BOUBACAR SIDI DIALLO

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań
Faculty of Law and Administration
email: diallo@amu.edu.pl
ORCID: 0000-0002-9124-5569
DOI: 10.14746/cph.2023.2.12

The economic and political development of African states in the historical context of the decolonization process

Introduction

Decolonization is a fairly recent historical phenomenon that stems from the colonial conquest.[1] It was particularly significant in the 19th century when colonial empires sought to increase their economic and political power in the world. Although this was a relatively brief historical episode, it left deep traces in the history of mankind and in the global economic hierarchy. The importance of decolonization is demonstrated by the fact that the European colonial empires expanded in the 1930s by obtaining a large surface area of the world's landmass, which also accounted for

---

[1] The term "decolonization" broadly refers to the growing independence as the colonial rule dissolved in the periphery and in the metropole, with its various political, economic, cultural, and social aspects. The transfer of the national sovereignty rights led to the emergence of new independent states, thereby permanently changing international relations and the global system of states. See A. Roberts (ed.), *The Colonial Moment in Africa: Essays on the Movement of Minds and Materials, 1900–1940*, Cambridge 1990; E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York 2007. Identifying the key systems, structures, and relations of colonial governing are the fundamentals one must know to properly challenge them, and lead on a path to decolonization. It is not "integration" or simply the token inclusion of the intellectual achievements of non-white cultures. Rather, it involves a paradigm shift from a culture of exclusion and denial to the creation of space for other political philosophies and knowledge systems. It is a cultural shift to thinking more expansively about why common knowledge is what it is, and, in doing so, adjusting cultural perceptions and power relations.

a significant proportion of the world's population. As a result, the colonized countries were subject to a strong influence of the colonizing countries especially within the framework of governance and economic and cultural relations. Although the beginning of decolonization dates back to 1776, when the United States of America declared its independence, the event can only be considered a "precursor."[2] The process which will undergo examination in this study is rooted in the European colonial expansion and it actually began in 1945. The aim of the present article is not to make a historical list of decolonization but to study its aspects and the causes that led to the emancipation of the colonized peoples and the construction of a new social and economic order in the world. These are countries whose motivation is to gain considerable economic and political power. In order to properly analyze the issue, we will first study the historical context of decolonization in the 20th century, which is the result of the phenomenon of colonization by European countries. We will take a closer look at the historical context of colonization: the main colonial empires, their motivations, and the territories they owned.

Decolonization is a historical phenomenon that had a strong influence on the evolution of the economic hierarchy in the 20th century.[3] The process of decolonization has its roots in the colonial system where a certain contradiction can be noted: the dominant colonizing countries deprived the colonized countries of their rights while exploiting them in many ways.[4] According to some definitions, "Decolonization is the set of processes by which the vast majority of countries, regions and peoples colonized by European countries between the 15th and the beginning of the 20th century gained, regained or negotiated their independence. Decolonization mainly affected America (in the 18th and 19th centuries), Africa, Asia and Oceania (in the 20th century)."[5] There are two points of view of the term decolonization. In

---

[2] 4 July 1776. The Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress, marking the separation of 13 North American British colonies from Great Britain. It was later ratified and is now celebrated in USA as a national holiday. On this day in 1776, the Continental Congress passes a resolution proclaiming the sovereignty of the American colonies in rebellion against Great Britain. Despite being ratified on July 2, this "Declaration of Independence" will not be published for another two days.

[3] The decolonization processes that began with the independence movements of the 19th century and culminated with the last emancipatory events of the mid-20th century, did not lead to a reversal of domination. Although the format changed and the former colonies acquired a new nominal status, spoliation, political subjugation, and cultural colonization are in fact still very much alive today.

[4] M. Erez, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York 2007; R.L. William, *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941–1945*, Oxford 1977.

[5] Ch. Babou, *Decolonization or National Liberation: Debating the End of British Colonial Rule in Africa*, "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science" 2010, no. 632, pp. 41–54, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27895947 [access: 7 August 2023]; A. Adebajo, K. Whiteman (eds.), *The EU and Africa: from Eurafrique to Afro-Europa*, London 2011.

a narrow sense, it is a process of emancipation by which a colonized country or region regains its independence. It is then a recovery of a confiscated sovereignty. In a broader sense, it could be linked with the contemporary issue of North-South relations. In fact, it is the process by which the European countries lost the bulk of their colonies in less than a quarter of a century. This article will also investigate the link between decolonization and the new global economic hierarchy that resulted from it. For this reason, we will study the issue of 'European' decolonization, which is a more recent process than that of the American colonies. It is also at the origin of the political divisions that influenced the new contemporary world economic order.

