

POLS 329 A  
Comparative African Politics

Classes 4 and 5:  
Colonialism in Africa

# Map quiz

- January 28
- Identify the country and former colonial power



# Research project 1

- Research proposal, due February 12
- Research essay:
  - Initial draft, due February 24
  - Final draft, due March 9
- Questions:
  - Jeffrey Herbst, Mahmood Mamdani, and Crawford Young offer very different assessments of the colonial African state. Which of these assessments provides us with the strongest analytical leverage to explain the nature of the African state?
  - Why did Africa's first postcolonial rulers retain the states created by colonizers and those states' structures and borders?
  - According to many scholars, African states' control over borderlands is limited. Does this claim still hold today?

# Presentations

- Sign up here:  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rvItEmxJLgRn2vA3bNAbVhw7dQE-bcD6PnxIr6ttKCw/edit?usp=sharing>

# Recap

Comparative politics of precolonial Africa

- Centralization
- Distribution of power

Non-state polities

States

Origins of precolonial political systems

Contemporary impacts of precolonial centralization

Slave trade and its impacts

# Plan for today

History of colonization of Africa

Three key questions

- What explains Africa's late colonization?
- What was the nature of the colonial state in Africa?
- What have been the impacts of colonization in Africa?

# Key concepts

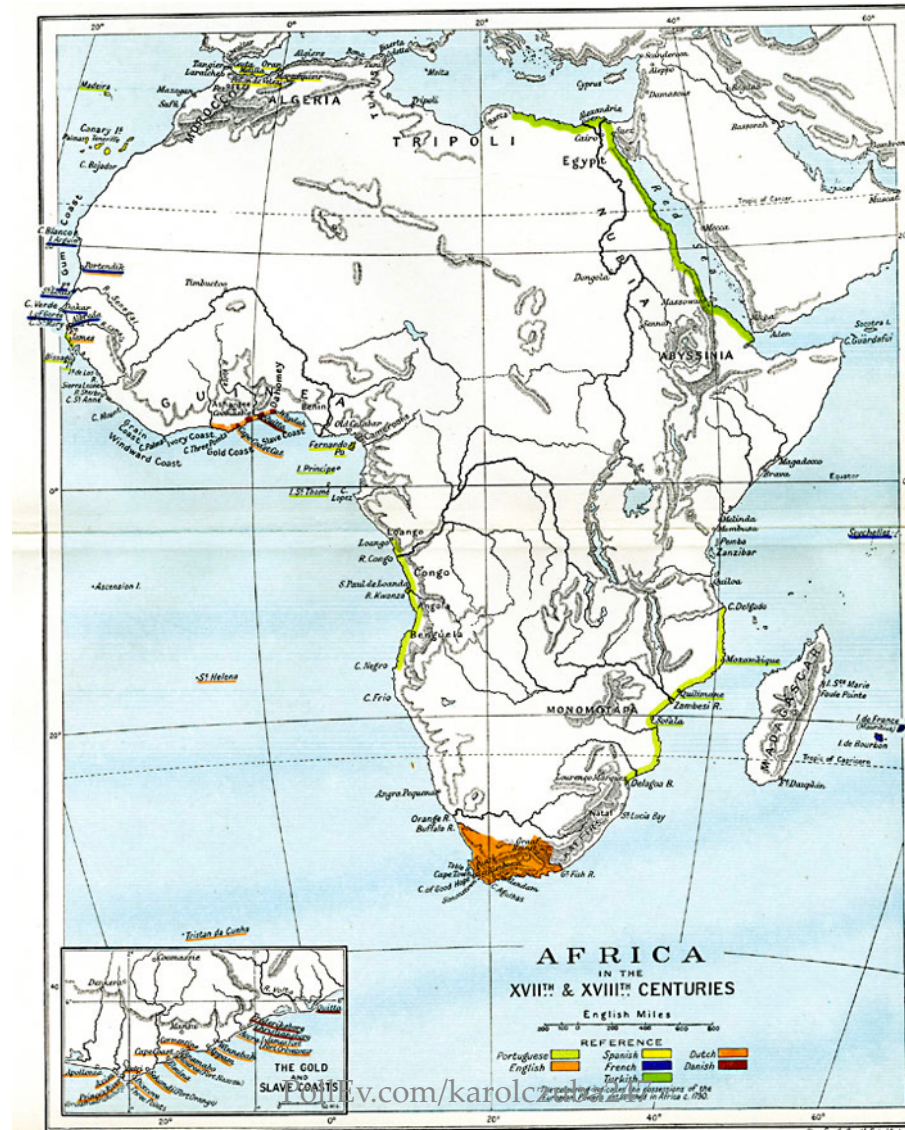
Colonialism (→ neocolonialism)

Colonization (→ decolonization)

