



“Colonial Legacies & Gender Equity in Kenyan Coffee”

By Erika Koss, August 2020

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A presentation for the IDS Research Seminar Series

Quick Quiz for the Chat

- ◇ How many countries in Africa produce coffee in the 21st century



My Academic Contribution?

- ◆ First time in Kenya, four months summer 1994
- ◆ Barista in San Diego, California
- ◆ MA in English from San Diego State University MA thesis from Northeastern University focused on Rwanda & Coffee
- ◆ Authorized Trainer for Specialty Coffee Association
- ◆ PhD candidate in International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS, Canada
- ◆ Research Associate in IDS at University of Nairobi, lived in Nairobi, February 2019 to August 2020
 - ◆ My talk in this research series last June.



Coffee Profits

\$200
Billion/year
Global Coffee
Value

\$20
Billion/year
Green coffee
exports value

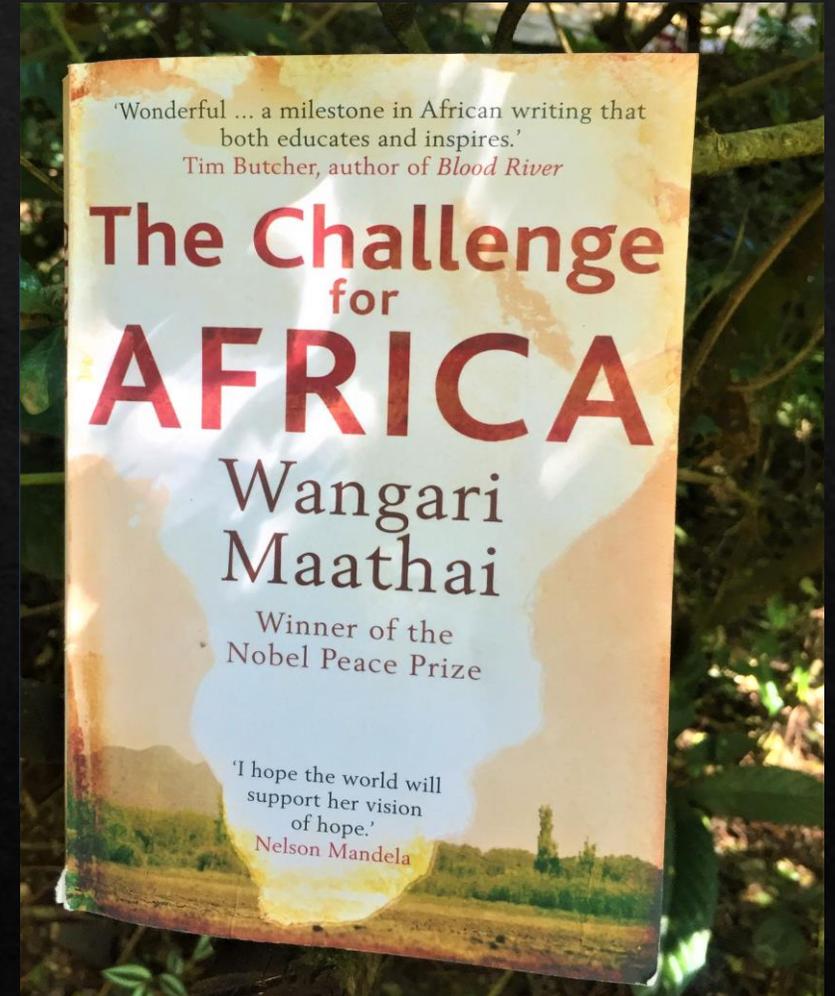
Less than 10% stays in
coffee producing countries,
more than 70 globally

Data from <https://www.hivos.org/assets/2018/06/Coffee-Barometer-2018.pdf>

Post-Colonialism / After Independence

“By and large, newly independent nations [in Africa] made no efforts to change the inherited colonial systems of governance, even though they had been designed, principally, to facilitate the continued exploitation of human and natural resources of the colonies for the benefit of the colonial motherland.”

