

An Assessment of the Partition and Scramble of Africa and the Effect of Slave Trade in the Continent

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Abstract

The scramble and Partition of African countries began in earnest with the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, and this was the cause of the most of Africa's borders today. The conference was called by German Chancellor Bismarck to settle how European countries would claim colonial land in Africa and to avoid a war among European nations over African territory. All the major European States were invited to the conference which includes the Germany, France, Great Britain, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, and Spain were all considered to have a future role in the imperial partition of Africa. The United States was invited because of its interest in Liberia but did not attend the conference because it had no desire to build a colonial empire in Africa. Also invited were Austria-Hungary, Sweden-Norway, Denmark, Italy, Turkey, and Russia who all were considered minor players in the quest for colonizing Africa, though Italy has claim some colonial possessions in Northeast Africa. Most notably there were no Africans present at that conference, nor were any Europeans present to ensure that native Africans had any say in the proceedings. This paper has adopted secondary source of data in the process of data collection. The findings of the paper have revealed that partition in Africa has led to emergence of colonialism, slave trade and other related contemporary imbalance that led to for present African underdevelopment. The paper recommended that African countries needs to be allowed to run its affairs as an independent sovereign countries to manage both their mineral and human resource to compete with every continent of the world interterms of development dynamism and African countries should develop an approach that will help them to fight social menace of poverty, corruption, insecurity and unemployment.

Keywords: Colonialism, Powerful countries, African countries and Development

1. Introduction

The Berlin conference only dealt with territories acquired by some powerful countries in Africa. Most coastal land had already been claimed by various European countries, as had much of Southern Africa and Africa north of the Sahara. Few Europeans had set foot into the interior of sub-Saharan Africa prior to this conference. Following the Berlin Conference there was still little exploration into the interior of Africa beyond gaining initial treaties. Most Europeans continued to stay on the coastal regions while a few missionaries followed rivers inland to find Christian converts. By 1900, though, more Europeans moved into the African interior to extract raw materials such as rubber, palm oil, gold, copper, and diamonds. These natural resources made Africa a vital resource for the European economy. (Ake, 1980)

Although most of these African colonies were controlled by nations, the Berlin Conference allowed King Leopold II of Belgium to become the sole owner of the vast area that is today called the Democratic Republic of the Congo in central Africa. This area was given to Leopold by the other European powers with the intent that this be an area of Free Trade for all Europeans in Africa. Leopold agreed to this stipulation as well as bringing Christian missionaries to the interior of this area, but in practice he kept out most other European traders as he granted concessions to various corporations to exploit the region's resources. In 1908 it was revealed that under King Leopold's instructions native people of the Congo were forced to farm wild rubber as a form of tax payment to the colonial government. Those who were unable to reach their rubber quota often had a hand or feet chopped off, or were killed by Leopold's agents. Once news of these abuses of power were brought to the public light, King Leopold was stripped of his colony and the vast Congo region was ruled by the Belgium government until it became independent in 1960 (Audu,1966)

By 1914, 90% of Africa had been divided between seven European countries with only Liberia and Ethiopia remaining

independent nations. Many of the boundaries drawn up by Europeans at the Berlin Conference still endure today with little regard to natural landmarks or historic ethnic or political boundaries established by the Africans themselves. The disregard of these boundaries, most of which were retained after independence, often continues to generate conflict in Africa today. African nations began to emerge from colonial rule first with Ghana which gained its independence in 1957. By 2000 virtually all of the former colonies had gained independence.

Statement of Problem

The issue of slave trade exposed the relationships that existed between Europe and Africa from the fifteenth century to nineteenth century. The relationship was that of master, servant relationship. Africa had no say at all in the political equation. African leaders continued to act as middle men between slave suppliers and buyers. The price of slaves cannot be fixed by them either. The effect of the trade accounted for the low population of most regions of Africa today.