Imperialism

Empire

# Early European colonization





# Early European colonization: trading outposts

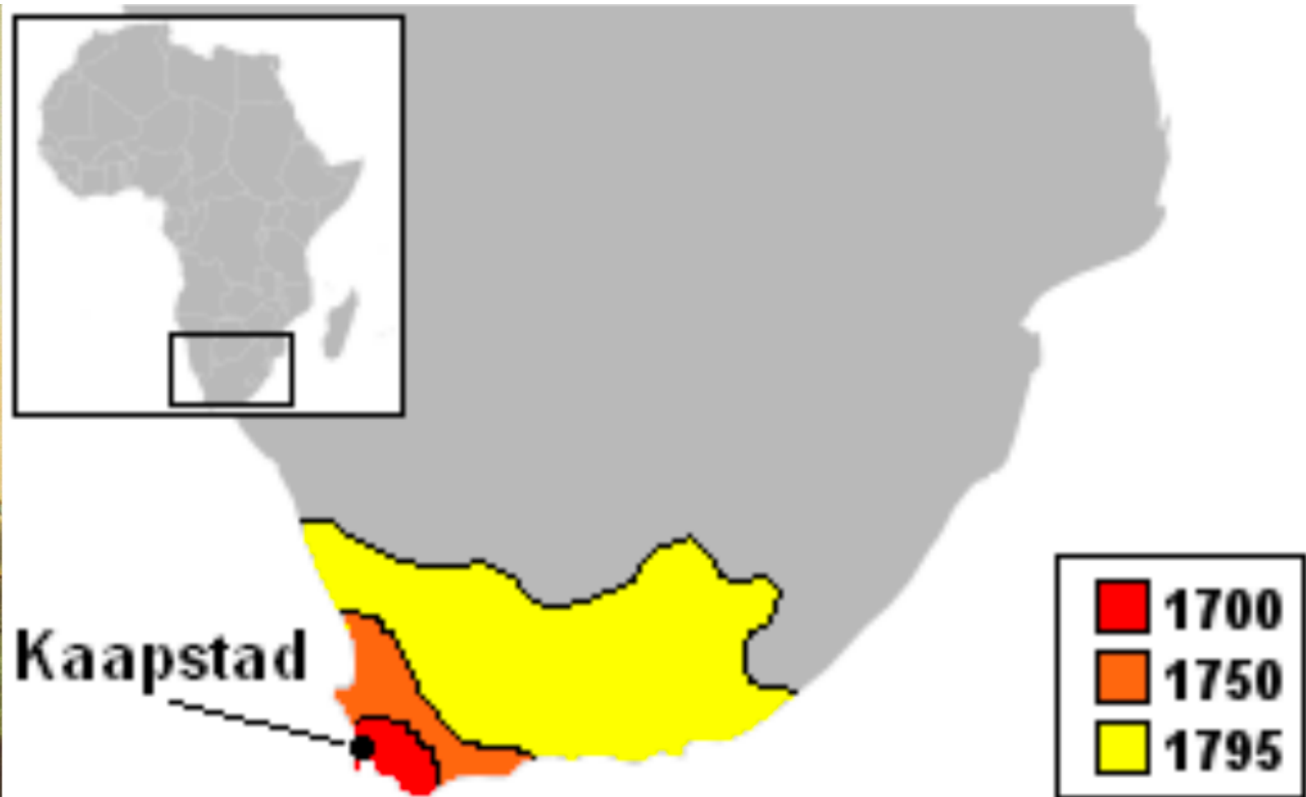


Elmina Castle

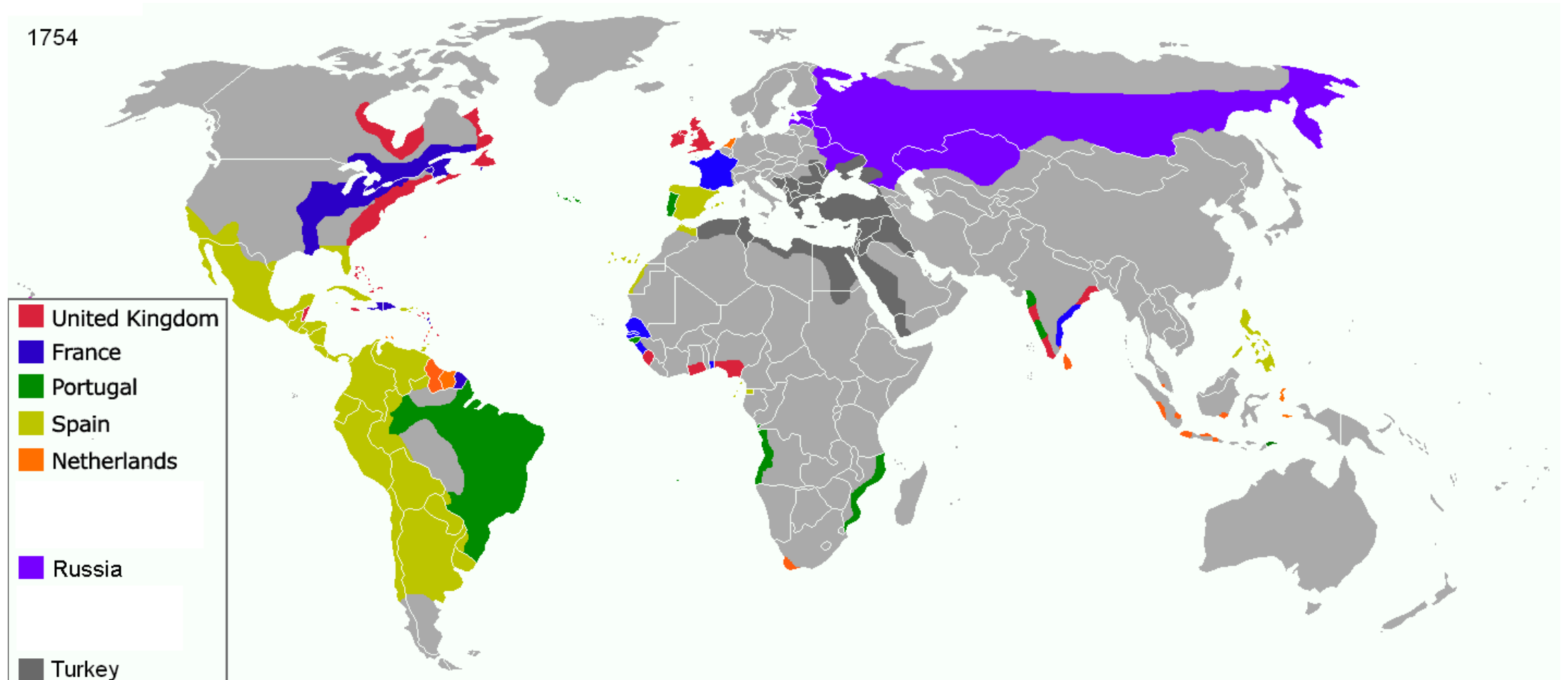


Osu Castle (Fort Christiansborg)

# Early European colonization: the birth of settler colonialism in Africa



# What explains the limited reach of European colonialism in Africa before the Scramble?



PollEv.com/karolczuba247

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas\\_of\\_colonialism#/media/File:Colonisation\\_1754.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas_of_colonialism#/media/File:Colonisation_1754.png)

# What explains the limited reach of European colonialism in Africa before the Scramble?



Disease environment  
(especially malaria)