(from Chapter 2, *A Legacy of Woes*, page 29)



Summary of Kenyan Coffee (2015)

- ◆ Agriculture – 34% of Kenya’s GDP (Salami et. al 2010)
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, 50%+ are women
- ◆ Coffee – 95% exported to Europe, USA, Asia
- ◆ Coffee – 15% of employment in ag sector (2011)
- ◆ 700,000 small holder farmers
- ◆ ‘Average’ farm size is 0.25 hectare
- ◆ “Farmers face greatest diversity of risk”
(Morris et. al, 2015: 76)



◆ Image, Erika with Gloria of Sakami Coffee in TransNzoia

“Colonial Legacies & Gender Policy & Practice in Kenya’s Coffee Sector”

My Core Questions (REVISED):

- ◆(1) Does colonialism and its legacy play a role in facilitating or hindering efforts to promote gender equity in the Kenya coffee sector?
- ◆(2) What is the 21st century role of the Kenyan state in facilitating or hindering efforts to address gender equity in the coffee industry?;
- ◆(3) How effective are efforts to build gender equity in the Kenyan coffee industry at the farm level (i.e. as facilitated by international or local nongovernmental organizations)?
- ◆(4) In looking at Kenya comparatively, globally but with specific emphasis on its African neighbors, what lessons can be learned from the case of Kenyan coffee to advance effective policy solutions to build gender equity for the future?



Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

- ◆ Coffee & Its History (Colonial History & Postcolonial Theory)
- ◆ Coffee & Gender (Feminist Theory)
- ◆ Coffee & the State (Political Economy of Coffee)



Methodology

- ◆ Literature Review & Documentary Analysis, including archival research at UN Archives, JFK library, and Kenya National Archives
- ◆ Interviews = 75 with individuals in or involved in Kenya coffee
 - ◆ (1) open-ended or semi-structured with policy leaders & key informants
 - ◆ (2) informal interviews and/or focus groups with coffee farmers
 - ◆ Counties of Nairobi, Mombasa, Nyeri, Kiambu, Meru, Embu, Kisii, Kericho, Nandi, Kisumu, and Trans Nzoia.
- ◆ Participant Observation at Global Conferences



Postcolonialism Literature Review

Works Highlighted are & will be

How Europe Underdeveloped Africa by Walter Rodney
(1972)

Decolonising the Mind by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986)

Discourse on Colonialism by Aimé Césaire (1950)

The Wretched of the Earth by Franz Fanon (1961)

Orientalism by Edward Said (1978)



By courtesy of Public Relations Dept., Tanganyika

(a) Coffee being taken to grading and marketing centre, Kilimanjaro Mt., Tanganyika Territory

(b) Coffee at delivery centre, Kilimanjaro Mt., Tanganyika Territory

Tanganyika, Kenya, Tanzania, 1920
Image courtesy of Kenya National Archives

The Berlin Conference, 1884-5

“Carving Africa like a Cake”

~ partitioning of Africa, establishing rules to amicably divide resources among the Western countries at the expense of African people.

~ 14 nations present with France, Germany, Great Britain, and Portugal were the major players.