The fundamental historical aspect and the definition of colonization

Colonization is an important historical process of territorial and demographic expansion. This is a phenomenon characterized by migration flows which include invasion, occupation, and exploitation of a geographic space, guardianship as well as political, cultural, religious, and economic subjugation, and even genocide, of populations who had established themselves previously on a given territory. It is an expansionist process of occupation, which consists of putting other territories under foreign influence. It includes political domination of the territory and subjugation of its inhabitants, and this is what we call imperialism on the part of the political decision-making center called metropolis. Colonization very often has the aim of exploiting real or assumed advantages (i.e., raw materials, labor, strategic position, living space, etc.) of a territory for the benefit of its metropolis or its settlers. On the other hand, it is frequently presented under the pretext of "development and civilization of indigenous peoples."

There are several types of colonization, where we distinguish those which are characterized by simple political occupation of a territory (for economic, religious, or ideological exploitation). Colonized territories may have a different legal status, which is granted to the citizen and to the colonized and which always plays in favor of the citizen with power. First of all, it should be noted that colonization is not a recent phenomenon historically. Indeed, the origins of the occupation of foreign lands always remains a question that provokes different answers.

The entire colonization process was underpinned by an obvious fact: that of the inequality of the different human "races." Therefore, while the meaning of race was crucial to the sustainability of racism for the colonial system, race seems to be a secondary issue that only becomes visible in the modern era when systemic injustice, inequality, or discrimination has been pointed out. Nevertheless, the understanding of how colonialism left behind a long-lasting legacy of racism and inequality can be

made more accessible with the help of Fanon's observations.[6] Talking about "superior races" and "inferior races," like Jules Ferry did before the Chamber of Deputies in 1885, was not shocking.[7] "At the time, the question of the hierarchy of races was not discussed, it was part of common sense," recalls Nicolas Bancel. The idea was validated and reinforced in the 19th century by a new scientific discourse, from the Essay on the Inequality of Human Races by the diplomat Joseph Arthur de Gobineau in 1855, to certain anthropological works which deduced that the physical traits of Black people (the size of the brain, for example) confirmed status as "primitives." And it was coupled with new evolutionary theories, considering that "wild" humans (Africans, for example) were only a first stage of "civilized" ones (Westerners).[8] "When we exhibit black men in African-style villages at the Universal Exhibition of 1889 (The 1889 World's Fair took on a whole new dimension. It celebrated the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution as well as the strength of the national industry, under the auspices of the Republic and its colonial empire, which had closed the gap with England), this also has an educational logic," notes Pascal Blanchard.[10] "The theme of the Exhibition was the progress of humanity and we try to show its different stages of development."

[6] F. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Ch. Lam Markmann, New York 1967, p. 232; E. Eze, *Achieving Our Humanity: The Idea of the Postracial Future*, New York 2001; B.W. Frank III., *Biko and the Problematic of Presence*, in A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander, N.C. Gibson (eds.), *Biko Lives!: Contesting the Legacies of Steve Biko*, New York 2008; B.R. Mogobe, *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu*, Harare 1999; O.W. Oyèrónkéé, *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, Minneapolis 1998, pp. 23–24.

[7] E. Tyler, G. Stovall, *French Civilization and its Discontents: Nationalism, Colonialism, Race*, Maryland 2003, p. 214.

[8] Gobineau ultimately accepts the prevailing Christian doctrine that all human beings shared common ancestors, Adam and Eve. He suggests, however, that "nothing proves that at the first redaction of the Adamite genealogies the colored races were considered as forming part of the species" and "We may conclude that the power of producing fertile offspring is among the marks of a distinct species. As nothing leads us to believe that the human race is outside this rule, there is no answer to this argument." J.A. de Gobineau, *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, Paris 1855.

[9] N. Bancel, P. Blanchard, G. Boëtsch, É. Deroo, S. Lemaire, C. Forsdick (eds.), *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires*, trans. T. Bridgeman, Liverpool 2008; S. Berthier-Folgar, *The 1889 World Exhibition in Paris: The French, the Age of Mechanics, and the Wild West*, "Nineteenth-Century Contexts" 2009, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 129–142.

[10] M.D. Brooks, *Civilizing the Metropole: The Role of the 1889 Parisian Universal Exposition's Colonial Exhibits in Creating Greater France*, "The Pegasus Review: UCF Undergraduate Research Journal" 2012, vol. 6, no. 2, article 3; P. Blanchard, F. Verges, N. Bancel, M. Cheb Sun, *Manifest pour un Musée des Histoires Coloniales*, "Libération" 5 August 2012, http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2012/05/08/manifeste-pour-un-musee-des-histoires-coloniales_817262 [access: 7 August 2023]; P. Blanchard, S. Lemaire, N. Bancel, D. Thomas, *Colonial Culture in France Since the Revolution*, Indiana 2014; N. Bancel, P. Blanchard, D. Thomas, *The Colonial Legacy in France: Fracture, Rupture, and Apartheid*, Indiana 2017, p. 398.