Inaccessibility /  
distance



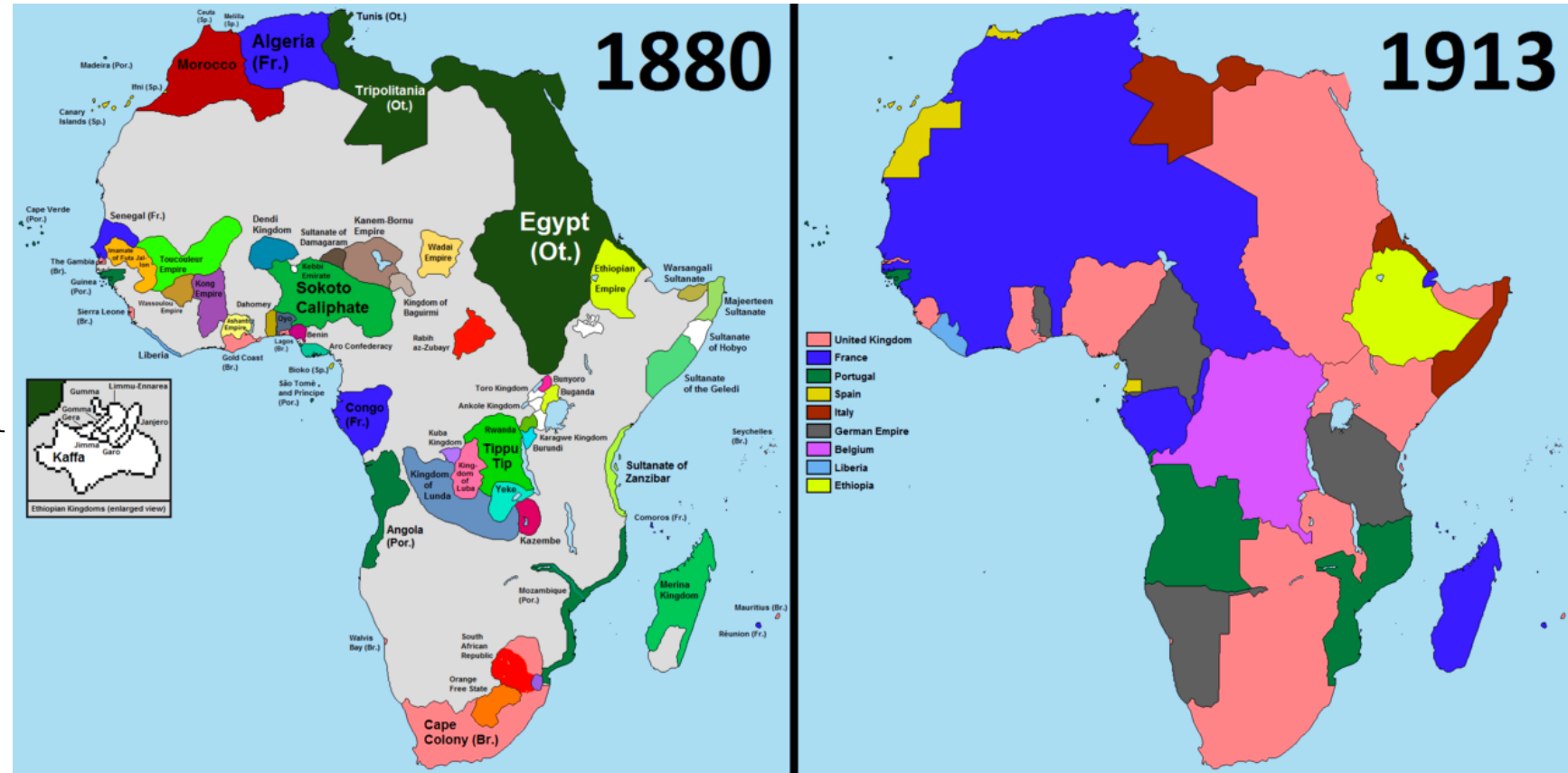
Relative lack of  
established states  
(complicating  
conquest)



Inaccessibility +  
poor agricultural  
yields

# The Scramble for Africa

- Berlin Conference, 1884-1885 + bilateral agreements between colonial powers



What explains the Scramble  
for Africa?

# What explains the Scramble for Africa?



Quinine  
prophylaxis



Steamboats



Maxim guns



European  
balance of  
power



Shortage of  
cotton



Local  
officials'  
initiatives

# What explains the Scramble for Africa?

- Governance innovation → reduction of cost through either indirect rule or subsidization of European colonial officials' salaries by locals:
  - “French West Africa's colonization took only 0.29 percent of French annual expenditures, including 0.24 percent for military and central administration and 0.05 percent for French West Africa's development. For West Africans, the contribution from French taxpayers was almost negligible: mainland France provided about 2 percent of French West Africa's revenue. In fact, colonization was a considerable burden for African taxpayers since French civil servants' salaries absorbed a disproportionate share of local expenditures.”
    - Huillery, Elise. 2014. "The Black Man's Burden: The Cost of Colonization of French West Africa." *The Journal of Economic History* 74 (1): 1-38.



# Varieties of colonial rule



Chartered companies



Direct rule



Indirect rule



Settler colonialism



Again, continuum of forms + substantial variation

# Varieties of colonial rule: chartered companies

- Dutch East India Company → Cape Colony
- British South Africa Company → Rhodesia
- Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company, Congo Free State



# Varieties of colonial rule: direct rule



# Varieties of colonial rule: indirect rule

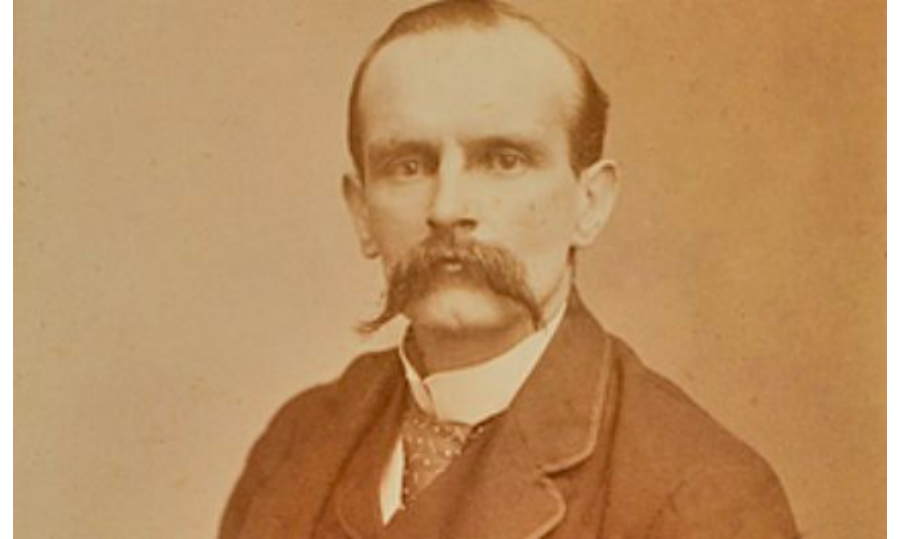
- Mahmood Mamdani:

- “Like all colonial powers, the British worked with a single model of customary authority in precolonial Africa. That model was monarchical, patriarchal, and authoritarian.”

- George Padmore:

- “The chief is the law, subject to only one higher authority, the white official stationed in his state as advisor. The chief hires his own police . . . he is often the prosecutor and the judge combined and he employs the jailer to hold his victims in custody at his pleasure. No oriental despot ever had greater power than these black tyrants, thanks to the support which they receive from the white officials who quietly keep in the background.”