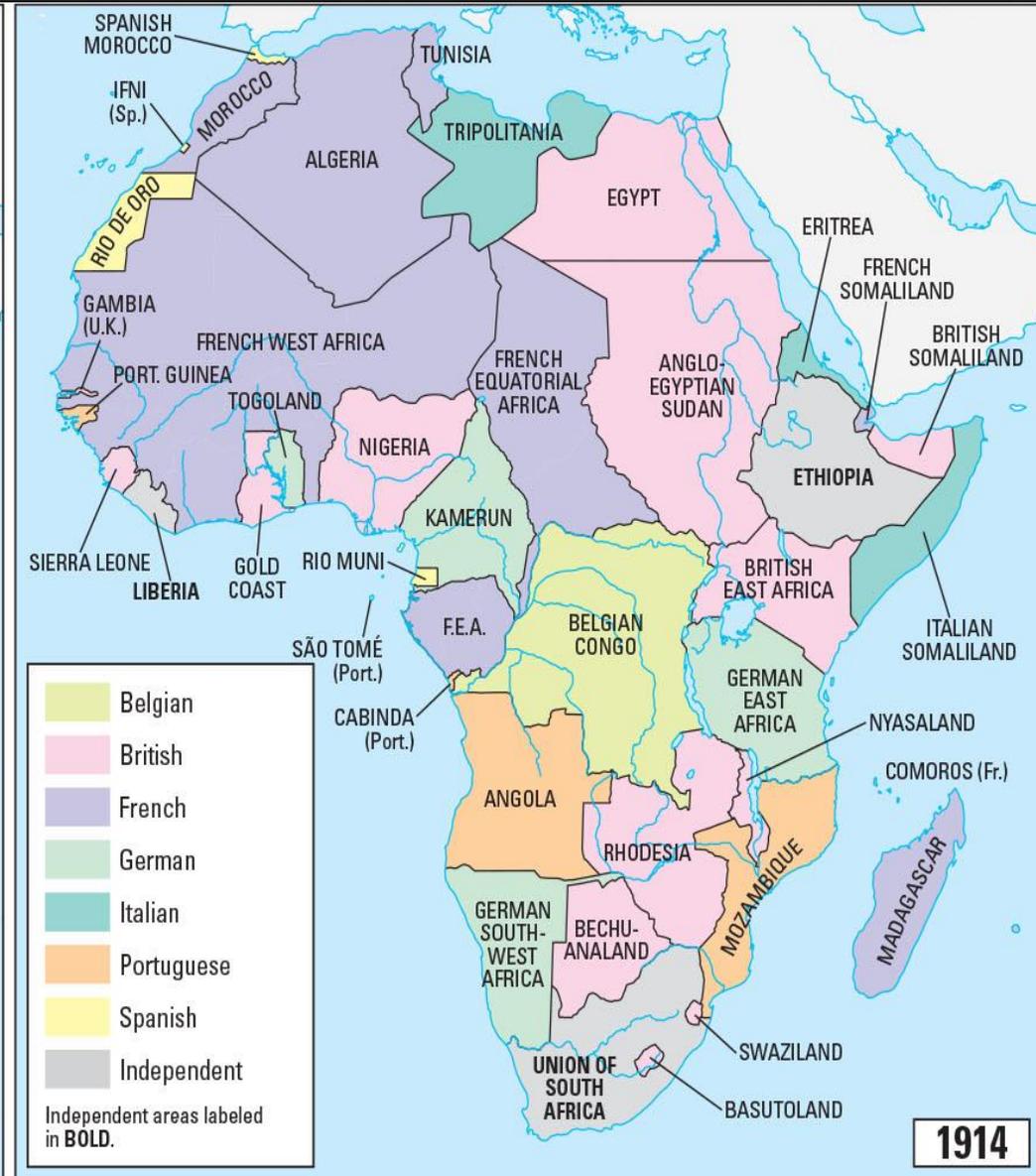
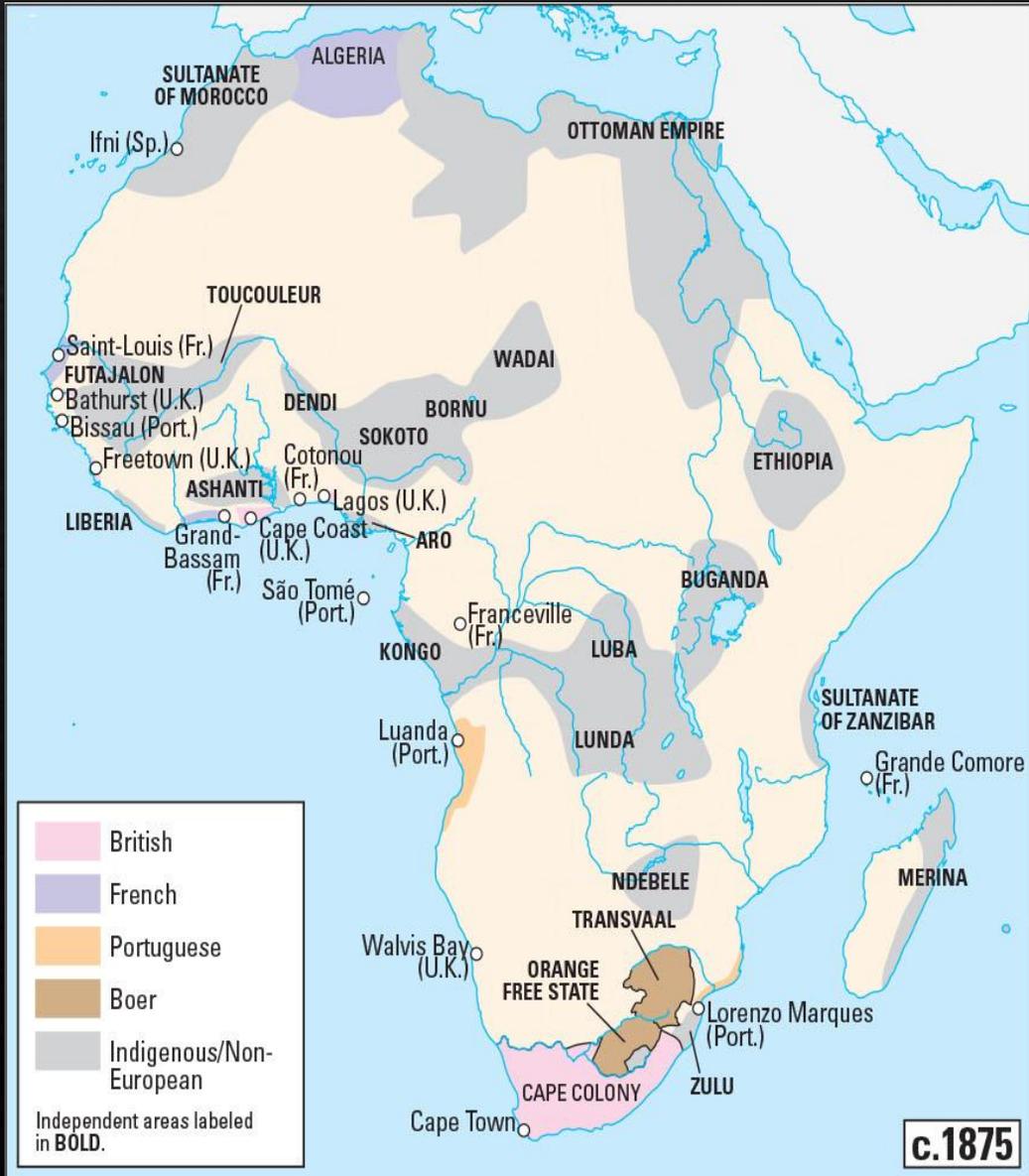
~ NO AFRICANS were present / NO African states represented.