The negative remarks about African past by colonial historians, notwithstanding, Arab scholars or historians had written a lot about African civilization before Europe incursion into Africa. There was an imperialist expansion policy of Arabs in Africa during the first century of Islam (622-722). This was the time Muslims from Arab nations gained a stronghold in Africa. Muslim traders and itinerant scholars penetrated from North Africa and then to West Africa. The ancient empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai in the West Sudan, and also central Sudanese states in Hausa land, Kaduna, Borno, Sokoto etc had a dose of Islamic influence. In East Africa, Islamic influence spread to Mozambique, North Africa and East Africa. The consequence of this is literacy in Arabic, which was the official language. Muslim scholars produced a lot of writings which includes the writing of political, biographic, culture and social history of the empires. These scholars produced a lot of Tarikhs and chronicles in the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries, such works include Tarikh as-Sudan (History of Sudan) Tarikh as- Gonja, history of Gonja. Others are Tarikh al- Fettach and Kano Chronicle. Many writers, who were non-Muslims borrowed from these writings to update their knowledge about African history (Leed, 1971)

2. Conceptualizations

Colonialism

The word colonialism, in the Africa context, raises a lot of emotions among African elite. Another vexing issue is the oversimplification of colonial powers, such as Britain and France.

Colonialism can simply be described as the capitalism of African resources by the then superpowers – Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Portugal, etc. It may be wrong to assume that what happened during colonial periods in the colonies was a result of a deliberate policy decision in London or Paris. The truth may be difficult to fathom and far less simple. The colonial influence, in West Africa, started at various periods of the states' history. The colonial period in Sierra Leone colony begun in 1787; it began for the Gold Coast colony in 1874; for Asante in 1902; for Lagos in 1861 and for the Oil Rivers in 1885; for Dahomey (now Benin Republic) in 1892 and for the Ivory Coast in 1893. However, there was a lot of weakness from the heritage political elite in African countries whose remain the agents of Western countries that help them in the maltreatment and exploitations of African in those days (Toyin,1966)

Origin of European Scrambles in Africa

Despite the hazardous nature of Africa to the Europeans, many still ventured into the hinterland of Africa. The rivers were full of rapids or waterfalls at their mouths. Mungo Park died in the water falls of the Niger when he was said to have discovered the River Niger in Nigeria. The French, in her bid to get hold in Africa, attacked Algeria in 1830. The motives behind this invasion were varied. The French Minister, Polignac wanted Mohammed Ali of Egypt to occupy Tripoli and Tunis to punish Algeria. In his calculation, the French was to aid the Egyptian Pasha with a naval fleet and financial assistance. But Britain had a hidden agenda, imperialistic in nature, warned Mohammed Ali to desist from such military adventurism. Britain then advised the Sultan of Turkey to punish the Pasha if he ventured West wards. The Minister quickly justified the attack on the need for France to open up Algeria for business purposes. Louis Philip who came to Algeria declared that it was France's aim to found an important colony in Algeria (Ake,1980)

The countries that make up Magrib are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. At the opening of nineteenth century, two distinct administrations and political system were in the Magrib.

On the one hand is independent Morocco, under Sherifian dynasty founded in 1649, on the other were semi-independent administrations in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. The Regencies that controlled these areas were under the suzerainty of Sultan of Turkey. Algeria was administered from Turkey since 1518. Tunisia was under the Ottoman administration since the end of the sixteenth century. But in 1705, Husan Ibn Ali Aglia, usurped the supreme authority and founded the Hussein Dynasty. Libya in 1800 was administered by Yusuf, who fought the Turkeys to return to power. For centuries the Barber Corsains maintained the sovereignty from the Europeans powers. They have been able to establish their superiority over Europeans on the Mediterranean waters. They captured Europeans as slaves and compelled them to build their palaces, till their lands and row their galleys. Their relation was master-servant relationship unlike what obtained in the West African

states.

Islamic religious brotherhood had a considerable influence in Libya. Unlike other Magreb nations, she was not easily occupied. The ideology of nationality and feeling of oneness which *Sanusiyya Tariqa* infused into the people of Libya, assumed a more complex dimension in the turn of twentieth century when France attacked the order, and when Italians occupied Libya in 1911 (Ake,1981)

Origin of Slave (Trade)

Leed, C (1971) has cited that slave trade has its origin in various nations of the world. The Greeks colonies in the Mediterranean were founded by Greek pirates, who plundered the town and sold them into slavery. In early times, ninety per cent of the population of Greece was slaves. According to Aristotle, ‘Certain peoples are naturally free, others are naturally slaves. The Roman population comprised more slaves than freeman. These slaves were drawn from Britain and other European nations, Asia and Africa. These people were the tillers of the soil, labourers, servants, court jesters, cooks, hairdressers, musicians, and gladiators. It is wrong to say that slave trade took place all over Africa. For example, nomadic Masai and other nomadic tribes did not partake in the heinous trade.