- Padmore, George. 1936. *How Britain Rules Africa*. London: Negro Universities Press: 317.



Frederick Lugard

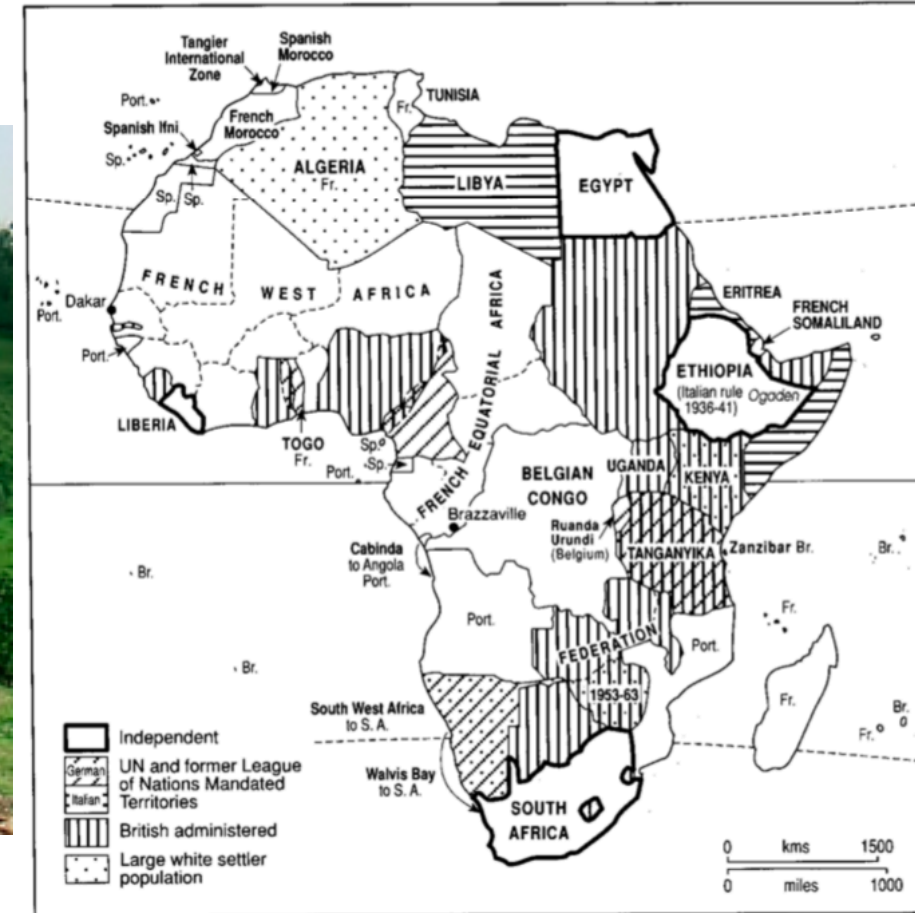
# Varieties of colonial rule: indirect rule

One of the first steps which Tufnell took in Karamoja was to establish chiefs. There was, however, no tradition upon which he could build, for the tribes of Karamoja were controlled by elders within the clan group. Tufnell was therefore forced to make his selection arbitrarily. The objective was to choose men of social standing, but who were not so old as to be physically incapable of carrying out their duties. Preference was given to Swahili speakers. Lopuko, who was made a chief in Bokora, says that he was appointed after he handed over two guns which he had obtained from the Abyssinians.<sup>2</sup> Presumably Tufnell decided that a man who could acquire two guns was not lacking in initiative. The chiefs were expected to keep their people in order, and to provide porters and food when called upon to do so. For their efforts they received irregular payments in cattle.



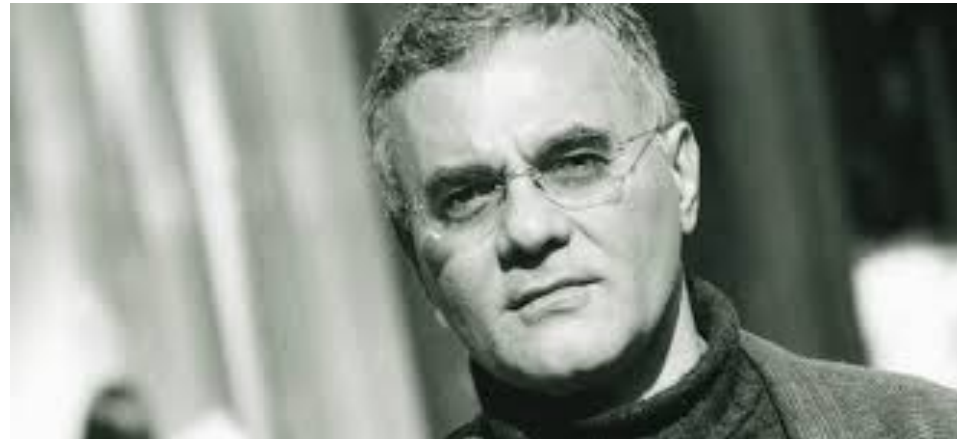
Barber, James P. 1962. "The Karamoja District of Uganda: A Pastoral People under Colonial Rule." *The Journal of African History* 3 (1): 111–24.

# Varieties of colonial rule: settler colonies



# Political power in colonial Africa

- Three perspectives:
  - Crawford Young
  - Mahmood Mamdani
  - Jeffrey Herbst



# R.I.P. Crawford Young

## Longtime political scientist, scholar on African politics M. Crawford Young dies at 88

January 23, 2020 | By [Doug Erickson](#) | [For news media](#) 📧

M. Crawford Young, an emeritus professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and one of the foremost scholars in the world on African politics, died Jan. 22 in Madison from complications related to congestive heart failure. He was 88.

While the Department of Political Science was Young's disciplinary base, he was a central figure in the creation of the university's African Studies Program. His critical early leadership and support helped the program thrive and provided him with an interdisciplinary community of scholars that nurtured his work. He remained actively engaged with the program until his death.

