



Decolonization

Muhammad Najm Akbar

Gentrain

makbar@mpc.edu

Our World: The Participants Speak

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- I propose that that participants take charge of this session and share their thoughts about:
 - What does Our World mean to me?
 - Where is Our World going?
 - What is an issue in Our World that matters to me the most, and what do I think about it?
 - What Our World might look like in the next five decades.
 - Or suggest ideas that would allow participants to have a great conversation about Our World.

Post-WWII International System: The Atlantic Charter

- We discussed the International System post-WWII last week and noticed several of its characteristics.
- The Big Three, the UK, USA, and USSR dominated it.
- Within the alliance, the US emerged as the leader of the Western camp and the divergence between the West and USSR emerged at various levels.
- The United States took massive military and economic steps to rebuild Europe and the two former Axis Powers the Allies had occupied directly.

Post-WWII International System:

The Atlantic Charter

- One source of divergence between the USSR and the West was that the Soviet Union viewed itself as isolated despite being part of the Alliance. Stalin begrudged the West for delaying the opening of a second front until late in the war. He was also aware of the frequent consultations between the USA and the UK.
- In 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Newfoundland and agreed on the Atlantic Charter. The Charter constituted the war aims of the two principal allies. 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

- At different paces, decolonization picked up 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 begins to rise in the late 1950s.](#)

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.”
- Today we will look at some examples of this change in a few African symbols of decolonization and their lives.

The Voice of the Colonized People

- The enslaved, discriminated, and colonized people found a voice in many ways. Toussaint L' Overture was one manifestation of it in the Haitian Revolution of the early nineteenth century. I want to begin with just two examples from Sub-Saharan Africa, the same person.
- Miriam Makeba was an artist and singer from apartheid South Africa. [This is a short excerpt from an interview she gave in Finland, in 1969.](#) (4.33 onwards).
- [This is a short manifestation of Miriam Makeba's way of asserting the uniqueness of her native culture.](#)

Kwame Nkrumah (1902-1972)

- Born in 1902, Nkrumah began his education in a Roman Catholic mission school in Ghana, then Gold Coast, 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.
- 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.



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.
- In his leadership, Ghana won independence in 1957. Gold Coast and British Togoland territory became a member of the British Commonwealth as independent Ghana.

Kwame Nkrumah

- Beginning in 1960, Nkrumah became Ghana's first president as a republic, and by 1961 pursued socialist policies including the nationalization of cocoa and an anti-democratic stance toward political dissent and other parties.
- He was instrumental in establishing the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. While out of the country on a peacemaking mission in Vietnam, Nkrumah was overthrown by a military coup on February 24, 1966. He went into exile in Guinea where President Sekou Touré hosted him. He died of cancer at a hospital in Bucharest, Romania on April 27, 1972.
- Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania) and Ghana were the first countries to participate in JFK's Peace Corpse program in 1961.

Ahmed Sékou Touré

(January 9, 1922 – March 26, 1984)

- 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.
- 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 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

- Born in 1905 to a family of African, loyalist chiefs, in Yamoussoukro, currently the capital of Cote d'Ivoire, Boigny steered a different path to freedom. He joined the French administrative and legislative system and yet pursued independence as his nation's goal.
- He 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.



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 Democratique Africain (R.D.A.), to advocate for self-determination but unlike him , he favored initially a continuing union with France.
- In 1956, he joined the French cabinet.
- After independence in 1960, Houphouet-Boigny became the President of 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.
- Leopold Senghor stood apart from his peers. He developed stronger ties with the colonial power than his Ivorian neighbor, Houphouët-Boigny.

Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001)

- 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 1946-1959.

Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001)

- In 1948, Senghor founded the Senegalese Democratic Bloc, which won the legislative elections of 1951.
- 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 Sékou Touré.
- On September 5, 1960, Senghor became the President of the Republic of Senegal for twenty years.



Leopold Sedar Senghor

- In 2018, the [CIA declassified an introductory note on Senghor](#). Here is an excerpt,

“... President Senghor is slight and frail, and wears well-tailored clothes. He has a shy, myopic glance and a precise academic manner. His optimistic attitude sometimes gives him the appearance of being naive, but he is actually very astute. Senghor is also easy-going and free of complexes.

Senghor solemnly observes the French ritual of vacationing every August at his form in Calvados, Normandy, his wife's homeland...”

Leopold Sedar Senghor

- CIA also noted that despite being a Roman Catholic, he succeeded in ruling a country that was up to 85% Muslim. His ancestors were Portuguese Guinean, and the name Senghor comes from the Portuguese name Segor.

