially the chapter by Alpers. A single-country history which has set new standards in African historiography is Iliffe (1979). For the beginnings of European missionary endeavour there is Oliver (1952). Although it ends with the death of Sultan Sayyid Sa'īd, Nicholls (1971) and Cooper (1977) are indispensable for an understanding of the history of the East African coast. For northern Mozambique there is the excellent study by Alpers (1975) which examines the activities of the Yao trading communities.

Some of the works dealing with the huge area of Bantu Africa covered by the outreach of Portuguese trading activities have already been cited: Vansina (1966); Gray and Birmingham (1970); and Miller (1980). To these must be added David Birmingham and Phyllis Martin (1973) and Birmingham's masterly contributions to earlier volumes of the *Cambridge history of Africa*, republished in a separate volume (1981). Oliver (1957) enlightens areas of west and east, as well as central African history, as do the papers edited by Ranger (1968). There is the great monograph on the colonial wars in Angola by Pélissier (1977) and, on southern Angola, the important study by Clarence-Smith (1979). For Zambia there are the two works by A. Roberts (1973 and 1977). For Malawi, there is the collection of essays edited by Bridglal Pachai (1972). The history of the lower Zambezi valley in Mozambique during this period is dominated by Isaacman (1972) and Newitt (1973). Another important work is Leroy Vail and Landeg White (1980).

The major general history of Madagascar is still that by Deschamps (1972). There is also P. M. Mutibwa (1973).

For Zimbabwe the best ethno-historical background is to be found in Beach (1980). Stokes and Brown (1966) is still useful as an introduction, while Ranger (1967) deals with the period leading up to the first confrontation with the white colonists.

The essential introductory work to this period in South Africa is the first volume of Wilson and Thompson (1969). Also very useful is the collection of essays on southern African societies edited by Thompson (1969). De Kiewiet (1941) remains full of vigour and insights. Many of the main themes pursued in this chapter are examined by the contributors to Marks and Atmore (1980).

2. THE EUROPEAN PARTITION OF AFRICA

‘If an historian conscientiously tries to encompass all the elements ... relating to [the partition] – the economic, social, strategic, intellectual, cultural, religious, personal, domestic–political, Afrocentric, peripheral and the rest – he is getting close to attempting a sort of *total history* of the period’ – P. M. Kennedy, *H[istorical] J[ournal]*, 1977, 20, 762. Nevertheless, however multifarious these ‘elements’ and the drives and motives which they generated, the partition in fact consisted of a series of acts of state – either unilateral annexations (or assertions of control), or diplomatic bargains. Decisions to assert control were often (though by no means always) prompted by situations in Africa. But these decisions were necessarily taken within the constraints of great-power relationships in Europe and throughout the world; while diplomatic bargains reflected, more or less directly, the fluctuating pattern of great-power alignments and antagonisms. Above all, until the closing years of the scramble no leading policy-maker would jeopardise metropolitan security, even remotely, for the sake of empire in tropical Africa. Between January 1887 and December 1889 the British cabinet considered only five papers relating to the partition of tropical Africa; it considered twenty on the perceived threat of a French invasion and on the necessary naval and military precautions. Indeed, throughout the 1880s Africa (other than Egypt) remained a very minor preoccupation for the cabinet. Between 1880 and 1889 it considered only fifteen papers on tropical Africa (and only about thirty on southern Africa), compared with nearly 300 on the Near and Middle East (including Egypt) and on Central Asia.

Given these strategic and diplomatic constraints, which also affected, *mutatis mutandis*, powers other than Britain, most serious studies of the partition – as opposed to studies in the theory of imperialism – begin, though they do not necessarily end, by exploring the official records of foreign and colonial ministries, and the ‘semi-official’ papers of ministers and senior officials. Most of them also exploit the records of unofficial commercial or other organisations wherever these are relevant. For some of the partitioning powers, notably Britain, France and Germany, there are guides to the diplomatic and colonial archives; but the wide chronological and geographical range of these, and their omission

of unofficial material, make them rather inconvenient instruments of initial orientation on 'sources for the partition'. A more practical approach is to consult the 'lists of sources' in competent secondary works which have utilised the relevant material. Simply as samples, the following may be noted. For British sources: J. E. Flint (1960); R. Anstey (1962); G. N. Sanderson (1965); J. S. Galbraith (1972); G. N. Uzoigwe (1974); A. N. Porter (1980). Sources for both British and French activities in West Africa are indicated by J. D. Hargreaves (1963). For sources on various aspects of French policy, see: J. Ganiage (1959); H. Brunshwig (1963); C. M. Andrew (1968); A. S. Kanya-Forstner (1969); P. Grupp (1972); M. Michel (1972). For German policy, see (e.g.) F.-F. Müller (1959); and above all H.-U. Wehler (1969). For the Congo State, see R. O. Collins (1968); and especially the very rich references in the numerous contributions by J. Stengers – e.g., that in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, *France and Britain in Africa* (1971).

These works (and many others) also contain rich bibliographies, often critically annotated, of published material (but note that the third, soft-back, edition (1972) of H.-U. Wehler (1969) retains the *Quellenverzeichnis* but lacks the bibliography). There are useful bibliographies for South Africa during the period of partition in J. S. Marais (1961) with material in Afrikaans, and in D. M. Schreuder (1980). The numerous 'Bulletins Historiques' on imperialism, colonialism and *Afrique noire* contributed by H. Brunshwig to R[evue] H[istorique] (especially 1957ff.) are very useful guides; as are the relevant 'review articles' that appear from time to time in *HJ*, *J[ournal of] A[frikan] H[istory]* and *J[ournal of] I[mperial and] C[ommonwealth] H[istory]*.

Attempts at overall explanation or interpretation of the partition are often difficult to distinguish from works on the 'theory of imperialism'. Recent works attempting an overall explanation, and often critically surveying the rival 'general theories', include: L. H. Gann and P. Duignan (1969); G. N. Sanderson, *JICH*, 1974 and in E. F. Penrose, ed. (1975); W. Baumgart (1975, English trans. 1982); and W. J. Mommsen (1977). Two powerful explanatory models, applicable primarily to Britain and Germany respectively, have been developed in the past two decades. R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, in *Africa and the Victorians* (1961), and elsewhere, have introduced the concepts of 'informal empire',

'strategic imperialism' and 'the local crisis'. Their work has revived the serious study of imperial history in the English-speaking countries; and has generated a rich literature of comment and criticism, some of which may be sampled in W. R. Louis, ed. (1976). H.-U. Wehler has developed, in his massive *Bismarck und der Imperialismus* (1969), the model of 'manipulated social imperialism'. He has summarised some of his conclusions in *P[ast and] P[resent]*, 1970; and in R. Owen and B. Sutcliffe, ed., *Studies in the theory of imperialism* (1972). Criticism has concentrated on Wehler's methodology (cf. G. Eley, *Social history*, 1976); and – as befits so uncompromisingly Eurocentric a theory – on his analysis of the Bismarckian–Wilhelmian economy and polity. More directly relevant to the partition is the brief comment by P. M. Kennedy, *PP*, 1972.

The battle between 'empiricist' historians and (neo-)Marxist theoreticians of imperialism continues briskly; but usually with more noise than casualties, thanks to the fundamental misconceptions, on both sides, indicated by E. T. Stokes, *HJ*, 1969; B. Porter, *JICH*, 1980; and N. Etherington, *A[frican] A[ffairs]*, 1982. However, Lenin – or at least 'Lenin misapplied' – seems to be tottering: R. C. C. Law, *JAH*, 1983, writes him off as a 'rather battered Aunt Sally' and invites attention to 'Bukharin and the Austro-Marxists'. Owen and Sutcliffe, in *Studies* (1972), publish a series of seminar confrontations between empiricists and mainly Marxist theoreticians; but the level of communication achieved does not seem to have been as high as that of the papers presented. However, the editors have appended an invaluable bibliography of over 250 works – of all schools of thought – concerned with or relevant to the theory of imperialism; and this material has not been merely listed, but analysed and classified.

In spite of the constraints of diplomacy and strategy, and the possible pressures of socio-economic development in the metropole, most historians attach importance, for some regions of Africa at least, to local Afro-European relations (including that of collaboration) before and during the partition. Indeed, R. Robinson, in Owen and Sutcliffe, *Studies* (1972), presents collaboration as a general, even crucial, 'non-European foundation of European imperialism'. In this field a complete bibliography would evidently include the internal history of all African regions accessible to Europeans before the partition: it is impossible to

give more than samples of the very rich literature. For West Africa, see: H. Brunschwig (1963); K. O. Dike (1956); J. D. Hargreaves (1963); G. I. Jones (1963); and above all A. G. Hopkins (1973). For the maritime Congo, R. Anstey (1962). For East Africa, R. Coupland (1938 and 1939); R. Oliver and G. Mathew, ed. (1963); C. S. Nicholls (1971); and J. S. Galbraith (1972). For Ethiopia, S. Rubenson (1976) seems exhaustive for external contacts from 1800 to about 1885. For the internal development of the Egyptian crisis from 1878 to 1882, A. Schölch (? 1972, English trans. 1981) completely supersedes the previous historiography. On the remoter financial background of this crisis, consult D. S. Landes (1958). The relevant literature on southern Africa is enormous. W. M. Macmillan (1929, reprinted 1963) is a useful starting-point. For further guidance, see the very copious references in A. Atmore and S. Marks, *JICH*, 1974; reprinted in Penrose (1975).

African resistance was less the polar opposite of collaboration than the other end of a broad spectrum of strategies adopted by Africans for coping with Europeans. Many African groups and leaders moved across this spectrum – sometimes successively in opposite directions – as the partition developed. The very rich literature is best approached through the regional chapters. There are interesting and sometimes controversial general treatments by T. O. Ranger, *JAH*, 1968, and in his contribution to Gann and Duignan, ed. (1969); and by A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *Canadian Historical Papers*, 1969. For aspects of resistance in East Africa see (e.g.): F.-F. Müller (1959); and J. M. Lonsdale, *HJ*, 1977. For West Africa, M. Crowder, ed. (1971); B. O. Oloruntimehin (1972); and Y. Person's monumental *Samori: une révolution Dyula*, 3 vols. (1968, 1970, 1975).

Much work has been done on the penetration and disruption of African by metropolitan economies, especially in South and West Africa. For South Africa see, both as an introduction to the literature and as a powerful statement in its own right, Atmore and Marks, *JICH*, 1974 and in Penrose (1975); for West Africa, the cogent and carefully documented exposition of A. G. Hopkins (1973). How far did interactions, and ultimately conflicts, between metropolitan and African economies afford motives for territorial annexation? How far, and in what circumstances, did metropolitan policy-makers act from these motives? These problems have been

investigated (sometimes for both British and foreign imperialism and in a global rather than a merely African context) by D. C. M. Platt (1968) and *PP*, 1968; by D. K. Fieldhouse (1973); and by W. G. Hynes (1979). Their answers are complex and defy easy generalisation, except perhaps in the banal phrase 'it all depended'. Policy-makers were not always convinced of the real value of the economic interests involved; and even when they were so convinced, they often could not afford to give economic considerations absolute priority over other (strategic, diplomatic, domestic-political) factors. Attempts to demonstrate the primacy of the economic factor often experience difficulty at the point of articulation between the 'needs of the economy' and the action of the policy-makers. For instance, Atmore and Marks (*JICH*, 1974) strive to show that the interventions of the 'imperial factor' in nineteenth-century South Africa were usually prompted by the 'development and demands of the British economy'. But their references to relevant statements, minutes or directives by the metropolitan policy-makers are rather scanty.

Finally, how far were political decisions influenced by overweening 'Hobsonian' pressures from the capitalists? S. Marks, discussing (*JAH*, 1982) the economic and other factors leading to the South African War, emphasises rather the economically determined 'structural constraints within which political action takes place'; the Hobsonian capitalists are indeed still around, but apparently in a secondary rôle. Detailed analyses of the relationship of capitalists to imperialism have in fact produced complex, even paradoxical results. In both Britain and France many of the most powerful capitalist groups (including *la haute banque* in France) were either very belated converts to imperialism or were from first to last quite uninterested in colonial expansion: Hynes (1979); C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *HJ*, 1976; cf. L. Abrams and D. J. Miller, *HJ*, 1976. Even when the capitalists *were* imperialists, their pressures upon policy-makers were by no means always successful. It all depended on 'the total situation'. If the policy-makers saw no problems – well, why not annex? But very often they did see problems – domestic-political, financial, diplomatic, strategic; and these, especially the two latter, were frequently insuperable obstacles: Hynes (1979); B. M. Ratcliffe, *JICH*, 1979; B. Porter, *JICH*, 1980.

Especially from the late 1880s the partition became geared, ever

more closely but often in complex and subtle ways, to the fluctuating alignments and antagonisms of the Powers in Europe. G. N. Sanderson (1965) emphasises this aspect; cf. *idem*, *HJ*, 1964. Other useful studies from this point of view are: J. D. Hargreaves, *C[ambridge] H[istorical] J[ournal]*, 1953; J. A. S. Grenville (1964); C. J. Lowe, *E[nglish] H[istorical] R[evue]*, 1966; R. L. Hess in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, ed., *Britain and Germany in Africa* (1967); and, with a far wider scope than merely diplomatic history, P. M. Kennedy (1980). For the naval balance in the 1880s and 1890s, A. J. Marder (1940) is authoritative; there is unfortunately nothing comparable for the 1870s.

The abortive prelude to the coastal partition in the late 1830s and early 1840s was one aspect of a general challenge to British Mediterranean and oceanic hegemony by France, the only other survivor as a great power from the multilateral imperialist conflicts of 'early modern' times. Useful introductions to this episode are: B. Schnapper (1961) and in *RH*, 1961; H. Brunschwig (1963); and R. M. Waller (Ph.D. thesis, 1979). G. S. Graham (1967) is indispensable for the background of ocean strategy.