Acceleration factors of decolonisation: colonial powers weakened by world wars and keeping up a favorable international opinion

Colonization was accompanied by numerous injustices and abusive practices that came along with the exploitation of the natural resources and the local populations of various colonies. This context of domination and exploitation provided a favorable framework for the expression of the rejection of colonization. Indeed, from the 1940s to the 1970s, a desire to regain independence was born of several factors. The end of the Second World War marked the emergence of two world powers: the USSR and the United States of America. Despite their strong ideological opposition, they had one thing in common, namely the fight against colonialism.[11] As a matter of fact, the United States is a country that was born as a result of a war of independence against the United Kingdom. The USSR sees colonization as a symbol of Western imperialism.[12] The ideological positions of the two great powers concerning colonization favored the expression of the demands for independence in the colonized countries.

The Second World War seriously undermined the colonial system.[13] The colonial powers lost their former prestige and were either defeated and occupied, as was the case of the Netherlands, Belgium and France, or they came out of the conflict deeply exhausted, as was the case of the United Kingdom. The natives, who were often employed in order to replenish the ranks of the allied armies in the war, felt a desire to break the ties that still bound them to a ruined and exsanguinated Europe. Moreover, the emergence of two great anti-colonial superpowers, the United States

---

[11] The world known to us today was shaped to a great extent by the events of the Second World War. Colonial troops from far-flung European empires fought and died in combat during the 1940s on both the Allied and Axis sides of the conflict and in the following few decades growing demand for independence surged in Africa, Asia, and in the Middle East. At the same time, a Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union pushed the world into aligning with either the American or the Soviet side, further accelerating the end of colonialism and tipping the scales towards decolonization. The creation of the United Nations and other international organizations, coupled with increasing economic interconnections and globalization, helped foster a greater global awareness for the struggles of independence around the world. See N. Gerard-Larson, *Decolonization and Independence in 20th Century Africa*, "K-12 Teacher Resources" 2021, no. 14, https://dc.uwm.edu/agsl_k12/14 [access: 7 August 2023].

[12] The nuclear balance established from 1949 will ensure that direct war between the two superpowers in Europe will remain "cold," any rise to extremes necessarily implying mutual destruction. But, from Korea to Indochina, from Indonesia to Algeria, anticolonial struggles will result in "hot" wars, the USSR favoring armed resistance and victories against imperialism, all of it done in an attempt to control the new regimes.

[13] R. von Albertini, *The Impact of Two World Wars on the Decline of Colonialism*, "Journal of Contemporary History" 1969, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 17–35; F. Fanon, *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*, London 1989; C.O. Chikeka, *Decolonization Process in Africa during the Post-War Era, 1960–1990*, New York 1998, p. 314; F. Cooper, *Décolonisation et travail en Afrique. L'Afrique britannique et française 1935–1960*, Paris – Amsterdam 2004, p. 584.

and the Soviet Union, and the new international context after 1945 favored the colonies' struggle for independence. Thus, the United Nations Charter reaffirms the "respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples."[14] This principle had already been mentioned by the American President Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister Churchill in the Atlantic Charter signed on 14 August 1941 on the US cruiser Augusta off Newfoundland.[15] In point 3 of this solemn declaration, the two heads of state set out the principle that "they respect the right of each people to choose its own form of government and hope that sovereign rights and self-government will be restored to those who have been forcefully deprived of them."

Decolonization took place in two phases. The first phase ran from 1945 to 1955 and mainly affected the countries of the Near and Middle East as well as South-East Asia.[16] The second phase began in 1955 and mainly concerned North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The colonized peoples of South-East Asia were the first to demand the departure of the Europeans and the first to reclaim their independence. In February 1947, the British decided to leave India, and a few months later, India regained its independence. However, it did not happen without violent clashes between the Hindu and Muslim communities. This situation led to the partition of the country into two independent states, India and Pakistan, on 15 August 1947. In 1948, the United Kingdom also granted independence to Burma and the island of Ceylon, but Malaysia had to wait until 1957 before becoming independent. Indonesia endured

---

[14] The decolonization efforts of the United Nations derive from the principle of "equal rights and self-determination of peoples" as stipulated in Article 1 (2) of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as from three specific chapters in the Charter which are devoted to the interests of dependent peoples. The Charter established, in Chapter XI ("Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories", Articles 73 and 74), the principles that continue to guide the decolonization efforts of the United Nations. The Charter also established the International Trusteeship System in Chapter XII (Articles 75–85) and the Trusteeship Council in Chapter XIII (Articles 86–91) to monitor the Trust Territories, http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations [access: 7 August 2023]. See R. Adler-Nissen, U. Pram Gad (eds.), *European Integration and Postcolonial Sovereignty Games: The EU Overseas Countries and Territories*, London – New York 2013, p. 272.