Again, in discussing slavery in Africa, distinction must be drawn from slaves captured in wars and those who voluntarily gave themselves up in order to serve for a certain period with a master. An example of this was the pawns for debts. This people gave themselves up for unpaid debt. They served their masters for certain period of time and they leave as soon as the agreed period to serve is over. The treatment of war slaves differs from place to place. They may be sold off, integrated into the society or work for the master for life. Nowhere were slaves more completely integrated into the family of the owner than among the coastal communities of Nigeria (Audu,1966)

To capture the scenarios of slave trade in Africa, many writers are of view that, “It is one of the harsh and unpalatable facts of history that the principal-almost the only-industry of tropical Africa for many centuries was the trade in slaves carried on mainly by the Christian peoples of Western Europe and the Muslim Arabs.” The sale of Africans into slavery began long before the birth of Christ and Prophet Mohammed. There is evidence that African slaves were acquired not only for domestic chores, but they engaged them in the building of projects like the pyramids of Egypt. The first set of African slaves to be sold were said to be Nubians who lived South of Egypt. From here they were sold to Europe and the Middle East.

Another important source of early slave supply was East Africa. The majority of slaves from there found their way to Asia. These slaves became a substantial number in the population of Turkey, Arabia and Persia. The Arab incursions in Magrib (Libya, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria) and the Sahara (the West Africa Region) stimulated the outflow of slaves from West Africa. Arab merchants, who through Trans Sahara Trade routes invaded the Sudan, were soon attracted by the presence of slave trade in Fezzan. Before long, about one thousand camels manned by Berber merchants invaded Western Sudan (Ake,1980)

The articles of trade were mainly gold and slaves form Western Sudan and glasses and ear-rings etc from North Africa. The links between Western Sudan, the Mediterranean and Middle East were multiplied and sustained by caravans who dominated the Trans Sahara Trade route. Slaves were the major inducement for the Arab traders to risk the hazards of Trans Sahara Trade route. The old empires of West Africa, Ghana, Mali, Songhai and others, derived their wealth from export of gold, “which grows on trees,” and slaves. The capital of Ghana Empire, Kumbi, was noted for its slave market, which no doubt supply constant by raids on the peoples kept living to the south. When Ghana was eventually defeated in battle by the Almoravids, many of the inhabitants were carried off to be sold as slaves in North Africa. At the peak of Mali’s glory, Mansa Kankan Musa in 1324, went to Mecca to perform the holy pilgrimage with five hundred slaves carrying gold articles. There is enough evidence to show that the Hausa states and Kanemi-Bornu region sustained their wealth through sales of slaves.

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

The arrival of Europeans on the West Coast of Africa opened a new vista in the Africa slave trade. The Atlantic slave trade became the main pre-occupation of European nations in Africa in the beginning of eighteenth century. In 1441, Gonzalves, one of the Portuguese explorers returned to Lisbon with ten African slaves whom he presented to Prince Henry. He received them with great pleasure. By the time of Prince Henry’s death, about 700 and 800 slaves were exported annually to Portugal. Though Prince Henry was said to have condemned the practice, about 448 slaves, in 1486 and 1493, belonged to Portuguese crown alone. This figure is the annual importation of slaves to Portugal (Toyin,1996)

However, Brazil and Spain occupied the larger part of West Indian Islands and mainland of South America. Portugal undertook to supply slaves to Spain on contractual agreement. The Negro slaves were shipped through West India Island to Spain. The discovery of New World- North America increased the need for new slaves (Joseph, 1996)

