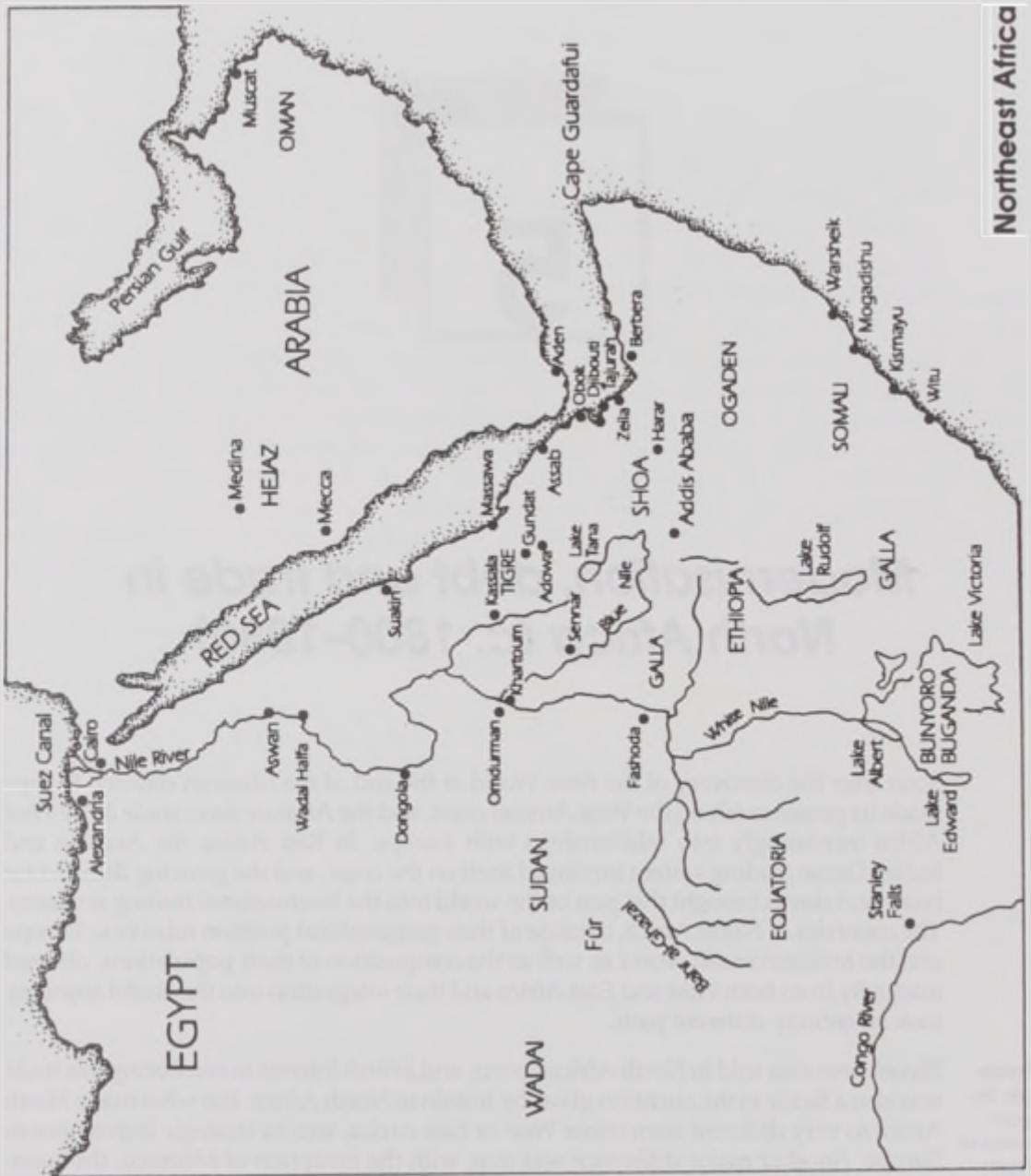



 5

Modernisation, debt and trade in North Africa (c. 1800–1880)

Soon after the discovery of the New World at the end of the fifteenth century, Europe made its presence felt on the West African coast, and the Atlantic slave trade drew West Africa increasingly into relationships with Europe. In East Africa the Arabian and Indian Ocean trading system impinged itself on the coast, and the growing demand for ivory and slaves brought this part of the world into the international trading economy. The countries of North Africa, because of their geographical position relative to Europe and the Mediterranean world as well as the composition of their populations, differed markedly from both West and East Africa and their integration into the world economy took an entirely different path.

Strategic importance of North Africa Slaves were also sold in North African ports, and British interest in combating this trade was also a factor in the attention given by Britain to North Africa. But what made North Africa so very different from either West or East Africa, was its strategic importance to Europe. Another major difference was that, with the exception of Morocco, the countries of North Africa at the start of the nineteenth century were all nominally under the suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan. They were all keen to keep the Turks from interfering with them and to win more independence from these overlords. In order to do so they



Northeast Africa

welcomed European interest and involvement in their countries as a counterbalance to the threat of Ottoman control.

Modernisation There was another reason for the welcome they gave Europe, and that was the desire to modernise. They needed European know-how, and above all, European capital in their attempts to modernise their countries. When they first encouraged European initiatives they could not see the end result of such encouragement, which was the limiting of their independence in a way that was far more restrictive than any Turkish overrule. These are common features of North Africa in the first three quarters of the century, and not even Morocco, which consciously tried to discourage rather than encourage European involvement, succeeded in escaping from the growing hold of Europe on North Africa. In this chapter the emphasis will be placed on the attempts of these North African polities to modernise, and how this brought them into the European orbit in a way that had not happened either in West or in East Africa.

EGYPT AND THE SUDAN

Mohammed Ali Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 and the short French occupation marked a turning point not only for Egypt but for the whole of North Africa. It showed how weak the Muslim world was in relation to Christian Europe, and how powerless the Ottoman sultan was to protect this part of his empire. When the French left in 1801, Egypt again came under the sway of the Ottoman Turks, but the Mamluks who had previously exercised power had been dealt such a severe military blow by the French that they were unable to reassert undisputed authority. An internal struggle broke out in which Mohammed Ali triumphed. Mohammed Ali had come to Egypt with an Albanian contingent which was part of the Ottoman army that had been raised to drive the French out of Egypt. In 1805 the Ottoman sultan recognised him as pasha (viceroy) of Egypt. So it was an external factor, the French occupation of the country, that brought Mohammed Ali to Egypt, and the weakening of the power of the Mamluks that gave him the opportunity of taking advantage of the internal struggle. The French occupation marked the end of Egyptian isolation and the country increasingly became the strategic and diplomatic centre of the Middle East.

Reforms Although Mohammed Ali is known as a great reformer and has been called the 'founder of modern Egypt', his aim was not to improve the lot of the Egyptian people, and during his rule the downtrodden and suppressed peasant fellahin suffered greatly. What he wanted to do was to establish a dynasty. His objectives were personal. He wanted to render Egypt so powerful that it would be independent of the Ottomans except in name. In order to do so he implemented drastic reforms. He broke the power of the big landowners by nationalising all of the land. The corrupt tax-farming system of the Mamluks was high on his list of priorities for reform. When this was abolished, taxes were paid directly to the state, usually in the form of wheat and cotton, which was sold by the state in Europe. The Egyptian economy was integrated into the international economic system through the contracting of loans and the production of cotton. Mohammed Ali did much to stimulate cotton growing and by 1845, 400 per cent more cotton was being grown than in 1821. In the course of this the Egyptian economy was

transformed from a subsistence economy to a cash crop economy. Because Europe showed such an interest in cotton, other agricultural activities were neglected in order to satisfy the European demand. The heavy reliance on cotton, encouraged by Europe, demonstrates the significance of the influence of Europe and the pull of world markets.

Mohammed Ali brought in French advisers and technicians to modernise the cotton industry and introduce superior agricultural techniques, all with the primary aim of increasing the flow of revenue to the state. Although Mohammed Ali realised that he could not modernise Egypt without calling upon Europeans for financial backing and know-how (European influence and presence in Egypt increased enormously during his reign), he was careful not to allow Europeans free rein, and he refused permission for the construction of a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, fearing that the existence of such a canal would strengthen the Europeans in Egypt at the expense of his own position.

- Industrial expansion** Communications and transport were improved. He did much for education and many promising young Egyptians were sent abroad to further their studies. Industrial production was stimulated by the building of wool and flax mills, a large silk factory, and other factories for the production of paper and indigo. His industrial initiatives extended to glassworks, sugar refineries and a tannery. Unfortunately for the Egyptians, this promising start could not be fully sustained, for when the industrial revolution transformed Europe, Egypt, which did not have supplies of coal and iron to drive industrial machinery, was unable to join the ranks of the industrialising nations.
- Defence** Mohammed built up an efficient and modern army that provided the basis for the stability which allowed him to attend to reform and to see that his programme was carried through. Between 1818 and 1830 he established munitions and ordnance factories. Although he did use fellahin in the army, he did not want to depend too much on them, and the Sudan became an important recruiting ground. A camp for recruits was set up at Aswan and his army commanders captured Sudanese in armed slave raids and forced them into the army.
- Trade routes** He helped to revitalise a number of trade routes. The Wahabis of the Hejaz, the coastal plain of Saudi Arabia which included the City of God, Mecca, and the City of the Prophet, Medina, had ruined the trade in that direction by their interference with the annual pilgrimage caravans to these two cities. Mohammed took action against the Wahabis and trade between Egypt and the Hejaz flourished. Pilgrims could once more travel to the Muslim holy places, and this traffic gave a boost to merchants in Cairo. Trade routes to Ethiopia were also revived, with important results for the rulers in the north of Ethiopia who in the 1830s and 1840s were able to supply their armies with firearms purchased with the profits of trade.
- Foreign affairs** From 1819 Mohammed Ali monopolised the export of most of Egypt's products. This monopoly was later extended to the Sudan, which Mohammed invaded and made an Egyptian colony in 1821. By the time that Mohammed invaded the Sudan he was already stronger than his overlord, the Ottoman sultan, and in 1821, when the sultan's Greek subjects revolted in an attempt to throw off the Turkish yoke, Mohammed went

to the aid of the sultan. The Egyptian intervention was so successful that it seemed likely that the Greek revolt would be crushed. In the face of Russian threats to intervene on the side of the Greek Christians, Britain and France sent a naval force to Greece in the hope of obtaining an armistice between the rebels and the Egyptians. Their efforts to achieve this were unsuccessful, and the Turkish and Egyptian fleets were destroyed in Navarino Bay in 1827. Mohammed expected generous compensation from the Ottoman sultan for his aid, and when this was not forthcoming, he wrung concessions from the reluctant sultan who was forced to recognise him as governor of Syria and Palestine after Mohammed's spectacular invasion of Ottoman Syria in October 1831. Mohammed Ali's defeat of an Ottoman army sent to drive him from Syria in 1839, alarmed Britain who was committed to shoring up the tottering Ottoman empire as a counterbalance to Russian influence. Under pressure from Europe Mohammed withdrew in 1840. This represented a major defeat for him.

Declining power European merchants in both Egypt and the Sudan had long been resentful of the monopolies established by Mohammed Ali, but there was little they could do about it while Mohammed's power was growing. Now that his power was declining, however, they moved to obtain control over his economic policy. The first step in this direction, granted after pressure from Europe, was to lift restrictions on foreign traders.

Mohammed's successors: Abbas Mohammed Ali's successors were fairly unmemorable rulers. During the latter years of Mohammed's rule, the Egyptian economy was becoming increasingly integrated into the world economy, and the process accelerated as the century progressed. The abolition of state monopolies forced on Mohammed by Europe undermined Egypt's precarious finances. In 1851 Abbas signed a contract for the construction of a railway line between Alexandria and Cairo. This was completed in 1856, extended to Suez in 1858 and later built up the Nile valley to Aswan. Abbas had left major debts, and the situation became worse under Said. An important milestone in this process occurred in 1856 when Said gave the Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps a concession to build what became the Suez Canal.

Ismail's improvements In 1863 Mohammed Ali's grandson Ismail took over the reins of power. He extended the advanced educational institutions established by his grandfather, and many intellectuals persecuted by the Ottomans gravitated to Egypt, which became a major centre for thinkers and writers; there was an intellectual dynamism which provided a fertile climate for the development of political ideas. Like his grandfather he was a great moderniser and he embarked on a series of schemes that included the building of 430 bridges, the digging of some 112 canals extending over 13 500 km, the construction of 150 km of railway line and the erection of 2 500 km of telegraph lines in Egypt and another 2 000 km in the Sudan. A modern harbour was created at Alexandria and it became the best port in the Mediterranean. Cairo was virtually rebuilt, being modelled on the lines of Paris. Sewers were introduced, and the supply of fresh water and lighting improved markedly.

Debt Ismail obtained concessions from the Ottoman sultan which provided for the new title of khedive and hereditary succession to the throne of Egypt from father to son. He had

to pay dearly for these concessions, which added to his considerable debt. In order to pay for his numerous schemes he had to borrow money at high rates of interest. The Suez Canal was opened in 1869 and the lavish entertaining that accompanied this event added to the huge and growing debt. As Egypt became more modern it came increasingly into the debt of Europe.

Early on in Ismail's reign the financial situation did not look too bad, and good prices were being received abroad for cotton, especially during the American Civil War (1861–1865). At the end of the war the market collapsed and Egypt's financial situation became desperate. By 1876 Ismail's debts were close to £100 million; about two thirds of this being foreign loans.

