

22 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

1914 — 1990s

COLONIALISM, INDEPENDENCE, AND THEIR AFTERMATH

COMMENTARY

Chapter 22 takes on the daunting task of attempting to survey and analyze the history of the world's second largest continent during the 20th century. This is a particularly difficult task, owing to what might be termed Africa's three-dimensional diversity. Spodek cites the first dimension of this diversity in the chapter's introduction, where he discusses the multiplicity of ethnic groups and cultural traditions in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the vast differences in territorial extent, population size, literacy rates, life expectancy, **gross national product**, and **per capita income** within the various countries of the region. The other two dimensions are discussed less explicitly, as recurring themes throughout the chapter. One is the different imperial policies of the European colonial powers, which were to have a strong impact on their respective colonies' transition to independence. In terms of political infrastructure, it was the British colonies which were generally the best prepared for self-rule, as a result of the pragmatic institution-building policies of the colonizers. France, on the other hand, had generally accorded Africans and their culture much more respect and had encouraged assimilation to French ways as well. As a result, the former colonies of France have generally retained close ties with their former mother country. The brutally exploitative rule of the Belgians in the Congo (now **Zaire**) and the Portuguese in **Angola** and **Mozambique** left those countries poorly prepared for independence and torn by internal strife. The third dimension of diversity comprises the divergent paths taken by the new leadership of the emerging nations of Sub-Saharan Africa after independence. A few, like the former French colony of **Cote d'Ivoire** (Ivory Coast), chose a capitalist economic system and close connections with France and the world economy. **Kwame Nkrumah** of **Ghana**, on the other hand, advocated a form of **state socialism**, with government ownership of the major productive industries and large-scale development projects. Other countries, like **Tanzania**, under the leadership of **Julius Nyerere**, tried to develop an economic system based on traditional African communalism. Some nations, particularly Zaire and many former French colonies, sought economic and military aid from Europe and the United States, while others sought aid from the Soviet Union and even communist Cuba. Finally, there was **South Africa**, a unique case in that it was the only white-dominated government in the region after 1976.

In order to try to reach some tentative conclusions, the text adopts a selective approach, comparing development in a number of representative countries, in an attempt to answer several crucial questions. The first question the author addresses is, essentially, How did European colonialism work? What were its salient economic and administrative features, both generally and in selected colonies? A second issue, addressed in more detail, is how Africans were able to mobilize and organize broad-based opposition to colonial rule and why, ultimately, the European colonial powers were forced to accede to their demands for independence. The second half of the chapter deals with the post-independence era and asks the questions, [W]hat political, economic and social systems did African peoples implement to rule themselves? and How well were these systems working — or not working and why? An important aspect of the latter question is the issue of the extent to which Africa's continuing political instability and economic underdevelopment is the result of the colonial legacy and continuing intervention by external forces (**neocolonialism**), as opposed to unrealistic choices made by Africans themselves or the greed and corruption of some of their leaders. Finally, the author addresses the question of the survival of African cultural traditions and the extent to which they impact on the societies of Africa and the world today.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

A. Introduction: Important Questions

- B. To World War I: Colonialism Established
 - 1. Economic investment: monoculture and mining and their effects
 - 2. Administration
- C. Colonialism Challenged: 1914-1957: What Do We Know? What Difference Does It Make?
 - 1. The World Wars and the weakening of European control
 - 2. Origins of the independence movements
 - 3. Seeds of discontent
 - 4. Pan-Africanism, 1914-45
 - 5. SOURCE: Our Only Hope for a New Life Lies in the Machine
- D. Winning Independence: 1945-1975
 - 1. The British colonies
 - 2. The French colonies
 - 3. The Belgian colonies
 - 4. The Portuguese colonies
- E. South Africa
 - 1. The Union of South Africa (1910)
 - 2. *Apartheid* (1948)
 - 3. The African National Congress
 - a. SOURCE: Nelson Mandela's Speech to the Court at His Trial
 - b. International sanctions on South Africa
 - 4. F. W. de Klerk and the transition to majority rule
- F. Evaluating the Legacy of Colonialism
- G. Independence and After
 - 1. Internal politics
 - 2. FOCUS: Traditional Institutions and National Governments
 - 3. Exceptions: altering borders
 - 4. SPOTLIGHT: Refugees and Exiles
- H. Economic Issues
 - 1. Africa's economic and social problems
 - 2. Roots of the economic problems: an economic and historiographic debate
 - a. Lack of a capitalist class
 - b. Lack of a capitalist ethic
 - c. International debts
 - d. Dictatorship and corruption
 - e. Manipulation of ethnic identity
 - 3. PROFILE: Julius Nyerere
- I. Cultural Life
 - 1. *Negritude*
 - 2. Music
 - 3. Cinema
 - 4. Literature
- J. African History
 - 1. How Do We Know?
 - 2. What Difference Does It Make?

IDENTIFICATION TERMS

For each term, students should be able to provide identification or definition, an approximate date, a geographical location (if relevant) and—most important—a concise explanation of its significance in the context of the chapter. Terms that appear in the *Study Guide* are listed on **bold** font in the first column.