"We have lost a man of towering intellect and an international scholar who was one of a kind," says UW–Madison Professor Aili Mari Tripp, who worked closely with Young in the political science



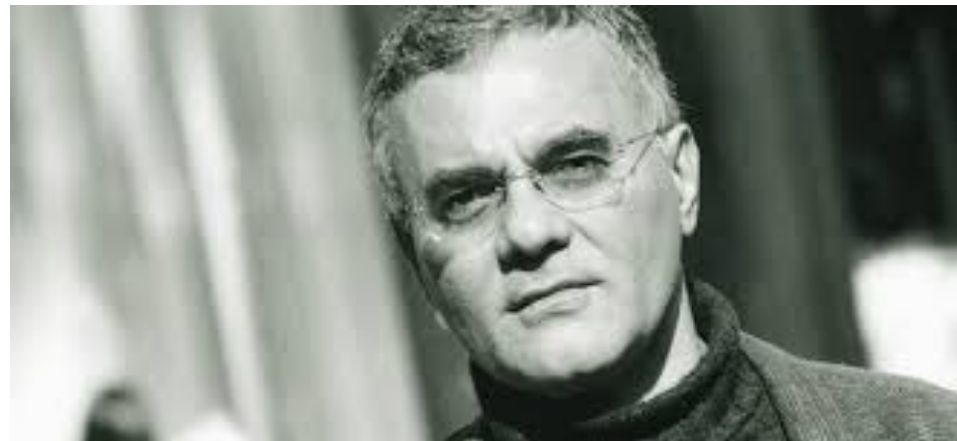
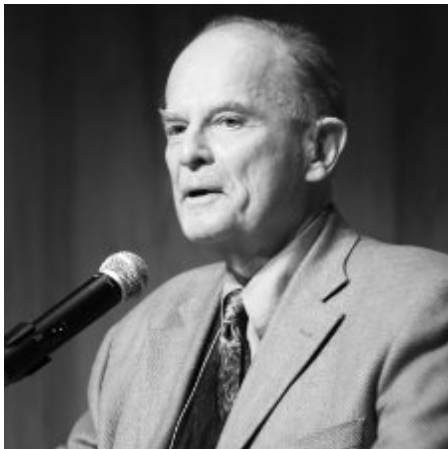
M. Crawford Young, pictured in 2013 in Ingraham Hall on the UW–Madison campus. PHOTO: CATHERINE REILAND



What arguments do these scholars advance?

# Political power in colonial Africa

- Three perspectives:
  - Crawford Young: Bula Matari
  - Mahmood Mamdani: hegemonic, bifurcated state and decentralized despotism
  - Jeffrey Herbst: external sovereignty and administrative weakness of non-hegemonic states



Are the three perspectives  
contradictory?

What effects did colonization  
have in Africa?

# Effects of colonization

Disruption of previous economic, political, and social order

Violent conquest and subjugation  
→ death

Outside economic control and reorganization of systems of ownership and production

Extraction of labour and resources

Some investment in public goods

Increase in trade and economic integration

Construction of new polities

Creation of new elites

# Effects of colonization: death

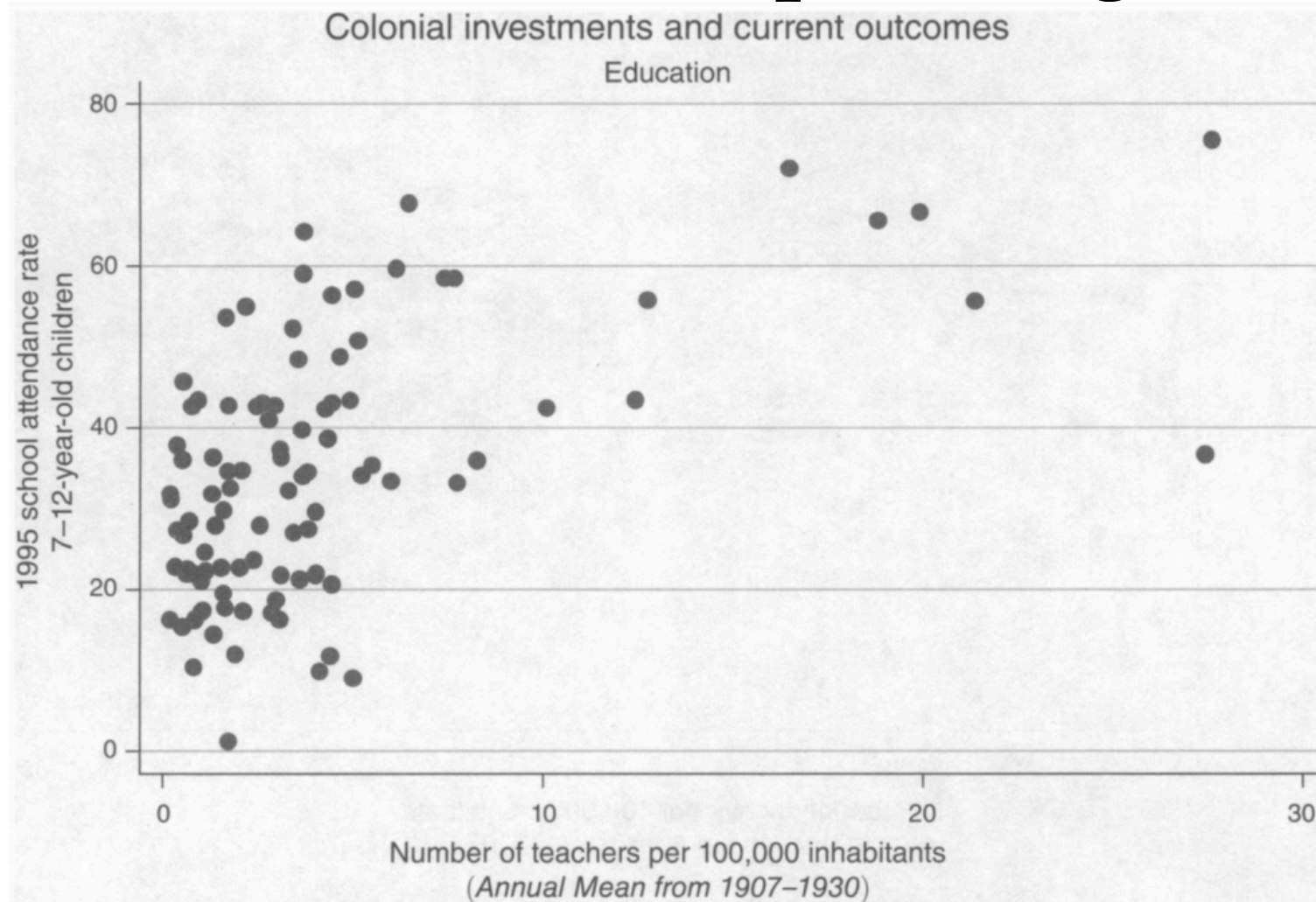
- Congo Free State / Belgian Congo:
  - ~ 10 million dead
- Herero and Namaqua genocide in German South West Africa (→ Namibia)