Khedive Ismā'il was the pioneer of extensive territorial empire in Africa; and a pioneer of the 'civilising mission' as a matter of public rather than merely private concern. His activities have been strangely neglected, both by historians of the partition and by theorists of imperialism. True, effective access to Egyptian archives is not easy even for the linguistically competent; but it is not impossible, as Hill, Schölch and others have demonstrated. Meanwhile, M. F. Shukry (1953) and R. L. Hill (1959) are convenient introductions and useful guides to sources, including those in European languages. G. Douin (1936–41) is incomplete, terminating in 1876; but it is an unexploited mine of information.

Work on the mid-Victorian change (or 'discontinuity') in British attitudes to empire (though not necessarily of course to formal annexation) has until recently concentrated on the critical examination of 'The imperialism of Free Trade': e.g., D. C. M. Platt, *Ec[onomic] H[istory] R[evue]*, 1968 and 1973. Work is only beginning on the changing attitudes of policy-makers to the value and significance of empire. F. Harcourt, *HJ*, 1980, breaks new ground by tracing these changes as far back as 1866–68. Much more work is needed on the 1870s. C. C. Eldridge (1973) has useful material; W. D. McIntyre (1967) adduces valuable com-

parative evidence from south-east Asia and Australasia, but is suggestive rather than explicit. Carnarvon has been investigated by C. F. Goodfellow (1966), but in too narrowly South African a context; he urgently needs further and fuller attention.

For the more abrupt policy revolution in France in 1879–81 see, for West Africa, C. W. Newbury and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *JAH*, 1969. Its military and political consequences in the Niger basin are admirably set out in A. S. Kanya-Forstner (1969). Its consequences in Madagascar appear, rather sketchily but quite clearly, in J. S. Swinburne (M.Phil. thesis, 1969). Its motives are further discussed by A. S. Kanya-Forstner in Owen and Sutcliffe, *Studies* (1972). Some of the relevant metropolitan background is filled in by Y. Conjo, *RH*, 1972. There are sidelights in J. P. T. Bury, *EHR*, 1967; and in C. R. Ageron, *R[evue] F[ranaise d']H[istoire d']O[utre]m[er]*, 1972. Here again, more work is needed: most obviously, perhaps, on the detailed relationship between the onset of major French expansion in Africa and the vastly improved international position of France after the Congress of Berlin (1878).

The coastal origins of the West African scramble, and its subsequent development and extension down to 1889, have been lucidly set out by J. D. Hargreaves (1963 and 1974). The accelerating effect of British and French tariff policies on the west coast has been demonstrated by C. W. Newbury: *EcHR*, 1968; and in his contribution to Gifford and Louis, *France and Britain* (1971).

For the French occupation of Tunisia, J. Ganiage (1959) is authoritative; cf. his contribution to Gifford and Louis (1971). On the British occupation of Egypt, A. Schölch, *HJ*, 1976, is important but not entirely convincing: in particular, he under-rates the importance of Anglo-French rivalry in summer 1882. On this, Robinson and Gallagher (1961) may still be consulted with profit. But see also J. W. Parsons (Ph.D. thesis, 1977); and above all A. Ramm in Gifford and Louis (1971).

On the interlocking Congo disputes of the early 1880s, the abortive Anglo-Portuguese treaty of 1884, the Berlin West African Conference and the origins of the Congo State, see: A. Roeykens (1958); R. Anstey (1962); H. Brunschwig (1963), and *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 1965; C. Coquéry-Vidrovitch (1969). J. Stengers has made very important contributions in *Le Flambeau*

(Brussels), 1963; in Gifford and Louis, *France and Britain* (1971); and in *RFHOM*, 1976. On the Berlin Conference itself, S. E. Crowe (1942) is still useful. There is a more recent discussion (with a very full bibliography) by W. R. Louis in Gifford and Louis (1971).

Later developments of King Leopold's imperialism have been studied by P. Ceulemans (1959); L. Ranieri (1959); G. N. Sanderson (1965); R. O. Collins (1968); J. Stengers (e.g.) in Owen and Sutcliffe, *Theories* (1972); and I. R. Smith (1972). Pending the expected major work on Leopold from the pen of Professor Stengers, N. Ascherson (1963) is well-informed and perceptive.

A. J. P. Taylor (1938) is no longer satisfactory as an analysis of Bismarck's 'bid for colonies'; W. O. Aydelotte (Philadelphia, 1937), and *CHJ*, 1937, is however still useful for the Angra Pequena affair. The study of Bismarck's colonialism is at present dominated by the works of H.-U. Wehler. Important contributions from various points of view (including the official Marxism of the DDR) have however been made by: F.-F. Müller (1959); H. A. Turner in Gifford and Louis, *Britain and Germany* (1967); H. Washausen (1968); H. Pogge v. Strandmann, *PP*, 1969; H. Stoecker (1977); and P. M. Kennedy (1980), and *PP*, 1972. H. P. Merritt, *HJ*, 1978, usefully investigates the motives for the most unexpected of Bismarck's colonial 'bids', that in East Africa.

H.-U. Wehler applies his 'social imperialism' model to post-Bismarckian colonialism in works dealing primarily with the internal history of Germany. The renewal of German colonialist pressure in the early 1890s, and the consequent development of a very sharp Anglo-German antagonism in Africa, have been explored by: T. A. Bayer (1955); G. N. Sanderson (1965); J. Butler in Gifford and Louis, *Britain and Germany* (1967); and have been evaluated by P. M. Kennedy (1980).

G. N. Sanderson (1965) attempts a comprehensive analysis of international competition in the upper Nile basin from its origins in the later 1880s to the Anglo-French settlement of March 1899. He has presented his conclusions on Anglo-French rivalry in Gifford and Louis, *France and Britain* (1971). Other important contributions on the Upper Nile problem have been made by: J. Stengers, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 1958 and 1960 – on the Monteil mission; R. O. Collins in Gifford and Louis,

Britain and Germany (1967) – on the ‘Nilotic’ aspects of the Anglo-German Agreement of July 1890; C. M. Andrew (1968) – on Delcassé and the Fashoda crisis; M. Michel (1972) – on the Marchand mission; C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *JICH*, 1974 and in Penrose (1975) – on ‘Gabriel Hanotaux, the Colonial Party and the Fashoda strategy’.

Until the completion of Professor Hargreaves’ major work, the final stages of the Anglo-French scramble in West Africa lack any comparably thorough analysis. There are however valuable contributions on various aspects by: M. Perham (1956); J. E. Flint (1960); J. A. S. Grenville (1964); A. S. Kanya-Forstner (1969), *HJ*, 1969, and his contribution to Gifford and Louis, *France and Britain* (1971); J. Ganiage, *RH*, 1975; C. Hirshfield (1979).

Work on the French colonialist movement, pioneered by H. Brunschwig (1960), has been intensively pursued by C. M. Andrew, A. S. Kanya-Forstner and others. See: C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *JICH*, 1974 and in Penrose (1975); the same, *HJ*, 1971, 1974 and 1976; C. M. Andrew, P. Grupp and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *RFHOM*, 1975; C. M. Andrew, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1976; S. M. Persell, *HJ*, 1974; L. Abrams and D. J. Miller, *HJ*, 1976. There is a major study of Gabriel Hanotaux by P. Grupp (1972); and of Eugène Etienne by H. Sieberg (1968).

There is nothing remotely comparable for Italian colonialism. Indeed, there appears to be no serious work of synthesis, or even of orientation, on Italian imperialism during the period of partition. For frustrated Italian aspirations in Tunisia, see J. Ganiage (1959). For Somalia, see R. L. Hess (1966). For the Ethiopian adventure, the most useful books appear to be: C. Conti Rossini (1935); C. Giglio (1958–72); and above all R. Rubenson (1964 and 1976). For Italian aspirations in the Nile valley, M. P. Hornik (? 1939) is still useful; but see, *faute de mieux*, G. N. Sanderson (1965) and *HJ*, 1964.

Considerable attention has been devoted to the rôles of Ethiopia during the partition: resistance to Italy, Shoan territorial expansion, relations with the Mahdist state and intervention in the contest for the Upper Nile. See: the two works by S. Rubenson cited above; R. A. Caulk (Ph.D. thesis, 1966), and *Transafrican Journal of History*, 1971; Z. Gabre Sellassie (1975); H. G. Marcus (1975). For Ethiopia and the Nile valley, see G. N. Sanderson

(1965), *JAH*, 1964 and *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1969. For Russian activities in Ethiopia, C. Zaghi (1973) supersedes the rather sketchy treatment by C. Jeśman (1958).

Serious work has only just begun on the revival of Portuguese imperialism in the late nineteenth century. See M. D. D. Newitt (1981); W. G. Clarence-Smith, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 1979. P. R. Warhurst (1962) and E. Axelson (1967) examine the fate of Portugal in the diplomacy of partition.

The historiography of the South African scramble, and of the origins of the South African war, still lacks a fully adequate biography of either Milner or Rhodes; however, for Rhodes see J. E. Flint (1976). The early study of the 'imperial factor' by C. W. de Kiewiet (1937) has been supplemented by analyses mainly of the political and diplomatic factors by: J. S. Marais (1961); G. H. L. Le May (1965); L. M. Thompson, in M. Wilson and L. M. Thompson, ed., II (1971); D. M. Schreuder (1969 and 1980); A. N. Porter (1980) and in *JICH*, 1972. However, much recent work has concentrated on the political implications of economic development, often insisting upon the crucial importance of economic interests and pressures and indeed of the developmental needs of the British metropolitan economy. Examples are: G. Blainey, *EcHR*, 1965; A. H. Jeeves, *Canadian historical papers*, 1973; D. Denoon, *HJ*, 1980; J. J. Van-Helten, *JAH*, 1982; and – challenging the primacy of economic factors – R. V. Kubicek (1979). There are useful surveys and critiques of recent writing in: A. Atmore and S. Marks, *JICH*, 1974 and in Penrose (1975); N. Etherington, *AA*, 1982; and S. Marks, *JAH*, 1982.

Work is still rather patchy and impressionistic on the relationship between the scramble, imperialist ideology and changes in the 'climate of opinion'. B. Semmel (1960) and M. D. Bidiss, *HJ*, 1972, discuss the development and influence of 'scientific' Social-Darwinist political ideas; but the most useful exposition of the overtly imperialist and racist content of Social Darwinism is perhaps still that of W. L. Langer (2nd edn, 1951). S. Koss, *HJ*, 1975, reveals the existence of an unexpected (Wesleyan) imperialist influence upon the English petty bourgeoisie. There seems to have been no serious exploration of the influence, especially upon impressionable adolescents, of such authors as G. A. Henty and H. Rider Haggard in Britain or Karl May in Germany; or of the

Boy's Own Paper, which commenced publication in 1879. A. N. Porter (1980) traces the efforts of imperialist politicians to manipulate British 'public opinion' on the South African question. B. Porter (1968) demonstrates the ineffectiveness of Liberal-radical 'critics of empire' in stemming the tide of British imperialist sentiment in the later 1890s; but R. Price (1972) effectively deflates, so far as Britain is concerned, the myth that imperialism was the specific creed of the 'nationalist masses'. For Germany, H. C. Schröder (1968) examines the anti-imperialist opposition of the *SPD*, and traces the decline of this opposition after *c.* 1900.

Nationalistic xenophobia in Europe could be both a cause and an effect of imperial rivalry. H. Brunschwig, in Gifford and Louis, *France and Britain* (1971), traces the strengthening of French colonialist sentiment by the popularisation, after *c.* 1880, of the traditional combativeness to Britain overseas of the *Marine* and the *Colonies*. P. M. Kennedy (1980) analyses perceptively the contribution of Anglo-German friction in Africa to the general 'antagonism' between these two powers.

3. NORTH AFRICA, 1870–1905

Historical writings concerning North Africa are mainly the work of French historians, as might be expected. Recently Tunisians and Algerians, also writing in French, have been taking up the subject. But most of these studies deal with the origins and growth of the nationalist movement, in a sort of hagiography. As for works in English, they mostly confine themselves to repeating or adding to published French works.

Algeria. For the 1871–1914 period, there is a large body of work, much of it polemical. André Julien made his name with his *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord*, published in 1931. The third part of this (roughly 1830–1925), which had not previously been published, was partially incorporated in *l'Algérie contemporaine*, a work hostile to the armed forces and the colonists. In their theses Xavier Yacono and André Nouschi concentrated on the difficulties experienced by the colonising forces, and on the standard of living of the native population. Robert Ageron is more interested in political questions, in *Les Algériens musulmans et la France* and, in particular, in *l'Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, volume II of which is his work.

Historical studies on the two protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco are virtually as numerous, but generally calmer. Pierre Guillen made his name by a fine thesis, *L'Allemagne et le Maroc*, but has had no disciples in this field, at least for the period prior to 1900, for the large volume of work in progress deals with international rivalries or with the early years of the protectorate. On the other hand, the entire history of the regency of Tunis from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth has now been covered. The value and the quality of these productions naturally varies, but in them can be found the details of the Tunisian archives of Dar el Bey in both Arabic and French.

This movement was initiated by two theses, that of Jean Ganiage on the *Origines du protectorat*, and that of André Martel on the Tunisian South. Since then, the former has interested himself in international relations between 1871 and 1914, particularly problems relating to the Mediterranean, and also in his other specialisation, historical demography. The latter, now teaching at the University of Montpellier, has made his name in military history. At Tunis, in addition to the many publications relative to the twentieth century, we should mention the studies of Mohammed Chérif on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the problem of the state) and those of Khelifa Chateur on the regency after 1815.