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 Swahili version of Arabic noun for teacher.
- Nyerere was a devout Catholic, and a Communist who preferred wearing Mao tunics.

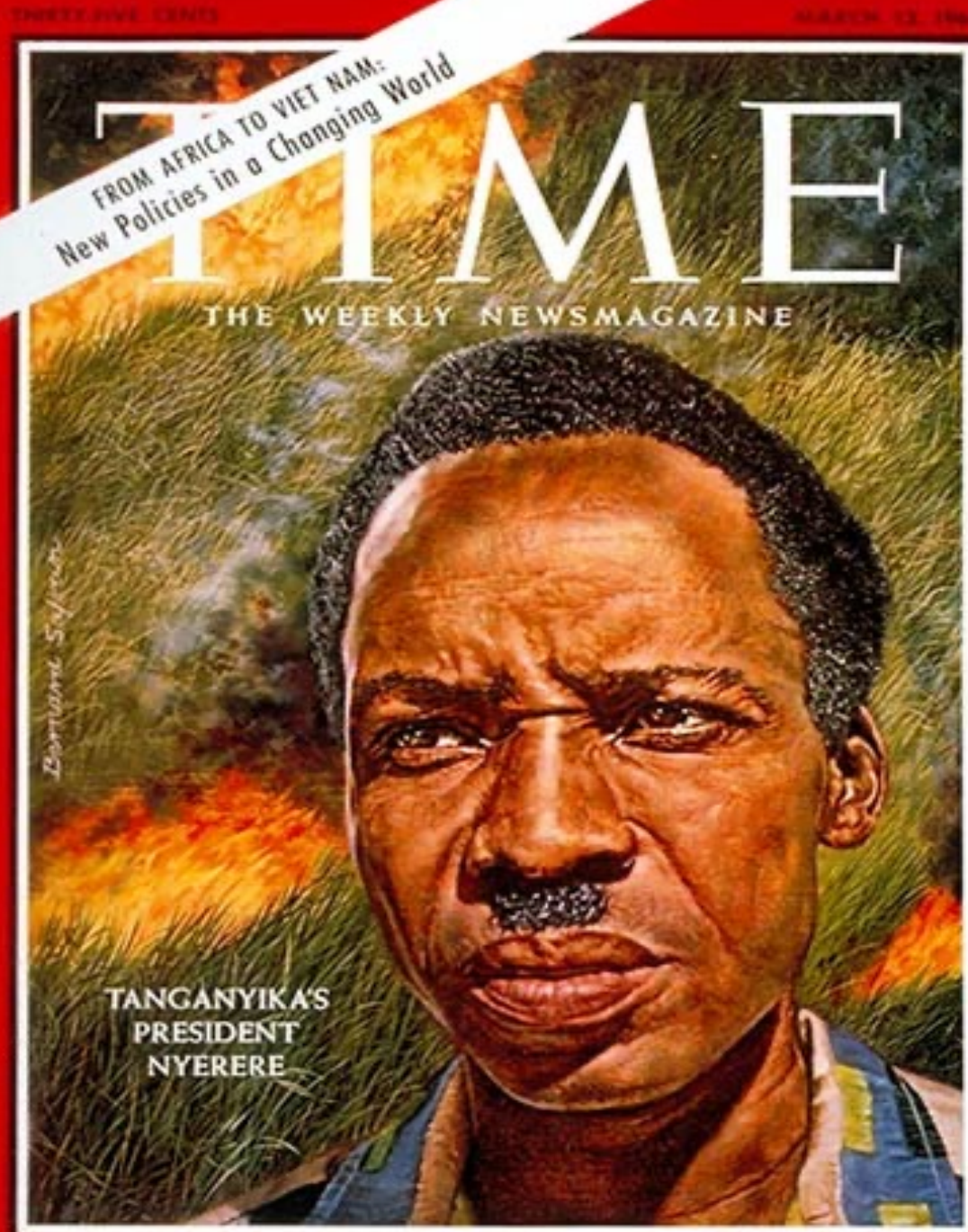
[Nyerere
meets
President
Kennedy,
July 1961](#)



Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999)

- Nyerere began his education at Government Primary School, in Musoma and obtained a teaching diploma from Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.
- After three years of teaching, he got a scholarship to attend the University of Edinburgh in 1949. He was the first Tanzanian to study at a British university and only the second to gain a university degree outside Africa.
- While completing his degree, Nyerere began to develop his particular vision of connecting socialism with African communal living. Upon his return to Tanganyika, Nyerere took a teaching position at a College, near Dar es Salaam.