From the above explanations by scholars, we can clearly understand that the Dutch founded a company for West Africa

slave trade and set up fort in Gold Coast (Ghana), in order to challenge the position of other rivals. The Portuguese, the French, the Dutch, Danes, Germans, Swedes, Spaniards and the British were all involved in the trade. They built ships designed purposely for the evacuation of slaves from West Africa. Although the slave merchants did not capture slaves themselves, local African potentates obtained the slaves and transacted sales with the European slave merchants on the coast. For instance, in Nigeria, the states of Lagos and Bonny and others, even in the interior, were ruled by chiefs, who made fortunes from the transactions. The practice was that, stronger neighbours made war against weaker neighbours and took all the inhabitants of the weaker neighbours as slaves, who were in turn sold off at the ports to the white slave merchants. At the peak of slave ports in Africa, Britain had fourteen, Holland fifteen, France three, and Portugal and Denmark four each.

Portuguese slavery activities in the Congo and Angola were better. Here the Portuguese were free from unhealthy rivalry among the contending forces in the trade. Slaving was indirect in the Congo, but in Angola it was direct. Forts were established in the hinterland to protect the slave caravans on their way to the coast. The interior ports or forts were to checkmate African leaders who might want to intervene in their activities. An irregular tax, usually measured in slaves, was imposed on African chiefs in order to compel them to raid their neighbours for slaves. The half caste Portuguese called Pombreros and Portuguese became strong allies in the trade. It was not uncommon for this set of people to instigate war among neighbours in order to capture more slaves. To raise the number of slaves, the Portuguese governor augmented her income by manipulating slaving licenses granted to slave contractors. The Portuguese war of conquest was no more than military expedition to increase the number of slaves needed to be transported through Atlantic Ocean to Brazil (Ake, 1980)

Reasons for Slave Trade

Cohen, D (1981) was of the view that the Dutch occupation of South Africa in the middle of the seventeenth century necessitated the importation of slave's trade from West Africa. The slaves worked in vineyards, grain-lands and vegetable gardens owned by the settlers. Because of their footholds in the New World, French, Dutch and Britain continued to demand and buy slaves to work in their various plantations in the New World. Caribbean Island, newly acquired by Britain, with a fertile land for sugar cane plantation, needed slaves to work on these plantations when the Spaniards began to explore North and South America between 1492 and 1504. She began to establish plantations in the areas. She again exploited mineral resources in this zone. A problem of labour arose. The indigenous peoples of this area were not strong enough to be engaged in this type of task. Spaniards who were already used to agility and strength looked for slaves in Africa to work on these plantations.

Berlin Conference of 1884-1885

Some writers believe that the Berlin Conference was Africa's undoing in more ways than one. The colonial powers used the occasion to super impose their domain on the African continent. By the time Africa states became independent in 1950s and 1960s, the realm had acquired a legacy of political fragmentation that could neither be eliminated nor made to operate satisfactorily. In 1884 at the request of Portugal, German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck called together the major Western powers of the world to negotiate questions and end confusion over the control of Africa. Bismarck appreciated the opportunity to expand Germany's sphere of influence over Africa and desire to force Germany's rivals to struggle with one another for territory (Joseph, 1996)

At the time of the conference, 80 percent of Africa remained under traditional or local rulers. Africa at the conference had its boundaries divided into fifty irregular countries. The colonial masters superimposed their cultures and religions over one thousand indigenous cultures and religions of Africa. The new countries lacked cohesion or reason for coexistence. These groups of people merged together by colonial masters were disparate groups who really did not get along.

According to Toyin, F (1996) has cited fourteen countries were represented by a plethora of Ambassadors when the conference was declared opened in Berlin in November 15, 1884. The countries represented at the conference were, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden-Norway, Turkey and the United States of America of these fourteen nations, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Portugal were the major players in the conference, controlling most of the colonial Africa at that time. It was clear that the commercial interests of Leopold, Portugal, France and Germany conflicted in the Congo region. The initial task of the conference was to agree that the Congo River and Niger River mouths and basins would be considered neutral and open to trade. The Congo Free State was recognized by the powers Britain, France, Russia, United States and Portugal. It was to be run as an international organization on a free-trade basis. Based on the earlier treaties entered into by Stanley and the local chiefs, King Leopold claimed the whole of Congo. This was accepted by the conference.

