



-1949

1950-59

1960

1961-64

1965-69

1970-75

1976-79

1980+

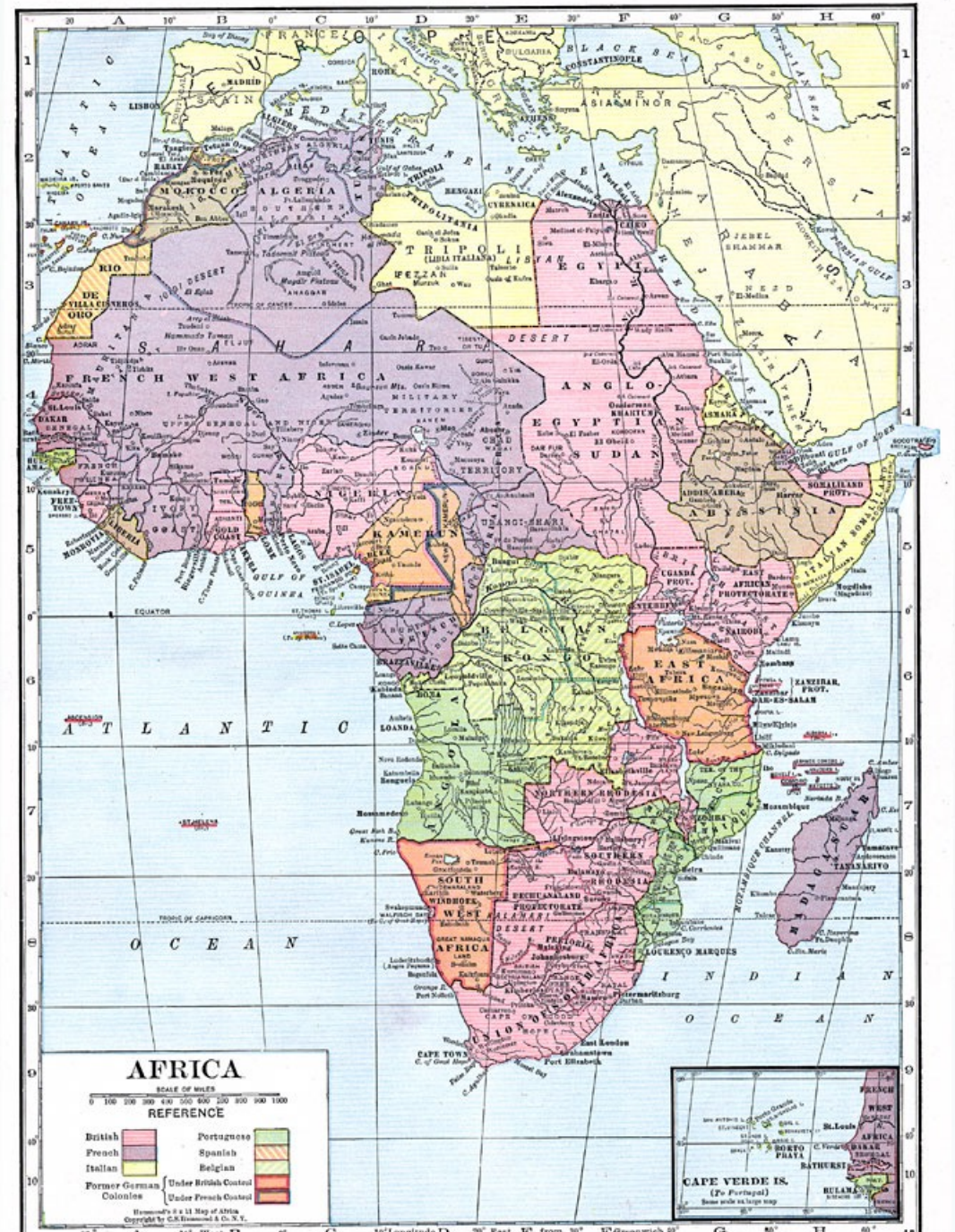
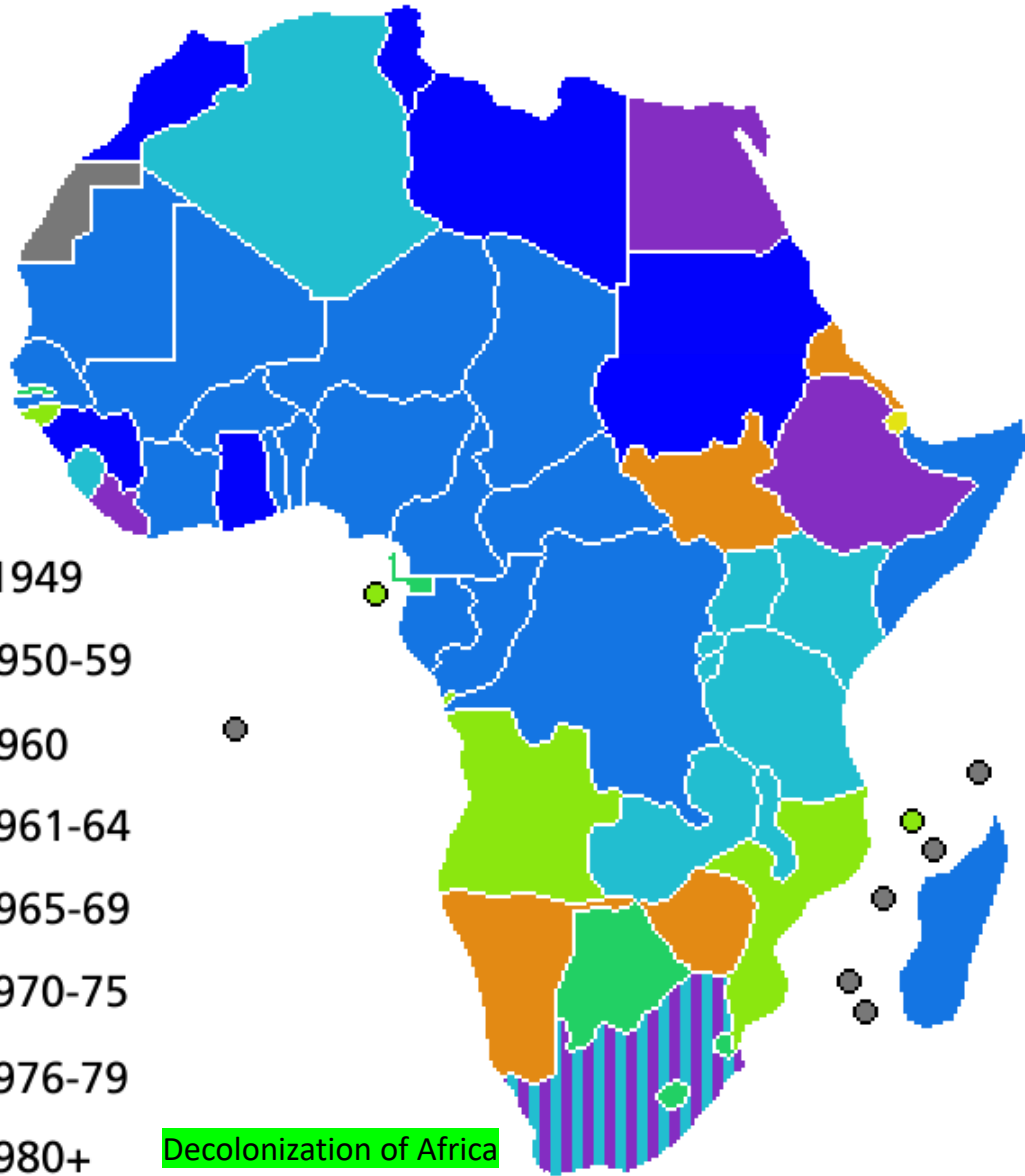
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Decolonization of Africa