[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.
- Nyerere was instrumental in the union between the islands of Zanzibar and the mainland Tanganyika to form Tanzania, after a 1964 coup in Zanzibar toppled Jamshid bin Abdullah, who was the Sultan of Zanzibar.

Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999)

- Nyerere was one of the founders of the Organization of African Unity in 1963.
- He offered a home to several African liberation movements including the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress (PAC) of South Africa, FRELIMO when it sought to overthrow Portuguese rule in Mozambique, and ZANLA (and Robert Mugabe) in its struggle to unseat the white regime in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). He also granted citizenship to Miriam Makebe.
- From the mid-1970s, along with President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, he was an instigator and leader of the "Front Line States," which provided uncompromising support for the campaign for Black Majority Rule in South Africa.
- He died in a London hospital of Leukemia on October 14, 1999.

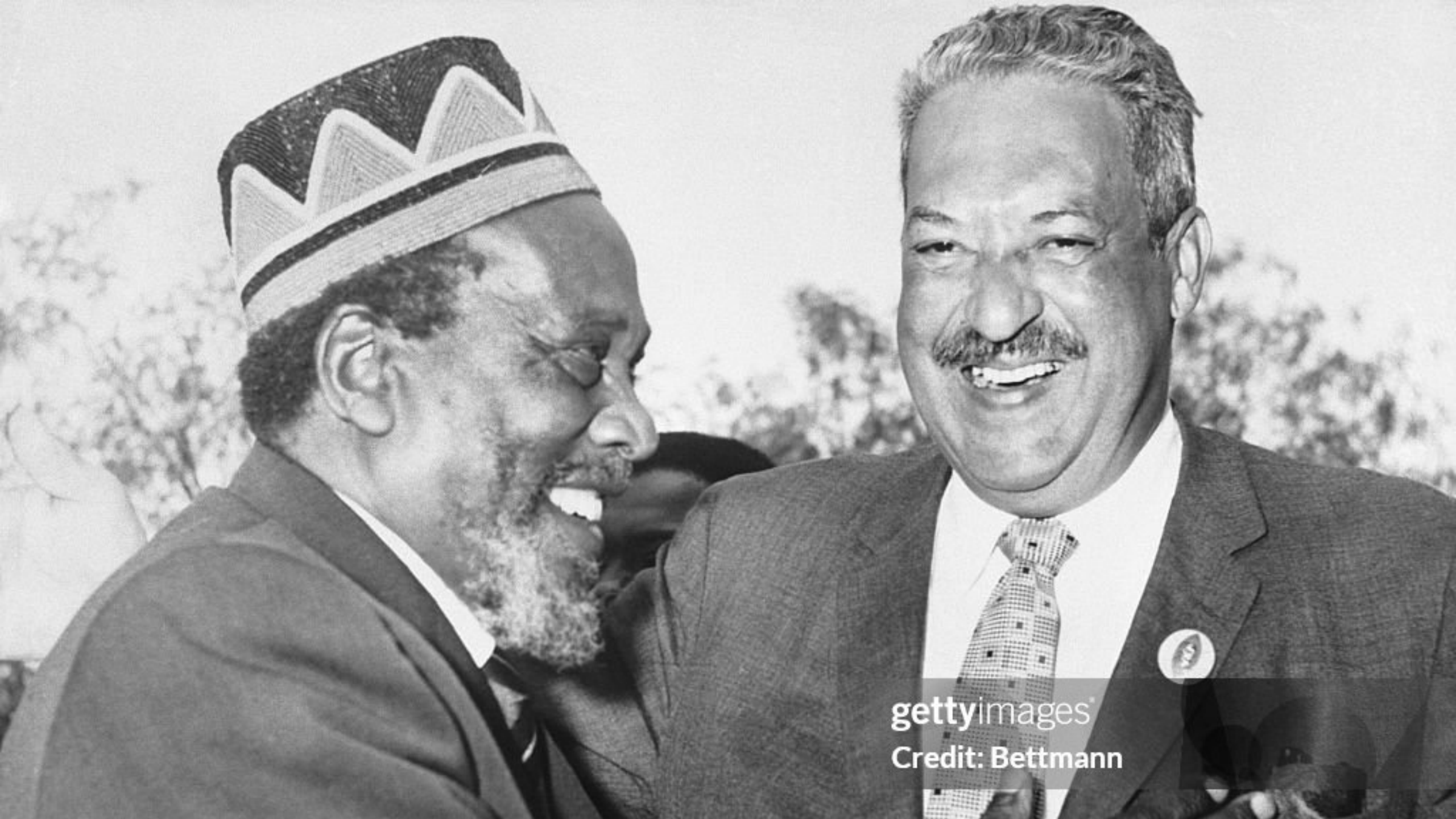
Jomo Kenyatta

- Jomo 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 August 1914 Kamau was baptized at the Church of Scotland mission. To avoid recruitment for World War I, he moved away from the capital area and took to wearing a traditional beaded belt known as a 'Kenyatta', a Swahili word that means 'light of Kenya'.
- In 1922 Kamau adopted the name Jomo (a Kikuyu name meaning 'burning spear') Kenyatta, and besides his job with the Nairobi Municipal Council Public Works Department, began his political activities.



Jomo Kenyatta

- In 1922, Kenyatta 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.
- When the organization, disbanded under governmental pressure, its members reconstituted it the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), in 1925. Kenyatta worked as editor of the KCA's journal between 1924 and 1929, and by 1928 he had become the KCA's general secretary (having given up his job with the municipality to make time).
- In May 1928, Kenyatta launched a monthly Kikuyu-language newspaper called Mwigwithania (Kikuyu word meaning 'he who brings together').



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Credit: Bettmann

Jomo Kenyatta

- In February 1929 KCA dispatched Kenyatta to London to represent the Kikuyu interests before the Colonial Office. The Secretary of State for the Colonies refused to meet him, but The Times in March 1930 published one of his letters pressing Kikuyu's demands. He returned in 1930 only with 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.

Jomo Kenyatta

- Kenyatta pursued his education in Birmingham.