The following points were also agreed upon:

- (i) The natives of these areas must not be exploited in the interest of European powers.

- (ii) There was to be freedom of navigation on the Congo and Niger rivers.
- (iii) Before an effective claim by European powers to African territories, it had to be effectively occupied.

As a result of the above rule (II), the conference refused to recognize the claims of the Sultan of Zanzibar to much of East Africa. The claim of Portugal to a vast area between Angola and Mozambique was not admitted by the members of the conference. Bismarck announced at the end of the conference in February, 1885, Germany had established a protectorate over Tanganyika in East Africa.

Following the conference, the give and take continued. By 1914, the conference participants had fully divided Africa among themselves into fifty countries.

Major colonial holdings included:

- Great Britain desired a Cape-to-Cairo collection of colonies and almost succeeded though their control of Egypt, Sudan (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan), Uganda, Kenya (British East Africa), South Africa, and Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana (Rhodesia). The British also controlled Nigeria and Ghana (Gold Coast).
- France took much of Western Africa, from Mauritania to Chad (French West Africa) and Gabon and the Republic of Congo (French Equatorial Africa).
- Belgium and King Leopold II controlled the Democratic Republic of Congo (Belgian Congo).
- Portugal took Mozambique in the east and Angola in the west.
- Italy's holdings were Somalia (Italian Somaliland) and a portion of Ethiopia.
- Germany took Namibia (German Southwest Africa) and Tanzania (German East Africa).
- Spain claimed the smallest territory – Equatorial Guinea (Rio Muni).

(Cohen, 1981)

One of the results of the conference was that it led to an intensification of the scramble for colonies. Owing to the regulation that colonies must be properly occupied before proclamation, other European powers took this as a signal to stake their own claim quickly. The other important point of note was that European powers were able to settle their colonial disputes peacefully.

Final Partition

By 1900 European powers had partitioned among themselves most of the African continent, though Ethiopia managed to preserve its wide independence. After the conference the rivalry between Britain and France intensified. In order to halt French advancement, Britain proclaimed a protectorate over Niger region in 1885 and made Lagos, a separate British colony in 1861 France undertook serious military campaigns, and eventually crushed the power of the Mandingo ruler in the Ivory Coast and the king of Dahomey, by 1890. These two regions were made into a protectorate and colony respectively. Many of her possessions were now separate by those of other countries on the coast; France now worked to join them together in the interior. The unhealthy rivalry continued between France and Britain, in the process, both rushed to sign treaties with local rulers. Britain crushed the Ashanti in a short war in 1896 and made their territory a protectorate. France wanted to connect territories on the upper Niger with Dahomey. In 1897-8 this culminated in a clash in Western Nigeria. The incident in Fashoda, aggravated Anglo-French relations. However, it was solved peacefully. In 1899 Nigeria became British protectorate. By 1903 France had gained most of North-West Africa, an area estimated to be about 33/4 million square miles (Chinweizu, 1978)

In 1885 Germany advanced claims to areas already claimed by Britain and where she had already signed treaties with local rulers. Using the Delimitation commission (composed of Britain, France and Germany) in 1886, the two countries settled their differences. Anglo-German agreement, October, 1886, without consulting the Sultan of Zanzibar, it was agreed that the mainline territories of the sultan extended only 10 miles interior. They agreed on the 'sphere of influence' in East Africa. Cecil Rhodes, the Cape premier, was anxious to extend British power northwards. He hoped that the region north of Boer Republic of Transvaal would be rich in natural mineral resources. There was the risk that the route to the north would be closed by possible annexations by Germany or Portugal trying to link her West African colony of Angola with Mozambique on the east. Rhode formed a company which was granted charter by the British government. The region was occupied by a pioneer column in 1890, the local Lobenguela having virtually lost his authority by agreeing to the Rudd Concession in 1888. The region was named Rhodesia in 1895.

Abolition of Slave Trade

There has been a great deal of controversy that surrounds the abolition of slave trade. Some historians, mostly British like Coupland, Mathieson and Mellor, attributed the abolition of slave trade and slavery to purely humanitarian or moral and religion considerations. On the other hand, some historians, William and Dike, have argued that the abolition can be traced to economic reasons. One of such writers Conton, states, "That the slave trade was abolished largely because it had now become more profitable to seek in West Africa raw materials and markets rather than slaves."