[15] The Atlantic Charter was a policy statement, signed by the U.S. and Britain, in August of 1941, early during WWII, to establish what the parties wanted to in the happen post-war time; after the initial signing, it was also agreed upon by the other allies. The charter set out 8 goals, rather than try to set out a blueprint of what exactly had to happen following the war. GATT (General agreement on trades & tariffs) and post war European independence, and other documents and goals were derived from the Atlantic Charter. The main aim of the Atlantic Charter was to show that the U.S. was supporting the U.K. during wartime. Both countries wanted to show a united front as well as the mutual hopes they had for a post-war world, which would come after defeating the Nazi regime. One of the main focuses was on peace after the war, and not so much on the U.S. strategy and involvement. One of the main U.S. aims with the Atlantic Charter was to change the way British policies were viewed, in regards to the Empire.

[16] J. Springhall, *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires*, Basingstoke 2001, p. 240.

four years of military and diplomatic confrontation with the Netherlands before the latter recognized the independence of the Dutch East Indies in December 1949.

France also had to deal with the desire for emancipation in its colonies. From 1946, the country was engaged in a military conflict in a distant colonial war in Indochina that claimed many human lives.[17] Eight years after the start of the conflict, it ended with the victory of the Viet Minh (Vietnamese Independence Front) over the French forces. The Geneva Accords of 21 July 1954 put an end to the conflict and France was forced to leave the country. Vietnam was then divided into two parts: the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was north of the 17th parallel and Vietnam was in the south. The independence of Laos and Cambodia, proclaimed in 1953, was finally recognized. By providing food, capital, and soldiers, the colonized people participated in the war effort of the colonizing countries. This contact helped them to discover the weaknesses, vulnerability, and excesses of the white people, which dealt a big blow to the authority of the colonizer who had freely used their resources.[18] At the end of the conflict, the colonized demanded compensation for their sacrifices. After the war, the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination was enshrined in the United Nations Charter of 1945. The adoption of the General Assembly resolution containing the important Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was clearly the beginning of a revolutionary process within the United Nations and represented, by its terms, an attempt to supplement the afore-mentioned relevant provisions of the Charter. The Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples expressly provides that "all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development."[19] It was then included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.[20] In turn, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the UN

---

[17] Ch.-R. Ageron, P. Devillers, *Les guerres d'Indochine de 1945 à 1975. Actes de la table ronde tenue à l'IHTP du 6-7 février 1995*, Paris 1996, p. 281; Ch.-R. Ageron, C. Coquery-Vdrovitch, *Histoire de la France coloniale*, t. 3: *Le Déclin (de 1931 à nos jours)*, Paris 1999, p. 550; J. Aimaq, *For Europe or Empire? French Colonial Ambitions and the European Army Plan*, Lund 1996, p. 314; B. Davidson, *The Second World War, 1939–1945*, [in:] idem, *Modern Africa: A Social and Political History*, London 1994, pp. 61–65.

[18] Iba Der Thiam rightly writes: "The war enabled several thousand Africans to discover Europe and France, their populations, their way of life, their fears and hopes, their weaknesses and their greatness, to come into contact with another perception of the white man, so different from the one they had known, and to return profoundly transformed."

[19] Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, G.A. Res. 1514, U.N. GAOR, 15th Sess., Supp. No. 16, at 66, U.N. Doc. A/4684 (1961).

[20] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings. Drafted by a UN committee chaired by Eleonor Roosevelt, it was accepted by the General Assembly as Resolution 217 during its third session on 10 December 1948 at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris,

General Assembly on 16 December 1966[21] stipulated that all nations have the right to self-determination, and further legislative work in this sense was not stopped. In fact, the decolonization process, according to data from the UN, lasted until 2020 as part of the third international decade of the elimination of colonialism.[22] Thus, the UN became the international forum for supporting decolonization. Both the USSR and the USA supported decolonization. The USSR opposed colonization because of their ideological principle.[23] As for the United States, the country did not forget that it had been the first colony in history to gain its independence. In 1946, their only colony (the Philippines) became independent, which gave them a clear conscience.