Capitulations European firms lent money to Egypt and extracted a variety of concessions from the Egyptian government. They found a group of British parliamentarians willing to apply pressure on their behalf to ensure that they received special treatment. The ability of the Egyptian government to act freely was being restricted all the time. To give an example: in terms of the so-called Capitulations, Europeans living in Egypt were virtually a law unto themselves, and were largely exempt from the khedive's jurisdiction. Europeans could not be forced to pay taxes, nor could the Egyptian authorities arrest a European unless his consul had specifically given his consent, and even then a European could insist on being tried in a consular court and not in an Egyptian court. This severely restricted the freedom of action of the Egyptian authorities, as by 1880 there were some 80 000 Europeans in Egypt, more than in any other part of Africa, except for the Cape Colony and Algeria. They were drawn mostly from Italy, Greece and Malta.

Suez Canal As Mohammed Ali had foreseen when he refused permission for its construction, the Suez Canal greatly increased the potential for European intervention in the country. Of all the European powers, Britain benefited most from the the construction of the canal as it made the route to its wealthy Indian colonial empire much shorter. Soon 80 per cent of British trade with the East passed through this vital waterway and it became important to Britain to ensure that the canal did not fall into the hands of a potentially hostile power that could cut off Britain's lifeline to India. Britain's interest in Egypt suddenly assumed new proportions. One should not make too much of this, however. In *Africa and the Victorians*, published in 1961, Robinson and Gallagher put forward the view that the entire British position in Africa was determined by the strategic need to defend Egypt and the canal, and that in order to retain this control it was prepared to make sacrifices elsewhere, in West Africa, for example.¹ Research since then has tended to modify this position. The security of the canal depended not so much on controlling Egypt as on supremacy at sea, and here no other power could challenge Britain. Although there is no doubt that Egypt was of strategic value because of the Suez Canal, it is clear that considerable British investments, both public and private, made Egypt important to Britain apart from any strategic value. From the 1840s Egypt's external trade increased rapidly and so did Britain's share of it. In 1880, 80 per cent of Egypt's exports went to Britain, while 44 per cent of its imports came from Britain. The exports were largely raw cotton while manufactured cotton goods from Manchester figured heavily in the imports. In the second half of the nineteenth century the investment of

the financial and service sector came strongly to the fore. This was part of a general spurt in overseas lending after 1850 as magnates and middle-class investors put their money in foreign projects in the hope of making superior returns. So we should not see British interest in Egypt purely, or even mainly, in terms of the defence of the road to the East.

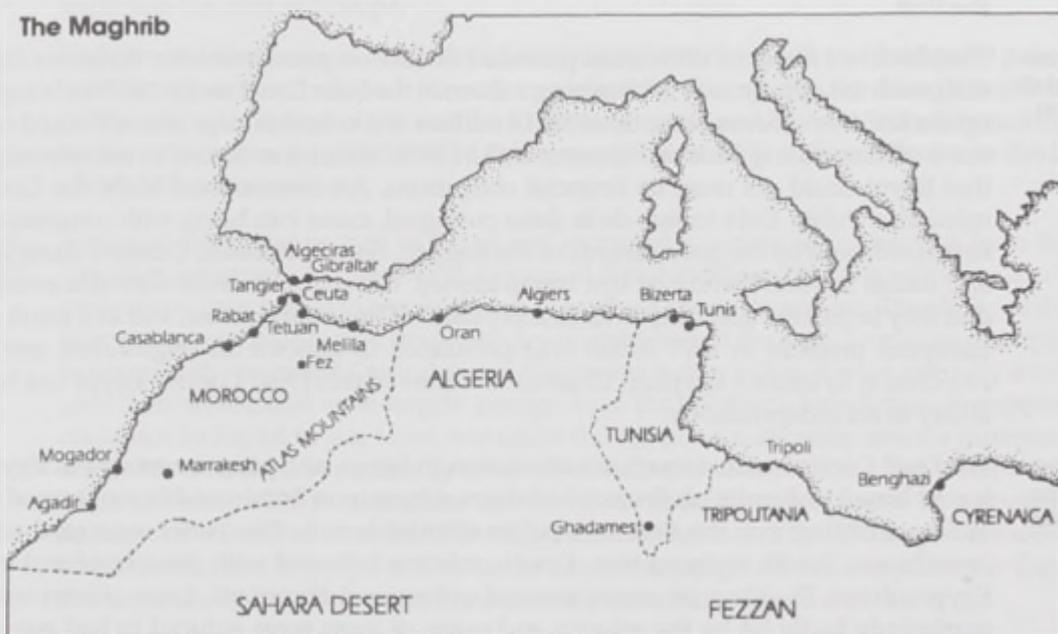
Financial disaster The khedive's financial difficulties provided the British prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, with the opportunity of obtaining a share in the Suez Canal and in 1875 he bought up the khedive's shares in the canal for £4 million. But even this large amount could not stave off impending financial disaster and in 1876 Ismail was forced to acknowledge that Egypt could not meet its financial obligations. An international body, the Commission of Public Debt (*caisse de la dette publique*), came into being with commissioners nominated by the governments of the English, French, Russian, German, Austrian and Italian investors who had lent Ismail money. The commissioners soon discovered that they lacked the authority to force acceptance of financial reforms, and as a result of European pressure in 1877 Ismail was persuaded to appoint an Englishman and a Frenchman to control Egyptian finances. In terms of this Dual Control Egypt lost her ability to act independently.

British occupation The Dual Control caused much dissatisfaction in Egypt, and pressure groups in Egypt forced Ismail to dismiss his financial advisers, whereupon Britain and France turned to Turkey, insisting that the Ottoman sultan dismiss Ismail. The Turks consented and Ismail's son Tewfik replaced him. Drastic reforms followed with the aim of making Egypt solvent. The harsh measures aroused widespread discontent. Army officers were particularly badly hit by the reforms and many of them were reduced to half pay. A series of military protests erupted from February 1879. By February 1882 Urabi Pasha, an army officer, was the leading political figure in Egypt and had control over much of the country. Britain and France were not prepared to allow the direction of affairs in Egypt to slip out of their hands, and took steps which culminated in the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, an event which was to have a major impact on the partition of Africa and on Anglo-French relations in the last 20 years of the nineteenth century. Since the 1882 occupation of Egypt forms an integral part of the partition of Africa, it will be discussed in chapter 7.

THE MAGHRIB AND THE SAHARA DESERT

Peoples of the area Northwest Africa comprises the four modern states of the Maghrib (the Maghrib, an Arabic term meaning the 'west', includes the modern states of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco) and also the vast expanse of the Sahara desert which makes up 90 per cent of the region. Despite the two waves of Arab immigration discussed earlier, the majority of the people in this region are not Arab, but descendants of the original Berber stock. With the exception of Morocco the Ottoman Turks had taken over the entire area in the sixteenth century. The presence of foreigners on the coast was growing, and there was a sizeable Jewish population, particularly in Tunisia. By 1836 there were some 12 000 people of European extraction in Tunis. Most of them came from Malta and Sicily. There were not so many Europeans in Algeria or Morocco in the 1830s, and they could

be counted in hundreds rather than thousands. In Morocco there was, however, a very large indigenous Jewish population and in the 1870s Jews comprised about one third of the population of Mogador. Most of the trans-Saharan commerce was in their hands. In Tripoli most of the merchant houses were owned by Jews, who came mostly from Italy.



Piracy There was an east–west and west–east trade along the littoral, and this included the organisation of pilgrimages to Mecca. For many years pirates based in these coastal towns had preyed on European shipping, and the ‘pirate industry’ in Tunis was extensive and very well organised. Algiers was also infamous for its pirates. But in the early nineteenth century the heyday of the pirates was about to end. As more European-based ships found their way to the North African coast, they were able to act in concert against pirates and to bring superior weapons to bear. Some dramatic blockades of towns like Algiers by combined European and American ships disrupted piracy, which went into a rapid decline. In some areas the demise of piracy brought about real economic hardship, although recent research has tended to show that piracy was usually a marginal activity rather than a major venture upon which the livelihood of many people depended. Of course the European campaign against privateering was designed not merely to stop pirates, but also to increase European influence in Africa. North African towns such as Algiers and Tunis were frequently bombarded and pressurised into making concessions that went beyond the mere cessation of privateering.

The steamship Piracy was no longer the threat it had once been by the time that the steamship made its appearance in mid-century and revolutionised sea transport. The impact of the steamship on West African trade has been discussed. Although there were significant

differences in the way that the steamship affected North Africa, its impact was substantial. Steamships were bigger and could carry more than sailing ships. In military terms they could convey soldiers to trouble spots more easily; in trading terms they could transport heavier and less valuable products and still make a profit. The potential for trade was thus immeasurably increased.

Strategic importance of Mediterranean As the century progressed it became easier for Europe to reach North Africa, but there were other reasons why Europe was showing more interest in the region. Britain was interested in the relatively small but steady stream of slaves that were transported from North African ports to Turkey and Syria. For both Britain and France the Mediterranean became progressively of greater strategic significance. France was intent on making the most of her proximity to the North African coast to develop trade links, while Britain was intent on preventing Russia from becoming a Mediterranean power and therefore threatening British trade with the East. In this respect the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 invested the Mediterranean with a fresh significance.

The countries of the Maghrib were generally poor, and suffered from periodic droughts such as the drought of 1815 and the following years. There were also some major epidemics such as those of 1784, 1793 and 1817–1818, in which many people died. In the early nineteenth century, it would seem as if the population on the whole was declining. The growing number of Europeans who began appearing on the coast were welcomed by the rulers of these states. As in Egypt, they were keen to modernise their countries and could do so only with European expertise and capital. There was also a deeper reason for seeking closer ties with Europe – they hoped to win more freedom from their Ottoman rulers, and Europeans were seen as allies in this struggle. Morocco was the only North African state that was not part of the Ottoman empire, and its early reaction to increased European activity was to shut itself off from the outside world and to keep contact with Christians to a minimum.

Algeria

French annexation In Algeria there was no question of local rulers welcoming Europeans as a counterweight to the Ottoman sultan. Algeria became a French colony as a result of an invasion by French troops. Disagreement between the French government and the Algerian dey about payment for food supplied by Algeria to the French army during the Napoleonic wars led eventually to dey Hussein losing his temper and slapping the consul, Peirre Duval, in the face with his flywhisk. This challenge to French honour suited Charles X, as at the time he was looking for a foreign adventure to divert attention from his misgovernment at home. Without giving much thought to the long-term effects of invading Algeria, 37 000 soldiers were sent to Algeria in May 1830 ostensibly to stamp out piracy and defend French honour. Hussein was banned and Algeria was annexed. The town of Algiers and the surrounding coastal area were quickly brought under control. There are historians who place at least some of the blame for this loss of independence on the dey. Engaging in behaviour that seemed likely to embroil the country in war with France, without first building up the army, seemed foolhardy in the extreme. N. Ivanov writes that the dey, 'having done everything to embitter rela-

tions with France, did nothing to strengthen the country's defences. In the eyes of Algerian patriots, this was tantamount to treason and pointed to the corruption of the regime.¹²

Plans for Algeria

French politicians had no long-term plans for Algeria. The people of Marseilles were enthusiastic about it as they were well situated to take advantage of the trade and shipping possibilities, but the rest of the French people were initially not very interested. However, a vague belief came to take root that Algeria would somehow reflect French greatness and that it would become for France what India was for Britain. Therefore, no matter how much later French governments would have liked to withdraw, they could not do so without being accused of betraying French interests, and equally important, if not more so, French honour.

Algerian reaction to annexation

It is not easy to characterise the reaction of the Algerian people to the French invasion, because there were so many different interest groups and opposing factions in the country. Thus the townsmen had different ideas from the people in the rural areas, those who lived in the mountains felt differently about it than those who inhabited the plains, some people were of Arab stock, others were Berber. With such great differences there was no single reaction. In general one can say that the townsmen showed no great opposition. Many of them welcomed French protection against Abd al-Qadir and his followers who frequently swept down from the mountains to raid them.

Abd al-Qadir

But it was a different matter in the countryside. In 1832 Abd al-Qadir declared a jihad against the French. He succeeded in forming a loose and temporary alliance of the quarrelsome tribes of western and central Algeria who were normally at loggerheads with one another, and the French suffered a number of serious reverses. As undisputed leader over western Algeria, in 1837 he signed the Treaty of Tafna with General Bugeaud, commander of the French forces in Algeria. The French hoped to use Abd al-Qadir to rule the interior, so that they could confine their direct rule to the coastal region. They therefore acknowledged his authority in the interior in return for his recognition of the French occupation of the coastal regions. But a breakdown in their relationship towards the end of 1840 ruined French hopes of a limited occupation, and in 1841 Bugeaud began the task of systematic conquest. The campaign was a very brutal one and left a bitter legacy of hatred. Abd al-Qadir was captured in 1847, but it was another ten years before the Berbers of the interior could be subdued, and even after that the peace did not last long. In 1873 another rebellion broke out and was put down only with the loss of many lives and much bloodshed. It is estimated that in subjugating Algeria, France lost over 150 000 soldiers.