4 AND 5. WESTERN AFRICA, 1870-1905

The richest sources for the study of West African history in this period are to be found in the archives of European governments, missionary societies and commercial concerns which were intensifying their activities in the region. Certainly, the bias of such sources may incline the unwary student towards an imperial perspective; but those capable of formulating their own questions and applying the principles of historical criticism will find evidence of a richness unparalleled in earlier periods. Formal despatches by governors may indeed be unrewarding, but their apparently obscure enclosures, for example, frequently contain vital clues.

The most satisfactory guides to such sources in European countries are usually in the series of *Guides to the sources of the history of Africa south of the Sahara*, published by the International Council

on Archives; the two volumes for France (Zug, 1971, 1976) are particularly important for this period. Unfortunately no such volume has appeared for the UK, but N. Matthews and M. D. Wainwright, *Guide to manuscripts and documents in the British Isles relating to Africa* (London, 1971), used in conjunction with Public Record Office Handbooks, nos. 3 and 13, dealing with the records of the Colonial and Foreign Offices respectively, may partly fill the gap. Information may also be found in the series of *Guides to materials for West African history in European archives* published by the Athlone Press; but where a volume has been published by the International Council on Archives, it is to be preferred. For business records, see also A. G. Hopkins (1976). Guides to archival sources in Africa are less readily available; regrettably, few independent governments have been able to give high priority to the staffing and development of public record offices, and researchers may encounter difficulties in using these rich resources. Senegal is one exception; researchers into the history of any of the territories of French West Africa (AOF) should consult the *fascicules* of the *Repertoire des archives* edited by C. Faure and J. Charpy (Rufisque, 1955, ff).

Besides the documentary evidence available in European languages, there are exceptional opportunities – and exceptional dangers – for the use of African oral traditions. During this period many of these were recorded, and sometimes published, both by historically minded administrators like Richmond Palmer and Maurice Delafosse and by African scholars like the Reverend Samuel Johnson. No general survey of such materials – and of the formidable critical problems involved – has been attempted. In recent years academics have in some areas made more systematic attempts to record and interpret oral sources (cf. D. Henige, *Oral historiography*, 1982).

Some early administrators interested themselves, for specific purposes, in the recent history of Muslim communities; mention may be made of the studies carried out by Paul Marty for the various colonies of AOF. A vastly more important source is of course the considerable body of theological, literary and administrative writing, in Arabic or in African languages, produced within Islamic states or communities; problems relating such material to other forms of evidence are discussed in the first chapter of David Robinson's forthcoming study of al-Ḥājj 'Umar.

The historical potential of contemporary printed sources was by no means exhausted by earlier writers of colonialist history. The books published, even with tendentious purposes, by travellers, administrators, soldiers, traders and missionaries such as Binger, Flegel, Gallieni, Kingsley, Peroz, Ramseyer and Kühne can still prove revealing, about the peoples among whom they worked as well as about their own purposes. And there is a substantial body of printed testimony by Africans. Authors like Blyden, Horton and Otonba Payne are by now well known; but there is still much to be learned from the columns of contemporary African newspapers.

Secondary studies

During the 1950s and 1960s research on this period tended to concentrate on studies of African responses to the encroachment of European power and to the early structures of colonial rule. Often the emphasis was directly on examples of armed resistance; there are some good essays of this type in Crowder (1971) and in Rotberg and Mazrui (1970). Many important studies, solidly based in archives of the colonial administration but supplementing them in varying degrees by use of oral traditions and reports from the African press, originated in the University of Ibadan: examples include Anene (1966); Aderibigbe (1959); Ikime (1969); Afigbo (1972); Akintoye (1971); Atanda (1973); and Asiwaju (1976). Adeleye (1971); Balogun (1971); Abubakar (1977); and Fika (1978) treat similar themes with the use of Arabic material from northern Nigeria.

For Ghana, comparable themes are treated in Agbodeka (1971), Braimah and Goody (1967), Staniland (1975) and Amenumey (1966). Here however the major research effort has concerned the internal development of the Asante state; see Wilks (1975), Arhin (1967) and Lewin (1978). Arhin (1979) treats its economic relations. Tordoff (1965), though not of this school, is still useful. In Sierra Leone Ijagbemi (1968) has worked on the Temne, Abraham (1978) on the Mende, each with somewhat different emphases. Fyfe (1962) remains the basic work on the Sierra Leone Colony, but may be supplemented by Porter (1963), Spitzer (1974) and Harrell-Bond *et al.* (1978). Mahoney (1963) is the best work on the Bathurst community.

The nineteenth-century history of colonial Senegal is being studied by Roger Pasquier, who has published some useful articles (1960, 1962); its political history is dealt with by Idowu (1966) and later by G. W. Johnson (1971). Relationships between Europeans and Africans in Senegambia are treated by Ganier (1965), D. Robinson (1975), Charles (1977), Bathily (1975), Klein (1968) and Quinn (1972). Earlier studies of the Tukolor empire created by al-Hājj 'Umar, such as Saint-Martin (1967) and Oloruntimehin (1972), will be largely superseded by the forthcoming book of David Robinson. Stewart (1973) and Désiré-Vuillemin (1962) deal with Mauritania.

The historiography of the western Sudan is dominated by the late Yves Person, and in particular by his vast and remarkably wide-ranging study of Samory (1968–75); Amselle (1977) is a valuable monograph relating to the same region. Diallo (1972) and McGowan (1981) deal with Futa Jalon. French relations with the Baule are well treated by Weiskel (1980); with Dahomey by Ross (1967) and Garcia (1976).

There has been a great deal of writing on theoretical questions concerning imperialism, and specifically many interesting studies of the French colonial party; but these are reviewed here only in so far as the authors have attempted to study the initiatives and reactions of Africans during the period of partition. The important work of Robinson and Gallagher (1961, 1981) attempts this at a general level; there is closer focus on West Africa in Crowder (1968), and in some of the contributions to Gann and Duignan (1969–75); and to Gifford and Louis (1967, 1971, 1984). More specialised studies which exemplify this approach include Flint (1960); Atger (1962); Kanya-Forstner (1969); Obichere (1971); Uzoigwe (1974); and Hargreaves (1963 and 1974); also some of the essays in Stoecker (1960–8). Newbury's documentary collection (1971) is a valuable resource. Studies of African warfare include Crowder (1971), Robert Smith (1976) and Smaldone (1977).

The major contribution to the economic history of the period made by Hopkins (1973) has still to be fully assimilated; some distinguished historians remain resistant to his work (cf. Hopkins, 1968, 1972; Ajayi and Austen, 1972). Baier (1980) is an important study of the effects of colonial control on the 'desert-side economy'. Important studies of Dahomey are Manning (1982)

and Coquéry-Vidrovich in Meillassoux (1971). On the growth of the cocoa industry Berry (1975) has applied to western Nigeria, with considerable historical depth, the approach which Hill (1956, 1963) pioneered on the Gold Coast. A good study of the relatively short-lived rubber trade has been made by Dummett (1971). Jeng (1978) and Swindell (1980) deal with aspects of Senegambian groundnut production. Political aspects of cotton-growing are treated by Nworah (1971) and M. Johnson (1974). Recent studies of European mercantile organisation are surveyed by Hopkins (1976).

The most comprehensively successful attempt to move from economic history to a study of the social consequences of colonialism has been made by the French Marxist, Suret-Canale (1964). Hausen (1971) and Wirz (1973) are important for Kamerun. Isichei on the Igbo (1976) has good material on social changes. The evolution during this period of African systems of 'domestic slavery' is emerging as a topic of great importance; see Miers and Kopytoff (1977), and for specific examples Bouche (1968), Renault (1971) and Grace (1975). Hopkins (1966) is also relevant. Western education in French West Africa is fully treated by Bouche (1975); there is nothing comparable for British Africa in this period.

The fortunes of Islam under colonial rule have been most thoroughly studied with reference to Senegal; see Monteil (1966) and O'Brien (1971), though the latter's emphasis is on later periods. Gbadamosi (1978) is important for Nigeria. Important work on the influence of Christian missions has also been done in Nigeria, beginning with Ajayi (1965) and Ayandele (1966). In the latter's biography of James Johnson (1970) this led on to study of the ideas and political activities of members of the educated African élite, which were very popular in the 1960s. Perhaps the most durable work of this period is Kimble (1963). G. W. Johnson (1971), Curtin (1972), Spitzer (1974) and Cole (1975) set such men in broader social contexts. Pallinder-Law (1973) is interesting on political experiments in Abeokuta. Higher priority in the study of African political history may now be given to localised study of political and social conflicts in rural areas, and of the connections between these and the activities of the educated élite, such as Simensen (1975).

6. WESTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA

French Congo and Gabon, 1886–1905

Most of the archival documents are located in Paris, Section Outre-Mer (S.O.M.) of the Archives Nationales. The Brazza material, inherited from the family's private papers, includes a series of fundamental dossiers on the Mission de l'Ouest-africain (M.O.A.), the Commissariat Général (1886–97), and the mission of 1905. The concessions material comprises about a hundred files on the companies. All this is complemented by the Archives de la Marine (Série BB.4) and by the material deposited in the S.O.M. at Aix-en-Provence (the political reports of the different colonies, and the reports of the Inspecteurs Généraux).

Studies of the region and the period are both recent and penetrating; cf. in particular Gilles Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo: une géographie du sous-peuplement, République Gabonaise, République du Congo*, Paris, 1966, which includes excellent historical accounts. On the period in general, these are the works of C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Brazza et la prise de possession du Congo: la mission de l'Ouest-africain, 1883–5* (1969) (documents and commentaries), and *Le Congo (AEF) au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires, 1898–1930* (1972). In these works will be found the bibliographical references to numerous accounts of the period. To these may be added a series of good monographs such as: Marc Michel, *La mission Marchand, 1895–1899* (1972); Georges Mazonot, *La Likouala-Mossaka, 1878–1920* (1971); A. de Mazières, *Liotard et le haut-Oubangui*, thèse de 3^e cycle (Université Paris I, Ecole des Hautes Etudes, 1975). Finally, on the Bateke people, the remarkable ethno-historical study of J. Vansina: *The Tio kingdom of the Middle Congo, 1880–1892* (1973).

King Leopold's Congo, 1886–1908

King Leopold will not be remembered gratefully by students of history. On the eve of the annexation of the Congo State by Belgium, he was heard to say: 'They can have my Congo, but they have no right to know what I have done there.' This was no mere jest: it led to the systematic destruction of the state archives. Only some fragments have survived (listed in Van

Grieken-Taverniers, 1981); they include the papers relating to foreign affairs (Van Grieken-Taverniers, 1955). Ironically enough, Leopold was mostly defeated by himself: he took no precautions to have his own private papers destroyed, and these are now available in the Royal Archives (Vandewoude, 1965). Other revealing insights are provided by the papers of high officials or advisers (many of which are preserved in the Belgian State Archives or at the 'Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale' at Tervuren), their correspondence (e.g. *Léopold II et Beernaert*, 1920) or their memoirs (for Banning, see Banning, 1927, and Stengers, 1955).

Some older biographies of the king are still useful (de Lichtervelde, 1926; Daye, 1934). Recent research is used in the latest one, by Barbara Emerson (1979), as well as in the general works on Leopold's Congo (Slade, 1962; Gann and Duignan, 1979). The king's special kind of imperialism was analysed by Stengers (1972).

The central administration of the State is described in the first part of Lutumba's strangely named *Histoire du Zaïre* (1972). Disentangling the finances of the state and the financial affairs of the king, which are extraordinarily mixed up, requires a kind of detective work, at which Stengers has made several attempts (1957, 1980). The most general survey of foreign policy is that of van Zuylen (1959). Foreign archives have been used to study the attitudes of Britain (Cookey, 1968), Germany (Willequet, 1962) and Italy (Ranieiri, 1959). The push towards the Nile can be followed in the works of Stengers (1969); Sanderson (1965) and Collins (1962 and 1968).

A vast amount of material on the European side of the work of the great companies is assembled in Waltz (1917). Useful special studies include Cornet (1947) and Katzenellenbogen (1973).

For the development of the Congo campaign in Britain, apart from Cookey's book, one may refer to the most recent biography of Morel by C. Cline (1980), and to Louis and Stengers (1968). In Belgium the indictment by Cattier (1906) remains a classic which is still worth reading.

The steps towards the annexation to Belgium have been studied by Stenmans (1949) and Stengers (1963).

Stanley left us the expression 'Congo Free State' as a translation of *Etat indépendant du Congo*, an early example of 'newspeak' that still haunts us today and is the worst feature of his *The Congo and the founding of its Free State* (1885). This is the first of a series of early histories culminating in the works of Wauters (1911), Masoin (1912/1913) and Morel (Louis and Stengers, 1968). After its demise, interest picked up only after 1945 when J. Cornet was the quasi-official historian of Belgian colonialism, while R. Slade ushered in the era of decolonisation in 1962. Her work, outdated as it is, was not superseded by L. H. Gann and P. Duignan (1979). Today there exists neither a satisfactory introduction nor a solid interpretation of this period in Zaïre's history.

Scholars are so impressed by the continuities between this régime and its successor that they tend to include the Congo State period in studies devoted to 'the colonial period'. Jewsiewicki (1972) views 1891 and 1920 as major turning points rather than 1879, 1885 or 1908, and most others follow him. As a result little research is currently devoted specifically to this period. The vogue for diplomatic history has passed as the most relevant archives have been combed, while the study of institutions (the military, the judiciary, the administrations, the missions and the major companies) are spurned, even though they need adequate study. Research today concentrates on regional history (Cornet, Martens, Mumbanza, Ndua Solol, Bustin) or on specific topics such as education (Yates) or a mission (Storme), or on some train of striking events (Bimanyu). The pace of research remains slow, and major themes such as the conquest itself, economic exploitation including atrocities, financial history, the evolution of societies and cultures in the country all still await their historians.