Emergence of African States
as a product of decolonization

Decolonization started to take place in Africa from the mid-1950s. Morocco and Tunisia obtained their independence in 1956.[24] In Sub-Saharan Africa, decolonization took place later and it was a more peaceful process. France granted independence to its colonies in the 1960s. But it refused to decolonize Algeria, where a large European community lived (a settlement colony). Its status was particular. Actually, as a French colony since 1830, Algeria was part of the French territory because it was divided into three departments belonging to France. Tensions between the "Europeans" and the "French Muslims" were high (economic and social, due to the inequality that was present in the colonial system). On 1 November 1954, the National Liberation Front (FLN), a nationalist party, proclaimed in a manifesto its desire to put an end to colonialism in Algeria by all means necessary and made known its conditions for

---

France. Of the 58 members of the United Nations at the time, 48 voted in favour, none against, eight abstained, and two did not vote.

[21] OJ 1977 No. 38 Article 167. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights opened for signature in New York on 19 December 1966.

[22] Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism GA Res 65/119, A/Res/65/119 (2011). The first international decade was proclaimed by International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism GA Res 43/47, A/Res/43/47 (1988); and the second by Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism GA Res 55/146, A/Res/55/146 (2000). See W.F. Cottrell, *The United Nations and Africa*, "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science" 1956, vol. 306, pp. 55–61, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1030734 [access: 7 August 2023].

[23] A. Fontaine, *Histoire de la guerre froide*, Paris 1965; CNUCED, *Manuel de statistiques du commerce international et de développement*, New York 1976.

[24] C.O. Chikeka, *Decolonization Process in Africa...*, p. 314; M. Michel, *Décolonisations et émergence du tiers monde*, Paris 2005, p. 271; J.L. Miege, *Expansion européenne et décolonisation de 1870 à nos jours*, Paris 2015, p. 432; F. Cooper, *Décolonisation et travail...*, p. 584; J. Ahlman, *Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa*, "Kronos" 2011, vol. 37, no. 1, p. 25.

peace. At the same time, a series of attacks marked the beginning of the war. The fight for Algerian independence led to abuses against Algerian and European civilians. The French army used torture to dismantle the FLN network. On 18 March 1962, the Evian agreements were signed, putting an end to the Algerian war.[25] In Egypt, on 26 July 1956, President Gamal Abdel Nasser, a champion of pan-Arabism, proclaimed the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. Clashing head-on with the interests of France, the United Kingdom, and Israel, the Suez crisis provoked a showdown leading to a joint military operation by the three countries against the former British protectorate in October 1956. Despite Nasser's military defeat, France and the United Kingdom were forced, in the face of growing pressure from the United States and the Soviet Union, to evacuate their expeditionary force and give way to an international intervention force under the aegis of the United Nations. Although the Suez affair ended in a moral defeat and a diplomatic failure for the former colonial powers of France and the United Kingdom, from that moment on, Colonel Nasser set himself up as a defender of the Arab cause and a champion of decolonization. Thus, less than ten years after the end of the Second World War and thanks to the various waves of decolonization in Asia and Africa, a new actor, the Third World, entered the international scene.

On the African continent south of the Sahara, Ghana, a former British colony, was the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to declare its independence on 6 March 1957.[26] Events also took place in quick succession in the French colonies of Sub-Saharan Africa and nearly fifteen new independent states were created in 1960. The proclamation of Ghana's independence in March 1957 inaugurated the era of the "suns of independence" in sub-Saharan Africa; it was followed by that of French Guinea the following year on 2 October 1958. However, it was in 1960 that the majority of African countries became sovereign, while others only came out from the colonial era later.[27] Independence in the 1960s opened up all possibilities: years of promises and optimism, but also years of tensions, ambiguities, and complexities as well as years of conflicts. It was therefore an opportunity for researchers in the social sciences and humanities to look back on the event, not only to analyze what

---

[25] T. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*, Cornell 2008, p. 304; P. Gifford, L. Roger (eds.), *Decolonization and African Independence: The Transfers of Power, 1960–1980*, New Haven – London 1988; V. Khapoya, *African Nationalism and the Struggle for Freedom*, in idem, *The African Experience*, London 2013, pp. 149–151.

[26] G. Migani, *La France et l'Afrique sub-saharienne, 1957–1963: Histoire d'une décolonisation entre idéaux eurafricains et politique de puissance*, Bruxelles 2008, p. 295; Ch.A. Diop, *Quand pourra-t-on parler d'une renaissance africaine?*, "Le Musée Vivant" 1948, no. 36–37; idem, *Alerte sous les tropiques: articles 1946–1960: culture et développement en Afrique noire*, Paris 1986; B. Droz, *Regards sur la décolonisation de l'Afrique Noire*, "Labyrinthe" 2003, no. 16, pp. 9–18.