Colons

Settlers from France and other parts of Europe were encouraged to settle in Algeria with offers of land in the fertile coastal area. These immigrants or colons were established in areas where the army could protect them, for the hatred and animosity that the conquest of Algeria aroused precluded the possibility of peaceful settlement. Forced removals of Algerians were undertaken to make more land available for colons. Many of the first settlers were people without means – and included wine growers from the south of France who had given up farming because of disease in their vineyards. Most

of the Europeans in the town were not Frenchmen at all, but Spaniards, Italians and Maltese. By the late 1870s out of a total population of 3 million there were 300 000 Europeans in the country. Many of the small farmers were unable to make a living from farming and drifted to the towns. The land they vacated came into the hands of a few wealthy men and companies who formed them into huge estates. Because of the relatively short distance that separated Algeria from France, the more prosperous colons kept close contact with metropolitan France and had access to the corridors of power there. These colons regarded themselves as superior to the indigeous population and were later opposed to plans to grant Algerians full French citizenship.

Tunisia

European influence The Tunis regency was the most westernised of the Maghrib states and the most open to European influence. Tunisia had been under the authority of Algeria from 1756 but in the first decade of the nineteenth century the Tunisians succeeded in driving the Algerians out of the country. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, in response to European pressure the bey promised to ban privateering and to open up his country to trade and other European activity. In the hope that he would be able to make inroads into eastern Algeria the bey welcomed the French invasion of Algeria. But when he realised that the French presence in Algeria was not going to be temporary, he did not feel quite so comfortable about having the Europeans on his unstable borders. On the other side of Tunisia, in Tripoli, in 1835 the Ottoman sultan had taken advantage of civil war to reassert his direct authority over Tripoli. This was a precedent that the bey did not want repeated in Tunisia. With a possible French threat on one side and on the other the Ottoman Turks, who seemed anxious to assume more direct control in the Maghrib, the bey was pleased to cultivate British support in order to maintain his freedom. In return for British help, in a series of decrees between 1841 and 1846 the bey abolished slavery. He was strong enough to enforce these decrees, and the economic loss was cushioned to a certain extent because the economy had a sound foundation based on grain and fruit, cloth, leather goods and metalware.

European aspirations The increase in French influence in Tunisia in the 1860s and 1870s made the British uneasy, although they had no intention of taking over Tunisia themselves. To counteract this they encouraged the Turkish sultan to reassert his authority, but this had the effect of driving the bey into the arms of France. The French were not the only ones to have designs on Tunisia. The Italians had begun to dream of resurrecting the Roman empire in Africa, and as the site of ancient Carthage Tunis had an obvious appeal. Moreover, there were more Italians in Tunisia than there were subjects of any of the other powers.

Economic problems There are very strong parallels between the troubles that beset Ismail in Egypt and the financial problems of the beys. The abolition of the slave trade had led to a loss of income; added to a great deal of inefficiency and corruption, this resulted in a financial crisis. Money was borrowed from foreign banks (mostly French). Some of the loans were negotiated on very unfavourable terms. At the same time the beys embarked on a policy of modernisation and reform, for which they required European expertise and finance. Huge sums of money were borrowed, but the management of these loans left

much to be desired and the state drifted into financial deep waters. The beys were forced to increase taxation and to compel certain groups who had hitherto not paid tax to do so. There was a major rebellion against the government in 1864. The French consul mediated between the government and rebels and persuaded the bey to abolish the constitution and to abandon reforms. The resistance was put down savagely. But because the government was unable to raise more money through taxes, further loans had to be raised.

**Euro-
pean
stran-
glehold**

The contracting of these loans was accompanied by greater involvement by Europe in the affairs of Tunisia. It was not only the loans that brought Europe into Tunisia. Mohammed Bey (1855–1859) granted foreigners the right to own property, which led to more intervention in the country. By 1869 the bey was in so much trouble that an international commission representing French, British and Italian interests was appointed to control Tunisian finances.

**British
involve-
ment**

Britain relied on shoring up the ailing Turkish empire in order to safeguard its interests in the eastern Mediterranean. Believing that the Ottoman empire was in danger of imminent collapse, Britain occupied Cyprus in 1878. To allay French apprehension about this move, Britain let it be known that it was prepared to give France freedom of action in Tunisia in compensation. Britain supported the French presence there because it realised that there was no question of the Ottoman sultan being strong enough to take over direct authority in Tunisia, and it was also concerned at recent signs that the now-united Italy was about to embark on an expansion policy. Britain much preferred to have France in Tunisia than Italy. If Tunis fell into Italy's hands this would mean that a potentially hostile European power would control both sides of the Mediterranean Sea at its narrowest point. During the Congress of Berlin in 1878, France's refusal to align itself with Russia in the aftermath of the Turkish defeat of 1877–1878 made it the key figure in the balance of power in the Near East. Its attitude enabled Austria and Britain to stop Russian ambitions in the Balkans without having to call upon Bismarck to make the unwelcome choice either of going against Austria or of openly opposing Russia. Bismarck and Britain were grateful and did everything they could to ensure that France did not change its attitude. In addition, Bismarck was keen to divert French attention from the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 and encouraged it to annex Tunisia. France did so in 1881.

**Finan-
cial
predi-
cament**

Here again, there can be little doubt but that increasing European influence was a dominant feature of nineteenth-century Tunisia. Contact with the outside world in the form of piracy and slave trading initially brought greater involvement. The desire to modernise and reform (although historians have considered the reforms to have been quite impractical and ill-advised, not at all suited to Tunisia) led to borrowing from European banks and the inability to repay. Loss of economic independence put the country at the mercy of European powers. It was only European concern with the balance of power that had prevented the earlier takeover of the country, and once Britain had decided to alter its policy on Tunisia, the fate of the country was sealed. The irony is that in both Egypt and in Tunisia it started with a desire for independence from the Ottoman sultan. The difficulty in raising money was also a common factor, and the

beys, like other rulers, tried to raise money by taxes. But by the time that they resorted to this expedient, they had already become so unpopular that rebellion and resistance was the response to the demands for money.

Libya

- Three areas** Modern Libya comprises three areas: Tripolitania, often referred to simply as Tripoli, which is the westernmost part of the country, Cyrenaica to the east, and the Fezzan to the south of Tripolitania in the central Sahara. It was more dominated by the Sahara than was either Algeria or Tunisia and European capital did not find it quite so attractive. In practice this meant that Libya preserved its identity for much longer than these other states. It was in this area that the trans-Saharan caravan routes flourished right up to the end of the nineteenth century. The route to Tripoli was important up to 1903 and the Benghazi route retained its vitality until 1911.
- Piracy** Most of the population consisted of inland nomads, shepherds or cameleers. On the coast profits were made from long-distance and regional trade, and there was a flourishing handcraft industry. Up to 1815 privateering was an important source of revenue. At the end of the eighteenth century Yusuf Karamanli was in power in Tripoli, and the wrath of the European powers and America was directed at him because he refused to take effective steps to end piracy. This led to war with the United States between 1801 and 1805 and Tripoli was blockaded. Yusuf emerged triumphant from this encounter, but the days of piracy were numbered. In 1815 the European powers placed a ban on privateering. This, together with the policing of the seas, reduced privateering considerably, although in the early 1830s France still found it necessary to exert pressure on Libya not to attack French shipping to Algeria. Karamanli was forced to accept an agreement whereby he would abolish all trading monopolies in his land, stop enslaving Christians and compensate Frenchmen for the losses he had caused them.
- Economic problems** With the decline in privateering, the revenue it had provided also declined. Economic hardship was aggravated by Yusuf's weak administration. Debts mounted and his attempt in 1830 to levy taxes on those groups who had hitherto been exempt led to widespread rebellion in both the Fezzan and on the coast. Europeans were playing an increasing role in the life of Tripoli and unlike Mohammed Ali, the rulers in Ethiopia or other North African rulers, he did nothing to modernise his army.
- Ottoman control** During these troubles the Bedouin of the Fezzan broke away from Tripoli. The chaotic situation gave the Ottoman sultan the opportunity of re-asserting his direct authority over Tripoli and in 1835 an Ottoman governor arrived and deposed the Karamanli dynasty. The Ottomans remained in control until the Italians captured Libya in 1911. The Turks subdued most of the coastal peoples, but their hold on the Fezzan and Cyrenaica was slight. The Turks could afford to keep only a small force of 8 000 men in Libya, and so long as the Libyan provinces paid an annual tribute and did not expect the Ottoman sultans to intervene in their troubles, the Ottomans were content to allow them a good deal of freedom.

- Sanusi Order** In Cyrenaica the situation remained anarchical and the Turkish government scarcely made its presence felt here. Fortunately for the Turks a new Muslim order, established on the Cyrenaica central plateau in 1843 by Mohammed ben ali ben as-sanusi, spread over a wide area and brought a measure of order to the interior. From their headquarters in Cyrenaica, emissaries of the Sanusi Order spread out over Cyrenaica and the Fezzan, establishing lodges or zawiyas, and bringing unity to the warring Bedouin. They acted as arbiters in the endless disputes that divided the various Bedouin groups and from 1856 the Turks used them as intermediaries between themselves and the Bedouin. Zawiyas were soon to be found not only throughout Cyrenaica and the Fezzan, but also in Wadai, Kanem-Borno and as far west as Timbuktu.
- Trade routes** The Sanusi played a crucial role in reopening the trade routes of the interior, which had been disrupted as a result of the disorder in Libya and the wars that had broken out around Borno after the death of al-Kanemi in 1835. The old trading route between Tripoli and Borno came into use again. It was Sanusi influence that made the route from Benghazi to Wadai the most important of the trans-Saharan trade routes. The Turks were pleased at the revival of trade and left the government of the interior in their hands, lacking both the will and the means to intervene effectively in the area themselves.

Morocco

- Similarities** There are some striking similarities between the way in which Morocco was drawn into the world economy in the nineteenth century and the examples of Egypt and other Maghrib countries. The problems facing the mulays of Morocco were modernisation and reform, and the money required for them. An important part of the process of modernisation and reform, as well as the collection of taxes, was the creation of an efficient, modern army. But there were important differences in the precise form in which these problems manifested themselves, as well as the way in which they were addressed by Moroccan rulers.
- European influence** Mulay Suleiman (1792–1822) followed a policy of isolation towards the outside world. He showed little interest in Europe and European trade, and in 1817, to prevent conflicts with Europe, he put a ban on privateering. He discouraged the settlement of Europeans in Morocco, and the few who were allowed in were forced to remain at the coast, particularly in Tangier. But despite these measures European influence grew, albeit at a slower pace than elsewhere in the Maghrib. After 1830 France was active on Morocco's eastern borders as it subdued Algeria. For centuries there had been a Spanish presence on the north coast of Morocco at Melilla and Ceuta, and on a number of occasions the Spaniards showed signs of wanting to extend their authority deeper into the interior. Then across the narrow straits was the British base of Gibraltar.
- End of isolation: France** It was the French who first broke through Morocco's isolation. Abd al-Qadir's resistance to the French occupation was conducted mainly from western Algeria and in 1843 he took refuge in Morocco when he was hard pressed by French forces. Public feeling in Morocco was very much on Abd-al Qadir's side, and yielding to pressure, Mulay

Abd al-Rahman (1822–1859) sent troops to his aid. The French retaliated by bombarding Tangier and Mogador, while the French general Bugeaud inflicted a crushing defeat on the Moroccan forces. Fortunately the French were fully engaged in putting down resistance to their rule in Algeria and did not want to occupy Morocco – they only wanted to teach the Moroccans a lesson. When peace was concluded in 1845 the mulay agreed to expel Abd al-Qadir should he ever enter Morocco again. Abd al-Rahman kept his word and, when Abd al-Qadir again entered Morocco two years later, Moroccan troops were sent against him.

Spanish invasion Abd al-Rahman's successor, Sidi Mohammed (1859–1873), had to deal with a Spanish invasion. When Spain failed to obtain a satisfactory assurance from Sidi Mohammed after the Spanish enclave of Ceuta had been raided by some Anjera tribesmen, it used the issue as a pretext for declaring war in 1859. By February 1860 Tetuan was in Spanish hands and the Spaniards were poised to advance deeper into Morocco. Britain did not want Spain to take over Morocco and it intervened to restore peace in April 1860. So here again it was a case of international rivalry limiting the actions of a European power. Throughout the nineteenth century Britain adhered to a policy of protecting Morocco's independence against the designs of others.

Inter-vention Despite the British intervention, the war with Spain opened the way for European interference in Morocco. In the peace agreement with Spain Morocco had to pay an enormous war indemnity while the Spanish hold on the coast was strengthened and its enclave enlarged.

The need to raise the indemnity was partly responsible for the greater intervention of foreigners in the affairs of Morocco. In order to pay Spain, a loan was contracted in London on the security of the Moroccan customs dues, the collection of which was taken over by foreign commissioners. As 60 per cent of the customs receipts were earmarked for war reparation payments, Spanish inspectors had to vet the customs receipts. At the same time Europeans were putting pressure on Morocco to relax restrictions on their trading with the country, and to this end they saw the reform of the monetary and tax collection system as necessary. The Europeans wanted a balance in the reforms. Anything that facilitated their trade and improved the security of their operations was welcome, but at the same time countries such as France and Spain did not want the Moroccan state to become so strong that it could resist their demands. France wanted Morocco to remain poor and weak so that when the time was ripe she could step in. The sultan was under attack from both sides. On the one hand the Europeans were urging him to reform and modernise, but on the other many of his advisers, and the majority of his followers, were conservative in the extreme, so that he was precluded from any reform of the educational, judiciary or religious institutions. Reforms in other spheres were limited by his meagre financial resources.