Yet this is not for a lack of sources! Abundant public archives in Belgium are accessible and were described by M. Van Grieken-Tavernier's 'archives' in *Livre blanc* (Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer, Brussels, 1962). Only the Belgian Royal Archive is not open to one and all. In Zaïre the archives have been described by B. Jewsiewicki in *Etude analytique des archives administratives zairoises* (Lubumbashi, 1973 (stencil)) and are summarized in Vellut (1974: 107–51). Missions and companies usually have kept some papers, and those of the major churches are well kept. Private papers are harder to find as they are dispersed, even though

the Musée Royal de l’Afrique Centrale has acquired important lots and attempts to centralise more.

Moreover the amount of publication by contemporaries is quite extraordinary, exceeding by far what was usual in other colonies. The bibliographies of Wauters (1895), Simar (1912) and Vellut (1974) are precious in this regard even though they do not list all of them, especially after 1895. The Congo State attracted agents from many nationalities as well as a throng of adventurous travellers. Their reminiscences and accounts are especially valuable when the authors belonged to less exalted echelons or wrote for a simple public in Europe. The less ambitious the account, the better. It then tended to be much more concrete. Such sources can be found in practically any European language – even Hungarian, but apparently not in Finnish, although some Finns served in the Congo. Jespersen (Hulstaert) and Armani are listed as examples in the bibliography. Both were agents for the state. The former wrote in Danish and documents the administrative occupation of a portion of the equatorial province where he is well remembered in tradition. The second one, an Italian, still remains our main source about southern Manyema after the Arabs, especially from 1904 to 1906. The full wealth of these sources is still unknown to most researchers. Nor have the myriad local ethnographies of the time been studied as sources for social history, although they are our main founts of information towards this end (de Calonne Beaufaict).

Oral reminiscences were first gathered in the 1930s, especially in the equatorial region, and can still be gathered today for the closing years of the period, although almost all such accounts are by now hearsay related by children or grandchildren of the participants. Yet in conjunction with written sources, whether published or not, these are essential elements for an all-round understanding of the period (Hulstaert). Recent research (Mumbanza, 1980) has shown that such data can still be gathered and considerably enrich other records.

7 AND 8. SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA, 1867–1910

South of the Limpopo

South Africa is an intensely divided society, and its historiography inevitably reflects its divisions. The period between 1870 and 1910

in particular is covered by a large, growing and controversial literature, and it is impossible in an essay of this scope to do more than allude to some of the older preoccupations, and outline very briefly the more recent interpretations and areas of debate. The published and unpublished primary source material for this period is almost embarrassingly abundant. Enterprising researchers have found evidence in archives and libraries as far afield as Poland and the American south, in languages as different as Hindi, Yiddish and Zulu. The more mundane sources include a variety of government publications, statistical material, departmental reports, commission and select committee evidence and reports, parliamentary debates and legislation, the archives of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines and individual mining houses, land registries and business records, mission archives and collections of private papers, political ephemera and trade union collections, and colonial and African newspapers. Many major collections of private papers (e.g. Smuts, Milner, Merriman, Fitzpatrick, Phillips) have been published for this period. In addition, several South African universities and the South African Institute of Race Relations are now establishing oral archives. For a listing of the official sources, see the bibliography in the *Oxford history of South Africa* (ed. Wilson and Thompson), vol. II. There are a variety of bibliographic guides to published works and theses available.

Much of the recent debate in South African historiography has centred on the mineral revolution, and it is in their interpretation of its meaning and effects that recent historians have differed most from that of their predecessors, such as Van der Horst or Hobart Houghton. Articles by Legassick and Trapido in the early 1970s established the significance of South Africa's industrial revolution in this period. During it the modern South African state was created and the preconditions for capital accumulation were established and subsequent class structures shaped. Whereas much of the earlier, liberal literature regarded contemporary racist practices in the Republic as an atavistic hang-over from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century 'frontier tradition', recent work has stressed the way in which racist practices accompanied the capitalist development of South Africa in these years and were intrinsically related to it.

The interaction of pre-industrial and industrial societies has been dealt with in a number of doctoral theses many of which are

now beginning to appear in print. Although De Kiewiet's pioneering work, *The imperial factor in South Africa* (1937) remains indispensable for the 1870s and 1880s, the new research explores in far greater detail the impact of the mineral discoveries and the scramble for southern Africa on African societies. Studies by Beinart (Mpondo), Bonner (Swazi), Cobbing (Ndebele), Delius (Pedi), Guy (Zulu), Harries (Tsonga), Kimble and Burman (Sotho), Parsons (Ngwato), Shillington (southern Tswana), are all concerned both with the nature of pre-industrial African societies and their social, economic and political articulation with colonialism and capitalism. The essays in Palmer and Parsons have a similar focus and deal with both central and southern Africa. There is no single work on the wars of conquest in South Africa in the 1870s and 1880s, although they are touched on in all the above, and Saunders and Atmore (in Rotberg and Mazrui) deal more specifically with the conquest of the Xhosa and Sotho respectively. The rise and fall of the African peasantry more generally is the subject of work by Bundy, while white-black agrarian social relations are dealt with in a series of major articles on the Transvaal by Trapido, in work by Delius and in theses by Keegan on the Orange Free State and Morris on the capitalisation of South African agriculture more generally.

Most of this work also throws light upon the origins of migrant labour and the nexus of contemporary laws controlling African labour. A pioneering article by Wolpe (1972), suggesting the origins of the system in capital's need for a cheap labour supply whose welfare costs could be borne in the reserves, has been modified by these detailed case studies, which show the system emerging out of the complex struggles between the mine magnates, colonial authorities, the traditional ruling class and African homesteads over the labour power of young men. The essays in Marks and Atmore and in Marks and Rathbone contain a useful introduction to these debates. The significance of the early days on the diamond fields for the evolution of migrant labour, the compound system and institutionalised racism is well argued in R. V. Turrell's Ph.D. thesis on Kimberley, while the early gold-mining industry has received even more attention. Starting with the publication of F. R. Johnstone's *Class, Race and Gold*, the significance of the gold mines has if anything overshadowed the literature on the earlier period. Further monographs include

N. Levy, P. Richardson, J. J. Van-Helten, R. V. Kubicek and D. Yudelman. The social history of the period has been brilliantly handled by C. Van Onselen in his two-volume collection of essays on the social and economic history of the Witwatersrand. Very different in approach but of value is the two-volume composite *Afrikaners in die Goudstad* (E. L. P. Stals *et al.*), produced by Afrikaner historians.

White politics and the 'native policy' developed by the colonies and republics have been dealt with by Trapido, McCracken and Davenport for the Cape; Welsh, Marks and Guy for Natal and Zululand; Uys, Trapido, Gordon and Delius for the South African Republic and Keegan for the Orange Free State. There is also a considerable literature in Afrikaans, some of it published in the *Archives yearbook for South African history*. A useful introduction to the politics of the period is through the many biographies of imperial and colonial actors. The literature on Rhodes is particularly voluminous, but Flint provides the most useful starting point. Lewsen's *Merriman* and older biographies of Schreiner and De Villiers are valuable for Cape liberalism. There are biographies of leading Boer figures such as Burghers, Kruger, Stein and Botha in Afrikaans.

Although the 'scramble' for southern Africa is touched on in a number of general works on the partition of Africa, or in detailed case-studies for parts of the region, the only recent synthesis on the 'scramble' in South Africa and Rhodesia, seen largely in terms of the politics of partition, is Schreuder's *The scramble for Southern Africa, 1877-1895*. This also contains a valuable bibliographical essay on the period covered. Unfortunately this work ends effectively before fully considering the South African war of 1899-1902. This war and the events which preceded it have been a matter of controversy ever since the publication of J. A. Hobson's *The South African war* (1900). Recent interpretations have moved away from the rather personalised accounts of causation in much of the early literature. Some of the literature of the war is reviewed critically in Marks and Trapido (1979) and Marks (1981). Much of the debate has centred on the relationship of imperial economic and strategic interests, and the needs of mining industry. Important contributions have been made by Jeeves, Mendelsohn, Spies, Duminy and Denoon. The most readable recent narrative history of the war

is Pakenham's *The Boer war*, although the collection edited by Warwick is in general a more scholarly introduction to the substantive issues. The participation of blacks in this ostensibly 'white man's war' is dealt with by Warwick and Nasson, Comaroff and Willan.

The reconstruction period has also been subjected to scrutiny since Denoon's *A grand illusion*. Again, it has been the relationship of the Milner administration to the mine magnates and more generally of the relationship of the war and reconstruction to the capitalist development of South Africa which has been to the fore in the debate (see Denoon, Mawby, Marks and Trapido, Legassick, Johnstone, Yudelman). For the unification of South Africa, Thompson remains the standard work, though the revisionist historiography stresses the economic underpinning of the constitutional changes and questions the notion that unification marked an imperial defeat. Chanock's *Unconsummated union* has a stimulating introductory section on the nature of the Union that was formed in 1910, and British imperial interests in the region.

The white working class has received rather more attention than the black in this period, but both are the subject of a growing literature (see the introductory chapters of Davies, Yudelman, Burke and Richardson, and the work by Katz). Bozzoli has also dealt with the ideology of English-speaking industrialists in this period. For black workers see the collections produced by Bozzoli and Webster out of the history workshops held by the University of Witwatersrand, and by Marks and Rathbone and by Warwick. To understand the formation of the African élite it is necessary to turn in the first instance to the work of Christian missions. The impact of Christianity in Natal–Zululand is dealt with directly by Etherington for the early part of this period and by Unterhalter for Nqutu district, Zululand until 1906; Hunt Davis, Saunders, Delius, Parsons, Dachs, Sundkler all make valuable contributions to our understanding of its very varied manifestations. As a class, the African petty bourgeoisie has been most sympathetically handled by B. Willan in his 'The life and times of Sol T. Plaatje', a work which stands with Shepperson and Price in the writing of African biography.

North of the Limpopo

This is a period in which primary written material becomes much richer also in the case of the territories north of the Limpopo. From the 1870s published travel literature, and the letters and diaries of missionaries and traders, increase in number and value, while from the 1880s and 1890s, these can be supplemented by Foreign Office, British South Africa Company and local administrative records. A number of settler accounts of early Rhodesia have recently been republished.

For the region as a whole, the two-volume *History of Central Africa*, edited by D. Birmingham and P. Martin, contains chapters by acknowledged experts on the region and synthesises much of the recent research. It still needs to be supplemented by earlier outline histories and the essays in composite volumes, such as Stokes and Brown, and Pachai (ed.), *Early history of Malawi*. Although much of his work is now dated, the first archivally based histories by Gann on the Rhodesias still contain useful material; his *The birth of a plural society* remains an outstanding account of the period in Zambia. Hanna and Oliver provide a solid basis for an understanding of the establishment of British rule in central Africa. Barnes (1954) was one of the first to look at the history of an African people and the impact of colonial rule, using both documentary and oral sources. In the 1960s his lead was followed, especially in Zambia in a series of regional ethnic histories based on oral and documentary evidence.

At the heart of the Zambian and Malawian experience in this period was the extension of the slave and ivory trade, the advent of missionaries and traders from the east coast, the penetration of the region from the south, its annexation by Crown and Company and the imposition of alien rule. The relevant chapters in Roberts's succinct outline *History of Zambia* are the most useful starting point. There is no equivalent for Malawi, though the introductory pages of McCracken's *Politics and Christianity in Malawi* contain a useful synthesis of late-nineteenth-century Malawian history before it deals in detail with the effects on Malawi of the Scottish missionaries. In general, historians have perhaps dealt with the impact of missionaries on Malawi more exhaustively than any other single topic (Ross, Stuart, the Lindens, Tangri). The chapter by Vail in Birmingham and Martin,

and his articles, deal graphically with the impact of colonial and company rule on African peoples, and trace the repercussions of early land and labour policies on later developments in Malawi and eastern Zambia. This work is valuable also in questioning the focus on the 'tribe' as the natural unit of analysis. Vaughan's recent doctoral thesis examines social and economic developments at a regional level, both for the immediate pre-colonial, slave-trading period and subsequently. There is a considerable amount of regional monograph material, dealing with individual ethnic groups: thus, the Lozi (Caplan, Mainga, Prins, Van Horn, Clarence-Smith), the Bemba (Roberts), the Ngoni (Barnes, Read, Rau), the Luvale (White, Cunnison), the Tonga (Colson, Matthews) and the Ngonde (Kalinga) have all received considerable attention. All these works deal with either part or the whole of this period as a section of wider studies, straddling an earlier or a later period (or both).

The much greater white presence in Southern Rhodesia has given its recent historiography an affinity with that of South Africa, and there are rather fewer detailed studies of African peoples built on oral sources. Nevertheless, the researches of Cobbing, Beach and Bhebe provide a solid foundation for the study of the Ndebele and Shona polities on the eve of the colonial occupation, and for their early responses to colonialism. The actual nature of the British South Africa Company and the early years of its rule are handled in masterly fashion by Galbraith in *Crown and charter*. Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* also contains an invaluable account of early colonial rule, although his stimulating analysis of the actual Shona-Ndebele uprising is contested and should be read in conjunction with the articles by Cobbing and Beach in the *Journal of African History*. Phimister's economic history of Zimbabwe (in Birmingham and Martin, and a forthcoming general synthesis which looks in considerable detail at this period) moves beyond his early work on gold-mining and on Rhodes, Rhodesia and the Rand. The African peasant response to colonialism and land policies have been thoroughly studied by Palmer and should be supplemented with the introductory chapters of Machingaidze on white farming. African mine labour and conditions in the mining industry form the subject of Van Onselen's *Chibaro*, which marked a watershed more generally in African labour history.

