Yesterday's Maps, Today's Tragedies

Richard A. Lobban
Rhode Island College, rlobban@ric.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/facultypublications
Part of the African History Commons, and the Anthropology Commons

Citation
A T T I T U D E S and consciousness in African art are much shaped by the borders between its nations, and other research on the history of the cartography of Africa-in times as early as the fourteenth century-is a part, but much of what constitutes its present and past. The immense prescolar history of Africa seems different from today. Probably one of the oldest maps known shows the crescent-shaped continent of Africa, heavily during the age of the Egyptian pharaohs. It shows the forms us not only about the continent's Africa shows us maps of Africa is possible river, whose source was unknown. Three-year 'voyage before known to the Greeks, but was forgotten by medieval Europe, and was not rediscovered until the famous head of the Library of Alexandria. His solar calculations in that with great precision. The knowledge of medieval Africa, in a coat and the Pepper Coast, the Portuguese knew West Africa as the Grain zone, so south the eight centuries, however, that European explorers began the trek to Africa's vast continent and with no African's role, the knowledge were to launch a new age in Things like the Moon were identified. The next major contribution to history initiated the partition of Africa, in a century, Africa was not free of conflict before the winter of its separate colonial experience under Belgians hoped "Rhodesias" were selected for white settler rule and its separate colonial experience under Belgium's, and in its separate colonial experience under Britain's. The splitting off of a "Spanish" portion of Morocco liberated the Western Sahara and great land of life, as it was near neighboring. The French wish or claim Algeria as an organic part of European blood until the nation finally gained its independence. The 30-year struggle is fitting, with its separate colonial experience under Italian rule, in another example of national formation over a boundary conflict. The challenge in POW and Biafra, now spilling into the elections, is of interest from capital policies and boundaries that sought to the Tutsi and Hutu. The colonial Belgians hoped to benefit from the division between the people. The nations of east, central and southern Africa (especially Kenya, "Kenia", and South Africa) have been under various political and international racism. In each case, fierce and once wars recast, as it became clear that the colonial boundaries did little to stop conflicts, and fiercely tried to foster them. And much remains to work done regarding the borders of South Africa's "Bantustans" before nation-building can take deep root in that long-transported land. For many years, the policy of the Organization of African Unity was to recognize, and failure to, the imperfect and inherited colonial boundaries. Although these times did not fit comfortably on African terms, they provided a relief vendetta and a sense of detente. However, for better or worse, African terms appear that some borders in Africa are being redrawn. The Parten in the maintenance of the country. Border's hand already discovered in its practical service that colonial frontiers make little sense. The post-colonial era has already seen numerous shifts in the new names of African nations, such as Burundi, Zaire, Ethiopia and Benin, and now that many countries on the continent are shifting from multi-party democracies, one can imagine new referenda in the 21st Century that may redefine African borders as expressions of national re-structuring. What should be the policy of intermediation around these boundary changes? Will future maps of Africa be redrawn by processes similar to those in eastern Europe and central Asia today? Those interested in preventing the recurrence and circumventing the perpetuation of frontier problems in Africa are invited to participate in the discussion on the history of Africa as seen through maps. This show runs through the Rhode Island Historical Society Museum, 202 Thames St., America Inside the picture, at the corner of Providence. Call (401) 751-3490 for more information.

RICHARD A. LOBBA is a frequent traveler and sometime resident of Africa. As well as a professor of anthropolo­gy and African studies at Rhode Island College and president of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society.