Economic problems In the 1860s Morocco received good prices for her wool, hides and corn, but as Australian and American products became more competitive in the 1870s, largely as a result of the greater use of the steamship and railway, her revenue from exports fell sharply. By the time that Mulay Hassan (1873–1894) took over, the Moroccan market

was being flooded by cheap Manchester cotton goods, and in many instances the local textile industry was ruined. To add to the problems facing Morocco's rulers in this period, there were a number of serious famines, namely in 1850, 1857, 1867 and in the years 1878–1881, when some 64 000 Moroccans emigrated. Many other Moroccans drifted to the coastal cities during these times of distress, creating new problems.

Taxation Mulay Hassan embarked on a campaign to obtain more money from taxes. The problem of collecting taxes had always limited the power of the mulay. It was a problem that was not satisfactorily resolved in the nineteenth century. The trouble was that the country was deeply divided. There were mountain villages in the Atlas Mountains where no mulay had ever succeeded in asserting his authority. The country was divided into a region that came under the control of the central government and was known as the bilad al-makhzen and another section where the control of the central government was virtually non-existent. This was known as the bilad al-siba ('the area of dissidence'). Taxes could be obtained from the area that recognised the government but the only way a mulay could extract anything from the bilad al-siba was by undertaking military expeditions in the area and forcing people to part with their goods. Every mulay led expeditions into this area, if only to make the dissidents aware of his existence. Mulay Hassan took steps to transform his ragged tribal levies into a modern efficient standing army, obtaining foreign military advisers and buying modern equipment. His army reforms remained limited, however. Even so, they strained his financial resources, and he increased taxes and made more raids on the bilad al-siba. This caused much resentment but there was no major revolt against his rule. Despite these attempts Morocco's financial situation remained perilous, although Hassan did largely succeed in meeting his budget. But he could do so only by tying himself more closely to European interests at the expense of his position among the people of Morocco.

'Protection' Although to some extent Hassan succeeded in avoiding the situation in which Egypt and Tunisia found themselves, Europeans did obtain greater control over Moroccan finances. The jealousies between the representatives of the various foreign governments prevented an effective system of financial reform from being implemented, thus worsening the situation. The European powers obtained a special status in Tangier, while the custom of Europeans giving 'protection' to Moroccans in their service weakened the hold of the mulay over his subjects as to all intents and purposes these Moroccans were removed from his jurisdiction. The 'capitulations' in Egypt had the same effect. Britain in its support for Moroccan independence pressed Hassan to make reforms. As a result of British efforts an international conference met in Madrid in 1880. Hassan was confident that the system of 'protection' would be ended. But the conference gave the system official recognition by regulating it, although it did restrict the number of people who could claim 'protection'; it also extended the scope of the special trading privileges that Britain, France and Spain had enjoyed in Morocco.

Mulay Hassan thus had to deal with more European interference in the affairs of Morocco, but with clever diplomacy he played off Britain and France against one another and frustrated French plans to turn Morocco into a French colony. Although the

European presence was increasing, by 1870, at which time Egypt had some 100 000 foreigners, Tunisia 14 000 and Algeria 245 000, Morocco had only 1 500 foreigners.

TRANS-SAHARAN TRADE ROUTES

Nomad raids As we have seen, since earliest times there had been a long-range system of trading across the Sahara, as well as a shorter regional trade between the desert dwellers and the people of the Sahel. But the Sahara as a whole remained remote and isolated, so that the way of life of its inhabitants had changed slowly. Nomads with camels could make lightning raids on the oasis dwellers and the more settled agriculturists of the Sahel. Although they could and did destroy crops and date palms, their main aim was to control and obtain a share of agricultural production. They wanted tribute. In order to obtain the grain and other products they needed, the desert nomads had to rely on trade, plunder and tribute. Although the raids of the desert nomads were very effective in the desert itself, they could not operate with any success beyond the fringes of the desert. They did not have the means or the numbers to dominate the more heavily populated areas outside the desert.

Role of nomads in trade The inhabitants of oases relied very much on selling their dates in order to obtain wheat and barley that were produced further north where rainfall permitted cultivation. For those closer to the southern fringe of the desert, dates could be exchanged for millet. And, of course, being situated at strategic points on the long-distance trading routes, they were deeply involved in trading. Although nomad groups could trade slaves and other articles on their own account, they could not compete with the settled merchants of the northern oases, who were financed by middlemen on the coast. So the principal role of nomads in the trans-Saharan trade was to provide transport animals, guides and military escorts for caravans. They also made deliveries on behalf of merchants.

Involvement in international trade But even their way of life was not proof against the penetration of the world economy, and in the course of the nineteenth century the Sahara was increasingly drawn into international trade. By the end of the century the lives of many of the desert dwellers had been changed, while the relationship between the Sahara and the outside world was at the same time altered considerably. In the course of the nineteenth century there were a number of shifts in the popularity of the various trade routes. It was the most westerly trade routes in particular that suffered from the competition provided by trade links spreading into the interior from the Atlantic coast. But, in general, the trans-Saharan trade route as such did not go into a decline until Atlantic shipping and overland transport (railways) became more efficient costwise. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century that it became cheaper for the people of the western Sudan to transport goods to the Atlantic coast than to take them overland to the North African coast. Until the 1880s political developments largely affected the trade routes. Some of these changes were more obviously due to the growing presence of Europe.

French occupation In many ways the French occupation of Algeria destroyed the economic unity of North Africa. In the first place it disrupted east-west caravan traffic along the northern fringes

of the desert. These served mainly pilgrims and short-distance trade. The French presence also had a major impact on the shifting of the long-distance trans-Saharan trade routes. In the early days of the French occupation, British products came into western Algeria via the Moroccan port of Tetuan. After 1837 there was a lively trade between Tetuan and Abd al-Qadir, particularly in arms. But after the fall of Abd al-Qadir, trade declined. Part of the reason for this was that the French placed restrictions on goods entering Algeria from neighbouring territories, while duties on goods coming from the western Sudan were unusually high. Although the French in the 1850s and 1860s took steps to remedy the situation, trade in this region remained quiet.

Because of fierce resistance French progress into the Algerian interior had been slow, but when the French eventually arrived they remained there. Nomads and oasis dwellers alike found themselves having to deal with a permanent army of occupation equipped with modern weapons. This was something completely new in their experience. Another factor contributing to the decline of trade routes in this region was the collapse of the Algerian demand for slaves, but one must add that the Algerian slave trade had never been as large as that of some of the other North African depots. The Algerian trade route was ruined too by the lack of a secure climate within which the caravans could operate, for hostilities between the French and one or other group could break out at any moment, to the disadvantage of the caravans.

Moroccan trade The trans-Saharan trade route to Algeria declined, but the trade routes to the west of Algeria did well and tended to move westwards in Morocco. The founding of the port of Mogador, on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, drew a good deal of trans-Saharan trade in this direction after the 1840s. Morocco resisted pressure to abolish the slave trade and emancipate slaves until 1912, so there was a ready market for slaves here. Trade to Mogador reached a peak in the late 1870s but it declined after that, and ended totally shortly after the arrival of the French in Timbuktu in 1894. From Timbuktu traffic now went by land and river to St Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River. The influence of the European presence on the west coast of Africa did not thus have an immediate and disastrous effect on the trans-Saharan trade.

Tripoli-Kano route The decline of the Algerian trans-Saharan route also resulted in an increase in the traffic along the central routes, particularly from Kano and Borno to Tripoli. The presence in this region of the Sanusi Order helped to make this a preferred route. Traffic on the Tripoli-Kano route enjoyed great popularity in the period between about 1850 and 1880, and during the short ostrich feather boom of the 1870s it reached a peak. In the depression of the 1880s it declined temporarily but improved again in the 1890s with the export of tanned goatskins. The Tripoli-Kano route lasted longer than the one to Mogador because it was further away from competing Atlantic routes. But the desert part of the route became prey to insecurity and in 1895 trade between Tripoli and Borno was disrupted to some extent by the activities of Rabih Zubayr, who had moved westward from the Bahr al-Ghazal. This, together with the fact that sea transport costs became cheaper, resulted in a decline of this route after 1900. The route was finally destroyed by the arrival of the railway in Kano in 1911.

Wadai-Benghazi route After 1850 a direct link between Wadai and Benghazi, which had been discovered early in the nineteenth century, was reopened and became a major route. The direct Wadai-Benghazi route was greatly favoured by the Wadai sultans who had become increasingly powerful since the mid-eighteenth century. They liked this route since it did not go through Borno to the west or Fūr to the east. This route also enjoyed the protection of the Sanusi Order which provided merchants with a social, legal and commercial framework upon which they could depend; its organisation could even be used for post! They kept peace along the entire route, and they were even successful at times in appealing for the return of goods stolen in raids. The presence of the Sanusi and the remoteness of this route combined to ensure that it lasted into the twentieth century.

Slave trade Slaves were transported along all of these routes and it has been estimated that, between 1800 and 1880, 500 000 slaves entered Egypt and that 250 000 went to Morocco. Many of the slaves that were sold in Egypt came along the Nile routes, which continued until the early twentieth century. The Benghazi-Wadai route was also the source of a considerable number of the slaves sold in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries. The Sanusi were a law unto themselves, and took no heed of the Ottoman ban on the slave trade after 1857. Thus although the number of slaves being taken across the Sahara as a whole declined, because of their isolation the Tripoli-Kano and Benghazi-Wadai routes were not easily monitored by the abolitionists, and the slave trade in this region did not die out finally until the beginning of the twentieth century. On the Benghazi-Wadai route the slave trade was actually on the increase until after 1900. It should also be remembered that there was a great demand for slave labour in the desert itself, to work on date plantations and vegetable gardens in the oases. Slaves too toiled in very harsh conditions in the rock-salt mines.

Various trading articles The ivory trade peaked around 1877; from about 1878 to 1883 ostrich feathers became a major item of trade, followed by tanned goatskins, which were used for women's footwear in the United States. Like the ostrich feather boom, the demand for goatskins also declined once America started using the chrome-tanning process and women decided they preferred undyed skins. Other items of trade were resin, leather work, kola nuts, fabrics dyed with indigo, and inevitably some gold. These products came mainly from the western Sudan and Hausaland, but on the routes from Borno, Wadai and Fūr the products were limited to ivory and slaves. There was also a constant demand for products of the Sahara itself such as salt, dates from oases and cereals from the Sahel.

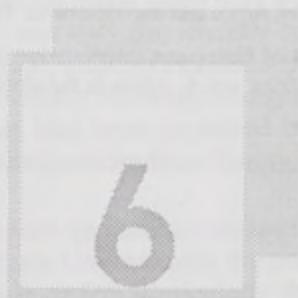
Firearms For much the same reasons as the slave trade continued to be lively, the trade in firearms flourished despite attempts by Europe to stop it. Benghazi was in the forefront of selling 18-shot Winchester repeaters in the 1880s. Originally bought for use by caravan escorts, large numbers of guns undoubtedly came into the hands of desert raiders. In Morocco at the end of the nineteenth century there was a great trade in the 1860 model single-shot Remington breechloader. Although the evidence is somewhat obscure it is possible that the increase in the incidence of raiding on the Tripoli-Kano route may have been due to the spread of these firearms to raiders.

- Imported goods** As the century progressed more English cotton goods were imported, and by 1860 these amounted to 70 per cent of the value of imports. North African woollen garments from Tripolitania went south, as did textiles from Austro-Hungary, medicines, jewellery, silks, and above all, weapons and ammunition. European manufactured goods became cheaper as time went by, but for many years they were relatively expensive because of the high costs of transport and only the wealthy could afford them. As they became cheaper with mass production, imports increased more quickly than exports, and this caused foreign exchange problems. Although indigenous craftsmen in the Sahel and the western and central Sudan had been protected by their isolation from competing foreign imports, manufactured articles from Europe eventually reached them as well.
- Overview** This brief look at trans-Saharan trade routes shows that there was a vigorous traffic for most of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly the pull of the European presence on the west coast affected the trade routes, particularly the more westerly. The presence of another European power, France, in Algeria, also had an effect in the shift in trade routes. Although the French had hoped that their occupation of Algeria would draw trade through Algeria, ironically it did not. The vitality of the routes further east owed little to direct European presence. Indeed, they owed much to the absence of Europe. The fact that Libya was controlled by the Ottomans provided the opportunity for the Sanusi Order to expand and impose order on large parts of the Sahara. The Kano-Tripoli and Wadai-Benghazi routes did not decline irreversibly until the beginning of the twentieth century. Conditions created by the Sanusi, the isolation of the region from the pull of the Atlantic coast and the fact that for a long time there was no reduction in the costs of transport to the coast, together with the relative poverty of the region from a European point of view, go a long way towards explaining this. Thus trans-Saharan trade went into an irreversible decline only about 1900 when it became more expensive to convey goods overland by caravan than it was to transport them by rail to the coast and by ship to their destinations. In the east, the isolated position of Wadai enabled the overland route to survive until 1911.
- Changing patterns of trade** So even in the Sahara the intrusion of European goods and the demands created by European capital were steadily changing the pattern of trade. Libya was more isolated, and the establishment of direct Turkish rule there in 1835 protected the region from European capital, which was also not attracted to the area because of its poverty and remoteness. Ethiopia's survival also owed something to its geographical remoteness and poverty, but access to the goods of European capital, such as guns, enabled people such as Johannes and Menelik to embark on expansionist programmes and to ward off the threat from Egypt.
- Growing European presence** So there were common features in these areas in the period from 1800 to about 1880. The processes that began early in the century accelerated after mid-century. No state could ignore the growing presence of European traders and consuls. Nor did most of them want to. People developed a taste for European cloth and guns, and the Europeans wanted their cotton, ivory and slaves. They did not see the Europeans as a threat. It used to be fashionable in historical circles to see Europe as opening up Africa. But the other

side of the coin needs to be emphasised, that Africa was in fact opening itself up commercially to Europe.