South West Africa

For South West Africa, as is the case north of the Limpopo, this is a period which sees great increase in the amount of primary material available both in print and in German colonial archives in Potsdam, East Germany, as well as in German and Finnish mission headquarters. The region remains neglected historiographically, although there are signs of an awakening interest in the past as it approaches independence from South Africa.

The most exhaustively covered aspect of South West African history is probably its annexation by Germany. The useful bibliographical essay on Germany's participation in the 'scramble' in Gifford and Louis (1967) should be supplemented with more recent articles by Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Paul Kennedy and Pogge von Strandmann. Recent interpretations are incorporated in Schreuder (1980). Vedder's *South West Africa in early times* deals with the first half of this period, but needs to be used critically, as do the accounts by Goldblatt and Esterhuyse, which do not go beyond rather poor narrative. In some sense, they are all concerned to provide a justification for subsequent German colonial rule in their account of the internecine warfare of the region. None of them deal with the socio-economic reasons for the political upheavals so evident in the late nineteenth century, or the changes African societies were undergoing. Bley and Drechsler are the only two detailed monographs based on unpublished source material in East Germany to be published in English, and they move well beyond any of the above in their analysis of the nature and impact of German colonial rule and the Nama–Herero uprising. *The diary of Hendrik Witbooi*, published by the Van Riebeeck Society in English and Afrikaans, constitutes a unique record of an African's response to colonial rule.

None of these works deals with the Ovambo, who only came under formal colonial rule in 1915. Apart from Stals (1968), an M.A. thesis and articles by Moorsom and an important joint article by Clarence-Smith and Moorsom on class formation and early labour migration, the history of the Ovambo in this period has been virtually unexplored.

9 PORTUGUESE COLONIES AND MADAGASCAR, 1870–1905

Angola and Mozambique

The historiography of Portuguese-speaking Africa is generally poor in comparison to that of other parts of the continent, but this particular period is better documented than any other. Partition and colonial expeditions produced a flood of reports, articles and books, by officials, officers, missionaries, explorers, company representatives, journalists, settlers and creoles. Large amounts of this material were published, usually but by no means always in Portuguese. For Angola, the books by Capelo and Ivens (1886), Carvalho (1890–4), Pimentel (1903), Nevinson (1906) and Couceiro (1910) are probably the most useful. For Mozambique, Andrade (1907), Enes (1913), Ornellas (1934–6), Botelho (1936) and Coutinho (1941) can be consulted. However, these are only the tip of an iceberg of published primary material, which includes a mass of polemical pamphlets and a vigorous local press in the colonies themselves.

Historians have not yet caught up with this immense wealth of sources, and have been handicapped by research conditions. The long years of dictatorship and colonial wars hampered foreign scholars and stultified the academic community within the Portuguese empire. Research in Portugal itself has opened up dramatically since 1974, but conditions in Angola, wracked by civil war and foreign invasions, have become even worse than before. The struggling school of local historians in Mozambique has begun valuable research but has been hampered by extremely difficult political conditions. The wanton murder of Ruth First in Maputo has been a cruel blow to Mozambique historians. The collection of oral testimony has suffered most from these conditions, but the vast body of official archives in Lisbon, Luanda and Maputo, poorly catalogued and organised, has only begun to be systematically exploited. The large and well catalogued Spiritan mission archives for Angola have been used rather more, but the Jesuit and Franciscan archives for Mozambique remain untouched. Scholars have relied disproportionately on British Foreign Office documents and Protestant mission sources.

The most recent general survey of the Portuguese empire is provided by Newitt (1981), which replaces the older syntheses by

Duffy (1959, 1962) and Hammond (1966). The weak point in Newitt is the examination of the origins of colonialism in Portugal, but this is well covered by Pirió (1982), Alexandre (1979) and Clarence-Smith (forthcoming). Capela's books (1973, 1975 and 1977) are written rather fast, but also contain much valuable material on this question. Almeida (1978–9) provides a year by year chronology and large bibliography, while Duffy (1967) surveys the labour question.

Among general histories of Angola, Wheeler and Pélissier (1971) and Henderson (1979) are both rather weak, although Wheeler is useful on the reactions of the Creole élite to colonial rule, and Henderson is good on Protestant missions. Bender (1978) purports to be a general history, but is in effect a set of essays on white settlement. His essay on convict settlement is the most useful for this period. Pélissier (1977) is a monumental compilation on the campaigns of colonial conquests, which provides a great deal of information on a wealth of other topics. Samuels (1970) covers education and missions, and Brásio (1966–71) reproduces a large number of documents on the Spiritan missions. The Protestant churches are dealt with by Soremekun (1971) and Okuma (1964). The only regional monograph is Clarence-Smith (1979), but there are important articles by Miller (1970 and 1973), Dias (1976), Birmingham (1978), Wheeler and Christensen (1973) and Soremekun (1977).

The historiography of Mozambique has a much more regional flavour than that of Angola, and the only general history, Henriksen (1978), is decidedly weak for this period. The Zambezi valley and adjoining parts of central Mozambique have attracted the most attention. The excellent book by Vail and White (1980) is strongly recommended, with its subtle use of official records, private company documents and oral testimony to reconstruct the history of the plantations of the Zambezi delta. Newitt (1973) covers the Zambezi valley from a wider and more political perspective, and is generally more reliable than Isaacman (1972 and 1976). Papagno (1972) is especially useful for an understanding of the Lisbon politics behind the granting of land concessions in the Zambezi valley. The chapter on the Mozambique Company by Neil-Tomlinson (1978) illuminates other aspects of economic history, while Bhila (1982) investigates the history of one small area, Manyika, in depth. Northern Mozambique is the subject of

Hafkin's thesis (1973), the last chapter of Alper's book (1975) and an article by Neil-Tomlinson (1977), but the focus of most of this work is on the coast. For southern Mozambique, Liesegang (1967) tells the story of the Gaza empire, while Katzenellenbogen (1982) charts the complex colonial rivalries over railways, ports and the supply of labour. The African origins of the migrant labour system are the subject of a fierce debate between Harris (1959) and Rita-Ferreira (1960 and 1963).

Madagascar and France

The archives of the Malagasy government in Tananarive have been partly classified and are open for consultation. In France the main deposits are in the Section d'Outre-mer of the Archives Nationales (formerly Archives des Colonies) and, for the years prior to 1897, the Archives des Affaires Étrangères (Fonds Mémoires et Documents, Archives, volumes 67, 68 and 141–46). In Britain, there are the Public Record Office and the Archives of the London Missionary Society (now deposited at the School of Oriental and African Studies).

For contemporary works on the colonial period, the *Histoire des Rois* by Père Malzac is a résumé of Père Callet's *Tantara ny Andriana*, with a supplement covering contemporary events, as seen by a Catholic priest. Passfield Oliver and Sibree give vivid descriptions of the island, and present British Protestant points of view. The Grandidiere's enormous *Ethnographie de Madagascar* and *Histoire politique et coloniale* are based on notes gathered by Alfred Grandidier during his explorations (1865–70), together with additional information obtained later. Catat's exploration (1889–90) describes the condition of the plateau and northern and eastern coasts with numerous photographs. Gustave Julien's work on the *Institutions politiques et sociales* is of major importance, particularly in respect of traditional law and the reforms. Martineau's study: *Madagascar en 1894*, is an outstanding description of the state of the island, as seen by a Frenchman preparing public opinion for the conquest.

As regards the conquest itself, the works of the ministers, Gabriel Hanotaux and André Lebon, are valuable. The report of General Duchesne and the book by Anthouard and Ranchot give details of the expedition. For Gallieni himself, the essential facts

are contained in his reports and letters. Considerable extracts from these, with an introduction and notes, can be found in *Gallieni pacificateur* by H. Deschamps and P. Chauvet. Carol's book, while not doing justice to Gallieni, is a splendid evocation of Tananarive at the time. On the pacification of the south, the documents to be consulted are the fascinating letters from Lyautey, Augagneur's indictment, and the clarification by H. Deschamps (*Les Antaisaka*, pp. 178–82). The principal journals to be consulted are: the *Amtananarivo Annual* for the Merina period, and *Notes, reconnaissances and explorations* and the *Bulletin de l'Académie Malgache* for the Gallieni period. An impressive list of review articles and journals can be found in Grandidier's *Bibliographie de Madagascar*, vol. 1, part 2; the first part is devoted to books.

Among the numerous later works are two general histories: H. Deschamps' *Histoire de Madagascar* and that of Ralaimihoatra. On the Merina period, there are the studies of Chapus and the Père Boudou, the former Protestant and the latter Jesuit, which are both excellent and reasonably objective; the British point of view given by Wastell; the sympathetic biography of Rainilaiarivony by Chapus and Mondain; the humorous and moving account of Rainandriamampandry by E. F. Gautier, and the useful and conscientious theses of Mutibwa and Randrinaisoa. The *Histoire militaire de Madagascar* provides the important official account of the military operations during the conquest and the pacification campaigns. Concerning Gallieni himself, there are Lyautey's letters, and various accounts by his faithful friends, such as Guillaume Grandidier, Gheusi and Marius Ary Leblond.

10. EAST AFRICA, 1870–1905

Cornerstones for the modern historiography of East Africa were laid in 1963 and 1965 with the publication of the first two volumes of the *Oxford History of East Africa*. Between 1965 and 1979, the years of research and publication of primary concern here, the initiative in many ways shifted to African universities. The results of work in that period have been published in *Zamani: a survey of East African history*, edited by B. A. Ogot (with John Kieran in the first edition), and numerous country-oriented volumes. *Tanzania before 1900*, edited by A. D. Roberts, was followed by 'The peoples of Uganda in the 19th Century', a special number

of *Tarikh*, and by *Kenya before 1900*, edited by B. A. Ogot. National historical associations have promoted serial publications such as *Hadith* and the *Kenya Historical Review*, the pamphlet series of the Historical Association of Tanzania, and so on. *A history of Tanzania*, edited by I. N. Kimambo and A. J. Temu, like the rest of the publications of this genre, was aimed at enriching the historical literature available to secondary and undergraduate students. Such primers, while they frequently contained the most advanced findings available at the time of publication, carried a minimum of bibliographical and other scholarly trappings.

Very full bibliographies were prepared for the Oxford *History of East Africa* and a comprehensive listing of sources has been provided by John Iliffe in his *Modern history of Tanganyika*. Valuable supplementary bibliographies include A. D. Roberts, 'A bibliography of primary sources for Tanzania, 1799–1899', *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 73 (1974); August Nimitz, 'Islam in Tanzania: an annotated bibliography', *ibid.*, 72 (1973); and J. B. Webster, *et al.*, *A bibliography on Kenya*, Syracuse, 1967.

Primary sources for the history of East Africa have been discovered, rediscovered and retrieved since 1965 by a large number of researchers, only a fraction of whom can be acknowledged in this space. At the same time, gaps in the surviving archives, lack of facility in German, and inaccessibility of official records owing to political upheaval have inhibited studies of the transition from the late Swahili to the early colonial era.

Archives bearing upon commercial relations in East Africa are spread far and wide, being lodged in Salem (Massachusetts), Marseilles (France), Hamburg (Germany), Great Britain and India. The British role in Zanzibar took on a more explicit political character in the 1870s and the consular correspondence and court records for the 1870s and 1880s provide valuable materials concerning the affairs of Indians who were British subjects. The Zanzibar Archives were effectively closed from the time of the revolution in 1964 until 1974. The staff of the Department of History, University of Dar es Salaam, undertook a team research effort in Zanzibar in 1975 and 1976, the results of which were still unpublished in 1983. Examples of important work done without the benefit of archival research in Zanzibar itself are Abdul Sheriff's yet unpublished but rightly influential thesis, 'The rise of a commercial empire: an aspect of the

economic history of Zanzibar, 1770–1873' (London, 1971), and Frederick Cooper's two volumes, *Plantation slavery on the east coast of Africa* and *From slave to squatter*.

The official archives for the German period in mainland Tanzania have been comprehensively described in the *Guide to the German records*, 2 vols., Dar es Salaam and Marburg, 1973. These materials are microfilmed. German records suffered much from burial and destruction during the First World War and those that survived were kept only selectively by the British. The Germans published extensively in such periodicals as the *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, so that the record is more intact than the archives alone suggest. Missionary archives also compensate for the patchiness of official records. The Roman Catholic Holy Ghost Fathers' archives (in Paris) and the White Fathers' archives (in Rome) indeed provide records of continuous observation from the 1870s through 1905. The London Missionary Society Archives (at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London) contain materials of greater value for the period before 1895 than afterward. Late-coming missionary groups, including the German Benedictines and Protestants of the Bethel, Leipzig, Berlin and Moravian societies took up spheres of influence in many parts of the country beginning in the late 1880s and thus began to chronicle local affairs in a detailed way. Missionary sources have been generally described in Roland Oliver's *The missionary factor in East Africa*. More detail on sources for the German Protestants is given in M. Wright, *German missions in Tanganyika, 1891–1941*. A work which is particularly impressive in using newly discovered German official records, neglected missionary sources, oral data and a command of geography to provide a regional history is Lorne E. Larson's 'A history of the Mahenge (Ulanga) District, c. 1860–1957' (Ph.D. thesis, Dar es Salaam, 1976).

