Africa, Resistance and World War I
Resistance to Colonialism

Whether Colonial Rule established through:

- military conquest
- negotiation with local chiefs
- treaties
- or some combination thereof . . .

Within a few years all Colonial regimes faced resistance.
Resistance to Colonialism

Abd al-Qadir -
- Algeria
(1832-1847)
Resistance to Colonialism

- Samori Touré, French West Africa (Islamic *jihad*) – (1882 – 98)

Muhammad Ahmad Al-Mahdi ‘Jihad’ (from 1870s; d. 1885): established Mahdist State
British-Egyptian Sudan (1881-98)

British Gen. Gordon – beheaded Khartoum (1885)
Resistance to Colonialism

Sefu,
son of Tippu Tip,
Slave Trader (worked with Zanzibar Sultan)-
Belgian Congo
(1892-4)
Resistance to Colonialism

Shona, Ndebele (1896-7)
British Southern Rhodesia

The spirit mediums, Nehanda and Kaguvi, in prison before they were hanged for their roles as ‘instigators’ of the risings.

(Frederikse, None but Ourselves, 42)
Resistance to Colonialism

Herero, Nama
--German
South West Africa
(1904-7)
Resistance to Conquest

Bambatha (Zulu)
--British South Africa (1906):

Bambata's Head.
Original negative broken by order of the authorities.
Parts found and reproduced.
Resistance to Colonialism

‘Maji Maji’ – German East Africa (1905-7)
Resistance to Colonialism

Tuareg Revolt – Sahara, French West Africa (1916-17)

(photo 1906)
Resistance to Colonialism

‘Women’s War’
(‘Aba Women’s Riots’)
--British Southern Nigeria (1929)
Resistance to Colonialism

Collaboration or Resistance? Not Dichotomy

Muslim areas:

- some leaders saw acceptance of ‘state’, even Christian state, as preferable to ‘statelessness’, warfare, chaos
- Islam ‘religion of the book’, needs environment wherein Islamic law can be respected and implemented: key to living as ‘good Muslim’
- others actively resisted: *jihad* or ‘holy war’ against Christians
Resistance to Colonialism

Islamic *jihad* most successful form resistance:
- ‘holy war’ promised rewards (immediate, afterlife)
- Islam basis for state (*caliph*) and society
- taxation system gave financial support for long-term resistance, state building
- West Africa/Sudan: 19th c. characterized by Islamic state building – new armies, states well positioned to turn against infidel Christian colonizers

Fear of Islamic Resistance remained throughout Colonial era in French, British territories
In 1914, Europe went to war.

Principal ‘foes’ also principal colonial powers:
‘Entente Powers’ (Allied Forces): Britain, France

‘Central Powers’: Germany
[Belgium initially neutral, ‘joined’ Allies after being invaded by Germany]

Colonial presence in Africa complicated, as well as potentially contributed to, Allied War Effort.

Could Britain, France count on support, loyalty of colonies – especially those bordering German colonies?
Africa and The World: WWI

German Colonies in Africa 1914

Colonial Africa Circa Late 1800's
- Independent States
- English Colony
- Italian Colony
- French Colony
- Portuguese Colony
- Spanish Colony
- Belgian Colony
- German Colony
- Boar Colonial Territory
Africa and The World: WWI

WWI in Africa, Middle East, Europe
Africa and The World: WWI

Africa: extension European Battlefield
Between August 1914 – November 1918
battles fought in:

- Cameroon
- Togoland
- South West Africa
- German East Africa
- Northern Rhodesia
- Portuguese East Africa
- Angola
- Liberia
Africa and The World: WWI

Africa: also recruiting terrain for Europe between 1914-1918

- slaves, soldiers, porters drafted
  [eg. story Rashid bin Hassani, ‘slave’, Resources’]
- French conscripts drawn from all territories
- fought in Europe, Asia as well as Africa
Africa and The World: WWI

Africa: material support for ‘war effort’

-ports like Dakar (Senegal), Accra (Gold Coast), Mombasa (Kenya) serviced ships
-all transport services (sea, rail) turned to war needs
-Africa one large ‘resource’
-foodstuffs diverted to war effort
-imports food, manufactured goods rare
-shortages severe
Africa and The World: WWI

War effort changed economy, demography:
- encouraged development secondary industry consumer goods (East, South Africa)
- servicing new industries, port cities deprived rural areas (fuel as well as goods)
- pulled, pushed rural populations into cities
- rapid urbanization (with attendant problems)
‘World’ War:
- world-wide movement troops meant world-wide movement disease influenza pandemic 1918
- more Africans lost to disease than to war/battles
- Gold Coast (West Africa) at least 100,000
- British Somaliland an estimated 7% African population
- especially virulent strain Sierra Leone
Africa and The World: WWI

Especially virulent strain in Sierra Leone:

- West African troops mixed with British, Australian, New Zealand, East African and South African troops moving in and out of European Theatre
- young adults most vulnerable
- killed more victims than any previous virus: 3% entire African population dead within a month
- Senegal (through port Dakar) similarly affected

Colonial efforts to contain: all ineffectual
Africa and The World: WWI

Consequences both short and long-term:

- demographic impact war, disease varied
- accentuated material deprivation
- accentuated ‘development differences’ regions, urban-rural

Fighting with Europeans, seeing Europeans killed, shaped African response to colonialism:

- fed expectations of ‘rewards’ for war effort: soon disillusioned
Ideals of WWI: freedom, democracy for all!

Woodrow Wilson’s 14-points:

V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.
Disillusion and Disappointment quickly led to more Resistance in all parts of the continent:

- nationalist parties emerged demanding ‘power’ ranging from increased representation to full independence

- disappointment deriving from WWI critical factor shaping Africa’s role in Decolonization
Result of Allied Victory and German defeat (entrenched in Treaty of Versailles) left Colonial Map of Africa redrawn:

- South West Africa came under rule of South Africa
- Cameroun and Togo split between British and French
- German East Africa became Tanganyika under British rule
In principle, all ex-German territories were under protection of League of Nations:

- European powers acted as ‘trustees’
  [see ‘Mandated Africa’, Readings]

For Africans, mandated power was no different than full Colonial Rule.