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Introduction: Africa Finds a Voice

- [Decolonization of Africa](#) picked up pace after the Second World War. This is how [Time Magazine, March 13, 1964](#), opened a long article on Africa,
“The aspirations that accompanied African independence were great indeed, and, to an extent, some of them have been realized. From Dakar to Dar es Salaam, gleaming office buildings rise where rust-roofed shantytowns once stood. Hydroelectric dams now hum where only the crocodile hunter passed ten years ago. Africans who a short time ago ran drugstores or taught elementary school, debate eloquently with their former colonial rulers in the United Nations, or struggle manfully with the problems of nonalignment in a world increasingly complicated by shifts of temperature in the Cold War...”
- [The number of free African states began to rise in the late 1950s.](#)

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Africa Finds a Voice

We begin with a quick chronology of African independence:

Northern Africa:

- 1922: Egypt
- 1956: Morocco and Tunisia
- 1961: Libya

Africa Finds a Voice

- A quick chronology of African independence:

Northern Sub-Saharan Africa

- 1956: Sudan
- 1960: Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad
- 1991: UN administered Western Sahara, a non-self-governing territory

Africa Finds a Voice

A quick chronology of African independence:

West Africa:

- 1847: Liberia
- 1957: Ghana
- 1960: Sénégal, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Bénin (Dahomey), Nigeria, Cameroun
- 1961 Sierra Leone
- 1965: Gambia
- 1958: Guinea
- 1973: Guinea-Bissau

Africa Finds a Voice

A quick chronology of African independence:

East Africa:

- Ethiopia: colonized only for a while
- 1960: Somalia
- 1961: Tanganyika (United Republic of Tanzania and Mombasa)
- 1962: Uganda
- 1963: Kenya
- 1976: Seychelles
- 1977: Djibouti
- 1993: Eritrea

Africa Finds a Voice

A quick chronology of African independence:

Central/Equatorial Africa

- 1960: Central African Republic, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo/ Zaire/ Congo-Kinshasa
- 1962: Burundi, Rwanda
- 1968: Equatorial Guinea

Africa Finds a Voice

A quick chronology of African independence:
Southwest, Southeast, and Central

- 1960: Madagascar
- 1963: Zambia
- 1964: Malawi
- 1968: Mauritius
- 1975: Angola, Mozambique
- 1979: Zimbabwe
- 1990: Namibia

Africa Finds a Voice

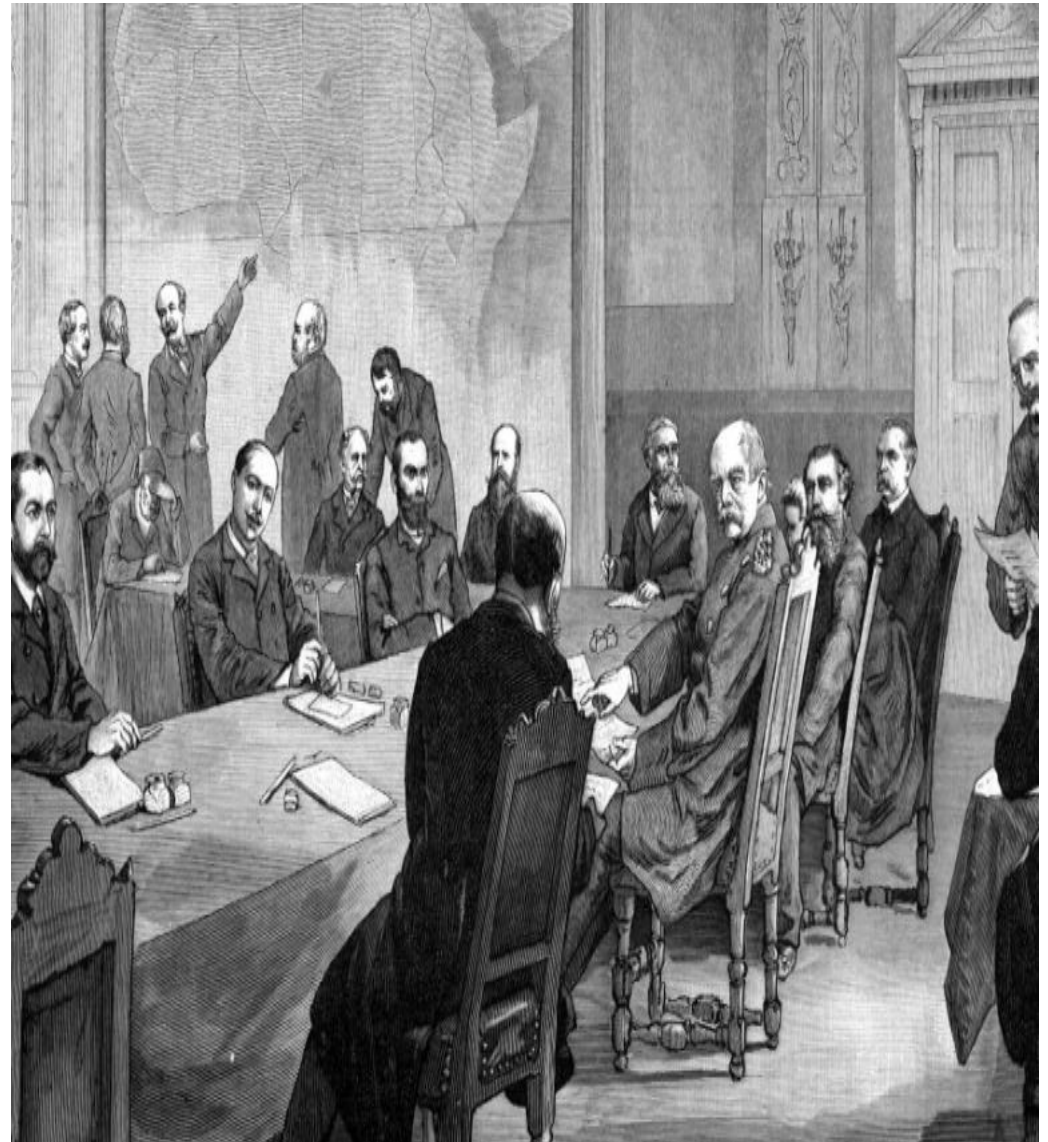
A quick chronology of African independence:

South Africa

- 1966: Botswana, Lesotho
- 1931: South Africa
- 1994: Nelson Mandela wins. Apartheid ends.

Africa Finds a Voice

- In our last unit, we learned that the Scramble for Africa, the Berlin Conference of 1884, and the European powers colonized Africa “tension-free,” except for Liberia and Ethiopia.
- The decolonization was completed in the second half of the twentieth century.
- Here are some factors that made it possible.



Africa Finds a Voice

- World War II radically changed the international system. Prewar imperial powers, France and Britain, suffered severe setbacks and realized that it was difficult to turn the rising tide of nationalism worldwide.
- The most powerful Western state had no interest in colonialism and had declared the end of imperialism as a war aim before it entered the war, as contained in the Atlantic Charter, 1941.

Post-WWII International System: The Atlantic Charter

- In 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Newfoundland and agreed on the Atlantic Charter.
- Out of its eight articles, half emphasized the US anti-imperialism and anticolonialism. This is what it said:





The Atlantic Charter, August 14, 1941

- The President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.
- First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;
- Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

The Atlantic Charter, August 14, 1941

- Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.
- Fourth, they will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity;

Africa Finds a Voice

- The developmental and participatory orientation of the postwar colonial policy opened the door for accomplished subjects to seek equal rights.
- Growing exploitation of African resources, industrialized labor, and the emergence of urban and seaport centers enhanced the realization of mutual dependence and enabled colonial subjects to use tactics like strikes, boycotts, mass petitions, and limited or guided parliamentary participation to press for their rights.
- We see it reflected in the lives of leaders of the independence movements.

Africa Finds a Voice

- Both the British and the French had relied on African troops in World War II. Rita Headrick counts about 525,000 troops mobilized from British Africa and 185,500 from French Africa (p. 502-504).
- Besides far-reaching intercultural experiences, the African veterans returned with an enhanced awareness of their rights. By all means, the colonial powers owed them a debt.
- Colonial powers had been sources of abominably high violence against their African subjects for various reasons, including rebellions. Suppressing rebellions was expensive, but it also raised awareness that the tide of nationalism was irreversible.

Africa Finds a Voice

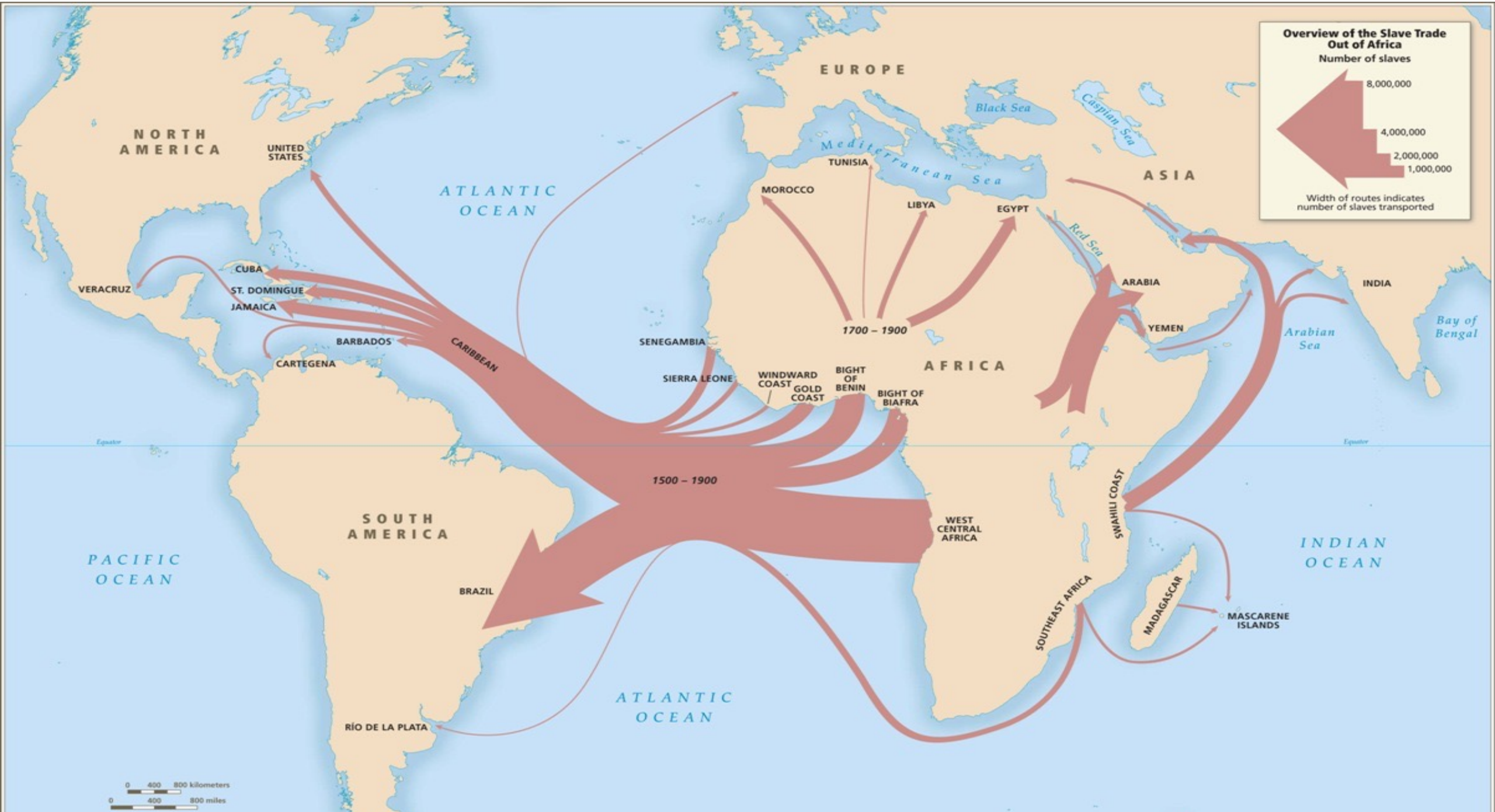
- White settlers' communities had a different story. They sought to oppose or reverse the independence plans but eventually failed.
- In the north, the settler population in French Algeria since 1830 exceeded one million. Unable to thwart independence, the right-wing settlers formed OAS, Organization de l'Armée Secrète. They deployed terrorist tactics against de Gaulle government officials and the independence movement.
- They finally failed, but one of their leaders, Jean Marie Le Pen, founded the xenophobic Front National in France. His daughter, Marine Le Pen, renamed it Rassemblement National, had its vote share grow, and became a serious contender for the Presidential office.