[27] Ch.A. Diop, *Quand pourra-t-on parler...*; idem, *Alerte sous les tropiques...*

it was and how it was perceived in 1960, but also to take the measure of the impact of decolonisation on the proclamation of the sovereignty of the new states.[28]

African States in the challenging times
of post-independence

The colonies that were gradually becoming independent faced many challenges.[29] Everything had to be rebuilt from scratch, while very few people had the skills to rebuild the country. In addition, civil wars broke out because of the blurred borders inherited from colonization. Independence was not an end in itself, but a means of national liberation, a means of human liberation. A means which, among other objectives, was to bring about changes at the national level in the socio-economic, legal, and political structures inherited from colonial domination. At the international level, it was supposed to be an expression of a current leading to a transformation of the existing economic, political, and legal order. In fact, Africa's independence remains a myth; the expected internal structural transformations have not taken place and, externally, on the international scene, Africa remains more marginalized and dominated than ever. In order to reduce this domination, this form of economic and political dependence on foreign countries, the African states generally advocate four solutions: the Africanization of managers, the strategy of import substitution, regional cooperation and negotiation for a new international division of labor, and a new international economic order. As is well known today, the terms of trade between industrialized countries and the small domestic market of most African states will not allow the latter to create new sources of income to support their foreign trade under the import substitution strategy. At the regional or sub-regional level, the generous resolutions of the OAU/AU and the declarations of intent of African governments have not been enough to make regional economic cooperation a reality: attempts at economic integration have failed, and even today the volume of intra-African trade is practically derisory compared to the bilateral trade relations established between African states and foreign countries. A gradual challenge to the colonial order, driven by the pan-African ideal, led to the independence of a number of sub-Saharan African countries. However, pan-Africanism was soon compromised by economic realities, ideological conflicts, and discrepancies between borders and ethnic groups. This led to a sacralization of the state and power, rejection of any form of federalism. Moreover, if authoritarian structures were justified in the fight

---

[28] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, Nairobi 1986, p. 4; A. Cabral, *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches*, New York 1973; idem, *Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts*, New York 1972); idem, *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings*, New York 1979; A. Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, New York 2004, pp. 54–55.

[29] M. Michel, *Décolonisations et émergence...*

against underdevelopment, their maintenance results in a significant reduction in the freedom of individuals and an absence of democracy. Without a popular base, power is generally based on the army. More fundamentally, the various colonization processes resulted in a cultural genocide, especially in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa, where the lack of understanding of national cultures prevents any action on teaching methods, on the birth of national literature, and on traditional structures. On the economic front, depending on the country, we are witnessing either insufficient growth or growth without development. These worrying observations, coupled with the acceleration of technical progress, make it imperative for the current leaders of sub-Saharan Africa to revise their conceptions in various fields in order to avoid serious crises. It is a strange paradox that the countries that receive the most aid from Western governments and private individuals are also the ones whose situation worsens the fastest from year to year. This is because the leaders of these countries are quick to divert international aid to their own benefit and they have no interest in seeing it decrease. As for their poor fellow citizens, they get used to being taken care of and forget the need to work for themselves. This increasingly dramatic situation suits the Western charity organizations themselves, their employees, and their donors, who see it as a reason to continue their work and collect more donations, rather like firefighters who welcome the increase in fire outbreaks. Not surprisingly, sub-Saharan Africa is sinking into destitution. This region that produced more than enough food for local consumption at the time of colonization, now imports a third of the cereals it consumes. Its manufacturing industry is almost non-existent and its exports are limited to underground products (oil and minerals) and cash crops (cocoa, coffee, etc.).[30]

Conclusions

The process of emancipation of the colonies was the starting point for the creation of a new world, and the decolonization movement was the bearer of a set of striking political ideals. The enunciation of Wilsonian principles, reaffirmed by the Atlantic (1941) and San Francisco (1945) Charters, ushered in an international

---

[30] The countries of the South still remain hostage to the economic system of the former colonizers despite decolonization, and they are forced to submit to the neoliberal model with exogenous development based on the export of raw natural resources with low monetary value. Especially since they are tied down by their public debt, an invention of the so-called "developed" countries designed to help them to continue the theft of resources. Neocolonialism, which is now twinned with neoliberalism, is thorough and implacable when it comes to consolidating results for global centrality. Today, formerly colonized peripheral countries have the international political status of free regions, but, in most cases, they are subjected to new economic and cultural paradigms of domination. The wealth of the colonizers is a necessary cause and the consequence is the poverty of the colonized.