The Maji Maji Research Project of the University of Dar es Salaam generated a quantity of oral data, some of which was made available in mimeographed form, edited by John Iliffe, in 1968. No other concerted effort to gather oral data for the period before 1905 was made between 1965 and 1979. It may be noted, however, that the Germans recorded many accounts by Africans, examples of which are found in the works of Carl Velten and Elize Kootz-Kretschmer, *Die Safwa* (3 vols.).

The official record for Kenya in the later nineteenth century is

comparatively spotty and almost non-existent for such areas as the arid, pastoral north. The Kenya coast shares with other parts of the Muslim littoral a depth of indigenous writings, legal documents, travellers' observations and missionary chronicles. Considerable gathering of oral data attended the use of these documentary sources, as is evident in the bibliographies attached to the work of Spear, Brantley, Ylvisaker and others listed in the bibliography. Unpublished records of the Imperial British East Africa Company and its agents have been described in the Oxford *History of East Africa*. Supplementary papers are to be found in the Macmillan Library in Nairobi and in the Colonial Records Project collections at Rhodes House in Oxford. The National Archives of Kenya do not contain extensive materials for the period before 1905, owing to the general absence of systematic district administration up to that time and the Secretariat fire of 1939. The Public Record Office must thus be regarded as the primary repository for a continuous series of official records on early Kenya. This observation takes into consideration the fact that missionaries occupied the central and western parts of the country only after the turn of the century, on the heels rather than in advance of the colonial government. The various sources for the early Kenyan period are listed in G. H. Mungeam, *British rule in Kenya, 1895–1912* (1966).

Led by B. A. Ogot, Kenyan historiography based itself extensively in oral data. The cultural complexity of Kenya stimulated localised and ethnic historical research, some critical problems in which have been discussed by John Lonsdale in a review article, 'When did the Gusii (or any other group) become a "Tribe"?' *Kenya Historical Review* (1970), 5, 1. Retrieval of history through oral data has extended to the least documented people of East Africa in such work as that of John Lamphear on the Jie. For the southern pastoralists, the Masai and related or interacting peoples, the new historiography is especially strong for the 1880s and 1890s.

In Uganda, Makerere University had been a centre for documentation and research for all East Africa up to 1965. Thereafter as a more nationally oriented university, its library is notable for its holdings of private papers and historical manuscripts by Baganda authors belonging to the vocal, literate, partisan élites who were so important in the extension of British colonial rule.

Translations of works by Apolo Kagwa have been published by M. S. Kiwanuka. John Rowe prepared translations and made many available through the Co-operative Africana Microfilm Project. The Secretariat archives in Entebbe begin in 1894 but do not assume great volume before the turn of the century. The extension of direct administration occurred mainly after 1902 in Uganda. Once again, personal papers and writings of colonial agents fill the gaps, as do the archives of the White Fathers and the Church Missionary Society (in London), organisations that formed parties intimately engaged in the affairs of Buganda well before the coming of formal colonialism.

In the early 1970s, the Department of History at Makerere undertook a crash programme of oral data collection in the northern and Kigezi parts of Uganda which had been neglected in earlier research. Critical reflection upon the methods entailed in this research and the work itself had to be suspended when conditions deteriorated during the régime of Idi Amin. An excellent study of the transition to colonialism within Uganda with regional focus was published by John Tosh. For the kingdoms, political history and inter-state relations continued to be a preoccupation as it had been before 1965. The social formation of a pre-colonial and early colonial state has been discussed in two works on Ankole. S. Karugire greatly advanced the discussion of caste in his *Kingdom of Nkore*, while M. Doornbos showed that the kingdom did not collapse and indeed was reconstructed in ways that favoured the monarchy and sealed a neo-traditional order. Plainly, the more that is known of the early colonial reconstruction, the more critical and effective will be the use of evidence drawn from élite and non-élite informants.

The source materials for East African history by 1979 approached a point of closure, especially as the recollections of elderly people no longer reached back to 1900 and before, and profound events and crises in many places had dislocated old communities and livelihoods. Yet the materials for the history of East Africa from 1870 to 1905, albeit scattered, are nevertheless massive, and can support increasingly sophisticated enquiries as the balance of external and internal factors is weighed.

Between 1965 and 1979 the writing of internal history was essentially nationalist in the sense of confining itself within the boundaries of the states as they were at the time of independence.

II NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN

Within these confines, however, much work reflects the larger processes of history within East Africa and has comparative significance. National histories such as Iliffe's *Modern history of Tanganyika* exemplify how the transition to colonialism can be treated in holistic, if geographically limited terms. The discussion of the ecological aspect reflects the most advanced thinking on this important new theme. While little is made of the common history of the mainland and the Zanzibar portions of the present United Republic of Tanzania, Iliffe's work is significant because the mainland formed the heart of the Swahili commercial system with all of its differential incorporation of localities and regions. Also notable among the pioneering works published in the 1970s was John Lonsdale's article on the conquest of western Kenya, which treats local conditions and sequences of military, political and commercial interaction in a meticulous way. The history of the Lake Victoria basin provides an especially attractive opportunity for future research, for it has a regional cohesion, national and international ramifications and ample source materials.

II. THE NILE BASIN AND THE EASTERN HORN, C. 1875–C. 1907

Egypt

Some idea of the nature and scope of official Egyptian archives for this period can be gained from H. A. B. Rivlin (1970); and from the *Quellenverzeichnis* of A. Schölch (?1972; English trans. 1981). There are essays on other relevant Egyptian sources in P. M. Holt, ed., *Political and social change in modern Egypt* (1968). For British official reaction to the Egyptian crisis, and British military intervention and occupation, see: the Gladstone–Granville correspondence edited by A. Ramm, 2 vols. (1962); the diplomatic correspondence at the P[ublic] R[ecord] O[ffice], F[oreign] O[ffice] 78 and FO 141; the Cromer Papers (PRO, FO 633); the Granville Papers (PRO 30/29); the Rosebery Papers (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh); and the Salisbury Papers (Christ Church, Oxford). Cromer's *Annual Reports* are useful if seen as the pleadings of an advocate rather than the verdicts of a judge.

There are useful bibliographies, with copious references to

Egyptian historical and other writing in Arabic, in: Schölch (as above); A. Hourani (1962, reprinted 1970); and P. J. Vatikiotis (1969, revised edn 1980) – for the Arabic references see Vatikiotis' footnotes. R. O. Collins, in R. W. Winks, ed. (1966), is also useful. E. R. J. Owen (1969) has a very rich bibliography of modern Egyptian economic history. For material on, or relevant to, the history of landownership, see G. Baer (1962).

The historiography for this period is copious, but rather little of it is fully satisfactory. At least four 'schools' of Egyptian historiography exist (or have existed), each seeking to propagate in English, French or Arabic its own version of modern Egyptian history. The British 'proconsular' school was dedicated to the creation of a 'correctly informed' public opinion in Britain. The French school was, more or less consciously, a literary riposte to the British occupation. The Egyptian nationalist school, in its early stages often under strong French influence, has treated history as a weapon in the national struggle. It has introduced into its historiography its own political presuppositions and preoccupations, sometimes to the point of producing (as Schölch has bluntly remarked) 'wishful thinking' rather than history. The 'dynastic' school, under the patronage of Fū'ād I, was granted privileged access to Egyptian official archives; at its best (e.g. G. Douin, M. F. Shukry) it produced works of permanent value, at any rate as repertories of information.

In spite of their divergent political outlooks and objectives, all four 'schools' had much in common. The 'early modern' history of Egypt in the Ottoman–Mamluk period was ignored or regarded as irrelevant to later developments. There was a heavy emphasis on narrowly political history, on Anglo-Egyptian relations, and – among the nationalists – on ideological and political manifestations (or alleged manifestations) of Egyptian nationalism. There was very little interest in social and economic history, or in problems of structural change. In some of these fields a little competent detailed work was done, but not usually by historians. Economists and agronomists wrote on some aspects of economic development; 'orientalists' on learned and popular Islam; descriptive sociologists on (especially rural) society; an educationalist on the history of education. Historians of all four schools were virtually unanimous in ignoring this work. Their typical product was the 'survey' of a fairly lengthy period; but for these 'surveys'

the supporting detailed monographs were almost entirely lacking. It is very hard to find much genuinely critical historiography before about 1950.

There is no 'standard' history of Egypt during the Ismā'īl-
'Urābī-Cromer era. P. J. Vatikiotis (1969, revised edn 1980) is a
'modern history' from Muḥammad 'Alī onwards; but it is
particularly valuable for intellectual, literary and journalistic
developments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
P. M. Holt (1966), with an even broader chronological and
geographical span, sees nineteenth-century Egypt against the
background of the 'early modern' Ottoman Near East. J. Berque
(1967, English trans. 1972) is less a 'history' than an extended
meditation on Egyptian history since about 1880. Its learning
(especially in social history) and its sympathetic concern for
contemporary Egypt are alike profound. The essays collected by
P. M. Holt in *Political and social change* (1968) are excellent examples
of the mid-century historiographical break-through; those by
J. N. D. Anderson, G. Baer, A. Goldschmidt and P. O'Brien are
directly relevant to the period 1875-1907.

Two major aspects of the Egyptian economy have been
thoroughly investigated: the history of landownership since 1800
by G. Baer (1962); and the rôle of cotton in the Egyptian
economy by E. R. J. Owen (1969). The study of the recent
economy by R. Mabro (1974) has a brief but useful historical
introduction, and some of its statistical tables go back to the 1880s.
Rural Egypt and the village community have been studied by
Hāmid 'Ammār (1954); by J. Berque (1957); and by G. Baer, who
has collected some of his important essays in both rural and urban
social history in his *Studies in the social history of modern Egypt* (1969).
For popular Islam, see J. W. McPherson (1941) and M. Gilsean
(1973). For Egyptian Islam generally in this period, H. A. R. Gibb
(1947) is still useful; so is C. C. Adams (1933) on Muḥammad
'Abduh. N. R. Keddie (1968) grapples with the elusive Jamāl
al-Dīn al-Afghānī; E. Kedourie (1966) examines the links between
Afghānī and 'Abduh. A. Hourani (1962) sensitively analyses
Egyptian religious, political and social thought. N. Safran (1961)
is interesting on the emergence of Egyptian nationalism as a
response to political, economic and social change. J. M. Ahmed
(1960) is a concise and lucid introduction to early nationalist
thought. On education, J. Heyworth-Dunne ([1938], reprinted

1968), writes with a broader scope than his title might suggest. The history of the enormous and pervasive Egyptian bureaucracy has been strangely neglected. M. Berger (1957) hardly attempts historical analysis. F. R. Hunter, *M[iddle] E[astern] S[tudies]*, 1983, is not only useful in itself but a welcome sign of interest.

G. Douin, vols. I and II (1933, 1934) has much useful information on Ismā'īl's reign down to 1873, where he stops so far as Egypt itself is concerned. The origins of Ismā'īl's financial problems may be studied in D. S. Landes (1958), and the behaviour of his European creditors in J. Bouvier (1968). Of the works of the British 'proconsular' school on the crisis of 1876–83 and on Cromer's régime, the most useful is probably that of Cromer himself (1908). To an alert and well-informed reader, much that Cromer writes is very revealing. Contemporary British opposition to 'proconsular' orthodoxy is represented by W. S. Blunt (1907). Some British historiography since about 1950 has seen the occupation less as an administrative triumph than as a succession of missed opportunities and imaginative failures: cf. J. Marlowe (1954 and 1970); P. Mansfield (1971). Although these authors still see Egypt primarily in relation to Britain and rarely use Egyptian sources, they evidently present a more balanced picture than their 'proconsular' predecessors. From the copious writings of the Egyptian nationalist school, the bibliography includes two examples by 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Rāfi'ī, its most prolific author.

A. Schölch (? 1972, English trans. 1981) has by his massive archival and prosopographical research rendered obsolete most previous work on the origins and development of the 'Urābī revolution. In particular, he has cast grave doubt upon the interpretations of J. M. Landau (1953 and 1954); and of Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, *Middle East Journal*, 1967. In *MES*, 1974, he calls for a reconsideration of nineteenth-century Egyptian 'constitutional development' in the light of his findings. Schölch has also demonstrated (*Historical Journal*, 1976) the existence in 1882 of strong pressure from the British 'men on the spot' for a military solution to the Egyptian crisis. But he has not demonstrated that this pressure was crucial; and he virtually ignores the increasing fear in London that British influence in Egypt might be destroyed by an alignment between France and the 'Urābists. On this and other diplomatic aspects, see: R. Robinson and J. Gallagher

(1961); and A. Ramm in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, ed., *France and Britain in Africa* (1971).

Work on Cromer's Egypt, apart from that of the proconsular and nationalist schools and the essentially derivative writings of, for example, Mansfield and Marlowe, is still very scanty. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid (1968) is useful on the re-emergence of Egyptian nationalism, at first under the patronage of Khedive 'Abbās Ḥilmī. But she could with advantage have told us more about Egypt and less about Cromer, on whom she has nothing very original to say. A. Goldschmidt, in P. M. Holt, ed. (1968) and Walid Kazzuha, *MES*, 1977, throw light on the origins of organised political parties in Egypt. Cromer's economic policies have been analysed by E. R. J. Owen in his book (1969), and in *MES*, 1966. R. L. Tignor (1966) is informative on some of Cromer's administrative policies but hardly adequate as an analysis of 'modernisation'.