Africa Finds a Voice

- In the east, about 61,000 settlers in Kenya opposed the independence option but yielded to the government's advice (Good, p. 615).
- In Central and Southern Africa, settler interests turned lethal in political, social, and economic terms and proved most difficult to handle.
- In Central Africa, Belgian (ex-Leopold) Congo-Kinshasa initially joined the British and French decolonization wave. While France liberated the Republic of Congo in 1960, Belgium liberated the DRC the same year. Belgium also ensured the independence of its trust mandate of Rwanda and Burundi in 1962.
- Letting the Belgian Congo go, however, was an impossible task. Immediately after independence, the Belgian government deployed army troops to protect the interests of 32,000 settlers.

Africa Finds a Voice

- The industrialist-settlers maneuvered to install the military government of Mabou, while the radical, nationalist, elected Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba was assassinated under mysterious circumstances.
- Further Southeast and West, the Portuguese autocratic and resource-starved government at home and affluent settlers obstructed the fragmented freedom movements' demands for independence of Angola and Mozambique. Guinea-Bissau (and Cape Verde) also waged a war for independence from 1963 for over a decade before Portugal recognized its liberation in 1974.
- Portugal had begun the slave trade in the fifteenth century, and it enormously benefited from its African outposts.



Portuguese Africa: Mozambique and Angola

- By 1974, a group of military officers decided to expel the Portuguese autocracy and move toward integration with Europe. The biggest source of settler support ended.
- The Mozambican freedom movement, the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) formed the government in June 1975.
- The Angolan independence movement remained divided into three factions along ethnic lines. In 1975, the Portuguese ended their occupation, after the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) agreed to govern together.

Portuguese Africa: Mozambique and Angola

- The ethnic differences defied calls for national unity. The divided ethnic movements, armed and funded by various international actors of the Cold War, controlled different parts of the country. In 2002, better sense prevailed to secure sovereignty and development of the country.
- The independence of Portuguese Africa ended the buffer zone between the African wave of freedom and Southern Africa, where the struggle for fundamental rights continued until the mid-1990s.
- Southwest Africa, Rhodesia, and South Africa were the bastions of settler colonial resistance. We will begin with Rhodesia.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southern Africa

- Southern Rhodesia erected the most tenuous hurdles on Africa's path to freedom.
- Although Cecil Rhodes had acquired the territory named after him in the 1890s, Northern Rhodesia became a British Protectorate in 1923 and gained independence in 1964 as Zambia.
- Southern Rhodesia, with about 250,000 settlers, became a British self-governing territory in 1923. Under an ambitious leader, Ian Smith, it issued a declaration of independence in 1965, based on the US Declaration of 1776. South Africa played a supportive role.
- Up to 1978, the resistance movements, Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), waged a violent "Bush War" against Smith's internationally unrecognized minority government.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southern Africa

- Finally, the British and the South African governments mediated negotiations in London in 1979.
- The British monitored the elections held in 1980. Robert Mugabe of ZANU won, while Ian Smith assumed the functions of the leader of the opposition.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southwest Africa

- Following World War I, the League of Nations had “mandated” this colony of defeated Germany to the South African Union.
- The UN, established in 1945, had taken over all eleven mandates from the League, including seven in Africa. They all gained independence by 1962.
- Excluded from this list was the eighth mandated territory of Southwest Africa, because the mandatory power, South Africa, rejected the UN supervision.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southern Africa

- The Union of South Africa was the only mandatory power that refused to abide by its obligations under the UN Charter
- The UN terminated the South African mandate in 1966 and remained resolved to secure the rights of the people in this occupied territory. In 1976, the UN General Assembly renamed the territory as Namibia and recognized the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole representative of the Namibian people.
- The Organization of African Unity, established in 1963, also mobilized support, as did the friendly frontline states. The independence juggernaut had gained additional momentum.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southern Africa

- In 1978, the Security Council approved a plan for the transition of Namibia into an independent state. Regional factors delayed the implementation until the late 1980s.
- Under UNSC Resolution 435, the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) deployed a successful peacekeeping mission to Namibia from April 1989 to March 1990 to oversee the country's transition to independence from South Africa.
- Developments in Namibia, however, remained deeply connected to South Africa.

