JUST HOW BIG IS AFRICA?
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AFRICA BEFORE IMPERIALISM

TRADITIONAL ETHNIC GROUPS IN AFRICA

From Textbook: McDougal Littell: World History, 2005
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- Only Liberia and Ethiopia remained independent.
AFRICA AFTER IMPERIALISM, 1914

WHAT CONTACT DID EUROPEANS HAVE WITH AFRICA BEFORE IMPERIALISM?

16th century Map of Africa
http://www.raremaps.com/gallery/enlarge/1952
WHAT CONTACT DID EUROPEANS HAVE WITH AFRICA BEFORE IMPERIALISM?

- European explorers began to venture south, towards Central Africa in the 1400’s, during the Age of Exploration and ocean navigation.

- Europeans first explored coastal areas because they were accessible by ship.

- Dense rain forests, rapids and waterfalls, diseases like malaria and sleeping sickness all prevented the Europeans from venturing inland.
WHY DID EUROPEANS FIRST WANT TO GO TO AFRICA IN THE 1400’s?
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- Basic curiosity
- The adventurous spirit of the Age of Exploration
- The desire to find new trade routes to India and East Asia
- Intentions of spreading Christian beliefs, and by legends of great natural resources (including slaves).
THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN AFRICA

Diagram of a European Slave Ship
http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/online/wilberforce/slide01.html
Many parts of Africa already had slavery when Europeans arrived.

Most slaves were captured in warfare or were sold by their families.

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Slave trade continued until the 1850’s when society abruptly turned against slavery.
FROM SLAVES TO RAW MATERIALS

Factory town in Britain during the Industrial Revolution

http://reference.findtarget.com/search/Widnes/
By the 1870’s, Europe had the advances in tropical medicine, transportation, and technology that made it possible to explore the vast interior of Africa for raw materials to feed the Industrial Revolution.

Much of the future of the African continent was determined by reasons that had nothing to do with the Africans themselves.

The Franco-Prussian War ended in defeat for France and led to the formation of a unified German Empire in 1871.

Italy unified itself as a single nation.
CONFERENCE OF BERLIN, 1884-1885
CARVING UP AFRICA

http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/online/wilberforce/slide01.html
European powers knew that the tensions that were mounting, so to avoid war, they came together in Berlin.

Made an agreement to end slavery and allow for free trade in Africa.

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Everyone present at the Conference of Berlin got a piece of the “great African cake.”
VIDEO:
THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA
IMPORTANT POINTS FROM THE VIDEO

Political Cartoon of Berlin Conference
During the 1880’s and 1890’s, Europeans armed with new weaponry and a sense of **entitlement** descended, as if overnight.
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- Europe thought of Africa as the “Dark Continent” - wild, exotic and in need of enlightenment.
We’ll examine one region in more detail...

THE CONGO

What do you know about The Congo?
We’ll examine one region in more detail...

THE CONGO
TODAY THE CONGO RIVER BASIN IS MADE UP OF SIX DIFFERENT COUNTRIES
MAJOR GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURE:
THE CONGO RIVER

- 2nd longest river in Africa (2,720 miles)
- 2nd largest river in the world by volume

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CongoLualaba_watershed_plain_political.png
THE CONGO RIVER BASIN
BEFORE IMPERIALISM

The Congo River
THE CONGO RIVER BASIN BEFORE IMPERIALISM

- The Congo was never fully united under one government before the arrival of Europeans.
- Instead, more than 200 ethnic groups occupied this region, each with its own customs and history.
- Some groups controlled territories of thousands of square miles under the rule of one leader.
- Other groups lived in small village-based societies.

The Congo River
FIRST CONTACTS:
THE PORTUGUESE & BAKONGO OF THE KONGO KINGDOM

The Portuguese and Bakongo Meet

http://images.uk.ask.com/
European maps up to this point often marked Central Africa as “terra incognita” (Latin for unknown land).

But instead of just leaving the space blank, they filled it in with their imaginations - often with mythical creatures like mermaids, dragons, three-headed or one-legged men.

So when the Portuguese landed in 1482, they must have been surprised to find that the Bakongo (who lived near the coast) people were an organized society with a common language and a King (ManiKongo) who was similar to European kings.
KONGO KINGDOM:
SOPHISTICATED & WELL-DEVELOPED

The ManiKongo (king) sat on a throne, had symbols of royalty, and was responsible for justice - just like European kings of the time.

The ManiKongo appointed governors, collected taxes, and controlled currency.

The nobility were ironworkers, but most Bakongo were farmers.
KING LEOPOLD II OF BELGIUM SEIZES THE CONGO IN 1885

King Leopold II

King Leopold II
KING LEOPOLD II OF BELGIUM SEIZES THE CONGO IN 1885

- King Leopold II of tiny Belgium wanted to take his place among the great colonial powers of Europe.

- Land was not available in Europe, or anywhere else.

- Inspired by a book - J.W.B. Money’s *How to Manage a Colony*.

- Tells of how the Netherlands made a fortune in Java (SE Asia) by using forced labor to run coffee, sugar, indigo, and tobacco plantations.

- Leopold would take the lessons he learned from this book and apply them to the Congo.
LEOPOLD’S IMPERIALISM IN THE CONGO

http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/images/2010/Feb/Punch_congo_rubber_cartoon.jpg
The area King Leopold II seized as his own personal property in 1885 was made up of over 200 ethnic groups.

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- Over 10 million people lost their lives.
VIDEO: CONGOLESE GENOCIDE