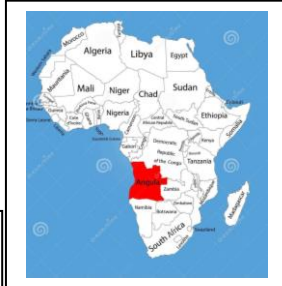
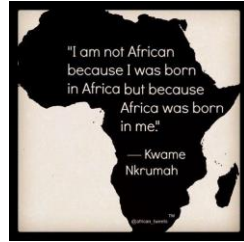
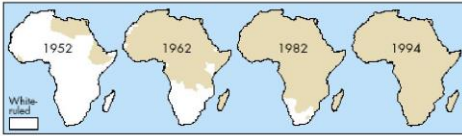


Aim #15: How did African nations gain independence & what were the effects?

Case Study: Ghana, Algeria, Ghana, Angola

Colonial Rule and Independence in Africa



Mini Lecture

- Following WWII, demands by Africans for an end to European colonization grew strong. Many Africans had fought on behalf of Britain or France, and they were ready to fight for their country. African newspapers & radio stations advocated for nationalism & independence.
- The first British colony in West Africa to win independence was the Gold Coast or **Ghana** in 1957 through negotiations led by the U.N.
- Ghana's first president, **Kwame Nkrumah** took office in the newly established republic in 1960. He was responsible for many public works & development projects, such as hydroelectric plants.
- Nkrumah was also accused of running the country into debt and allowing widespread corruption (an economic pattern often seen in African dictatorships). In 1964, he claimed dictatorial powers when the voters agreed to a one-party state with Nkrumah as party leader.
- Nkrumah was a vocal supporter of **Pan-Africanism**, a term he used to mean a celebration of cultural bonds that united people throughout Africa and a rejection of European colonialism.
- In keeping with his Pan-Africanist vision, Nkrumah founded the **Organization of African Unity (OAU)** in 1963. However, 3 years later, the Nkrumah government was overthrown in a military coup. Not until 2000 would Ghana witness a peaceful transfer of civilian power from one elected president to another.
- In North Africa, the French colony of **Algeria** also struggled for independence after WWII. However, Algeria endured far more violence in the process of gaining its independence.
- Algerians' battle for independence began in 1954. The war was a complicated affair with many groups involved. Since many French people lived in Algeria as settlers, the French government considered Algeria a part of France & was adamant that it could not become a separate country- but the French in Algeria were a minority.
- The Algerian movement for independence was led by the **National Liberation Front (NLF)**, which used effective guerrilla techniques against half a million French forces sent to keep hold of Algeria. While French military casualties were relatively low, hundreds of thousands of Algerians died in the war.
- **The Algerian War** caused sharp divisions in France, with many favoring Algerian independence. In 1958, French president Charles de Gaulle planned the steps through which Algeria would gain independence.
- Independence in 1962 caused many thousands of pro-French residents to flee Algeria; many of these were middle-class professionals, and their absence caused economic problems.
- The new Algerian Republic faced problems. Its first leader was overthrown in a coup led by his former ally. The country was a single-party state for many years, with little tolerance for dissent.
- In 1991, a bloody civil war developed in reaction to one-party rule lasting until 2002, when the army chose the president. Suicide bombings were common. In 2011, the military state of emergency (in place since 1992) was lifted in response to protests in the wake of major uprisings in nearby states (the Arab Spring).
- East Africa was a culturally diverse region- home to many long-standing African cultures, Middle Eastern merchants, and Indian laborers/middle class professionals.
- Before independence, many **Kenyans** resisted European control. A group called the Mau Mau carried out terror campaigns in 1952 in protests against economic conditions as well as British colonialism.
- Kenya's government, with British support, attempted to put down the **Mau Mau Rebellion**. However, the fighting escalated into a civil war, and the Mau Mau gained support throughout Kenya. The British ultimately gave up the area, granting independence in 1963.
- The first elected president was **Jomo Kenyatta**, who ruled from 1964-1978. A longtime advocate for independence, Kenyatta had served prison term for supporting the Mau Mau.
- Attempts to unify the diverse people living in Kenya and creating a single national identity were difficult and slow. Violence between Kenya's ethnic groups were common, especially during elections and particularly on Indians.
- Independent Kenya had only one political party. Following Kenyatta's death in 1978, Vice President Daniel Moi ruled for 24 years while Kenyan stability disintegrated in the face of increasing corruption. Finally, the **IMF (International Monetary Fund)** threatened to withdraw loans if corruption continued- in the 2000s, the government pledged to crack down on bribes.
- The Portuguese colony of **Angola** in SW Africa won its independence in 1975 following a 14-year armed struggle. However, ethnic conflict post-independence was devastating as the borders of Angola (like many of the newly independent African countries) had been set by European colonial powers with little regard for the makeup of the ethnic groups thrown together under one government.
- This led to a 27-year civil war, each group wanting to control the country's lucrative diamond mines. In 2002, the rivals agreed to cease-fire. However, this did not end the country's problems of poverty, corruption, and human rights abuses.