legal context that was less favorable to the classical principles of colonization. The asserted anti-colonialism of the two superpowers and of the new organisation, the UN, was the most radical expression of the retreat of the old European powers, and also an indirect encouragement to nationalist movements in the colonial territories. Although they were neither expressed with the same intensity nor at the same times, nationalist demands played a decisive role in the cancellation of the colonial fact. The ideals developed, notably the negative impact of domination on their living conditions, the affirmation of pre-colonial cultural and national pride as well as the passive or violent demand for emancipation, were undoubtedly decisive blows to their state of subjection. In fact, it is as if colonization itself had provided the elements necessary for it to be challenged and for its destruction. The nationalist leaders, most of whom were trained in the West and initiated into the British, French or Belgian political lives, drew from the Western thought the ideals necessary to forcefully achieve their destiny.

Confronted with a post-war climate marked by East/West antagonism, the decolonized countries had to endure this new situation or reinvent a new political doctrine of international positioning. Neutralism was perceived by many Third World leaders in the 1950s as an original way to counterbalance the logic of the blocs and the arms race while promoting the economic and social development of their countries. The irruption of the Third World on the international scene, validated by the Bandung conference, did not hide the ideological differences between the "aligned" and "non-aligned" states of Asia and Africa. In addition to the question of international positioning, the attainment of independence – and particularly the end of the state of subjection – opened up a post-colonial phase during which the nationalist leaders and intelligentsia that had come to power sought ways and means of ensuring true independence, which some believed could only be economic. To this end, the choice of an ideology likely to carry the national effort was essential to meet the challenge of underdevelopment. However, despite convincing results in certain areas, independence proved to be incomplete in the majority of decolonized countries. The official rhetoric, "revolutionary" or "moderate," inspired by the doctrines of socialism, capitalism or Marxism-Leninism, even served in many states "to mask the disappointments of a political reality that was too slow to move or the distortion of this reality." In the end, the last phase of decolonization – in this case the management of acquired independence – proved, in hindsight, to be the most difficult one. While liberating them, this political and psychological process introduced the Third World states into a post-colonial phase in which they now faced and/or discovered their own inability to reinvent themselves. Moreover, these emancipated states have also been subjected to a new regime of domination brought about by the neo-colonial phenomenon and by the structural adjustment policies imposed by the international financial institutions since the 1980s. International

relations were marked, in the aftermath of the Second World War, by the irresistible decolonization movement of the peoples of Africa and Asia. Nationalist movements were encouraged in their demands by an increasingly favorable international context. These nationalists were, however, aware that they could only rely on themselves to achieve sovereignty in various ways. Thus, in the thirty years between 1945 and 1975, all the colonies in Asia and Africa were liberated from the colonial yoke, either peacefully or violently. The process of decolonization took a winding road and the countries gaining independence did not always make good use of it. Often, as it was previously mentioned, bloody civil wars or long-lasting tribal fights broke out. Just as often, the development of African countries has been hampered by huge natural disasters, in particular droughts, which result in large-scale famine.

REFERENCES

Adebajo A., Whiteman K. (eds.), *The EU and Africa: from Eurafrique to Afro-Europa*, London 2011.

Adler-Nissen R., Pram Gad U. (eds.), *European Integration and Postcolonial Sovereignty Games: The EU Overseas Countries and Territories*, London – New York 2013.

Ageron Ch.-R., Coquery-Vdrovitch C., *Histoire de la France coloniale*, t. 3: *Le Déclin (de 1931 à nos jours)*, Paris 1999.

Ageron Ch.-R., Devillers P., *Les guerres d'Indochine de 1945 à 1975. Actes de la table ronde tenue à l'IHTP du 6–7 février 1995*, Paris 1996.

Ahlman J., *Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa*, "Kronos" 2011, vol. 37, no. 1.

Aimaq J., *For Europe or Empire? French Colonial Ambitions and the European Army Plan*, Lund 1996.

Albertini R. von., *The Impact of Two World Wars on the Decline of Colonialism*, "Journal of Contemporary History" 1969, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 17–35.

Babou Ch., *Decolonization or National Liberation: Debating the End of British Colonial Rule in Africa*, "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science" 2010, no. 632, pp. 41–54, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27895947 [access: 7 August 2023].

Bancel, N., Blanchard P., Boëtsch G., Deroo É., Lemaire S., Forsdick C. (eds.), *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires*, trans. T. Bridgeman, Liverpool 2008.

Bancel N., Blanchard P., Thomas D., *The Colonial Legacy in France: Fracture, Rupture, and Apartheid*, Indiana 2017.

Berthier-Folgar S., *The 1889 World Exhibition in Paris: The French, the Age of Mechanics, and the Wild West*, "Nineteenth-Century Contexts" 2009, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 129–142.