Sudan

No records of the Turco-Egyptian administration have survived in the Sudan: those that have survived in Cairo have yet to be effectively exploited for the decade 1875–84. Much of our information for this period is derived from books by, or based on material left by, Europeans serving as khedivial officials: Romolo Gessi, Charles Gordon, Rudolf Slatin, Eduard Schnitzer ('Emin Pasha'). But these Europeans served mainly in the south or the far west (Darfur); and the Turco-Egyptian officials who governed the 'metropolitan' northern and central provinces did not write books or attract biographers. Paradoxically, in the final decade of the Turkiyya there is more and better available source material for the southern than for the northern Sudan. R. C. Slatin (1896) is of course a 'primary source' for the west during his governorships in Darfur (1879–84). The memoirs of Yūsuf Mikhā'il, which have been edited by Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad Nūr (Ph.D. London, 1963), are copious on politics in Kordofan on the eve of the Mahdiyya. But for the central and northern provinces we have only one or two sidelights and a snapshot. There are sidelights in the memoirs of Babikr Bedri, vol. 1 (1959, English trans. 1969). The snapshot is the Report (1883) by Lieut.-Col. J. D. H. Stewart on administrative and other conditions in the

Sudan (British Parliamentary Paper [C. 3670]). However, Na'ūm Shuqayr [1903] drew heavily upon local Sudanese knowledge and on captured Mahdist documents for his account of the late Turkiyya and the early career of the Mahdi. His material on the Mahdi has been summarised in German by E. L. Dietrich, *Der Islam*, 1925. There is no translation into any other language.

The central archives of the Mahdist state are well preserved and admirably arranged in the Central Record Office (*Dār al-Wathā'iq*) at Khartoum. Their contents and scope are described by P. M. Holt in *The Mahdist State in the Sudan* (2nd edn 1970) and in *S[udan] N[otes and] R[ecords]*, 1955. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Aḥmad Abū Salīm has published in Arabic a guide to the records of the Mahdi (1969); and, among much other Mahdist archival material, a selection of Mahdist documents (1969). For full details of these archival publications and of recent Sudanese historiography on the Mahdiyya, see: P. M. Holt (1970); and P. M. Holt and M. W. Daly (1979). P. M. Holt has published, in English, a calendar of the Khalifa's correspondence with his general, Maḥmūd Aḥmad (1956). H. Shaked has published (1978) a summary–translation of an official hagiography of the Mahdi. Babikr Bedri, Na'ūm Shuqayr and Yūsuf Mikhā'il (see above) are all valuable sources for the Mahdist revolution and state. Babikr's memoirs are particularly interesting as the experiences of a rank-and-file Mahdist who was not a member of the new 'Establishment'.

P. M. Holt has pointed out, in *St Antony's Papers*, no. 4 (1958), that some of the English-language sources on the Mahdiyya – J. Ohrwalder (1892) and R. C. Slatin (1896) – were 'written up' as anti-Mahdist propaganda by F. R. Wingate from the rough drafts of the authors. (The memoirs of Fr P. Rossignoli, published in English translation by F. Rehfish, *JNR*, 1967, escaped this processing.) Wingate's own contribution (1891, reprinted with an introduction by P. M. Holt, 1968) contains comparatively little propaganda and looks more like a compendium of information for use by a conquering and occupying army. In 1889–90 hopes of early reconquest were very high in both Cairo and London.

Sources for 'British policy towards' the Mahdist state are indicated in Mekki Shibeika (1952) and G. N. Sanderson (1965).

The 'staff-work' for the earliest civil administration under the Condominium was the responsibility of the Cairo HQ of the

Egyptian Army intelligence branch. Early administrative papers are therefore to be found in the CAIRINT class at the Central Record Office in Khartoum. But they are also to be found in the INTEL class – the records of the Assistant Director of Intelligence stationed in Khartoum. Whatever the original criterion of distinction (possibly the office that originated the correspondence), it was evidently not subject-matter; down to about 1905 almost anything ‘administrative’ can be found in either class. But thereafter, as the Sudan administration developed and the link with the Cairo Intelligence HQ became more tenuous, CAIRINT gradually ceased to carry general administrative material. Except for the Financial Secretary’s office, the organisation of government ‘departments’ was still rudimentary in 1907; very little ‘departmental’ correspondence (other than financial) has survived from this period.

However, for early Condominium administration the ‘Sudan Archive’ at the University of Durham is at least as important as the records at Khartoum. This archive holds both the Wingate and the Slatin Papers, as well as other important deposits: see G. Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate* (1971) for further details. The Wingate Papers are particularly important in view of Wingate’s practice of transacting official business through quasi-personal correspondence.

There are good general bibliographies of the Sudan: R. L. Hill (1939); Abdel Rahman El Nasri (1962). But they are now rather out-dated; as is G. N. Sanderson’s survey of the historiography of the modern Sudan, *Journal of African History*, 1963. M. W. Daly has compiled an annotated select general bibliography, *Sudan*, World Bibliographical Series, vol. 40 (1983). The entries are admirably arranged and cross-referenced. For English-language material on the modern history of the Sudan, the selection is judicious and misses little of importance. J. A. Dagher (Yūsuf As‘ad Dāghir) has compiled a bibliography of Arabic sources for the Sudan (1968). R. L. Hill’s *Biographical dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (1951, 2nd edn, *Biographical dictionary of the Sudan*, 1967) is indispensable. J. O. Voll has compiled a *Historical dictionary of the Sudan* (1978).

Only one ‘general history’ of the modern Sudan merits mention. P. M. Holt and M. W. Daly (1979), the revised and extended third edition of P. M. Holt’s *Modern history of the Sudan*

(1961), is learned, lucid and concise. It has an excellent select bibliography, which includes material in Arabic. For the general development of the nineteenth-century Sudan, see P. M. Holt's essay on 'Modernization and Reaction', in his *Studies in the history of the Near East* (1973).

Sudan Notes and Records (1918 – in progress) is very rich in regional and ethnic historical studies for the period from the Turkiyya to the early Condominium. G. N. Sanderson, *JAH*, 1963, is a convenient guide to much of this material. An author and subject index to *SNR*, vols. I to 55, 1918–74, has been published (1983). There is much similar material outside the pages of *SNR*: W. Hofmayr (1925) on the Shilluk; A. Paul (1954, reprinted 1971) on the Beja; S. Santandrea (1964) on the western Bahr al-Ghazal, also (1977) on the town of Wau; E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1971), on the Azande; R. S. O'Fahey (1980) on Darfur; K. Hødnebo (Cand. Fil. thesis, Bergen, 1981) on the ecological history of Equatoria; L. E. M. Kapteijns (D.Litt. thesis, Amsterdam, 1982) on Dār Masālīt; D. H. Johnson, *JAH*, 1982, on the Dinka and the Nuer.

For the Islamic background of this period see: P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State* (1970); P. M. Holt's essay on 'Holy families' in his *Studies* (1973); J. S. Trimmingham (1949, reprinted 1965); and J. O. Voll (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard, 1969).

The thin historiography of the northern Sudan during the late Turkiyya reflects the paucity of the sources. The importance of Na'ūm Shuqayr [1903] has already been indicated. G. Douin, vol. III: *L'Empire africain* (1936–41) peters out c. 1876. R. L. Hill (1959) has some interesting information and insights, but hardly presents a continuous history for this period. For Gordon's first governor-generalship, 1877–9 (during which Gordon was however heavily preoccupied with the south-western Sudan) see B. M. Allen (1931). There is an excellent historical geography of Turco-Egyptian Khartoum by R. C. Stevenson, *SNR*, 1966. The southern Sudan is better served for this period. For the south as a whole, see M. F. Shukry (1937) and J. R. Gray (1961); On Islam in the south, see Gray's essay in M. Brett, ed. (1973). For Gordon as 'general-governor' of Equatoria, 1874–6, see M. F. Shukry (1953) – an edition of Gordon's correspondence with Khedive Ismā'il. G. Birkbeck Hill published (1881) material illustrating Gordon's policies and activities in the southern Sudan over the

whole period 1874–9. A. Thuriaux-Hennebert (1964) has written usefully on the Egyptian administration of the Azande. For the Bahr al-Ghazal see: on or relating to al-Zubayr Raḥma Maṣṣūr, H. C. Jackson (1913, reprinted 1970) and W. K. R. Hallam (1977); on Romolo Gessi, Gessi's own memoirs (1891, English trans. 1892) and the two works by C. Zaghi (1939 and 1947). On Equatoria under 'Emin Pasha' and the final collapse of Egyptian rule in the south, see: the selection of Emin's letters and journals edited by G. Schweinfurth *et al.* (1888); G. Schweitzer (1898, English trans. 1898); A. J. Mounteney-Jephson (1890, reprinted 1969); R. O. Collins (1962); and, with a first-rate *Quellenverzeichnis* and bibliography, I. R. Smith (1972). There is an extensive literature on Emin. His *Tagebücher* have been published: F. Stuhlmann, 5 vols. (1917–27).

For the Mahdist revolution and state, the second edition of P. M. Holt's *Mahdist State* (1970) is fundamental and indispensable. Holt has also written, *SNR*, 1959, a brief but valuable assessment of the significance of the Mahdiyya in Sudanese history. On Gordon's mission and death, there is an enormous hagiographical and, more recently, 'psychological' literature, almost all of it useless as a contribution to Sudan historiography. The only satisfactory study is still that in B. M. Allen (1931). Other useful work on the Mahdiyya in English includes: H. C. Jackson (1926) on Osman Digna ('Uthmān Diqna); A. B. Theobald (1951) and *SNR*, 1950; L. E. M. Kapteijns, *African perspectives* (Leiden), 1977; and Aḥmad 'Uthmān Ibrāhīm, *SNR*, 1979. There is now an increasing body of monographic work on the Mahdiyya by Sudanese scholars writing in Arabic. Examples are: a study of the theological debate between the Mahdi and the orthodox '*ulamā'*' by 'Abdallāh 'Alī Ibrāhīm (1968), and two regional studies – on Darfur by Mūsā al-Mubārak al-Ḥasan [1971], and on Kordofan by 'Awaḍ 'Abd al-Hādī al-'Aṭā (1973).

Apart from the material on Emin, historiography is scanty for the southern Sudan during the Mahdiyya. For Equatoria, R. O. Collins (1962) continues the story down to 1898. But on the Bahr al-Ghazal he is almost completely silent; and the material available in S. Santandrea (1964) and A. Thuriaux-Hennebert (1964) is very fragmentary. And there is very little on the great Nilotic peoples – Dinka, Nuer and Shilluk – who between them

probably amounted to more than half of the southern Sudanese population.

Relations between the Mahdist State and Ethiopia have received considerable attention. See: G. N. Sanderson, *JAH*, 1962 and 1964, and *SNR*, 1969; P. M. Holt, *Mahdist State* (2nd edn 1970); R. A. Caulk, *Transafrican Journal of History*, 1971; Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Qaddāl, in Arabic (1973); A. Triulzi, *JAH*, 1975.

The diplomacy of European competition in the Upper Nile basin, the diplomatic background of the 'reconquest' of 1896–8, and the development of Kitchener's campaign may be followed in: G. N. Sanderson (1965) and *SNR*, 1959; A. B. Theobald (1951); and P. Magnus (1958). The battle of Karari (Omdurman) has been analysed in great detail from the Sudanese side by 'Ismat Ḥasan Zulfū (1973, English trans. 1980). This work contains much of value on the military organisation of the later Mahdist state – a topic not treated in detail by Holt.

The making of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of January 1899 has been studied, from various points of view, by: Mekki Abbas (1952); Mekki Shibeika (1952); G. N. Sanderson (1965); and Muddathir 'Abd al-Raḥīm (1969). There is no adequate treatment of Kitchener's brief governor-generalship; there is relevant information in P. Magnus (1958) and G. R. Warburg (1971). However, Warburg (*op. cit.*) is primarily concerned with the structure and policies of Wingate's administration, of which he presents a comprehensive and meticulously documented analysis, at all events for the northern Sudan; he is more sketchy and less reliable on the south. He has studied the relations of this administration with Cromer and his successors in *Asian and African studies (Annual of the Israel Oriental Society)*, 1969; and its (Islamic) religious policy in *ibid.*, 1971. His brief but meaty paper in *MES*, 1970, is especially useful on Egyptian financial subventions to the Sudan; and on Wingate's efforts to reduce Egyptian influence and pave the way for an exclusively British régime. G. N. Sanderson, in his Introduction to the English translation of Babikr Bedri's *Memoirs*, vol. II (1980) has examined the hastily improvised military administration of 1898–9 and traced some of its lines of evolution under Wingate. The role of Rudolf Slatin in the administration is the principal theme of the biographical essay by R. L. Hill (1965). For 'Alī Dīnār's seizure of power in Darfur and his early relations with the Sudan

government, see A. B. Theobald (1965). R. L. Hill, in *Sudan transport* (1965), traces the origins and development of the railway system.

Early Sudanese resistance to British rule in the northern Sudan has been analysed by A. S. Cudsi (M.Sc. Econ. thesis, Khartoum, 1969); by S. A. R. Bukhari (M.Phil. thesis, London, 1972), in the context of the administration's overall problem of military security; and by Hasan Aḥmad Ibrāhīm, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 1979. For early administration in the south, and resistance to it, D. C. E. ff.Comyn (1911) is a much more perceptive and useful testimony than its title might suggest. There are useful sidelights in F. X. Geyer (1914). There are accounts and analyses by: R. O. Collins and R. Herzog, *JAH*, 1961; S. Santandrea (1967); A. S. Cudsi (1969); R. O. Collins (1971); and G. N. Sanderson, in *Etudes... Henri Brunshwig* (1982).

F. X. Geyer (1914) describes his work in the re-establishment of the Catholic mission in the southern Sudan. The re-establishment of the missions, especially in relation to the administrative objectives and policies of Cromer, Kitchener and Wingate, has been studied by: R. L. Hill, *MES*, 1965; R. O. Collins (1971); and L. M. Passmore Sanderson and G. N. Sanderson (1981).