Africa Finds a Voice: Southern Africa

- The South African Union had been a white minority government since 1910, when the Dutch and British territories merged. In 1934, the British granted it independence. And in 1961, it became a Republic.
- All along, settler governments had strengthened their grip over the country through codified apartheid, enforced legally and socially.
- Only with the gradual success of the African National Congress (ANC) and the farsightedness of the Frederick de Klerk government did the shackles of apartheid begin to break. Nelson Mandela assumed power in 1994. In Namibia, Sam Nujoma had preceded him in 1990.

The Trust-Distrust-Relationships

- This is how we ended our discussion on the Suez Canal a few weeks ago: “Profiteering and domination drove colonialism. The colonized people experienced the consequences of this adventure in their daily lives...as they coped with the sustained humiliation that a superior race inflicted on them, physically and intellectually.
- Violent, oppressive, exploitative, and degrading, but it was a relationship; a long series of complex interactions, that changed the geopolitical, social, and economic ecosystems of the colonized people forever.”
- Here are some examples of this change in a few African symbols of decolonization and their lives, and the road they took to independence.

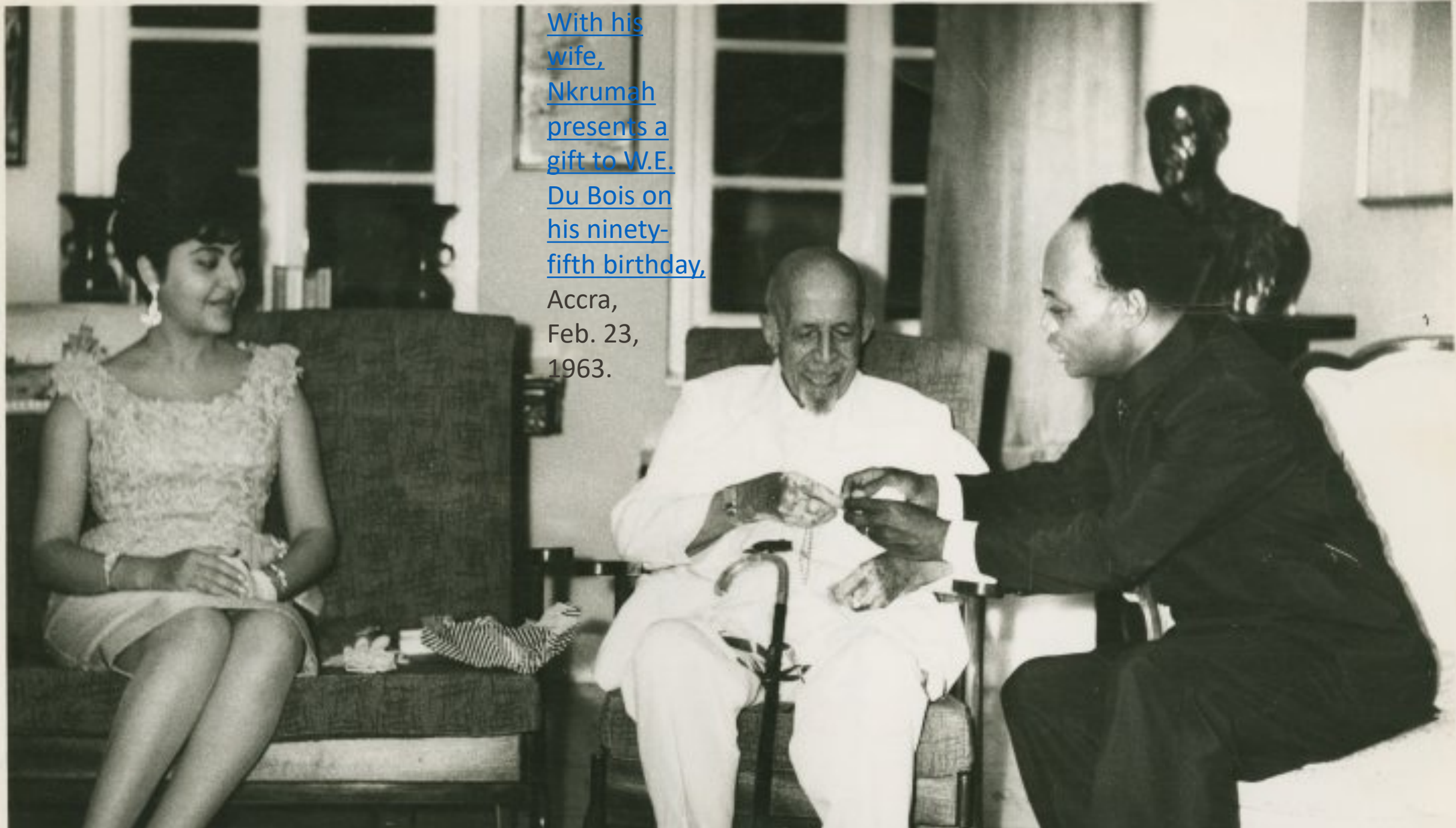
Kwame Nkrumah (1902-1972)

- Ghana gained independence in 1957. Kwame Nkrumah led the Ghanaian independence movement. Born in 1902, Nkrumah began his education in a Roman Catholic mission school in Ghana, then the Gold Coast.
- He trained as a teacher at a Government Training College in 1930 and taught at a Roman Catholic primary school in Elmina, the site of a Portuguese Castle built for the slave trade in the 15th century.

Kwame Nkrumah (1902-1972)

- Nkrumah won a scholarship to study at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Despite difficult years of struggle to keep up financially, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in economics and sociology from Lincoln in 1939, and then from UPENN with a Master of Science in philosophy and education.
- With an unfinished Ph.D., he moved to London in 1945 and fraternized there with the Communist Party, radical groups professing anti-imperialism and struggles for the colonial emancipation of Africa.
- He studied law and completed his thesis for a doctorate in philosophy.

With his wife,
Nkrumah
presents a
gift to W.E.
Du Bois on
his ninety-
fifth birthday,
Accra,
Feb. 23,
1963.