Blanchard P., Lemaire S., Bancel N., Thomas D., *Colonial Culture in France Since the Revolution*, Indiana 2014.

Blanchard P., Verges F., Bancel N., Cheb Sun M., *Manifest pour un Musée des Histoires Coloniales*, "Libération" 5 August 2012, http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2012/05/08/manifeste-pour--un-musee-des-histoires-coloniales_817262 [access: 7 August 2023].

Brooks M.D., *Civilizing the Metropole: The Role of the 1889 Parisian Universal Exposition's Colonial Exhibits in Creating Greater France*, "The Pegasus Review: UCF Undergraduate Research Journal" 2012, vol. 6, no. 2.

Cabral A., *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches*, New York 1973.

Cabral A., *Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts*, New York 1972.

Cabral A., *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings*, New York 1979.

Césaire A., *Discourse on Colonialism*, New York 2004.

Chikeka C.O., *Decolonization Process in Africa during the Post-War Era, 1960–1990*, New York 1998.

CNUCED, *Manuel de statistiques du commerce international et de développement*, New York 1976.

Cooper F., *Décolonisation et travail en Afrique. L'Afrique britannique et française 1935–1960*, Paris – Amsterdam 2004.

Cottrell W.F., *The United Nations and Africa*, "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science" 1956, vol. 306, pp. 55–61, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1030734 [access: 7 August 2023].

Davidson B., *The Second World War, 1939–1945*, in idem, *Modern Africa: A Social and Political History*, London 1994.

Diop Ch.A., *Alerte sous les tropiques: articles 1946–1960: culture et développement en Afrique noire*, Paris 1986.

Diop Ch.A., *Quand pourra-t-on parler d'une renaissance africaine?*, "Le Musée Vivant" 1948, no. 36–37, pp. 33–44.

Droz B., *Regards sur la décolonisation de l'Afrique Noire*, "Labyrinthe" 2003, vol. 16, pp. 9–18.

Erez M., *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York 2007.

Eze E., *Achieving Our Humanity: The Idea of the Postracial Future*, New York 2001.

Fanon F., *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Ch. Lam Markmann, New York 1967.

Fanon F., *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*, London 1989.

Fontaine A., *Histoire de la guerre froide*, Paris 1965.

Frank B.W. III., *Biko and the Problematic of Presence*, in A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander, N.C. Gibson (eds.), *Biko Lives!: Contesting the Legacies of Steve Biko*, New York 2008.

Gerard-Larson N., *Decolonization and Independence in 20th Century Africa*, "K-12 Teacher Resources" 2021, no. 14, https://dc.uwm.edu/agsl_k12/14 [access: 7 August 2023].

Gifford P., Roger L. (eds.), *Decolonization and African Independence: The Transfers of Power, 1960–1980*, New Haven – London 1988.

Gobineau J.A. de, *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, Paris 1855.

Khapoya V., *African Nationalism and the Struggle for Freedom*, in idem, *The African Experience*, London 2013.

Manela E., *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism,* New York 2007.

Michel M., *Décolonisations et émergence du tiers monde*, Paris 2005.

Miege J.L., *Expansion européenne et décolonisation de 1870 à nos jours*, Paris 2015.

Migani G., *La France et l'Afrique sub-saharienne, 1957–1963: Histoire d'une décolonisation entre idéaux eurafricains et politique de puissance*, Bruxelles 2008.

Mogobe B.R., *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu*, Harare 1999.

Ngūgī wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, Nairobi 1986.

Oyèrónkéé O.W., *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, Minneapolis 1998.

Roberts A. (ed.), *The Colonial Moment in Africa: Essays on the Movement of Minds and Materials, 1900–1940*, Cambridge 1990.

Shepard T., *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*, Cornell 2008.

Springhall J., *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires*, Basingstoke 2001.

Tyler E., Stovall G., *French Civilization and its Discontents: Nationalism, Colonialism, Race*, Maryland 2003.

William R.L., *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941–1945*, Oxford 1977.

THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN STATES IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE DECOLONIZATION PROCESS

Abstract

The study of decolonization has long been dominated by political history, focused on formal emancipation of nations at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, societies subject to European colonial administration. The article reveals the reasons for the emancipation of colonised nations and the construction of a new social and economic order in the world. It also presents the relationship between decolonisation and the new global economic hierarchy. In fact, decolonisation did not change anything in the economic and political relations between former metropolises and former colonies, similarly at the cultural level, where the language of the coloniser still dominates in the official sphere and in education.

Keywords: economic growth, political development, African, states, historical context, decolonization, process