# Effects of colonization: extraction

- Finn Fuglestad:
  - "The fact that the French were able to squeeze more than a million francs out of the impoverished and hunger-stricken peoples of Niger can only be described as a major performance."
    - Fuglestad, Finn. 2008. *A History of Niger, 1850-1960*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# Effects of colonization: public goods





# Effects of colonization: public goods

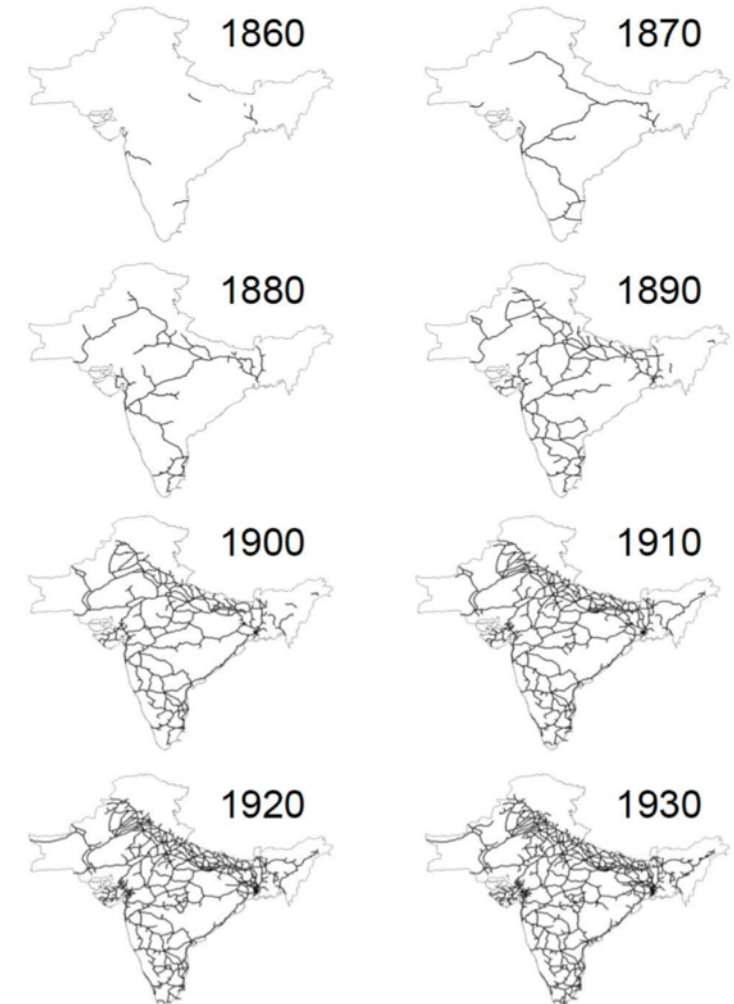


# Effects of colonization: public goods

- Railways in India:

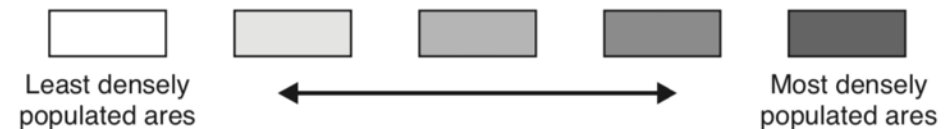
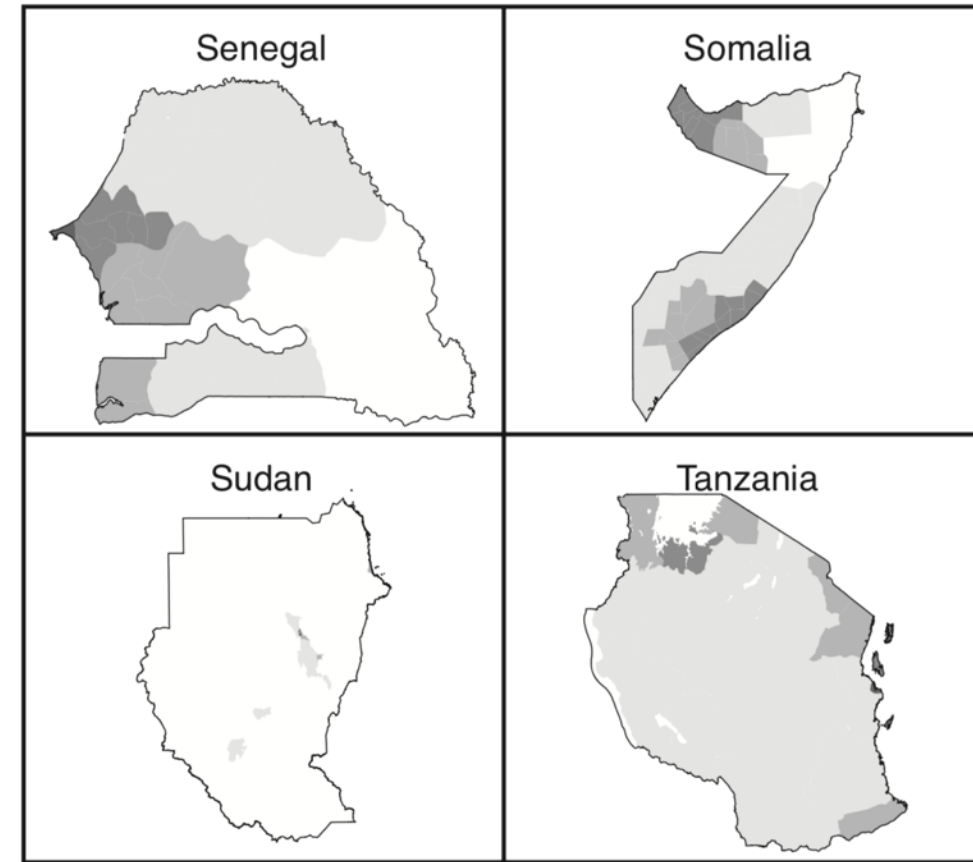
- Decreased trade costs and interregional price gaps
- Increased interregional and international trade
- Eliminated the responsiveness of local prices to local productivity shocks (but increased the transmission of these shocks between regions)
- Increased the level of real income (but harmed neighbouring regions without railroad access)
- Decreased the volatility of real income

- Donaldson, Dave. 2010. "Railroads of the Raj: Estimating the Impact of Transportation Infrastructure." NBER working paper.