J. Ward (1905) is illustrated with over 500 early photographs of the Sudan and the Sudanese; and it incorporates, often *verbatim*, some interesting reports of early patrols and reconnaissances. F. X. Geyer (1914) has nearly 400 photographs.

Ethiopia

The historiography of Ethiopia for the reigns of Yohannes IV and Menelik II suffers from the loss or destruction of almost all official Ethiopian records, and the inaccessibility of any scraps that remain. But it has also suffered, until quite recently, from the inability or reluctance of European historians of modern Ethiopia to master a difficult language and to get to grips with the complex and subtle structure of Ethiopian society and institutions. Nevertheless, there is now a growing body of reliable and usable work, comparable in volume with the *usable* work on Egypt in this period – though hardly with that on the Sudan.

The archives of the major European powers, and the Ottoman,

Egyptian and Mahdist archives, contain not only material relating to Ethiopia but the correspondence of Ethiopian emperors and kings with foreign rulers. This correspondence, which not infrequently throws light on internal Ethiopian affairs, has been traced for the nineteenth century by S. Rubenson's exhaustive searches of almost all the relevant archives, including mission archives and other unofficial collections. He reports on his findings in detail in *The survival of Ethiopian independence* (1976). Rubenson also reports on Ethiopian chronicle material both published and in manuscript: for the Yohannes–Menelik era, published material is evidently meagre. The official *Res Gestae* of Menelik are indeed available in French translation with a useful editorial apparatus: Guèbrè Sellassié, ed. M. de Coppet, 2 volumes (1930, 1931). But whatever its value as a specimen of official Ethiopian historiography, this work is too stylised to be of much immediate assistance to a political historian, and it is discreet almost to the point of total silence on Menelik's relations with European powers. Many of the Europeans who resided or travelled in Ethiopia in this period wrote about their experiences. Their accounts, obviously of varying evidential value, are conveniently listed in Z. Gabre-Sellassie (1975) and H. G. Marcus (1975). Alfred Ilg, the most influential and long-serving of Menelik's European advisers, has been the subject of a biography by C. Keller (1918) and a study by W. Loepfe (1974).

A historical dictionary of Ethiopia, with a rich bibliography, has been compiled by C. Prouty and E. Rosenfeld (1981); and a bibliography of the modern history of Ethiopia by H. G. Marcus (1972). There are useful introductory 'surveys' of Ethiopia by D. J. Mathew (1947) and by E. Ullendorff (1960). J. S. Trimingham (1952, reprinted 1965) is not only indispensable for Ethiopian Islam but very useful for general orientation on Ethiopian history and ethnography. There is unfortunately nothing comparable to Trimingham for Ethiopian Christianity and the Ethiopian Church in the nineteenth century. The most recent 'general history' of Ethiopia in English is that by R. Greenfield (1965, 2nd edn 1967). On the Yohannes–Menelik period he is brief but often perceptive; he prints, in English translation, Menelik's famous 'Circular to the Powers' of April 1891. The two-volume general history by A. Bartnicki and J. Mantel-Niecko (German trans. from the Polish, 1978) has been condemned as totally worthless by E.

Haberland, *JAH*, 1981. Nevertheless, for this period it contains useful information competently presented; nor is the commitment to 'dogma' (of which Haberland complains) very obtrusive. It also has a useful bibliography.

The history of the 'non-Amhara' peoples of Ethiopia tends to be neglected in the historiography of this period, and has to be sought mainly in ethnographic works. Since 1959 the Frobenius-Institut at the University of Frankfurt-am-Main has published a series of major studies on the peoples of southern Ethiopia. Perhaps the most useful to the modern historian is that on the southern Galla (Oromo) by E. Haberland (1963). G. W. B. Huntingford (1955) has written more generally on the Oromo, and on the kingdom of Kaffa; and there is a very useful study of Jimma Abba Jifar by H. S. Lewis (1965). For the Muslim and Muslim-influenced peoples of Ethiopia, including the Muslim Oromo and such important groups as the Danākil ('Afar), the Muslim groups of Eritrea and the Sidama peoples, J. S. Trimingham (1952) provides at least an introduction: unfortunately, Trimingham's work lacks a bibliography.

At present, the most useful general guides to the Yohannes-Menelik period appear to be Z. Gabre-Sellassie (1975) on Yohannes, and H. G. Marcus (1975) on Menelik; though neither author fully succeeds in integrating his hero's career into the complex political, religious, economic and social structure of Ethiopia. C. P. Rosenfeld's *Chronology of Menilek II* (1976) is in fact a very copious repertory of information from 1844 to 1913, admirably arranged and as far as possible precisely dated (where chronological precision is impossible, the author says so). For such themes as the chronology of Menelik's campaigns of conquest, the scale and tempo of his arms supplies, the payment of tribute to and by him, Rosenfeld is not merely convenient but virtually indispensable.

R. Pankhurst has written extensively on Ethiopian economic history since 1800: (1968); *Journal of E[thiopian] S[tudies]*, 1964; *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 1964. R. A. Caulk has worked on the urban and economic history of Harar: *JES*, 1971; *JAH*, 1977. R. Pankhurst has written on the foundation by Menelik of Addis Ababa as a new 'fixed capital', *JAH*, 1961; and P. Garretson on the early history and development of Addis Ababa (Ph.D. thesis, London, 1974). R. Pankhurst has also written on *State and land in*

Ethiopian History (1966). D. Crummey has analysed, in two important papers (*Past and Present*, 1980; *JAH*, 1983), the relationship between hereditary 'nobility', hereditary landownership and political power. H. Erlich, *JAH*, 1974, examines the ascent to the highest ranks of the nobility of a 'king's man' of lowly social origin. R. A. Caulk has analysed, for nineteenth-century Ethiopia, both the political significance of firearms, *JAH*, 1972; and the inter-action of 'religion and state', *JES*, 1972. Much of this recent analytical work has yet to be assimilated into the general historiography.

Ethiopia's rôle in the partition of Africa, both as a successful 'resister' and as an active participant, has attracted much scholarly attention. For work of this kind, some Ethiopian sources are available, though not of course in Ethiopian archives; and the unsolved problems of the internal structure and dynamics of Ethiopia are a less crippling handicap. There are moreover useful European sources: not only diplomatic correspondence in the relevant national archives (on which S. Rubenson (1976) should be consulted); but also valuable published testimonies. G. H. Portal 'wrote up' his mission to Yohannes twice ([1888] and 1892). For the Rodd mission of 1897 there is A. E. W. Gleichen (1898) and, better, the official British *Précis of information* (1897). C. Zaghi has edited (1956) Salimbene's diary of his mission to Menelik; and C. Michel (1900) is frank and informative on the French missions that attempted to reach the White Nile with Menelik's 'assistance' – though he tends to blame Lagarde, rather than Menelik, for their failure.

For Ethiopian resistance, see S. Rubenson (1960); and above all his *Survival of Ethiopian independence* (1976). Important contributions have also been made by R. A. Caulk (Ph.D. thesis, London, 1966), and *Transafrican Journal of History*, 1971. However, after 1889 Rubenson concentrates rather narrowly on the local consequences of the Treaty of Wichale, on which see also S. Rubenson (1964) and *JAH*, 1964; he has little to say on the fluctuating pattern of European alignments and antagonisms within which Menelik had to make his diplomatic moves. On these themes see G. N. Sanderson (1965). Rubenson virtually ends his story in March 1896; but Menelik himself did not believe that he had completely solved Ethiopia's European problem at Adowa. For Menelik's interventions in the politics and diplomacy

of the Nile Valley between 1896 and 1898, see: H. G. Marcus (1975), and *JAH*, 1963 and 1966; G. N. Sanderson (1965) and *JAH*, 1964. One of the most important of these initiatives was Menelik's successful attempt to reach an entente with Khalifa 'Abdallāhi: on this, and on Mahdist–Ethiopian relations generally, see the works cited above, p. 816. On Russian activities in Ethiopia, C. Zaghi (1973) supersedes the sketchy, though sometimes perceptive, treatment by C. Jeřman (1958).

Little seems to have been written on the internal politics and conditions of Ethiopia between 1902 and 1908. H. G. Marcus (1975) describes in interesting detail the 'domestic' organisation of Menelik's imperial household. H. Darley (1926, reprinted 1972) has some vivid, not to say lurid, side-lights on conditions in south-western Ethiopia: he frequently alludes to the deterioration that followed Menelik's incapacity. Otherwise, historians have concentrated on the complex diplomatic and financial struggle for control of the then unfinished Ethiopian railway; and on the tortuous European diplomacy which ultimately led, in the Tripartite Treaty of 1906, to the frustration of renewed Italian territorial aspirations and the stabilisation of Ethiopia's international position. Marcus (1975) is informative on both topics; and has written specifically on the Tripartite Treaty, *JES*, 1964. For the railway question, see T. L. Gilmour (1906); W. Loepfe (1974); and K. V. Ram, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 1981.

Somalia

Archival material for much of this period of Somali history will be found in the records of the British India, Foreign and Colonial Offices; and in those of the *Archivio Storico dell'ex-Ministero dell'Africa Italiana*. In this period the British government published two 'Blue Books' on relations with, and operations against, Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Ḥasan (Cd. 1597, 1903; Cd. 5000, 1910); and a two-volume *Official history of the operations in Somaliland, 1901–4* (War Office, 1907).

Historiography is very scanty. There are useful bibliographies in I. M. Lewis (1961, reprinted 1967); in R. L. Hess (1966); and in S. S. Samatar (1982). That in Samatar is the most comprehensive. But it omits a few relevant titles to be found in Lewis and Hess; and it is considerably inflated by material which, while

doubtless relevant to the author's field of study, is hardly relevant to Somali history.

This period of Somali history is incomprehensible without some knowledge of: Somali socio-political structure and institutions; the nineteenth-century development of Somali Islam; and the role of the Somali language as a political weapon. These three closely linked topics are admirably analysed, with varying emphases, by: I. M. Lewis (1961, reprinted 1967) – and cf. Lewis' essay in I. M. Lewis, ed. (1966); B. W. Andrzejewski and I. M. Lewis (1964); and S. S. Samatar (1982).

The best and most balanced treatment of Somali history in this period appears to be that by Samatar (1982) although it is no more than a sketch in a work whose primary focus is socio-linguistic rather than historical. Among other virtues, Samatar relates Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Ḥasan's movement clearly and cogently to the clan and lineage conflicts of 'normal' Somali politics; and he takes the Sayyid's Somali opponents seriously. I. M. Lewis (1965, revised edn 1980) is useful on Egyptian and early British administration; helpful (though not always completely accurate) on the Anglo-French 'scramble' and partition of 1884–8; and admirable on the social and religious background. But he is almost silent on the internal development of the Sayyid's movement between 1899 and 1908; and on the British attempts to destroy it by military action between 1901 and 1904.

Five substantial pieces of writing have been devoted more or less exclusively to the career of Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Ḥasan. That by Sahykh Jamā' 'Umar 'Īsa (1976) is in Somali. That by D. Jardine (1923, reprinted 1969) is over-loaded with military detail; but when Jardine escapes from this preoccupation he can often be perceptive, in spite of some routine 'official' denigration of the Sayyid. F. S. Caroselli (1931) owes much of his factual material to Jardine, but is critical of British policy. An Egyptian interpretation by 'Abd al-Ṣabūr Marzūq (Cairo, 1964) sees the Sayyid's movement as part of an anti-British jihad common to Egypt, the Sudan and Somalia. Oddly, he calls Muḥammad 'Abdallāh a 'Mullah'. R. L. Hess, in N. R. Bennet, ed. (1968), is a competent (but very one-sided) synthesis of the published work, with some original material on the Sayyid's relations with the Italians.

I am indebted to an unpublished M.A. dissertation (University

of London, 1975) by Dr L. E. M. Kapteijns for information on the treatment of Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh in Shaykh Jamā‘ ‘Umar ‘Īsa’s Arabic-language *History of the Somali in medieval and modern times* (1965). Shaykh Jamā‘ evidently went to great pains to collect Somali oral traditions (or at any rate those favourable to the Sayyid); and he bases his account firmly on these, but not without occasional anachronistic inputs. Shaykh Jamā‘ relates (as do Samatar and most European writers) a number of anecdotes about the Sayyid’s early life, and especially about his alleged clashes with British officials; but it is very difficult to assess the evidential value of these stories. The best guide to the Sayyid’s ideas is obviously his own utterances. His Somali-language *Diwān* (Collected Verse) has been published (but apparently with some bowdlerisation and expurgation) by the indefatigable Jamā‘ ‘Umar ‘Īsa (Mogadishu, 1974). A scholarly edition in an European language would be an invaluable *instrument de travail*.

For the Egyptian period in northern Somalia, G. Douin, vol. III: *L’Empire africain* (Cairo, 1936–41), describes the establishment of Egyptian control in considerable detail, but is very thin on administration. For the establishment of the British protectorates, and British administration down to 1905, see A. M. Brockett (D.Phil. thesis, 1969). The establishment of the Italian protectorates is traced by R. L. Hess (1966); Hess also illustrates the impact of the Sayyid’s movement and propaganda upon Italian Somaliland, *JAH*, 1964. B. G. Martin (1976) attempts, not very convincingly, to explain Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh’s quarrel with the Qādiriyya as a dispute about the permissible limits of *tawassul* (the invocation of Muslim saints as mediators between God and man). Samatar (1982) helps to elucidate the political and ecological constraints and opportunities that determined the strategy of the Sayyid between 1899 and 1910. The British counter-strategy, and the fetters placed upon it by London, can be discerned amidst the dense ‘bush’ of military detail in the pages of Jardine (1923). There does not appear to be anything substantial on the Sayyid’s sojourn at Illig.

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7 AND 8. SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1867-1886

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