- In June 1932, he testified to the Morris Carter Kenya Land Commission on behalf of Kikuyu land claims. The colonial administration maintained, nonetheless, its policy of restricting the Kikuyu to reservations allowing a free hand to the white settlers.
- In 1934 Kenyatta began his studies at University College, London.
- In 1935, he transferred to the London School of Economics, to study social anthropology under the renowned Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. Under Malinowski, Kenyatta completed his thesis on Kikuyu culture and tradition and published a revised version of it as Facing Mount Kenya in 1938.

Jomo Kenyatta

- During World War II, he frequented a group of anti-colonial and African nationalists from around the African continent and the Diaspora to organize and promote Pan-Africanism.
- In September 1946, Kenyatta returned to Kenya and took up the post of principal at the Kenya Teachers College in Githunguri and resumed his political activities becoming President of the Kenya African Union (KAU) in 1947.
- While he campaigned for freedom, Mau Mau engaged in an armed struggle. The colonial government prosecuted Kenyatta for alleged involvement with the Mau Mau movement in 1952. In April 1953, they sentenced him to seven years of hard labor for "managing the Mau Mau terrorist organization". He spent the next six years at Lokitaung before being moved to 'permanent restriction' at Lodwar (a particularly remote desert army post) on 14 April 1959.

Jomo Kenyatta

- In the meantime, the colonial government crushed the Mau Mau rebellion, and the State of Emergency was lifted on 10 November.
- During Kenyatta's incarceration, his lieutenants formed the Kenya African National Union, or KANU, on 11 June 1960 elected him as President, and campaigned for his release. On 21 August 1961, Kenyatta was finally released, on the condition that he didn't run for public office.
- In 1962, Kenyatta went to the Lancaster Conference in London to negotiate the terms of Kenya's independence.

Jomo Kenyatta

- In May 1963 KANU won the pre-independence election and formed a provisional government. When independence was achieved on 12 December that year, Kenyatta was prime minister.
- Exactly one year later, with the proclamation of a republic, Kenyatta became Kenya's first president.
- Jomo Kenyatta died in his sleep on 22 August 1978.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

- Patrice Emery Lumumba was born on 2 July 1925, in the Sankuru district of Congo (the modern-day Democratic Republic of Congo). He grew up in a mud-brick house in this Belgian colony and attended both Protestant and Catholic schools run by white Belgian missionaries.
- After his schooling, Lumumba became a postal clerk in Stanleyville City in 1954. The colonial government jailed him in 1955 for embezzlement but reduced his sentence in 1956.