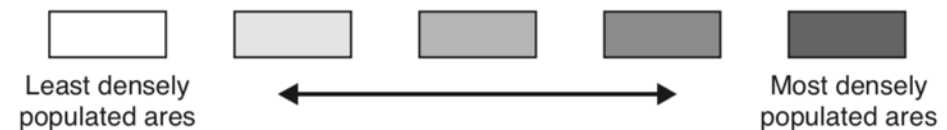
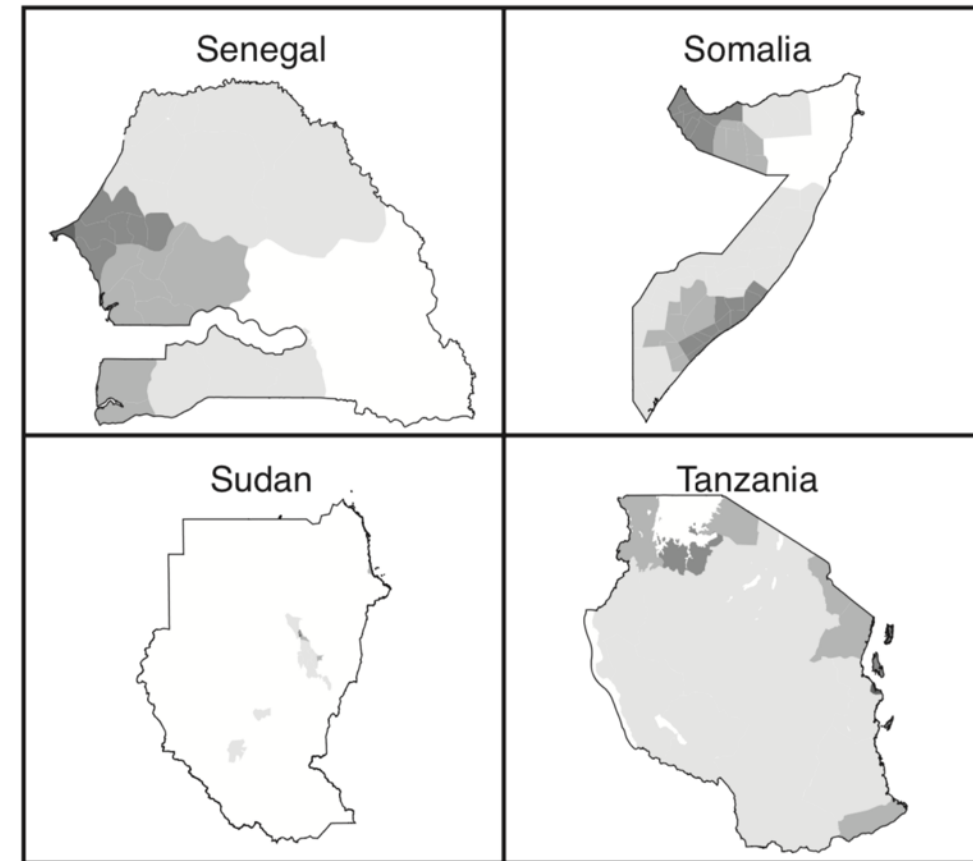
# Effects of colonization: creation of new polities

- Artificial states and artificial borders:
  - 80% of non-coastal African borders follow latitudinal and longitudinal lines →



# Effects of colonization: creation of new polities

- Artificial states and artificial borders:
  - 80% of non-coastal African borders follow latitudinal and longitudinal lines →
- Communities divided by national borders
- Irredentist movements
- Divided societies and internal ethnic competition
- Lack of resources or market access



# Effects of colonization: creation of new elites

## European

- Colonial officials
- Settlers

## Local

- Warrant chiefs in British colonies in Africa
- 'Bureaucratic bourgeoisie' →
- Transformation into state elites →
- Neopatrimonialism

# Effects of colonization: ethnicization

Mahmood Mamdani

- “More than any other colonial subject, the African was containerized, not as a native, but as a tribesperson.”

Terence Ranger: ‘invention of tradition’

# Effects of colonization: continuation of colonial governance practices

- Mamdani:
  - Continuation of decentralized despotism after independence →
  - Ethnicization: rural and urban popular resistance to decentralized despotism inevitably took an ethnic form as 'tribal' political organization →
  - Government response to resistance: either continuation of decentralized despotism or attempt to reform it through centralization, resulting in centralized despotism →
  - No democratization

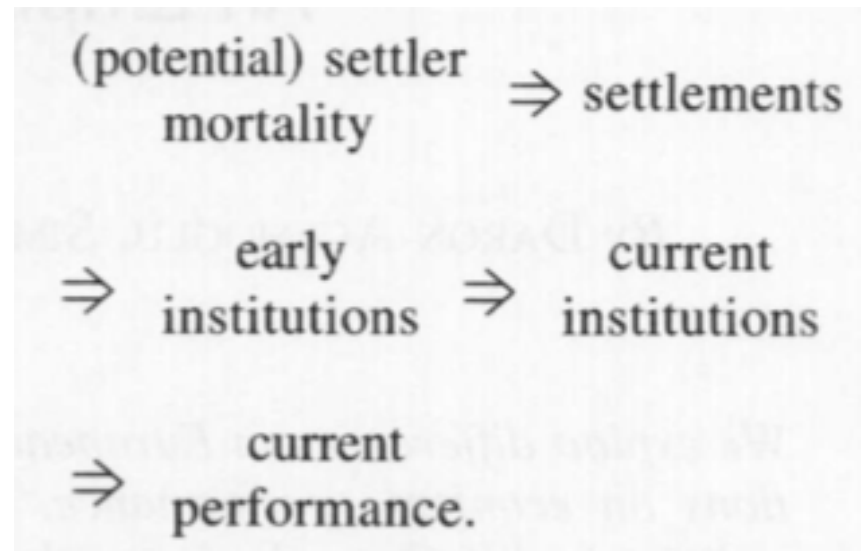
# Effects of colonization: continuation of colonial governance practices

- Recent empirical evidence from a natural experiment in Namibia:
  - “[I]ndividuals in indirectly ruled areas are less likely to support democracy and turn out at elections.”
  - Mechanism: “the greater influence of traditional leaders in indirectly ruled areas has socialized individuals to accept nonelectoral bases of political authority.”
    - Lechler, Marie, and Lachlan McNamee. 2018. “Indirect Colonial Rule Undermines Support for Democracy: Evidence From a Natural Experiment in Namibia.” *Comparative Political Studies* 51 (14): 1858–98.



# Effects of colonization: continuation of colonial governance practices

- Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson:
  - Extractive vs. inclusive institutions
    - Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91 (5): 1369–1401.