Notes

- 1 R. Robinson & J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The official mind of imperialism*.
- 2 N. Ivanov, 'New patterns of European intervention in the Maghrib', in J. F. A. Ajayi (ed.), *Unesco general history of Africa*, vol. 6, *Africa in the nineteenth century until the 1880s*, p. 500.



The partition of Africa: an overview

Annex- ation of African territory

In 1880 very little of Africa was under European control. By 1900 very little was not. We have seen that although the range of their interests on the coasts was expanding and their influence in the interior increasing, particularly in West Africa, by about 1880 the European powers in general were reluctant to assume new formal responsibilities in Africa. It is true that the European powers had been nibbling away at the North and West African coasts for many years, and that as the nineteenth century wore on so the process accelerated, yet by 1880 they had relatively few formal colonies. It is also true that the growing technological gap between Europe and Africa, which has been mentioned so often in earlier chapters, made it inevitable that Europe would interfere more in African affairs. But there was no reason to suppose that such interference would manifest itself in the wholesale formal annexation of African territories. Yet this is what happened. After 1880 various European powers began formally annexing African territories with a haste that has led it to be called the 'scramble' for Africa. What were the reasons for this change, why did it occur so quickly, and why did it take place at that particular time? Some of the answers will have to be sought in Europe and others in Africa itself.

Im-
perial
and Af-
rican
histo-
rians

At the outset it should be stressed that the subject is a controversial one. Although the facts themselves are generally not in dispute, the *significance* of these facts is very much a matter for debate. Thus while no-one questions that Britain occupied Egypt in 1882, the significance of that event on the partitioning of Africa has been the subject of vigorous disagreement. And what complicates the issue is that very often imperial and African historians do not look at the same facts at all.

This is because many historians interested in the history of Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century have tended to see the partition of the continent either as an episode in the history of imperialism or as an episode in the formative history of Africa. This is not to deny that there are historians who, eschewing labels, do not classify themselves as either imperial or African historians, and who attempt to steer a middle course between these two extremes. Imperial history is interested mainly in the causes of the partition, which are found principally outside Africa, in relations between the European powers and in the perceptions of the industrialised regions of the world as to what their relationships with unindustrialised Africa should be. African history, on the other hand, is far more concerned with the effects of the partition on Africa. Its main concern is the actions of European powers in Africa and the African response. The relationships between the European powers and their aims are not important to them. In the same way, in colonial historiography the conquest of African polities simply details the actual mechanics by which Africa was taken over, and is not so important as what impelled Europe to partition the continent. In contrast, to many African historiographers the conquest was of paramount importance. One of the main differences between African and European historians studying the colonial era concerns the amount of attention which should be given to African resistance. This difference is reflected in volume 7 of the *Unesco general history of Africa* and volume 6 of the *Cambridge history of Africa*. In the latter most of the contributors are Europeans, and the balance of power between Europe and Africa and what impelled Europe to 'go into' Africa are important; the details of the armed clashes receive far less attention. The writers in the Unesco volume are mainly Africans, and one third of the volume is devoted to resistance to colonial conquest.

Two
scram-
bles for
Africa

John Lonsdale has pointed out there were really two scrambles for Africa – the first in the mid-1880s and the second in the 1890s.¹ Not many Africans were directly affected by the first scramble, which was characterised by treaty-making between small groups of Europeans and African rulers and was aimed at staking claims that other European powers would recognise. These treaty-making Europeans were not seen by the African rulers as different from the various other European groups that had come through their territory earlier, such as explorers and missionaries, who had also carried flags and bits of paper and said they wished to be friends. Whether the rulers who put their crosses to the printed treaty forms that the Europeans brought with them from Europe understood what their crosses meant, or in what terms they interpreted them, was not important to the Europeans, who showed the Africans where to place their crosses. Nor was it significant in the long run. Whether or not they had signed treaties, the Africans lost their independence anyway. What the treaties were aimed at was staking claims

that would be recognised by other European powers. The treaties were designed to keep other powers out of certain specific areas.

**Both
scram-
bles im-
portant**

The first partition of the continent is often called the 'paper partition', because the lines of division and borders were drawn in the chancelleries of Europe based on paper claims (treaties). After these paper claims had been established they had to be put into effect on the ground. In imperial history this represents the second scramble for Africa. To some African historians this is the only scramble that really matters. But both scrambles are important. The European diplomatic manoeuvring has relevance for African history because it largely determined the shape of colonial Africa: it determined its borders (which have largely remained the same in modern times), while the colonial policies adopted provided the essential background to local responses and initiatives, including the liberation struggles. The second scramble is important for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is to demonstrate the baselessness of the myth that European rule was welcomed by African societies. The nature and variety of African responses to the impact of Europe is complex, and it is clear that any general statement beyond the fact that Africans prized their independence and sought to preserve it in any way open to them has to be a highly qualified one that takes into account local circumstances and many subtle nuances.

**No
simple
expla-
nation**

We should not expect any simple or generally acceptable explanation for the European partition of Africa. We shall have to find a path through a minefield of conflicting interpretations and opposing viewpoints, but in the end we should not expect to come up with a nice neat answer. The partitioning was a complex process; the reasons why it happened are likewise complex. We would do well to bear in mind the words of L. H. Gann: 'All things considered, a pluralistic explanation appears to make more sense ... In fact there were not one, but many European imperialisms, all of them interwoven with missionary, military or mercantile strands, with metropolitan, local and international threads. All these strands combined to produce the pattern of white expansion ... and by the early 1880s a convergence of many forces resulted in the rapid partition of Africa. Each of these forces had multiple causes. Each one in turn requires a pluralistic explanation. Each one of them contained an element of the fortuitous.'²

Reasons

In an attempt to place the partitioning in perspective, we shall first analyse the reasons for greater interest in Africa at this time. Then we shall go on to analyse why this new interest should have found expression in a sudden rush to carve out formal colonies.

INDUSTRIALISATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND EXPANSION

**New
Im-
perial-
ism**

The new economic situation that faced Europe in this period and which gave rise to the so-called New Imperialism, was not confined to Africa and the same period witnessed great European activity in Asia. In fact, Asia was a far more important prize than Africa. What distinguished the New Imperialism from older types of imperialism was that it was rooted in the industrial revolution, which for a time made Britain the 'workshop of the world'. For a variety of reasons, which included maritime supremacy, the availability of coal and iron in close proximity to one another, and new inventions, the

industrial revolution first took place in Britain. British producers and exporters favoured free trade and open competition in unrestricted markets. Free trade meant that no nation had the right to interfere with another's trading activities. In practice this meant that Britain was dominant for it had the cheapest mass-manufactured goods and also the biggest merchant navy to transport these goods. In the first half of the nineteenth century Britain secured a preponderant share of the world's export trade in manufactured goods and of the carrying trade. No other nation could compete with it. In the golden era of British trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, when it was supreme at sea, with no significant foreign rivals, informal spheres of influence served British needs admirably. Britain had no need for formal colonies. It already dominated trade without colonies. In 1852 Benjamin Disraeli, later to be prime minister of England, expressed the opinion that colonies were 'millstones around our necks'. 'Little Englanders' agreed that colonies were a burden to the mother country, that Britain was better off without them.

Britain's strong position Between 1763 and the 1820s the old colonial system declined; Britain was divested of its American colonies, the first French empire crumbled and Portugal and Spain lost their colonies. Although in the period between the 1820s and the 1880s European powers did not totally turn their backs on colonies, relatively speaking there were few annexations. One of the reasons given for this lack of activity is that Britain was so strong that it was in a position to deter others from making serious inroads into its comfortable informal trading empire. Until the 1880s Britain thought in terms of preventing others from staking claims; it did not stake claims itself. Informal control suited it. All Britain had to do was to persuade France and Germany to maintain policies of free trade in Africa. But it could not control the other powers, nor could it direct developments in Africa. The success of informal control depended very much on British supremacy at sea, the absence of foreign rivals and the existence of stable governments in Africa. In the last part of the nineteenth century all three of these preconditions disappeared.

European industrialisation Britain soon had to deal with foreign rivals in Africa. Up to 1850 Britain was the only industrialised power, but between 1860 and 1871 Britain's position was beginning to be challenged by the emergence of a unified Italy and Germany. Germany appeared to be the most powerful of the new industrial states in Europe. The Mont Cenis and St Gothard tunnels through the Alps, completed in 1871 and 1872 respectively, gave it products convenient entry into the Mediterranean area. A growing merchant fleet took German products to the far corners of the world; Hamburg merchants were rapidly expanding their trade with Africa. At the same time the scientific utilisation of water power developed northern Italy, especially Turin and Milan, into an industrial region. For a long time France had been restrained because of a declining or static birth rate, but it also began industrialising, although at a much slower pace.

The United States After the Civil War of 1861–1865 a reborn and consolidated United States of America made rapid strides towards industrialisation. The war itself gave a fillip to the production of iron, coal and steel; westward expansion saw the completion of a trans-continental rail link between California and the east coast in 1869. Between 1860 and 1900

some 14 million people, mainly Europeans, emigrated to the United States. The immense natural resources of the country, absence of threats from any neighbouring states, and the increase in population, led to rapid industrialisation, so that by 1890 it had the largest factory system in the world. American traders looked to other countries to expand their activities, having largely satisfied the domestic demand. This meant that, at the same time as countries such as France, Italy and Germany were industrialising and producing more cheap manufactured goods which they wished to sell abroad, the United States was providing stiff competition in markets in Latin America and the Pacific region. Trading conditions in the New World thus became that much tighter, so that European traders had to search for new markets elsewhere. More traders began gravitating towards Africa which hitherto had not been a particularly attractive prospect, except for South Africa and Egypt.

Free trade and tariff walls

The situation was aggravated by the so-called Great Depression in Europe from about 1874. This was brought about essentially because foreign and domestic demand for products was not growing so fast as the capacity of the new machinery to produce those goods. This too pointed towards the opening of new markets. Because all of the nations expanded industrially in separate compartments, each determining its own economic policy, the newly industrialised nations saw tariffs as a means of protecting their infant industries and excluding rivals. As they read the situation, the mercantilism applied by Britain early in the century had enabled it to dominate world markets. Once it was supreme, it sponsored free trade. The other European nations argued that if they also adopted free trade they would not give their developing industrial sectors the opportunity of maturing or of competing successfully with British products. They felt that only through the imposition of tariff barriers could they maintain their position. By 1879, with tariffs in Spain and Germany, and tariff changes imminent in Italy and Austria-Hungary, it seemed as if there would be a general movement towards tariffs. Because of the slower pace of its industrial development, France especially needed to protect its home markets against foreign rivals. This tendency towards the establishment of exclusive trading areas hints at pressures in favour of taking formal control.

Need for new markets

A shrinking world, saturated markets, and the search for new exclusive markets focused attention on Africa. Britain now had to face more competition in Africa from other European powers. The entry of new traders in the second half of the nineteenth century was also promoted by the advent of the steamship. So at the same time as pressure in older markets was beginning to build up, encouraging more traders to look towards tropical Africa, the steamship was also making it easier for small traders to enter the African market.

European expectations

At the time, many people believed that the interior of Africa would turn out to be another El Dorado. By the late 1870s, depression and the need for new cheaper markets, reinforced by explorers' reports of El Dorados in the interior, gave people hope for the potential of Africa. Trade and capital export would both be of great benefit to Europe, so it was said. Not everyone believed this of course, but there was a widespread belief that Africa would yield untapped sources of raw materials such as had been discovered in the late 1860s in Kimberley and in the mid-1880s on the Witwatersrand, and also that

it would provide a vast market for Europe's manufactures. In most instances these expectations were not fulfilled. Trade with Africa remained small. In the case of Britain, until 1914 trade and capital export remained in the region of 1 per cent of its total trade and total export of capital. Africa lacked the infrastructure or economy to act as a large market for European manufactured goods. Expectations were great, however, and it was expectations, whether realised or not, that were important motives for entry into Africa.

Technological advances At the same time technological developments gave Victorian leaders great confidence in their ability to take over political control of Africa and exploit it economically. Technological developments made action in Africa both possible and more affordable. Quinine made the interior of tropical Africa more accessible to Europeans, while the steamship transformed the nature of trading relations. Great things were expected of railways and it seemed as if they would soon open up the interior as steam engines raced inland. In 1879 French policy-makers were talking of linking up French interests in Algeria with those in Senegal via the railway line. The railway was indeed to revolutionise transport but it was not quite so easy as enthusiasts in the 1880s thought it would be. Major railroad construction had to wait until the 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century, although numerous smaller lines were built before then.