Patrice Emery Lumumba

- In 1957, he became the sales director for a brewery company in Léopoldville (currently Kinshasa).
- While Lumumba was working in Stanleyville, he joined the Belgian Liberal Political Party. In Léopoldville, he helped find the Movement National Congolais (MNC) political party. He emphasized Pan-Africanism and Congolese nationalism to enable multi-ethnic Congolese society to come together.
- In 1959, the Belgian government announced plans for Congolese independence within five years. Several Congolese political forces then joined hands to demand a unitary form of government and chose Lumumba to lead them. His political party the MNC, split over some of his bold positions.
- In 1959, he attended the Round Table Conference in Brussels which paved the way for Congo's general elections.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

- After the May 1960 general elections, Congo achieved independence on 30 June 1960 with Lumumba as the leader of the largest single party. He was selected to become the Congo's first prime minister and his political rival, Joseph Kasavubu, became president of the Congo.
- Speaking to the Declaration of Independence ceremony, this is how Lumumba conceived the Congolese future ‘We will show the world what the black man can do when he is working in freedom,.. We will make sure that our homeland’s earth truly benefits its children. We will review all the laws established in other times.” Congo and Belgium, he said, would deal as equals. Foreigners’ assets in Congo had to be respected. But Congo would remain vigilant. Congo, he declared, must become also a springboard for the liberation of the whole African continent.

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 its enormous mineral wealth.
- Katanga was home to the Union Minière 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. Lumumba's forces indulged in a ferocious action in Southern Kasai and faced allegations of massacre of civilians.
- An institutional breakdown resulted in Lumumba's dismissal, and Colonel Mobutu, taking 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.
- UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld lost his life on 17 September 1961 in the crash of his airplane on the way to Ndola (in what is now Zambia).

Patrice Emery Lumumba: Unanswered Questions

- There are unanswered questions about who did what. If the institutional breakdown the military takeover and secession, and Lumumba's killing, all or separately, were all internally triggered or had one or more external sponsors and patrons for separate or all actions?
- [Stephen R. Weissman](#), a former congressional aide for Africa, a historian of Congo, and a political science professor, made several claims about the Congo situation in an article contributed to the Foreign Affairs, July 2014. In sum, he held the US responsible for the regime change, the military coup, and the subsequent developments. Regarding the assassination, he demands accountability of the CIA, claiming that her station chief was fully aware of the situation and, according to the documents he had seen, he took critical decisions without clearance from Washington which was busy with the JFK transition.

The Portuguese Africa: Mozambique

- Mozambique, home to Portuguese settlers, followed a tortuous path to freedom and so did Angola.
- Mozambican nationalists formed several independence movements, including the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), in the early 1960s.
- Three Mozambique nationalist groups based in Tanzania established the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) in Dar es Salaam on June 25, 1962.



The Portuguese Africa: Mozambique

- FRELIMO took over control of the government of Mozambique on September 20, 1974.
- On November 22, 1974, the five-member UN commission of inquiry (Nepal-chair, German Democratic Republic, Honduras, Madagascar, and Norway) issued a report stating that Portuguese troops had massacred some 1,000 individuals between 1971 and 1974.
- Mozambique formally achieved its independence from Portugal on June 25, 1975.
- Samora Moises Machel became president of Mozambique on June 25, 1975.

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.
- Machel was attracted to Marxist ideals and began his political activities in a hospital.
- 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. Machel spent most of his time in the field with his men, leading them in combat and sharing their dangers and hardships. By 1970 Samora Machel became commander and chief of the Frelimo army. He believed in a guerilla war and Frelimo's army established itself among the poor in Mozambique.

Samora Moises Machel

- In 1974, the Portuguese left Mozambique. The new revolutionary government, led by Machel, took over on June 25, 1975. Machel became Mozambique's first president.
- On October 19, 1986, Samora Machel's aircraft crashed in the Lebombo Mountains. President Machel and twenty-four others died in the accident.

Dependent Independence

- 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 scored better on the decolonization of non-settler parts of the empire. The white colonies had Dominion status at the earliest
- Settler colonialism also finally, failed as the colonized majorities in French Algeria and Indo-China, Dutch/British South Africa, German/South African Namibia, and British Zimbabwe waged difficult struggles for freedom.
- The British strived to leave before the breaking point. The institutional framework they had developed in the colonies enabled managed transitions, mostly.

Dependent Independence

- The British did not want to reproduce the pre-departure conflicts of French Indo-China or Algerian scale despite facing multiple challenges in India, Kenya, and Malaysia. The British Commonwealth symbolically retained relationships between the freed states and Britain.
- 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 moment, besides the Belgian Congo. Violence at their departure was as gruesome as the centuries of exploitation of Belgian Congo, and Portuguese Angola and Mozambique.
- A new struggle for growth and prosperity began with independence.