# Effects of colonization: continuation of colonial governance practices

## Non-hegemonic states

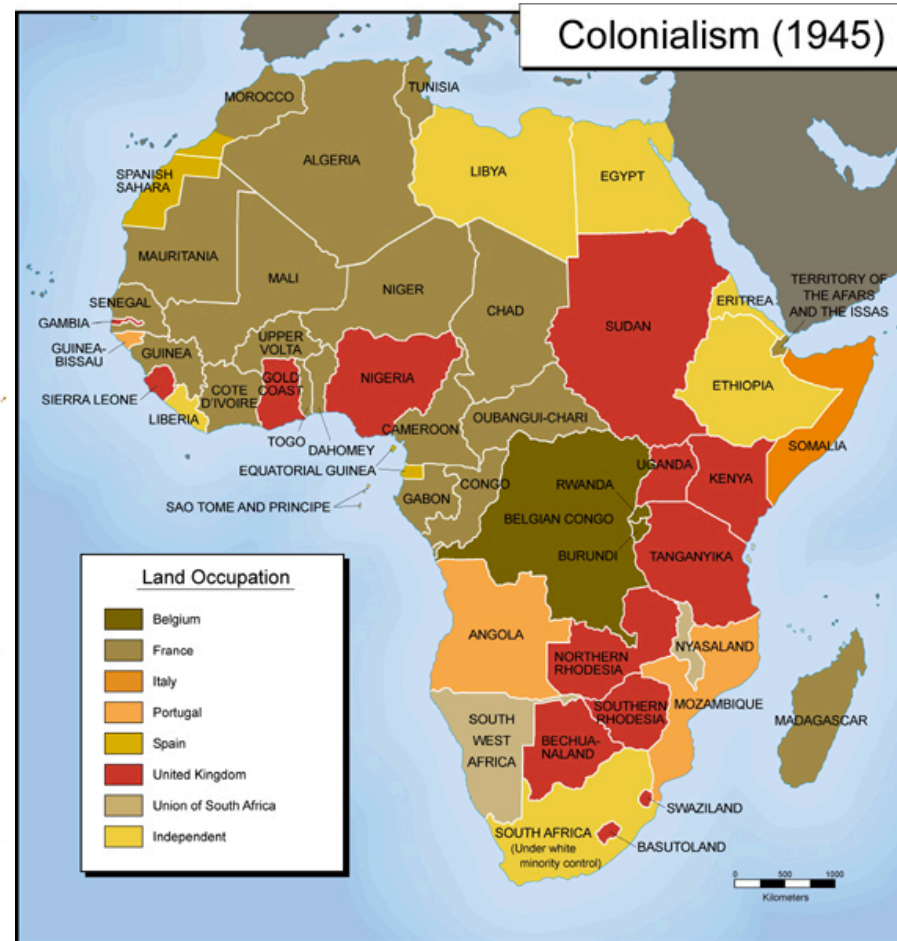
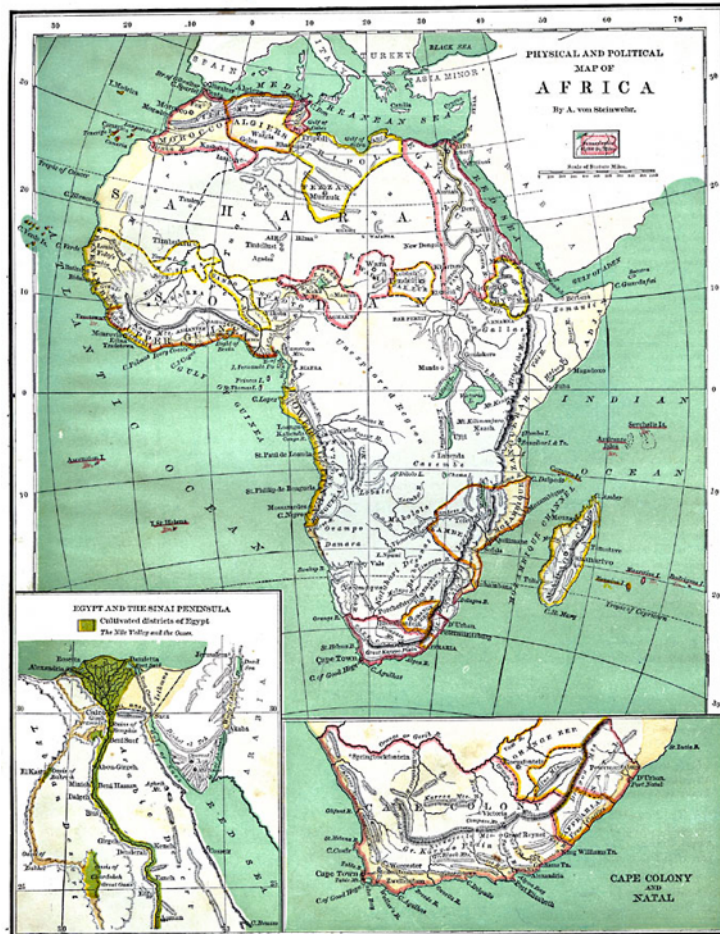
- Territorial concentration of state power
- Inability to project state power

Weak links between state and society → weak accountability and legitimacy

Weak political institutions

Imposition of 'unambiguous sovereignty' (Herbst)

# Effects of colonization: states-system



<https://etc.usf.edu/maps/pages/7300/7338/7338.htm> / <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/afpolitically.htm> / <http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/colonial-exploration-and-conquest-in-africa-explore/>

# Effects of colonization: social norms

- Divergent attitudes towards homosexuality in precolonial Africa
- Christianity (→ Kabaka Mwanga of Buganda) and colonial legislation
- The use of anti-homosexuality legislation and policies (esp. the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014 & 2018 in Uganda) by elites to manipulate social anxieties
  - Rao, Rahul. 2015. "Re-membering Mwanga: Same-Sex Intimacy, Memory and Belonging in Postcolonial Uganda." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 9 (1): 1–19.
  - Sadgrove, Joanna, Robert M. Vanderbeck, Johan Andersson, Gill Valentine, and Kevin Ward. 2012. "Morality Plays and Money Matters: Towards a Situated Understanding of the Politics of Homosexuality in Uganda." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 50 (01): 103–29.

## High Court declines to decriminalise anti-gay sex law

FRIDAY MAY 24 2019



LGBT supporters at the High Court on February 22, 2019. PHOTO | JEFF ANGOTE | NATION MEDIA GROUP

# Kahoot!

# Africa on the eve of decolonization