Military technology Then there was the very important military technology, with the development of the breech-loading rifle and, in the last days of the scramble, the Maxim gun. Breech-loaders, which had a much improved rate of firing, and which had first been used on a large scale in the American Civil War, began to be imported into Africa by Europeans after the Franco-Prussian War. Relatively few of them, however, found their way into the hands of Africans, which meant that Africans armed with muzzle-loading muskets had to face Europeans who had guns that had six times the range and could fire at ten times the rate. Coinciding with the final stages of the partition of Africa, when clashes were more frequent, was the development of automatic guns. The multi-barrelled guns of Gatling and Nordenfeldt were followed in 1889 by an automatic machine-gun developed by Hiram Maxim and which bore his name. Hilaire Belloc, the British anti-imperialist poet, in his 'Modern Traveller' summed up its effect in a sarcastic couplet:

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

THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

Hobson's economic model We have now examined a number of factors that promoted the penetration and conquest of Africa, but we have still not come to the crucial question of why European governments should have taken exclusive formal control over these far-off places, many of them with unpronounceable names, and why they should have done so at that particular time. Among the theories advanced to account for the partition the economic ones have generally held pride of place. Having looked at the general economic situation as background to increased interest in Africa, it is now time to look at a more

specific economic model. The Anglo-Boer War in particular, with its overtones of mining capital involvement, gave a sinister new connotation to the word imperialism. J. A. Hobson, who had been in Johannesburg in 1899 when he covered the war for the *Manchester Guardian*, was convinced that the machinations of the Rhodes-controlled press had been responsible for the war. In 1902 he published his *Imperialism: A study* in which he attempted to show that the new colonies that had been annexed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century could not be justified from an economic point of view and that the colonies had been bad business for Britain, although they may have been very good business for a small group of financiers who controlled cartels and who through ownership of newspapers and other means hoodwinked the public into supporting colonial expansion. Hobson argued that under-consumption in industrialised countries and a surplus of production and capital led them to take over markets in other places. Hobson came to the conclusion that 'the distinctive feature of modern Imperialism, from the commercial standpoint, is that it adds to our empire tropical and subtropical regions with which our trade is small, precarious and unprogressive'. Vast sums of money had been spent on administering and developing backward areas, building roads, constructing railways and bridges. This money came out of the public purse, but the income from the enterprises was private – it went into the hands of few financial manipulators, huge combines and cartels.

Lenin Lenin's *Imperialism: The highest stage of capitalism* was influenced by Hobson. Leninist explanations posited that the survival, or at least the continued development of the capitalist economy in the late nineteenth century, depended very much on outlets for capital and the establishment of new markets. Although Marxist historians have cited Lenin in support of their arguments about the relationship between finance capital and the partition, Lenin was in fact not talking about Africa, and certainly not about the partition era. B. M. Ratcliffe makes the point that 'Lenin was not talking about the Partition or of monopolies and capital exports as causes of the colonial expansion of the late nineteenth century. For Lenin, imperialism, which is a new stage in the evolution of capitalism, dates only from the early twentieth century and is associated not with the division but the redivision of an already partitioned world. The late nineteenth century is but a transitional period and marks no radical departure. Lenin, then, does not provide an explanation of the Partition, nor do any of the other early twentieth-century neo-Marxist theories of imperialism.'³

'Glut of capital' Although Hobson was not speaking particularly about Africa, his analysis has relevance for the African case because generations of Marxist scholars have used such arguments to condemn 'capitalist imperialism' for the partition. Although they may have been incorrectly bringing in Hobson and Lenin in support of their conviction that the partitioning was all part of a capitalist plot, over the years large numbers of historians and publicists have accepted that in the factories of the industrialising countries there was over-production, that more was being produced than could be consumed at home, and that there was a 'glut of capital' because there was no point in capitalists investing the profits from their operations in expanding production. In terms of their belief the capitalists put pressure on their governments to take over new areas

in Africa where they could invest their money and sell their surplus production. Lenin's view that cartels, trusts and massive banking interests controlled all production and were strong enough to force governments to act in accordance with their wishes has been accepted as valid for the situation in Africa. It was capitalists who put pressure on their governments to take over new areas where they could invest the 'glut of capital'.

The nature of the economic factor These charges against capitalism may have been based on a misreading of Hobson and Lenin, but nevertheless they forced other historians to focus their attention on the connection between the New Imperialism of the late nineteenth century and economic factors, and over the years their research has shed much light on the nature of the economic factor. Over a period of time non-Marxist scholars have systematically pulled the Hobson-Leninist theory apart. It has thus been shown that economic pressure groups were certainly not so powerful as the Marxists had made out, and that industrialists like Régis, Woermann or J. C. Goodefroy were 'within the total framework of Western capitalism ... small fry who controlled but an insignificant portion of their country's wealth'.⁴ It has also been established that, although there were a number of large trusts and cartels in America and some too in Germany, this was after 1900, and that Britain had very few. As to the argument that these companies made huge profits, this too was generally not true. The British South Africa Company, for example, did not pay a dividend until 1922.

Opposition to government intervention But apart from all this, it became clear that far from putting pressure on their governments to establish colonies, traders and companies, initially at least, were against government interference. The new middle class in England, which arose as a result of the industrial revolution, believed that it was in the best interests of society as a whole and, of course, in the best interests of their own individual enterprises, to conduct commercial operations and to invest and accumulate capital without government intervention. They were interested in trade, not in ruling or administering colonies. Annexations remained a last resort. Given equal opportunities with the traders of other nations, it was felt that British traders could more than hold their own. If some local chiefs proved obstructive, a token show of force was all that was required to put matters right. From time to time they did call upon the government for limited short-term action to overcome some specific market difficulty, to force an indigenous chief to pay his debt or for a gunboat to bring a recalcitrant village to heel.

Government support of traders At an early date the French government adopted a policy of lending official support to her traders. This was not because of any pressure brought by the French business community, who were on the whole indifferent to the trading opportunities provided by Africa. It was because of the weakness of French business interests to hold their own against their British counterparts. In the case of Germany, Bismarck's decision to go into the business of annexing territory was strengthened by the belief that German companies would assume the expense and burden of administering them, although he was to be disappointed in this. In this case one can almost speak of government pressure on the companies to involve themselves more actively in Africa rather than the other way around. Only in the case of Portugal could one perhaps talk of business pressure on the government. Because of its poverty and weakness, Portugal could not compete with the

industrialising nations. Its manufacturers required protected markets from which their rivals were shut out. Portuguese mercantile groups thus put pressure on the government to act positively and bring the hinterland of Angola under Portuguese control.

Capital investment in Africa

From research into the supposed charges by Hobson, it is clear that financiers in England and France with surplus capital invested very little of it in Africa. Apart from South Africa and Egypt, British capital went for investment in the United States of America. As a market for British goods North America and Australia bought much more than Africa, and the rapidly expanding markets for British manufactures were the Argentine and China. A number of German companies wanted Bismarck to take over the areas in which they operated, but it is hard to portray South West Africa as a place which was required for the investment of capital that could not be gainfully employed elsewhere. Most German capital was invested in America and in Central and Eastern Europe. Germany exported ten times as much to France as it did to its colonies. France invested more in Russia than it did in Africa. When speaking of Italy, a debtor nation, or Portugal, which was poverty-stricken, it is clear that neither had money to spare for investment in Africa, or elsewhere.

Role of economic factors

Although the Hobson–Lenin theory may have been largely discredited, the belief remains strong that economic factors in one form or another provided the engine for the scramble for Africa. If one argues that the basic impulse was economic because it was for economic reasons that the first Europeans went to Africa and that everything followed on from that, then it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the economic factor is basic to the partition process. But on a more sophisticated level, even if economic factors were present in most territories one cannot say that they necessarily played the crucial role in the decision to partition Africa. In some areas the economic factor was decisive, in others it was not. As we shall see there were many other reasons, and the best way of analysing their importance is to assess their weight in specific areas. The significance of the various factors changed between 1880 and 1900, as did the nature of imperialism itself, as well as government and public attitudes towards expansion.

Austen's theory

Ralph Austen has an interesting point of view on the economic factor. One of his major theses is that Africa as a whole was becoming progressively less important to Europe. From about the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Europe's role in the world economy was shrinking as other continents, Asia in particular, were being opened up. Even in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the price of African produce was rising and manufactured articles were becoming cheaper, Austen believes that 'the relative value of African trade within the Atlantic economy was decreasing, in both quantitative and structural terms ... The world economy as a whole was growing at a more rapid rate than African commerce.'⁵ Africa did not provide critical products that could not be obtained elsewhere. As the world market expanded and the steamship helped to make new areas more accessible, even vegetable oils could be obtained elsewhere. African rivers had very limited navigability so for the most part they could not act as highways from the coast into the interior. Explorers who went out to establish the courses of the major rivers of Africa felt a need to justify their explorations in economic terms, but

businessmen did not have much faith in Africa's trading possibilities in the interior. It is interesting to note that the costs of the exploration were borne by geographical societies, humanitarian bodies and governments, and not by business. In the development of this line of thinking he says that in the late nineteenth century, at the time of the partition, with the fall in the prices of African products, Africa's significance for the world economy became even smaller. Austen's observation about Africa's declining share of world trade needs to be approached cautiously. The evidence to prove that this was the case is rather fragmentary.⁶

Austen: why Europe took over Africa Why then did Europe decide to take over Africa at a time when Africa was of less significance to the world economy than it had been at any other time in the past few hundred years? The answer Austen gives is that, despite the limited value of Africa, Europe took it over because it could afford to do so. Technological developments made the conquest of Africa both easier and cheaper. Austen focuses on this as an important reason why Europe partitioned Africa. Rapid technological development in Europe meant that the cost of action in far-flung places progressively decreased. In human terms, the steamship and advances in medicine made action in Africa cheaper. So did military technology such as the Gatling and Maxim guns. The costs of occupying Africa were decreasing. So Austen believes that a major factor in explaining Europe's action is 'the capacity of an economic system as flourishing as the European one to indulge itself in apparently wasteful efforts'.⁷

THE MEN ON THE SPOT AND THEIR GOVERNMENTS AT HOME

Increasing rivalry Thus far we have looked at the situation very much from the point of view of European motives and European economic needs. But to obtain another perspective we have to shift the focus to Africa itself. While Britain was trading mainly on the coast and it had no serious rivals, it interfered very little in African affairs, with the result that there was a good deal of stability. But the new competition meant that Britain and the other powers had to intervene more frequently and on a larger scale in order to secure their interests against rivals. This increased interference was accompanied by a widening of the frontiers of instability. The competition and rivalry in Africa between the traders of various nations and between big and small traders, even of the same nation, coincided more or less with a marked deterioration in the terms of trade in Africa, thus increasing the frontiers of instability.

Fieldhouse's hypothesis D. K. Fieldhouse in his book *Economics and empire*, published in 1973, while holding the view that the so-called New Imperialism was fundamentally a 'political phenomenon' resulting, as he said in an earlier article in the 1960s, from the 'fevered nationalism of Europe', believes that the causes for the partition should be sought in Africa, not in Europe. According to him, 'the vital link between economics and formal empire ... was neither the economic need of the metropolis for colonies nor the requirements of private economic interests, but the secondary consequences of problems created on the periphery by economic and other European enterprises for which there was no simple economic solution'.⁸ Fieldhouse concluded that the partition occurred when it did because it was at that time and in those places that relations between Europeans and

the indigenous peoples of Africa became fundamentally unstable. This instability was due partly to European penetration of the interior. The partitioning took place, Fieldhouse emphasises, when economic activities led to non-economic problems which could not be solved by the usual economic methods, but had to be solved by political action (the establishment of formal control) – in other words when economic problems became politicised.

European traders go inland

The above scenario fits the situation in West Africa, where Africa became locked into the world economy through its export of palm products – when prices fell in Europe the effect on West Africa was dramatic and had a profound destabilising effect. When the terms of trade declined in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and turned against African exporters, the old type trade, which fitted into patterns that had largely been established during the slave trade era, underwent a transformation. The only way that European traders could reduce their costs was by going inland to deal with the producers themselves, thus cutting out the middlemen.

African traders

The depression hit African traders even harder than it did the European merchants, who could obtain credit from European banks. The depression in trade caused unrest among Africans who were now receiving less for their products than before. The intensified competition upset the relatively stable relations between merchants and African farmers and traders.

British traders in the Niger delta

European traders tried to bypass the middlemen to make contact directly with the producers. This increasing European influence, and African resistance to it, led to the actual military conquest. Of course, in many areas it was not possible for the Europeans to go into the interior. European penetration was initially successful only in areas where European gunboats had access to the interior, as in the Niger delta. From the 1870s the village communities of the Niger delta, which had acted as middlemen during the slave trade and at the height of the palm oil trade, began attacking British trading posts as they desperately tried to prevent the Europeans from usurping their role as middlemen. By this time, however, British consuls in the area had become used to interfering in the affairs of the coastal states in order to obtain good trading conditions for British traders; the consuls, who were given no power by the British government, were fortunate in that they were able to call on the ships of the anti-slavery patrol of the West African squadron to back them and bombard the towns of the attackers. This was a fairly unusual situation for, in most other parts of Africa, action by Europeans in the interior was not possible without the major expense involved in the organisation of a military expedition.

Position of British consuls

Not all consuls were fortunate enough to be able to call on anti-slavery patrols. Consuls in the East African interior, who were appointed to keep a watching brief on British interests in an area where Protestant missions featured prominently, were unable to do much to stop the slave trade. As Salisbury himself explained in 1888, the consul was 'a compromise between the desire of the missionaries to obtain Protection and the desire of the Home Government not to be involved in expensive operations. To please the missionaries we send a representative of the Govt.; to spare taxpayers we make him

understand that he will in no case be supported by an armed force. The only weapon left to him is bluster.⁹ Consuls were firm advocates of formal control by their government. So were local governors.