A more careful study of slave trade abolition can both to be said to be humanitarian and economic reasons. According to Adu Boahen (1964), 'In the first place, it should not be forgotten that the attacks on the slave trade did not really begin in Europe and England until the eighteenth century – the very century when in the realms of literature, philosophy and religion, emphasis was being placed in the equality, fraternity and the liberty of man!' This was the same century that John Wesley preached the equality of man. And that all men are equal before God. He condemned the slave trade on the grounds that it was ungodly and inhuman. Rousseau, Adam Smith, Samuel Johnson and Davie Defoe all condemned the slave trade and slavery mainly on moral and humanitarian grounds.

The second group of people who actually organized and launched the attack on slave trade and remained persistently in their frontal attack were men who were filled with humanitarian and evangelical outlook in their approach. They were Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson, Henry Thornton, William Wilberforce, and later Fowell Buxton and James Stephen. It was this people who formed the society for the abolition of slave trade in May 1787 and British Anti-Slavery in 1823.

By the end of eighteenth century, the British West Indian Island had had enough slaves for the plantation. In fact, about fifty per cent of the slaves imported were re-exported to the Islands of other European powers. The British conquest of new fertile French and Dutch islands between 1792 and 1803 led to stiff competition with other European countries. So, they hoped that the abolition of slave trade would halt the expected gain to the economy. Again, since Brazil and Cuba had more sugar and produced at a cheaper rate than theirs, and there was a surplus sugar in England that needed buyers, Britain would prefer to have markets rather than slaves. A writer, William contended that it was the accumulation of unsold sugar in Britain and the subsequent need for market that engineered the passing of the abolition bills in 1807 and 1833.

That Britain relied on African slaves for her economy is not in doubt. The textile, the sugar refinery, the shipping, which Britain is known for, and the iron industries all depended indirectly on the slaves shipped to West Indian Islands. But things took another dimension when Britain started her industrial revolution – that is the change from production by hand to production by machines (Ake, 1980)

All these industries ceased to rely on human cargo (slaves) from West Indian Islands. The ship owners were making more profits from conveying raw cotton and unrefined sugar from Brazil and United States to Europe and Britain than from conveying slaves to the West Indians. Then the traffic in slave dropped. The demand for raw material arose as more and more machines were put into use. The industrialists and humanitarians agreed that instead of importing Africa labour (slaves), they could start to encourage Africa to grow their raw materials for their industries. Thus, by the early nineteenth century, it had become clear that African slaves had ceased to be an economic factor in Britain, and that Africa could serve Britain effectively by producing cash crops and finished goods could be sold to Africa too.

Resistant to Abolition

Leed, C.A (1971) has argued that the abolition of slave trade or the Atlantic Slave Trade left two regions of Africa completely unaffected. Instead of stoppage, the export of slaves in the direction of East and North Africa was on the increase. The East Africa slave trade was handled by the Arabs who had settled in the coastal towns of East Africa. A few of them might have found the ways to the hinterland, but most of them relied on African leaders to sell slaves to them.

The position of the region in terms of sale of slaves was made manifest in 1840 when the Arab ruler of Oman, Seyyid Said, decided to transfer his court from Muscat to Zanzitar. The aim was to inaugurate a systemic exploitation of resources of East Africa. One of these resources was the Africa slave. The expansion of crops and other plantation by Said, requested more slaves to work on these plantations. The demand for more slaves in Middle East and Arabia, prompted East Africa rulers to continue the trade. Under the tutelage of Said, and assisted by Indian finance, more and more Arab organized caravans which penetrated the whole of East Africa for slaves. These activities of the Arab reached the lakes of Central Africa and beyond. In a number of places, the Arabs established 'colonies' as centres for the collection of slaves. In the upper region of River Congo, the Arabs attacked the organizational system, which were poor, raided their villages and seized men and women for slaves.