Source of image

<https://historiesofcatastrophicdreaming.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/post-scramble-for-africa.jpg>

On Left, c. 1875 . . . On Right, 1914, Source of map: Modern Geography Textbook



Postcolonialism and Coffee Literature

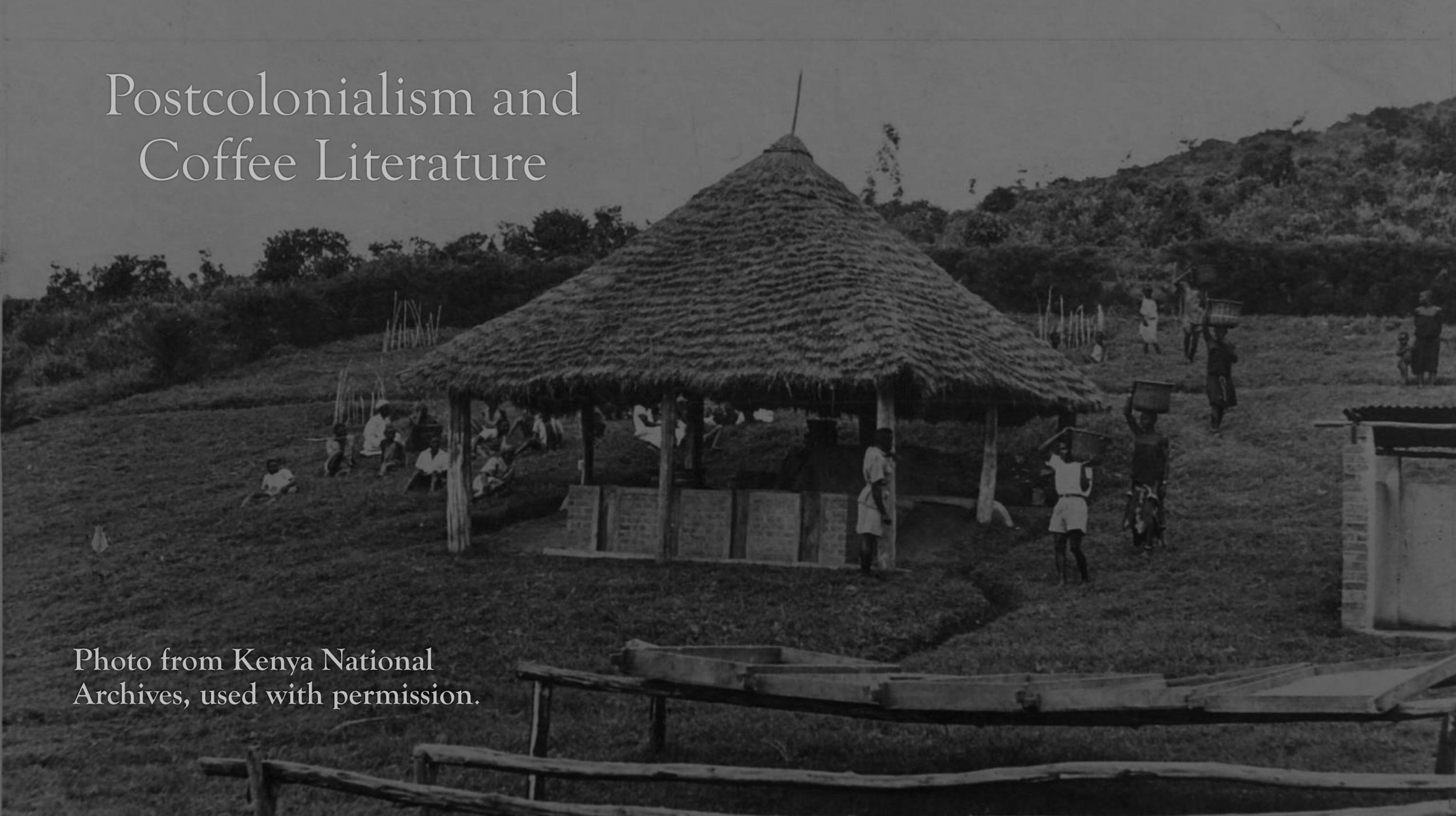
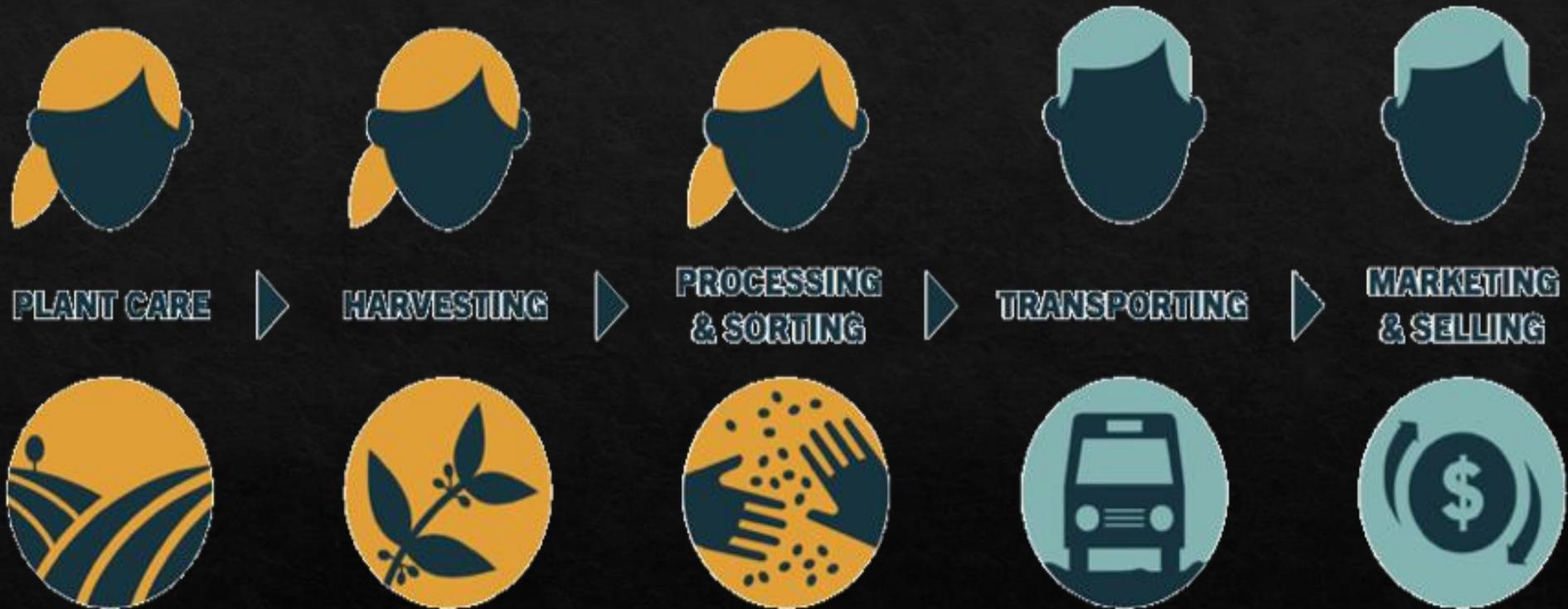


