

# European Invasion of Africa and the Process of Colonization - History Form 3 Notes

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## [Introduction](#)

In the last Quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium and Portugal were in Africa, competing for colonies to boost their social, economic and political standing.

They convened the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 (convened by Otto Von Bismarck, the Germany Chancellor) where they shared Africa in Europe without regard to the inhabitants. This is what is termed the invasion of Africa.

By 1914, apart from Liberia and Ethiopia, the rest of Africa had been colonized

## [The Scramble and Partition of Africa](#)

### [Scramble](#)

It refers to the rushing for something. In the African situation, it meant the rush for and struggle by European powers to acquire various parts of Africa during the 19th century.

### [Partition](#)

It refers to the sharing of something. In the African situation, it referred to the actual division of Africa by European powers during the Berlin conference of 1884 -1885

## [Methods Used by Europeans to Acquire Colonies in Africa](#)

### 1. **Signing of treaties;**

#### a. Treaty signing with African leaders.

- The British signed the Maasai Agreements (1904 and 1911), Buganda Agreement of 1900 and the Lewanika-Lochner treaty with Lozi. The royal Niger Company had by 1884, signed 37 treaties through George Goldie, with African leaders in Niger delta, Yorubaland and Gambia.
- Carl Peters signed treaties on behalf of Germany with the chiefs of Uzigua, Ukami, Usagara and Ungulu.

These treaties facilitated the acquisition of those areas for colonization.

#### b. Treaties signed amongst European powers. These were known as Partition Agreements. For example;

- The Anglo-Germany Agreements of 1886 and 1890 and Heligoland between the

British and the Germans over the sharing of East Africa.

- The Anglo Italian treaty signed in 1891 between the Italians and the British over possession of Eritrea and the Somali coast.
- The treaty between the British and Portugal and France in 1890 on the sharing of Madagascar (France) Mozambique and Angola (Portugal).

## **2. Military conquest/ Use of force.**

1. The French war against the Mandinka of Samori Toure (1870-1899) and their conquest of western Sudan from Senegal to Chad specifically in the Tukolor Empire, Segou and Masina by 1898. Tunisia, morocco and Algeria were acquired forcefully.
2. The British used military force in the Nandi resistance from 1895-1905, the Chimurenga wars involving the Shona/Ndebele against the British, forced acquisition of Egypt and Sudan
3. The Germans fought the Maji Maji wars from 1905- 1907.
4. The Italians were defeated during their Ethiopian campaign, by Menelik II in the battle of Adowa in 1896.
5. The Portuguese forcefully established their rule over Angola, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique.

## **3. Use of missionaries as frontrunners.**

- The Europeans used missionaries, carrying a bible in one hand and a gun in the other, who tried to convince the Africans to support the European goals.
- Missionaries manipulated local quarrels and took sides in a view to promote European occupation. For example, in the case of Buganda where we had religious conflicts between Protestants, Muslims, Catholics and Traditionalists.
- Sometimes the missionaries went to war against each other and against Africans. E.g the Franza-Ingeleza war of 1892 that pitted the Protestants (British) against the Catholics (French). Fredrick Lugard's intervention on the side of Protestants set stage for the acquisition of Uganda by the British.
- In Bulozzi, Father Francois Coillard convinced Lewanika of the benefits of British protection.
- In Nyasaland (Malawi) which was depicted as Livingstone's country, missionaries (read role of Scottish missionaries) shaped public opinion in favour of imperial control.

## **4. Treachery and Divide and rule policy**

- The Europeans instigated inter-tribal wars causing some Africans to support them against warring communities. E.g. use of the Wanga against the Luo and the Luhya in Kenya, the Ndebele/shona against the Lozi in Rhodesia.
- The Italians lied to Menelik II by signing a treaty of friendship but which was published in Italian version indicating that Ethiopia had agreed becoming an Italian protectorate.
- The Maasai agreement was written in a language that the Lenana never understood.

## **5. Use of company rule.**

- The British and the Germans used chartered companies to acquire and rule their colonies. For example, the role played by the British South African Company of Cecil Rhodes, Imperial British East African Company of Sir William Mackinnon and the German East Africa