Nelson Mandela
monoculture

indirect rule
cadres

Soweto
animist

Chinua Achebe
Kwame Nkrumah
Yaounde Convention
Apartheid
Pan-African Congresses
Negritude
Biafra
Big Men
neocolonialism
statism

Swahili
year of the great strikes
W. E. B. Du Bois
Jomo Kenyatta
Congo Crisis
Tutsi and Hutu
Angola and Mozambique
Native Lands Act
African National Congress
F. W. de Klerk

Sudan
Idi Amin
Horn of Africa
Somalia
Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire)
Mobutu Sese Seko
Wole Soyinka
Leopold Senghor
griot
Julius Nyerere

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading and studying Chapter 22, students should be able to:

1. Understand the various motivations behind European imperialism in Sub-Saharan Africa (as explained in Chapter 16) and how they relate to the diverse effects of colonial rule as described in this chapter.
2. Explain the terms monoculture and neocolonialism and how they relate to Sub-Saharan Africa.
3. Discuss the different forces and events that tended toward the weakening and eventual end of European colonial rule in the period c. 1914-1960.
4. Evaluate the effects of colonial rule on Sub-Saharan Africa, with particular reference to the different forms of colonial administration practiced by different European countries.
5. Discuss the most critical economic, social and political issues facing Africans today.
6. Understand the importance of African culture and cultural debates in African societies today.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LECTURE TOPICS

1. Review the various motivations for European imperialism and the partition of Africa, with particular reference to the historical debate over imperialism discussed at the end of Chapter 16. Then discuss the various forms European administration assumed in Africa and compare some of the results of these different forms of administration.
2. Explain the background of African independence movements and the inner divisions within them. Discuss the relative contributions of European liberalism and nationalism, African-Americans, colonial educational policies, African labor movements and the two world wars to the evolution of African independence movements and national consciousness.
3. Present the effects of colonialism on Sub-Saharan Africa, discussing both positive and negative aspects. Labor exploitation and monoculture, arbitrary colonial borders and the lack of political rights and experience should be balanced against improvements in public health, communications and transportation infrastructure and public education.
4. Trace the independence process and post-independence history of several selected comparative case study nations, pointing out the various successes and difficulties and the reasons for them. Discuss neocolonialism, underdevelopment, the problems of Big Men and predatory states and the effects of the intrusion of Cold War politics into Sub-Saharan Africa.
5. Discuss and compare the various approaches to economic development pursued by African states and leaders.
6. Discuss the long struggle for racial equality and black majority rule in South Africa and the reasons for the eventual end of Apartheid.

TOPICS FOR ESSAYS OR CLASS DISCUSSIONS

1. Although the leadership of African independence movements was almost always drawn from the tiny minority of European (or sometimes American) educated elites, historians have identified a number of local organizations which served as recruiting and training grounds for grass-roots support. Citing specific examples, identify at least three such organizations and explain how they served to promote support for independence.
2. Define monoculture and explain the various ways in which its practice has proven so harmful to African economies and the African environment. Since it was so harmful, why was it introduced in the first place?
3. What specific problems did African leaders confront in the years immediately following independence? How successful were various nations in dealing with these problems? To the extent that they were not successful, why was this the case?
4. What various types of economic systems were tried in Africa by the newly independent countries? How successful were the various experiments? What problems did they encounter? Cite specific examples.
5. How did the traumatic experiences of the two World Wars and the Depression undermine the moral authority and confidence of the European nations to maintain colonial rule over African peoples? In what ways did they also undermine Europe's ability to maintain that control?
6. According to the text, how have Africans managed to preserve their traditional cultures in spite of their domination by European imperialism and European cultural influence? What forms of African culture are strongest today? How have African cultural forms influenced those in other continents?
7. Current events and issues: Who's to blame? Citing explanations and arguments from the various historians, economists, politicians and others discussed in this chapter, what or who is to blame for Africa's underdeveloped economies, unstable governments and ethnic and religious tensions? Be sure to explain their respective arguments fully. Which arguments, in your view, are the most convincing?
8. Debate: Based on evidence in the chapter, how well did the French colonial policy of assimilation work? Is there any evidence that the former colonies and colonial subjects of France actually were assimilated into French culture? On the whole, was assimilation any more or less racist or exploitative than the colonial policies of the British, Portuguese or Belgians?
9. How have various commentators explained the roots of Africa's economic problems? What solutions have been proposed? Discuss these questions with specific reference to the debate reviewed in the chapter.
10. Group work: Using all of the primary sources (documents, quotations, poems, illustrations and photographs) in the chapter as evidence, discuss the extent to which African people and their society have been westernized by the colonial experience and neocolonialism, in comparison with the degree to which they have maintained their essentially African cultures. What are the salient aspects of African culture? How might they differ from those of their temporary European rulers?

TEXT RESOURCES (Spodek, 2nd ed.)