Position of local governors Local governors in Africa were expected to balance their books without recourse to the home government, and customs dues were an important source of revenue to them. Making ends meet in Africa was not easy for governors, although their masters in Europe expected it. They eyed with distaste the traders who entered Africa via unclaimed strips of coast and thus evaded duties. Where they could, these governors were eager to extend their authority further along the coast so that customs dues could not be evaded. Early in 1876 the French foreign ministry was ready, in return for Gambia, to hand over the whole of the west coast from Senegal to the British. This did not occur and the governors of Senegal and Sierra Leone became increasingly involved in disputes as they both erected customs posts in the coastal area between the two colonies in order to prevent traders from escaping customs dues. Disputes also arose when rival administrations met each other in the Gold Coast and at the frontier between Dahomey and Lagos.

Missionaries There were numerous other categories of 'men on the spot'. Another group who wanted action were the missionaries. Missionaries put pressure on their governments to annex the fields of their operations, but very often the flag that followed the missionaries was not that of the missionaries' own nationality. Thus British Baptists and Congregationalists in Cameroon and Madagascar found themselves under the German and French flags. In Leopold's Congo, the British Baptists suffered the same fate. In East Africa, French White Fathers and Holy Ghost Fathers ended up in British Uganda and German East Africa respectively. Although it has often been said that the missionaries prepared the way for the imposition of colonialism in Madagascar and in East and Central Africa, and it is true that they often welcomed it, the missionary factor was present only in certain areas. A direct link can be seen only in the case of Nyasaland.

French army officers and civil servants The mission factor was probably not so important as the actions of the French army officers who were intent on furthering their own careers, and who sometimes heated up a dormant situation so that they would have a chance to excel themselves and so gain promotion. Of course, the line between men motivated by furthering their careers and those acting in 'honour of the flag' is a fine one. A group of influential civil servants in France and army officers in Senegal were already intent on extending French power in Africa in the late 1870s. This was done largely for reasons of prestige, although there were also idealistic hopes of constructing railroads that would magically link Algeria and the Senegal River, and they were able to accomplish quite a lot despite official disapproval from home. It was the fragmentation of the French decision-making process, in which it would seem that the various bodies frequently did not tell each other what they were doing, that allowed to succeed a small group of men who were by their nature and profession rather combative towards Britain.

Conflict It is difficult to speak of a definite French policy, there were so many conflicting policy directions. There was no central coordination or control of policy and African possess-

ions came under different ministries – most of the colonies came under the Ministry of Marine and Colonies at the Rue Odinot, but the North African colonies did not. Algeria fell under the Ministry of the Interior. Tunisia, and later Morocco, came under the Foreign Ministry at the Quai d'Orsay. Until 1894 the Ministry of Marine and Colonies was not a fully-fledged ministry and, as a result, did not attract the cream of the civil servants; it was badly organised and there was not much coordination between the various departments. The various ministries were jealous of one another, and did not work well together.

Indifference of French cabinets French cabinets were notoriously indifferent to what was going on in Africa. Christopher Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner say that the failure of the successive French cabinets to control colonial policy before the First World War was partly due to 'the constitutional weaknesses of the pre-war Third Republic: transient governments with an average life-expectancy of nine months, a poorly developed sense of cabinet responsibility, and a general preoccupation with domestic politics rather than with foreign policy. Some prime ministers were disinclined to allow their cabinets to consider foreign policy at all.' They go on to say that 'the general indifference of French cabinets to the colonies they ruled was due to something more than their own administrative deficiencies. It also reflected a widespread feeling that the Empire was of only peripheral importance to the affairs of the metropolis ... France, unlike Britain, had a continental identity and saw her vital interests overwhelmingly in continental terms. Not even the most passionate colonialists ever believed that any conquest overseas could fill the gap left by the German seizure of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871.'¹⁰

Supporters of colonial expansion But there were a number of influential Frenchmen who did believe that colonial expansion could help France regain its lost prestige, and that, if it did not take vigorous steps to assert itself, there was a very real danger that it would become a third-rank power. The desire to regain French pride and prestige was particularly strong among army officers, who saw the drive into the West African interior as a means of restoring French greatness. The army, the civil service and those social groups who entered these professions were in the forefront of a vigorous campaign to extend France's colonial frontiers.

Subversion of government decisions An alliance between highly placed expansionist-minded civil servants and army officers serving in Africa frequently sabotaged decisions taken at the top by the government. The men in charge in Africa, in practice if not always in theory, had much freedom of action. The government at home was dependent for information and an analysis of the situation on the man on the spot, and had to make its decisions on what he chose to tell or withhold from them. Military officers intent on extending French boundaries in the Senegal and western Sudan could do so while keeping the French government at home ignorant of what was happening until it was too late to do anything. This was possible because the officers in the field had a core of like-minded officials at home to support them.

Apathy French business interests and the general public were apathetic towards colonial expansion. Algeria and Tunisia together were responsible for as much French trade as the rest

of the French empire combined, while Senegal accounted for over half of France's foreign trade with West Africa. But apart from these areas Africa held few attractions for French business concerns.

Attitudes to empire Among the public there was little interest or pride in the French empire. Even in Britain it was only right at the end of the partitioning process that popular enthusiasm played a significant role, and it was rather that men such as Chamberlain used this emotional spillover to obtain what they wanted, than that this outburst in any way convinced or forced government imperialists to act. But it is nevertheless true that Britons were proud of the empire. As Andrew and Kanya-Forstner write, 'most Englishmen probably did take a pride of some sort in "the Empire on which the sun never sets". The sun never set on the French Empire either, but most Frenchmen did not take pride in it.'¹¹ Part of the reason may be that while most British families had at least one member who was in the 'colonies', few Frenchmen had relatives in Africa. Given this general apathy of government, business interests and the public towards colonial affairs, it is easy to understand how the small dedicated group of men in office in Paris were able to dictate the pace of events by careful management.

Trader pressure on government To what extent were traders in West Africa, or their principals in Europe, able to bring pressure to bear on their governments to take positive action to protect trade? As we saw above, traders did not generally desire government interference, but as conditions in Africa became more unstable, they became less able to solve their problems themselves and more inclined to ask for government help. Because access to the interior was possible in the Niger delta, British traders were able to take steps to secure their interests themselves, with the aid of helpful local consuls, who could commandeer gunboats which could travel up the river. But in other parts of West Africa traders were unable to intervene directly in the interior. Yet the coastal trade was vulnerable to turmoil in the interior, as in the examples of Lagos and Freetown. Merchants and officials called for action here because they said that inter-state conflict was disrupting the flow of goods from the interior to the coast. The concern of the traders was transmitted to authorities at home. Their success depended on the amount of pressure they were able to exercise and the extent to which the politicians were willing to listen. At first the pressure was minimal and, in any case, governments were not enthusiastic about listening.

Attitude of British traders The recession of the mid-1870s did not result in strong pressure from British mercantile groups for government aid in opening up new markets in Africa or the Far East. Business circles were confident that new outlets could be established without government intervention, and any uneasiness felt about French tariff moves disappeared as the British economy passed through an expansionary phase between 1879 and about 1883. When the economy went into a serious depression between 1883 and 1886 concern for their markets appeared on all sides. It was widely believed that production had outrun demand, that more markets would have to be created to solve the problem. But this no longer seemed so easy to do. For some time the French government had been taking action to secure a monopoly for its traders. The pressure for differential tariffs in West Africa came mainly from French metallurgical, textile and chemical industries. Such tariffs were imposed in Senegal in 1877 and the Ivory Coast in 1889. British fears

that they would be excluded from some of their markets was very real, because in 1880 only 32 per cent of British trade with West Africa was with British possessions. The bulk of its trade was in unclaimed areas or territories under the control of other European powers.

German support for traders

Germany too was showing signs of giving its traders official support. In the 1880s the German government gave more protection to its traders, partly as a result of pressure brought to bear by mercantile interests and partly as a result of a tariff-protection campaign by industrialists. Britain and France feared that German moves might result in their exclusion from unclaimed areas. Tariff increases were threatening, and British chambers of commerce and other trading institutions began looking more and more to the government to take some action on their behalf. They did not want to erect tariff barriers, their main aim was to increase the free trading area, not to exclude others; but as their rivals carved out exclusive trading areas, they began to see, as Hynes says, 'that in the final analysis free trade in Africa would be safeguarded only under some form of British protectorate or colony'.¹²

Merchant pressure

The combined threat of tariff barriers, disruption to trade between the coast and the interior caused by instability inland, and the threat of foreign powers taking over the hinterlands of the coastal trading colonies, led to British merchants (though traditionally suspicious of moves to expand the role of government, which they associated with increased regulations and additional taxes) pressing for a more active policy. What is more, they also displayed an unaccustomed willingness to accept higher taxation in order to pay for action on their behalf. For some time governments took little notice of these pleas. In signing a convention with France in 1889, the British government acquiesced in both Sierra Leone and the Gambia being surrounded by French territory and cut off from their hinterlands. By the early 1890s British business was determined not to let this happen elsewhere, and chambers of commerce backed up the calls of the traders and began to exercise pressure on the government. By this time the government was more inclined to act, not because it wished to protect trade as such, but because it was more aware that instability in the interior could create a situation in which a rival might act and cut off the trade to the coast.

The influence of the men on the spot has often featured prominently in explanations for the partitioning. Although 'these men undoubtedly played a part, and in some cases a very important part, in determining the timing and nature of the partition of West Africa', writes Hopkins, 'their responsibility for causing it was of much the same order as that of the unfortunate Archduke Franz Ferdinand, whose assassination sparked off the First World War. The central problem is to clarify the circumstances which enabled these prominent politicians and soldiers to make a mark on history where others before them, men of similar ambitions, such as Faidherbe and Glover, had been frustrated'.¹³ Why were governments prepared to listen to them at that stage whereas they had earlier taken little notice of them? This is the crux of the matter. At one level, in the days of Faidherbe there was not much international tension about – European powers did not feel sufficiently threatened to move in quickly in response to a move by another. This changed later in the century.

British government action In the case of Britain, although the British government became more willing to heed the pleas of traders and others it was only because it perceived other, wider interests that it wished to pursue. But generally the British government was loath to assume responsibility itself and between 1886 and 1891 it granted charters to British companies (to Goldie's Royal Niger Company, to William Mackinnon's Imperial British East Africa Company, to Cecil Rhodes's British South Africa Company) to administer vast areas at no cost to the government. In the early 1890s it became more willing to take decisive action in the interior. And it was even later, around the mid-1890s, that, under the leadership of Joseph Chamberlain, Britain became the major colonial aggressor.

PRESTIGE, DIPLOMATIC AND STRATEGIC FACTORS

Reasons for annexation In the final analysis it was the government that sanctioned the annexation of a territory. Why did governments do so? Was it because of economic factors, the pleas of traders or missionaries, or instability in Africa? Were they forced into this position by overzealous army officers in Africa? These all played a part, but in the end the decision was taken in terms of how the government perceived the overall interests of the country. To argue along these lines tends to reduce the force of the economic argument. Although the economic argument is a powerful one, there is a great body of historians who reject economic arguments for the partition of Africa. According to them, what was new about the New Imperialism was that economic considerations took second place to political and strategic motives – the major powers were preoccupied with questions of national security, military power and prestige.

Rivalries in Europe Although there are major variations in what this group of historians believe, they stress that the partitioning of Africa was the outcome of fears and rivalries in Europe. In the 1950s David Thomson expressed this view in a statement that even in the 1990s is widely accepted. He wrote that 'political and strategic, rather than economic or financial considerations, governed the behaviour of the great powers in the colonial field. Even where strong economic considerations existed ... such considerations were kept entirely subordinate to political and strategic necessities or merely to issues of national prestige and dignity. Apprehensions about national security and the quest for reliable alliances so engaged the attention of the governments of most of the powers that their decisions, whether to pursue active imperialist policies or to moderate their policies of expansion and settle colonial conflicts with other powers, were determined first by political calculations and only secondarily by economic ... Only rarely were the actions of governments directly guided by purely economic motives. International relations were conducted mainly by diplomats of the old school ... Their despatches show very little interest in economic conditions or social forces ... but only a profound absorption in the skilled game of power politics. Enshrouded in suspicions, alert to every sign of subtle shifts in the balance of power, they tirelessly and purposefully pursued the interests of their countries as they understood them; and they understood them almost exclusively in terms of alliances and counteralliances, manoeuvres and bargains, always with the single purpose of enhancing national security and power.'¹⁴

Disraeli's motives In a short analysis of Benjamin Disraeli, C. C. Eldridge says much the same thing. Earlier we quoted Disraeli's statement in the early 1850s that colonies were millstones about the nation's neck. It has often been said that when Disraeli was later prime minister of England (1874–1880), he abandoned this view and became an ardent imperialist. Eldridge argues, however, that in the 1850s Disraeli was not a bitter opponent of colonies any more than he was a vigorous expansionist in the 1870s. 'He was not interested in colonies as such or in British expansion in the tropics ... He was more interested in the empire as a source of power and prestige. It was the part the possession of empire could play in assisting Great Britain's role in world affairs that concerned him most ... he was solely concerned with utilising the British possessions to increase British power and influence. The empire of England was the visible expression of the power of England in the affairs of the world.'¹⁵

Influence of merchants on policy Also with regard to Britain, Robinson and Gallagher write that 'Foreign policy was a matter for an *élite*, and they conducted it according to their own view of national interest and world policy.'¹⁶ Austen believes that the balance in favour of taking action in Africa was tilted 'by the influence of the sectors in the European economy which calculated their returns in the form of long-term systematic benefits rather than immediate private profits. The representatives of these sectors were not primarily merchants or manufacturers but, rather, abolitionists, ideologues or public servants.'¹⁷ Austen does not believe that the requests of merchant bodies for government action had any real influence on the government.