Review Questions:

1. What is Pan-Africanism?
2. What methods did Nkrumah use to fight for independence?
3. What policies did Kenyatta employ once in power?
4. How did Algeria gain its independence?

Enduring Issue: Inequality; Conflict

How and why did African countries gain independence in the second half of the 20th century?

Directions: Read the text below and answer the question that follow.

Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism is an ideology and movement that encourages the solidarity of Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social, and political progress, and aims to "unify and uplift" people of African descent. Those who support Pan-Africanism believe that all African peoples and countries are intertwined. At its core Pan-Africanism is, as stated by Minkah Makalani of Rutgers University, "a belief that African peoples, both on the continent and in the diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny."

Pan-Africanism was a powerful idea in the mid-1900s that inspired leaders of African Independence Movements.

"[Jomo] Kenyatta [the first president of Kenya] explained the flag. 'Black is . . . for black people. Red shows . . . [that] the blood of an African is the same colour as the blood of a European, and green shows . . . [that] when we were given this country by God it was green, fertile, and good.' What he . . . must mean . . . [is] that our lands could only be regained by the blood (red) of the African (black)."- Kwari Njama

"If we are to remain free, if we are to enjoy the full benefits of Africa's enormous wealth, we must unite to plan for the full exploitation of our human and material resources in the interest of all our people." —Kwame Nkrumah (1950s), first President of Ghana

1. How might the idea of Pan-Africanism have contributed to African independence movements in the mid-20th century?

Ghanaian Independence (1957)

Watch [this CCTV Africa biography of Kwame Nkrumah](#)

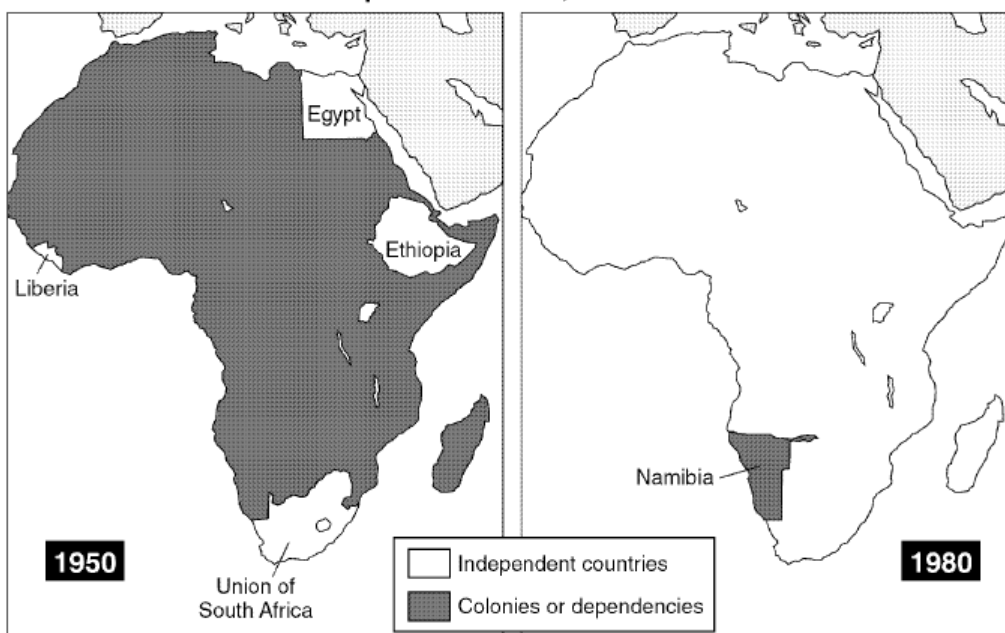
1. Identify some of Kwame Nkrumah's achievements as the leader of Ghana.
2. How did Nkrumah's education outside of Ghana affect him?
3. Why were there protests in Ghana in 1948? What effect did these protests have on Nkrumah?
4. What was the effect of Nkrumah's decision to make Ghana a one-party state? What actions did he take as ruler?
5. Explain the opposing claims about Kwame Nkrumah's legacy voiced in the video.
6. What ended Nkrumah's rule? How did the people of Ghana react?

Kenyan Independence (1963)

Watch [this CCTV Africa biography of Jomo Kenyatta](#)

1. Which European country colonized Kenya?
2. Who was Jomo Kenyatta? Why is he important to Kenyan history?
3. How did Jomo Kenyatta change as a ruler after Kenya's independence?
4. How did Jomo Kenyatta consolidate and maintain his power in Kenya?
5. According to the commentators in the video, what is Jomo Kenyatta's legacy in Kenya?

Independent Africa, 1950–1980



Source: Glenn E. Hughes et al., *Practicing World History Skills*, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1984 (adapted)

1. **Explain** the historical circumstances that led to the historical development depicted in the maps.