Kwame Nkrumah

- In 1947, Nkrumah left Britain and began his political career at home. The British colonial government arrested him in 1948 when mass riots broke out across the colony.
- In 1949, he formed the radical Convention People's Party (CPP). And was arrested again. From his prison cell, he won a seat in the parliament and a victory for his party.
- The colonial government released him after realizing that the margin of victory was 20,000 to 3,000. The governor allowed him to become the prime minister of the Gold Coast colony in 1952, almost directly out of his prison cell.

Kwame Nkrumah

- In his leadership, Ghana won independence in 1957. Gold Coast and British Togoland joined and became a member of the British Commonwealth as independent Ghana.
- Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania) and Ghana were the first countries to participate in JFK's Peace Corps program in 1961.

Ahmed Sékou Touré

(January 9, 1922 – March 26, 1984)

- Guinea gained independence in 1958. Ahmed Sekou Toure led the independence movement.
- Ahmed Sékou Touré was born in Guinée Française to a Muslim family and had his early education at a Quranic School. He had little to no formal education beyond initial schooling in French. Instead, he pursued the reading and training of his choice, developed an understanding of Communism, and joined the French Communist Party's (PCF) first Guinean study group.

Ahmed Sékou Touré

(January 9, 1922 – March 26, 1984)

- Touré organized the first labor union in French-controlled Guinea, the Post, Telegram, and Telephone Workers' Union (PTT), in 1945, and affiliated it with the PCF-connected French General Confederation of Labor (CGT).
- His trade union grew in strength. He climbed the ranks of anti-imperialist political organizations operating in French West Africa, such as the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), formed in 1946. He created the Parti Démocratique de Guinée (PDG) in 1950 and merged the labor and anti-colonial political activities.



Ahmed Sekou Touré

(January 9, 1922 – March 26, 1984)

- In 1953, he demonstrated his strength through a 72-day General Strike, which set the stage for the famous 1958 independence referendum. By December 1953, workers won a wage increase, and the Trade union membership exploded, from 4,600 at the beginning of the strike to 44,000 by 1955.
- By 1957, Touré had been able to establish local committees that effectively challenged the colonial administration at all levels. He scored a victory against the colonial government by leading Guinea to vote no in a referendum seeking the continuation of French colonialism on September 28th, 1958.

Felix Houphouet-Boigny

- Côte d'Ivoire gained independence in 1960. Felix Houphouet-Boigny led the movement.
- Born in 1905 to a family of African loyalist chiefs in Yamoussoukro, Boigny trained as an “African Doctor” in 1925 and entered French colonial service.
- In 1944, he founded the Syndicat Agricole Africain (S.A.A.) to defend the rights of cocoa producers.

The
President
and First
Lady of the
Ivory
Coast,
arrive at
Washington
National
Airport
May 22,
1962.



Felix Houphouet-Boigny

- Elected as a member of the French Constituent Assembly in 1945, he played a significant role in the legislation that abolished all forms of forced labor in 'Overseas France.'
- Like Sekou Touré, he joined the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (R.D.A.) to advocate for self-determination, but unlike him, he favored a continuing union with France initially.
- In 1956, he joined the French cabinet.
- After independence in 1960, Houphouet-Boigny became the President of the Ivory Coast.

Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001)

- Senghor was a poet, a writer, a Senegalese politician, and the first President of the Republic of Senegal (1960–1980). He was also the first African man elected to the Académie Française.
- Senghor's education began at a Catholic mission school in Senegal. After high school, he won a scholarship to study in France, where he enrolled in Lycée Louis-le-Grand and prepared for the entrance exam to the École Normale Supérieure, University of Paris.
- He graduated in 1935. His classmates included Georges Pompidou, a future French President (1911-1974).



Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001)

- Senghor joined the French army during World War II. He was taken prisoner in 1940 and released in 1943. After the war, Mr. Senghor became a Communist.
- In 1944, he joined the faculty of Linguistics at the French National School for Overseas Departments and Territories, a position he held until Senegal's independence in 1960.
- He was elected to the French Constituent Assemblies in 1945- 1946 and a member of the French National Assembly 1946 to 1959.
- In 1948, Senghor founded the Senegalese Democratic Bloc, which won the 1951 legislative elections.

Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001)

- Senghor served in the Cabinets of Prime Minister Edgar Faure (1955-56) and Michel Debré in 1959.
- He was a member of the drafting Commission for the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, a member of Senegal's General Council, a member of the Great Council of French Western Africa, and a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.
- Senghor was an ardent advocate of federalism for newly independent African states, a kind of "French Commonwealth," as opposed to many other African leaders including President Seko Touré.
- On September 5, 1960, Senghor became the President of the Republic of Senegal for twenty years.