The Nile Valley and Saharan trade routes provided other avenues for the export of Negroes to North Africa and Mediterranean. The war precipitated by the Fulani jihadist in 1804, in Hausa land, also provided opportunities for the capture of pagans for the slave trade. The Benue trough low population is traceable to the many slaves taken from the region in the past by the Jihadists. This region, called the Middle Belt in Nigeria of today, was termed pagan zone. In

Bornu, the leader continued to raid for slaves in the regions South of Lake Chad; in Kano, Katsina and other towns, there were open slave markets. Slaves were the main article of trade. The same can be said of Bornu-Fezzan and Wadai Benghazi routes during the nineteenth century. The trans-Saharan trade in slaves had a unique feature of Trans-Atlantic route. Apart from the fact that many of the slaves were young woman and eunuchs. The long march across the desert and heavy death toll it involved had no parallel in the history of slave trade.

Missionary Activities

The humanitarians devoted most of their time to spreading Christianity and European culture in Africa. Between 1792 and 1804, they were involved in the formation of a number of missionary societies in West Africa. Such societies were Wesleyan Missionary Society and the Baptist Missionary Society. In 1795, the Wesleyan Mission Society sent out a party of mechanics and preachers to Sierra Leone, this group extended their activities to the Gambia in 1871, to Ghana in 1834 and Yoruba land in 1846's. A host of other missions were established in West Africa e.g. The Glasgow and Scottish Missionary Society, Church Missionary Society, North German or Bremen Missionary Society which operated in Togo, the Evangelical Missionary Society from Switzerland in Eastern Ghana, the United Presterian Church of Scotland in Calabar and others (Toyin,1996)

These societies did not concentrate in building churches, preaching the gospel and converting Africans they also taught new methods of preparing export crops to their own countries. In Ghana Christianity was not thought alone. These societies paid attention to the development of agriculture and legitimate trade as a substitute to slave trade. They introduced new crops like cocoa, set up plantation agriculture. They also set up settlement centres as experimental farms. The Methodist established the coffee, clove, cinnamon and orange plantation in cape coast. The Baptist missionaries set up cocoa plantations at Akropong from where they supplied pods and seedlings to farmers. Some of these societies formed companies. Basel Missionary Society in Ghana formed the Basel Trading Company (now known as the UTC) in 1859, while the Church Missionary Society (CMS) formed the West Africa Company in 1863.

The greatest contribution of missionary societies was in education. They set up elementary and secondary schools in the whole of West Africa where their activities took place. In 1841, the CMS had twenty-one elementary schools and as early as 1827, it founded the Foray Bay College, which exists until today.

3. Conclusion

Colonial administration in Africa varied from one region of the continent to another. Except Liberia, which was established or founded by ex-slaves or settlers, other African nations underwent colonial administration. The hoisting of flags on the colonies of sphere of influence was not an easy one either. Wars were fought and many regions were destroyed by the cannon fire of the colonial masters' armies. The rebellion or antagonistic posture of African leaders continued until 1914. Finally, the super powers took over the rein of power and established their oligarchies in the various colonies. Despite the hazardous nature of Africa to the Europeans, many still ventured into the hinterland of Africa. The rivers were full of rapids or waterfalls at their mouths. Mungo Park died in the water falls of the Niger when he was said to have discovered the River Niger in Nigeria.

The French, in her bid to get hold in Africa, attacked Algeria in 1830. The motives behind this invasion were varied. The French Minister, Polignac wanted Mohammed Ali of Egypt to occupy Tripoli and Tunis to punish Algeria. In his calculation, the French was to aid the Egyptian Pasha with a naval fleet and financial assistance. But, Britain had a hidden agenda, imperialistic in nature, warned Mohammed Ali to desist from such military adventurism. Britain then advised the Sultan of Turkey to punish the Pasha if he ventured West wards. The Minister quickly justified the attack on the need for France to open up Algeria for business purposes. Louis Philip who came to Algeria declared that it was France's aim to found an important colony in Algeria.

The virtual inevitable race for colonies began in West Africa, not in 1882 or 1884 as supposed, but rather in 1879 when King Leopold of Belgians and France sent out Stanley and de Brazza to conclude treaties with local rulers in Congo Basin. This area was an exclusive preserve of the Portuguese. The sudden directive that the above-mentioned powers gave to their men surprised Portugal.

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