Timetables, charts and graphs:	Sub-Saharan Africa	(pp. 743-4)
Large photographs or illustrations:	Chart of the Zambezi River, c. 1865	(p. 742)
	Building the Uganda railway, c. 1900	(p. 745)
754)	South African miners' strike, 1913	(p. 748)
	Aerial view of rioting in Leopoldville, Belgian Congo	(p. 754)
	Seaside segregation, South Africa	(p. 755)
	A new and democratic dawn for South Africa, 1994	(p. 757)
	First-time voters, South Africa, 1994	(p. 758)
	Rwandan refugees at Rusomo, Tanzania, 1994	(p. 764)
	Giant AIDS poster in Lusaka, Zambia	(p. 767)
	An <i>mbira</i> , or thumb-piano from Nigeria, c. 1880s	(p. 768)

Maps:	Africa in 1914	(p. 746)
	The economic development of Africa	(p. 749)
	The decolonization of Africa	(p. 752)
	Ethnic groups in Africa	(p. 759)
SPOTLIGHT:	Refugees and Exiles	(pp. 764-5)
PROFILE:	Julius Nyerere	(p. 763)
FOCUS: 760)	Traditional Institutions and National Governments	(p.
SOURCES:	Our Only Hope for a New Life Lies in the Machine [from Ousmane, <i>God's Bits of Wood</i>]	(p. 750)
	Nelson Mandela's Speech to the Court at His Trial, 1964	(p. 756)
	Prayer to Masks — Leopold Senghor	(p. 771)

ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SOURCES (*Documents Set & www.Prenhall.com/Spodek*)

- 22-1 The Colonial Secretary argues for Uhuru
- 22-2 Amilcar Cabral: the force of the intellect [from *Identity and Dignity in the Context of the National Liberation Struggle*]
- 22-3 Julius Nyerere's path of *Ujamaa* [from *Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism*]
- 22-4 Nelson Mandela: the ultimate conquest [from *The Struggle is My Life*]
- 22-5 Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement [from *I Write What I Like*]
- 22-6 African Women: an overlooked factor [from Awa Thiam, *Feminism and Revolution*]
- www Tradition or tyranny? The controversy over *Kakia* (female circumcision)

AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES (videos, DVDs, CD-ROM, and websites)

***Africa, I Remember: Music on Earth productions.* [video; 30 minutes]**

A study of Senegalese musician Tunde Jegede, who has combined the classical traditions of European and African music to create a musical synthesis of two cultures.

***African Studies:* <http://www.w3.org/hypertext/DataSources/bySubject/AfricanStudies/africanWWW.html> [website]**

This is a search engine for other African Studies links.

***The Africans: AnnenbergCPB Video, WETA/BBC, 1986.* [9 one-hour videos; color]**

This series explores the diversity of all aspects of African culture by comparing sixteen different countries.

***Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rainbow Nation: Films for the Humanities & Sciences* [video; color]**

Part of the new *Stories my Country Told Me* series, this video follows Desmond Tutu during a typical day in his post-1994 life and explores the question of whether South Africa can survive and thrive as a multicultural society.

***Burden on the Land: Roger Pyke Productions* [video; 52 minutes, color]**

This video surveys the causes and ramifications of Africa's famine problem.

***Center for African Studies at the University of Pennsylvania:* http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/AS.html**

[website] This site includes scholarly articles on all aspects of African Studies.

The Continent that Overslept: Danmarks Radio/Filmakers Library [video; 58 minutes, color]

This award-winning investigative film inquires into the reasons for Africa's underdevelopment, through interviews with businessmen, government officials and scholars. The consensus among younger Africans is that colonialism can no longer be blamed for Africa's ills and that Africans themselves must take action or take responsibility.

The Long Walk of Nelson Mandela: PBS Home Video [video; 120 minutes, color]

This *Frontline* episode traces Nelson Mandela's struggle against Apartheid, from his trial and imprisonment at Robben Island to his eventual release and leadership of the African National Congress to victory and a democratic, multi-racial South Africa.

Living in Africa — African Solutions to African Problems: South African Broadcasting [5 videos; 150 min., color]

This series focuses on five different nations (Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Zambia) in east Africa, each of which is dealing with a specific crisis. It explores the debates on dealing with the problems and the ramifications of the proposed solutions.

Rwanda: History of a Genocide: A film by Robert Genoud/Filmakers Library [video; 52 minutes, color]

This documentary explores the historical origins and course of the 1994 genocide, starting with German and Belgian colonization of Ruanda and Urundi.

The Silent Killer: AIDS in South Africa: SVT/Filmakers Library. [video; 52 minutes, color]

Patients, doctors, social workers and public health officials are interviewed in order to gain a better understanding of the HIV epidemic in South Africa in the Swedish Television production [English edition].

South Africa: Forging a Democratic Union, 1994. [video; 28 minutes, color]

This video reviews the struggle against Apartheid, with particular reference to the U.S. role in aiding South Africa's transition toward democracy.

We Jive Like This: Filmakers Library [video; 52 minutes, color]

Explores the vibrant musical culture of South Africa's black townships.