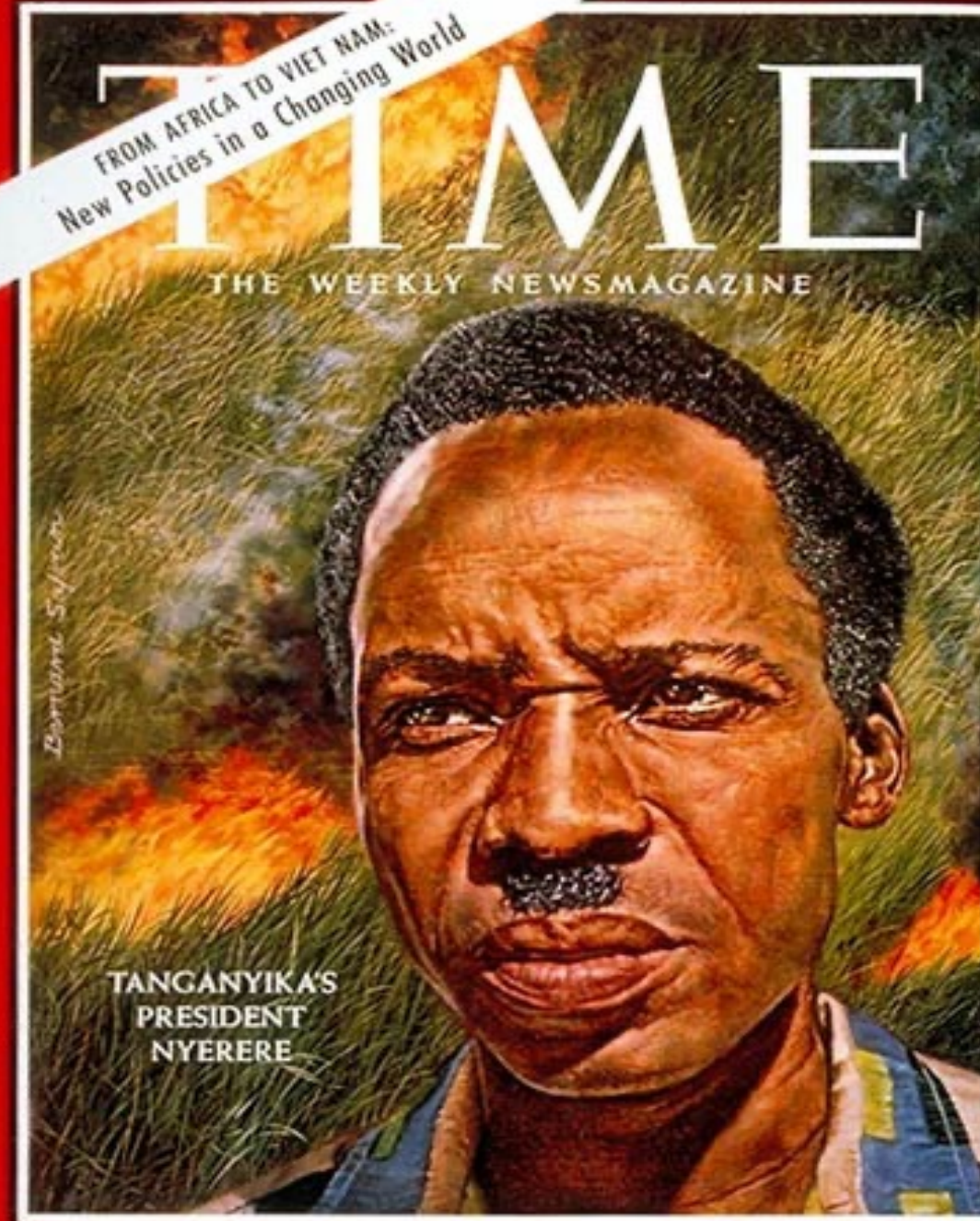
Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999)

- Julius Kambarage Nyerere (April 13, 1922 - October 14, 1999) was President of the United Republic of Tanzania (previously Tanganyika), from the country's founding in 1964, until his retirement in 1985.
- Born in Tanganyika to a local chief, Nyerere was a teacher. Tanzanians called him Mwalimu, which is the Swahili version of the Arabic noun for teacher.
- Nyerere was a devout Catholic and a Communist who preferred wearing Mao tunics.

[Nyerere
meets
President
Kennedy,
July 1961](#)



[Time Magazine,](#)
[March 13,](#)
[1964](#)



Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999)

- Nyerere founded the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), quit his teaching job, and strived to unite nationalist factions into one grouping. He succeeded in 1954.
- Nyerere campaigned for independence. He also spoke on behalf of TANU to the Trusteeship Council and Fourth Committee of the United Nations in New York.
- In 1958, Nyerere entered the Colonial Legislative Council and was elected Chief Minister in 1960.
- In 1961, Tanganyika was granted self-governance, and Nyerere became its first Prime Minister on December 9, 1961. A year later, Nyerere was elected President of Tanganyika when it became a Republic.

Jomo Kenyatta

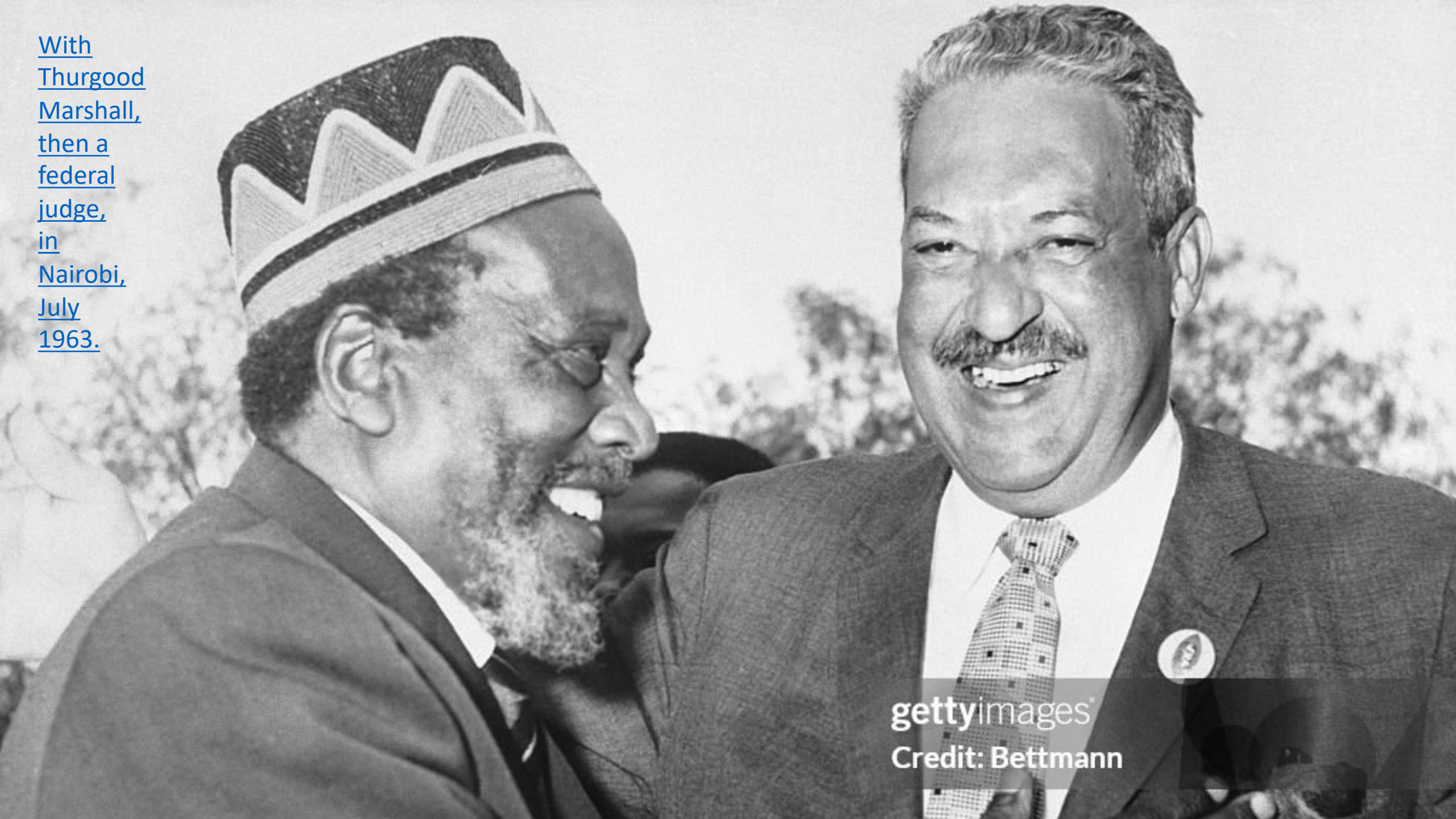
- Kenya became independent in 1963. Jomo Kenyatta led the independence movement.
- Kenyatta was born Kamau to a family of Kikuyu chiefs. He began his education at a Church of Scotland Mission school near Nairobi.
- In 1912, he became an apprentice carpenter.
- In 1922, began his political activities while he was a Municipal employee. The same year, he joined the East African Association (EAA) to campaign for the return of Kikuyu lands given over to white settlers when the country became the British Crown Colony of Kenya in 1920.