Significance of missionaries Although the missionaries, who went out to places such as Lagos and Uganda and Nyasaland, played an important part in their annexation, our appreciation of their significance should be tempered by a sober realisation that the British government, for example, was not averse to encouraging the idea that it was taking action on behalf of missionaries or against the slave trade, since it could be sure that action in these worthy causes would be approved by a large number of Britons. But even in Central East Africa, where the missionary influence was strongest and economic arguments weakest, the British government intervened not primarily because of the missionaries but because it saw that other certain national interests could be advanced. Despite the fact that Salisbury would have lost the support of Presbyterians in Scotland had he allowed the missions to come under the Portuguese, he would have let it happen and bought off the Portuguese with this land in return for Portuguese recognition of Mashonaland and Matabeleland as a British sphere, had Rhodes not come along and offered to take over the entire region at no cost to the British taxpayer.

Portugal and prestige In the case of Portugal, some sort of 'prestige' was obviously very important. The old Portuguese empire meant a lot to many of the ruling Portuguese families; to them the colonies were visible proof of Portuguese initiative and drive, the legacy of a proud tradition that could not simply be swept aside. It was largely a sentimental reaction. The Portuguese aristocrats believed that it was only through colonies that a small nation such as Portugal could ever be great again. So, although the colonies were going through a bad time, it was important to keep them and try to expand them. They had a dream of linking up Mozambique and Angola.

- Italian attitudes to colonies** The same applies to Italy. From the beginning of the partition Italy had set its sights on the creation of an African empire in the tradition of the ancient Roman empire. The site of ancient Carthage in Tunisia had an obvious emotional appeal, but when this was whisked away before Italy's eyes by France in 1881, it focused its sights on Libya and northeast Africa.
- French prestige** Prestige as a factor in the partition of Africa has usually been associated very much with France. It was prestige in 1881–1882 that governed French actions in Madagascar. British operations there did not harm French economic interests, but the way that the British intended organising matters with no reference at all to French 'historic influence', as if the French did not count in the Indian Ocean, angered the French. Prestige was again all-important in Tunisia, where to be ousted by the Italians would have been a great setback to a France struggling with its image after the 1870–1871 defeat. Prestige was also evident in French activity in what became the French Congo. Until Britain reacted to this French acquisition by signing a treaty with Portugal which aimed at cutting the French colony off from the sea, French imperialism on the Congo 'had been little more than an exercise in public relations'.¹⁸ In the case of the French Congo, public opinion was whipped up and public pressure was exerted on the government to act. But this was somewhat of an exception and it was only late in the scramble that public opinion became fired with imperialistic fervour.
- Balance of power** The question of prestige is very much tied up with international rivalry and competition among the great powers in the late nineteenth century. Alignments and the balance of power were so finely poised that even minor changes such as the acquisition of more African territory were likely to elicit a response and a countermove from another European power; even a minor diplomatic setback could be taken to reflect a change in a power's standing in the world. France, battling to keep its major power status, was extremely sensitive about such setbacks, while for the newly united Germany, success outside the traditional political arena of Prussia was very important as an expression of its new-found power. Until the 1880s Britain did not react so badly to minor defeats, but from about 1884, when new and old rivals challenged its ascendancy, it could no longer afford to be so relaxed about its position. By 1898 Britain was so concerned about its credibility as a great power that it was prepared to threaten war in Europe over Fashoda, which was of very little intrinsic worth.
- French fear of British economic expansion** Hopkins believes that the adoption of a policy of imperialism by France in the 1870s was due to a realisation that it was falling further and further behind Britain as far as economic progress and global influence were concerned. Not only was this gap growing instead of decreasing, but in Europe German industrial and military growth was leaving France behind. France had been ousted by Britain time and again. It was defeated in 1815, a defeat which played a large role in retarding its economic development in the nineteenth century. 'Since the victors of Waterloo then pressed the French into declaring the slave trade illegal, it is not surprising that France viewed abolition as the final move in a British plot to destroy what was left of her Atlantic commerce. Any illusions that France had recovered her former power by the middle of the nineteenth century, at least in Europe, were shattered by the defeat which she suffered at the hands

of Germany in 1870.¹⁹ The basis, then, for French imperialism in the late nineteenth century was fear that its ambitions would once again be frustrated by British economic expansion, led by Manchester textiles.

When in 1884 Goldie bought out two French companies that were trading on the Niger delta, this was the final proof, if any were needed, that France was not going to be able to make any inroads on British supremacy by engaging in commercial activity. Political and military activity became the watchwords.

Congress of Berlin There is no shortage of theories about why France entered the partition scene. Most of them have to do with prestige or diplomacy. The question of international rivalry is bound up with the issue of the balance of power. F. H. Hinsley takes the Congress of Berlin in 1878 as an important point of departure in this argument, when Russian and British rivalries in the Balkans and the Ottoman empire brought Europe to the brink of war. They averted that crisis, but after that they played out their power politics not in Europe but in Africa and Asia. Conflicting interests in Africa threatened European peace and forced them to carve up Africa in order to keep the European peace.²⁰

French diplomatic position Sanderson spells out the significance of the Congress of Berlin in more precise terms. Historians have said that it was Britain's overwhelming strength in the first half of the century that deterred other powers from challenging it in Africa. Sanderson implies, however, that British success in deterring France from making advances in Africa in the first three quarters of the century was not only because of British economic predominance, and that one of the reasons why it was able to do so was that France did not have the diplomatic support of any European powers. It stood alone against Britain. Had it enjoyed the support of another power the coastal partition of Africa probably would have occurred much earlier.

France as key to balance of power Sanderson develops this theme by saying that the French diplomatic position changed dramatically in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin. France suddenly became the key to the balance of power in the Near East. In the aftermath of the Turkish defeat at the hands of Russia in 1877–1878 France's refusal to align itself with Russia meant that Austria and Britain were able to halt Russian ambitions in the Balkans without calling upon the help of Germany. Bismarck was very grateful for this. It meant he did not have to choose between denying support for Austria and openly confronting Russia. So Bismarck and Britain both courted France, and encouraged it to take Tunisia. But France's transformation went beyond this. It remained the key so long as Russia continued to have ambitions in the Balkans and the Levant. Salisbury reacted to this new situation by restraining any British activity in Africa that might annoy France.²¹ France's diplomatic position was further strengthened in 1884 when Bismarck encouraged French adventures in Africa in order to further his own plans.

Doctrine of paramountcy France had a motive to upset the status quo in West Africa, and it had room to manoeuvre because Britain was in a vulnerable position. In many areas where Britain had not established formal control but was the only power with influence, it was becoming more eager to assert a sort of quasi-legal right as 'paramount power' to stop others from carving out spheres of influence. This paramountcy seems to have origin-

ated in West Africa where it was a useful device for temporarily extending and applying control, without having to go so far as to assume the burden of formal empire. Paramountcy was used in the Niger delta, where Britain had no formal possessions, but was backed by the availability of armed force. In 1875–1876 Lord Carnarvon hoped that the French would recognise British paramountcy along the entire West African coastline from Morocco to Gabon, with the exception of Senegal. As early as 1876 Carnarvon wanted a Monroe Doctrine to apply to East and Central Africa as well. Originally this paramountcy was asserted in areas where there were no other powers involved, but later it also became a doctrine to keep other powers from establishing spheres of their own. If paramountcy had been established, no other power had the right to intrude there. As originally envisaged paramountcy applied to the coast, but it was not long before some British policy-makers were ready to extend the idea of paramountcy to vast areas of the interior, where no European power at all had any influence.²²

**Britain's
vulnera-
bility**

British commercial supremacy had been so unquestioned that there seemed no point in taking over unannexed areas. The result was that Britain made no attempt to formalise this informal empire – had it done so France would have been in danger of being permanently confined to Algeria and Senegal. There were thus many areas over which the exercise of power was informal. This made Britain particularly vulnerable. Its great strength was in fact a potential weakness!

**Emer-
gent
role of
Ger-
many**

Austen too sees the partition as being linked to the relative status of the powers, and he focuses in particular on Germany. The diplomacy of the partition must be seen in the context of European developments, in particular the unification of Germany. 'Pervading the minds of even the most lofty diplomatists were powerful, if demonstrably unrealistic, anxieties concerning the links between great-power status and economic imperialism. The new powers, both Germany and Italy, identified the earlier economic ascendancy of Britain with the substance of empire rather than the ideology of free trade. The older powers, Britain, France, and most anxiously of all, Portugal, saw themselves humiliated or, at the very least, overshadowed by the emergent role not only of Germany but also the massive United States and Russia. African colonies represented a surviving economic asset which, if not critical in the glories of the past, might now be expanded to assure meaningful status in the future. Within this general context of intense and multi-faceted international competition, the economic rationale behind African colonization was to a considerable extent pre-emptive – designed to assure access to potential rather than actual markets and commodities, as well as trade routes to the always larger prize of Asia.'²³

Others too have seen Germany as important. The partition began as a contest between Britain and France, and by the late 1870s there was no other discernible pattern that could have been expected. At first it was only the British and French in Africa, besides the moribund Portuguese. By the 1870s King Leopold of Belgium was busy carving out a sphere of influence in the centre of the continent, but his ability actually to create a state here ruled by himself, seemed hardly likely until Bismarck suddenly took an interest in African affairs around 1883. It was Bismarck who finally destroyed the comfortable informal empire that Britain had relied upon to keep rivals out. In explain-

ing Bismarck's interest one has to return to Europe and see how the Iron Chancellor hoped to further his plans for a European balance of power by encouraging France to oppose Britain and also to help put an end to British pretensions to exclude others from Africa by the exercise of 'paramountcy'. Prestige was also a factor in Bismarck's actions, which were in part a response to the arrogant and indifferent manner in which Britain treated his actions in Angra Pequena, which was economically of very little worth.²⁴

Collapse of British ascendancy

Sanderson stresses that the basic fact to remember is that '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.'²⁵

Interweaving of factors

We started this chapter by hinting at the complexity of the concept of the New Imperialism and the reasons for the partition of Africa. The following quotation from C. C. Eldridge which confirms the many-sided nature of the partitioning is a fitting end to the chapter. He writes that: 'Commercial rivalry, internal crises and power vacuums in existing colonies and spheres of influence, and local friction between individual powers on the periphery of empire explain much, especially when seen as the culmination of relations over a longer period.' But he nevertheless believes that it is 'in Europe that the impulses for expansion must primarily be sought: European political and commercial rivalry electrified the atmosphere and led to large-scale partition. And in Europe, political and economic motives, in varying degree, dominated the policies of most European powers. Only towards the end of the century did "emotional" factors become important when imperialism became (or was made) a popular creed with the masses. In general, the economic motive entered everybody's calculations but it was frequently subordinated to considerations of power politics, prestige, strategy or even the overwhelming demands for intervention from the periphery.'²⁶

Notes

- 1 J. Lonsdale, 'The European scramble and conquest in African history', in R. Oliver & G. N. Sanderson (eds), *The Cambridge history of Africa*, vol. 6, *From 1870 to 1905*, p. 681.
- 2 L. H. Gann, 'Reflections on imperialism and the scramble for Africa', in L. H. Gann & P. Duignan (eds), *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960*, vol. 1, pp. 127-128.
- 3 B. M. Ratcliffe, 'The economics of the partition of Africa: Methods and recent research trends', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 15, 1981, p. 18.
- 4 Gann, 'Reflections on imperialism', p. 114.
- 5 R. A. Austen, *African economic history: Internal development and external dependency*, p. 112.
- 6 See A. G. Hopkins, 'African economic history: The first twenty-five years' (Review article), *Journal of African History*, 30, 1989, pp. 157-163.
- 7 Austen, *African economic history*, p. 113.
- 8 D. K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and empire 1830-1914*, p. 476.

- 9 Quoted by R. Robinson & J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The official mind of imperialism*, p. 224.
- 10 C. M. Andrew & A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *France overseas: The Great War and the climax of French imperial expansion*, pp. 12–13.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 12 W. G. Hynes, *The economics of empire: Britain, Africa and the New Imperialism 1870–95*, p. 57.
- 13 A. G. Hopkins, *An economic history of West Africa*, p. 164.
- 14 D. Thomson, *Europe since Napoleon*, pp. 494, 522–523.
- 15 C. C. Eldridge, *Victorian imperialism*, pp. 104–105.
- 16 Robinson & Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, p. 378.
- 17 Austen, *African economic history*, p. 114.
- 18 G. N. Sanderson, 'The European partition of Africa: Origins and dynamics', in *The Cambridge history of Africa*, vol. 6, p. 139.
- 19 Hopkins, *African economic history*, p. 158.
- 20 G. N. Ozoigwe, 'European partition and conquest of Africa: An overview', in A. A. Boahen (ed.), *Unesco general history of Africa*, vol. 7, *Africa under colonial domination, 1880–1935*, p. 24.
- 21 Sanderson, 'The European partition', pp. 121–122.
- 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 119–120.
- 23 Austen, *African economic history*, p. 116.
- 24 Sanderson, 'The European partition', p. 138.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- 26 Eldridge, *Victorian imperialism*, p. 145.