Photo from Kenya National
Archives, used with permission.

Gender & Coffee Research Findings based on all interviews



Analysis of Kenyan women in COFFEE

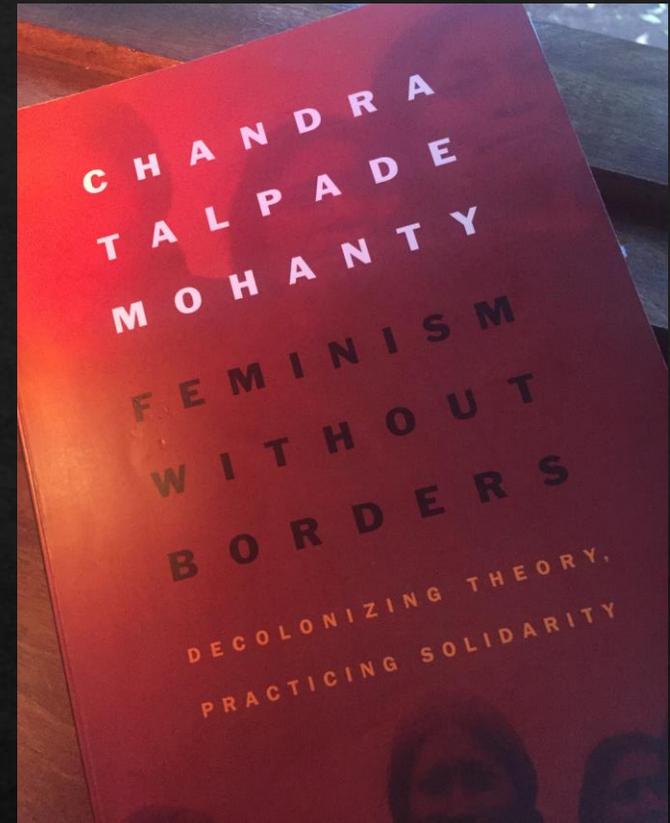
“Coffee is actually a crop for the whole family and not necessarily a man’s crop as generally perceived. Gender roles in the communities show that male heads of households only act as the preferred trustees of the crop on behalf of the whole household. In the event that the male household head is no longer there to discharge this duty due to old age, sickness or demise then the trustee role passes onto the female household head. The women are responsible for the day-to-day wellbeing of the households: balancing the family food basket and ensuring sufficiency in their daily food needs” (Morris et. al, 2015: 80).

The “DOUBLE BURDEN” is real in 2020.

“Under Western Eyes: Feminist
Scholarship and Colonial
Discourses Chandra Talpade
Mohanty’s 1986 influential
journal article



Kimberlé Crenshaw, professor of
law at UCLA
& Columbia Law School, who
coined critical race theory &
intersectionality in 1989.





The International Coffee Organization estimates in their 2018 report, “Gender Equality in the Coffee Sector,” that “between 20% and 30% of coffee farms are female-operated and up to 70% of labour in coffee production is provided by women, depending on the region” (ICO 2018, 16-17). Yet I have not been able to locate data from Kenya that disaggregates how many of its 700,000 coffee farmers are women.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

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Image, Erika, Cecilia, & Mbula in Seattle, Global Coffee Expo, 2018