Jomo Kenyatta

- Kenyatta worked as editor of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), KCA's journal, between 1924 and 1929, and by 1928, he became the KCA's general secretary.
- In May 1928, Kenyatta launched a monthly Kikuyu-language newspaper called Mwigwithania (Kikuyu word meaning 'he who brings together').
- In February 1929, KCA dispatched Kenyatta to London to represent the Kikuyu interests before the Colonial Office. He returned in 1930 with only one success, the right to develop independent educational institutions for Black Africans.
- In May 1931, Kenyatta once again left Kenya for London, but this time stayed for fifteen years. He pursued his education in Birmingham.

With
Thurgood
Marshall,
then a
federal
judge,
in
Nairobi,
July
1963.



gettyimages®
Credit: Bettmann

Jomo Kenyatta

- In 1934, Kenyatta began his studies at University College, London.
- In 1935, he transferred to the London School of Economics to study social anthropology, focusing on Kikuyu culture.
- Back to Kenya in 1946, while Mau Mau engaged in an armed struggle.
- The colonial government prosecuted Kenyatta for alleged involvement with the Mau Mau Movement that spanned 1952-1960. In April 1953, they sentenced him to seven years of hard labor.
- In the meantime, the colonial government brutally crushed the Mau Mau rebellion, and the State of Emergency was lifted on 10 November.

Jomo Kenyatta

- During Kenyatta's incarceration, his lieutenants formed the Kenya African National Union, or KANU. On 11 June 1960, they elected him as President.
- On 21 August 1961, Kenyatta was finally released. A year later, he attended the Lancaster Conference in London to negotiate the terms of Kenya's independence.
- In May 1963, KANU won the pre-independence election. When independence was achieved on 12 December that year, Kenyatta was the prime minister.
- Exactly one year later, with the proclamation of a republic, Kenyatta became Kenya's first president.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

- Patrice Emery Lumumba of the Democratic Republic of Congo was the first major victim of the settlers-industrialists-mother country collusion, in continuing story of exploitation and oppression in the *Heart of Darkness*.
- Born on 2 July 1925, Lumumba attended both Protestant and Catholic schools run by white Belgian missionaries. By 1954, he was a postal clerk and the sales director for a brewery company in 1957.
- While working, he joined the Belgian Liberal Political Party and helped establish the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) to bring a multi-ethnic Congolese society together.



Patrice Emery Lumumba

- In 1959, the Belgian government announced plans for Congolese independence within five years.
- After the May 1960 general elections, Congo achieved independence on 30 June 1960. He became Congo's first prime minister.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

- Lumumba's election as the prime minister frustrated elites and resulted in a revolt of the army, the uninvited intervention of the Belgian troops to protect their interests, and the secession of the provinces of Southern Kasai and Katanga, backed by Belgium and the West because of their enormous mineral wealth.
- Katanga was home to the Union Manière du Haut-Katanga, which mined uranium, tin, and copper. The province had the largest number of Belgian settlers, around 32,000. Copper contributed more than 33 percent of the Congolese revenue.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

- Lumumba asked for the UN Security Council to help. The Council authorized and deployed Opération des Nations Unies au Congo, (or ONUC) within days but it did not ease the tense internal situation.
- An institutional breakdown resulted in Lumumba's dismissal, and Colonel Mobutu took over the government. Lumumba was placed under house arrest in the protection of Ghanaian troops of the UN force. He managed to escape, was arrested by the army again, and this time handed over to the seceded province of Katanga on January 18, 1961.
- He was assassinated there, leaving several unanswered questions about this tragic outcome.



**President
Reagan with
President
Samora
Moises
Machel of
Mozambique
on
September
19, 1985.**

Samora Moises Machel

- Samora Machel was born to poor parents in a Mozambiquan village. The Portuguese required his parents to grow crops of their choice and in the 1950's, transferred their farmland to Portuguese settlers.
- Machel attended Catholic school and trained to become a nurse.
- In 1962, Machel joined the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique or FRELIMO. In 1963, he traveled to several other African nations for military training. In 1964, he returned to Mozambique and led FRELIMO's first guerrilla attack against the Portuguese in northern Mozambique.

Conclusion

- Decolonization did not end the colonial era economic system, in which colonies remained producers and suppliers of raw materials and commodities for the mother countries.
- The British strived to leave before the breaking point. The institutional framework they had developed in the colonies enabled managed transitions, mostly, except for the settler colonies.

Conclusion

- The "Overseas France" chose between independence within a larger French Community or moving away from it.
- The Portuguese, with greater reliance on the oldest European strongholds in Africa, had the worst decolonization moments, besides the Belgian Congo. Violence at their departure was as gruesome as the centuries of exploitation of Belgian Congo, Portuguese Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau.
- A new struggle for growth and prosperity began with independence.