

Africa since 1940

The Past of the Present

Second edition

Africa since 1940 is the flagship textbook in Cambridge University Press's New Approaches to African History series. Now fully revised to include the history and scholarship of Africa since the turn of the millennium, this important book continues to help students understand the historical process out of which Africa's position in the world has emerged. A history of decolonization and independence, it allows readers to see just what political independence did and did not signify, and how men and women, peasants and workers, religious and local leaders sought to refashion the way they lived, worked, and interacted with each other.

Covering the transformation of Africa from a continent marked by colonization to one of independent states, Fred Cooper follows the "development question" across time, seeing how first colonial regimes and then African elites sought to transform African society in their own ways. He shows how people in cities and villages tried to make their way in an unequal world, through times of hope, despair, renewed possibilities, and continued uncertainties. Looking beyond the debate over what or who may be to blame for Africa's recurrent crises, he explores alternatives for the future.

Frederick Cooper is Professor of History at New York University. Author and coauthor of a number of books on the history of Africa and of empires, his recent books include *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa* (2014) and *Citizenship, Inequality, and Difference: Historical Perspectives* (2018). His books have won prizes from the American Historical Association, the African Studies Association, and the World History Association. He has conducted research in both East and West Africa, has taught at Harvard University and the University of Michigan, and has been a visiting professor in France.

New Approaches to African History

Series Editors

Judith Byfield, *Cornell University*

Martin Klein, *Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto*

Editorial Advisors

William Freund, *Emeritus Professor, University of Kwazulu-Natal*

Richard Roberts, *Stanford University*

Didier Gondola, *Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis*

Derek Peterson, *University of Michigan*

Kenda Mutongi, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Elisabeth McMahon, *Tulane University*

John Thornton, *Boston University*

New Approaches to African History is designed to introduce students to current findings and new ideas in African history. Although each book treats a particular case and is able to stand alone, the format allows the studies to be used as modules in general courses on African history and world history. The cases represent a wide range of topics. Each volume summarizes the state of knowledge on a particular subject for a student who is new to the field. However, the aim is not simply to present views of the literature but also to introduce debates on historiographical or substantive issues, and individual studies may argue for a particular point of view. The aim of the series is to stimulate debate and to challenge students and general readers. The series is not committed to any particular school of thought.

Other Books in the Series

1. *Africa since 1940* by Frederick Cooper
2. *Muslim Societies in African History* by David Robinson
3. *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* by Michael Gomez
4. *The African City: A History* by William Freund
5. *Warfare in Independent Africa* by William Reno
6. *Warfare in African History* by Richard J. Reid
7. *Foreign Intervention in Africa* by Elizabeth Schmidt
8. *Slaving and Slavery in African History* by Sean Stilwell
9. *Democracy in Africa* by Nic Cheeseman
10. *Women in Twentieth-Century Africa* by Iris Berger
11. *A History of African Popular Culture* by Karin Barber
12. *Human Rights in Africa* by Bonny Ibaoh
13. *Africa since 1940, Second Edition* by Frederick Cooper

Africa since 1940

The Past of the Present

Second edition

Frederick Cooper
New York University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48068-0 — Africa since 1940
2nd Edition
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108480680

DOI: 10.1017/9781108672214

First edition © Frederick Cooper 2002

Second edition © Frederick Cooper 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

13th printing 2016

Second edition 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd, Padstow Cornwall, 2019

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Cooper, Frederick, 1947- author.

Title: Africa since 1940 : the past of the present / Frederick Cooper.

Other titles: New approaches to African history ; 13.

Description: Second edition. | New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2019. |

Series: New approaches to African history ; 13 | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018048289 | ISBN 9781108480680 (hardback) |

ISBN 9781108727891 (pbk.)

Subjects: LCSH: Decolonization—Africa—History—20th century. |

Decolonization—Africa—History—21st century. | Africa—Politics and

government—1945–1960. | Africa—Politics and government—1960- | Africa—Colonial

influence. | Africa—History—20th century. | Africa—History—21st century.

Classification: LCC DT30 .C595 2019 | DDC 960.3/2—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018048289>

ISBN 978-1-108-48068-0 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-72789-1 Paperback

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/CooperAfricanized

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

LIST OF FIGURES	<i>page</i> vii
LIST OF MAPS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xi
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION	xiii
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION	xvii
1 Introduction	I
2 Workers, Peasants, and the Challenge to Colonial Rule	27
3 Citizenship, Self-Government, and Development: The Possibilities of the Post-War Moment	51
4 Ending Empire and Imagining the Future	87
Interlude: Rhythms of Change in the Post-War World	116
5 Development and Disappointment: Economic and Social Change in an Unequal World, 1945–2018	127
6 White Rule, Armed Struggle, and Beyond	196
7 The Recurrent Crises of the Gatekeeper State	234
8 Twenty-First-Century Africa	291
INDEX	305

Figures

1	South Africa's first non-racial election, April 1994. Philip Littleton/AFP/Getty Image	<i>page 5</i>
2	Genocide and looting, Rwanda, April 11, 1994. Pascal Guyot/AFP/Getty Images	5
3	A French administrator with subordinate personnel and local notables, around 1920. Roger Viollet/Getty Images	23
4	Drying cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire, 2001. Tyler Hicks/Getty Images	29
5	Rural mission church in Cameroon, 1949. ©ECPAD/La Documentation Française.	37
6	Charles de Gaulle giving opening speech to the Brazzaville Conference, January 30, 1944. Historic Images/Alamy Stock Photo	53
7	Women voting in legislative elections in Dakar, Senegal, 1956. Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone/Getty Images	63
8	Campaign rally of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria, 1959. Eliot Elisofon. EEPA EECL 1666. Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution	91
9a	GDP per capita and GDP per capita growth in sub-Saharan Africa, 1960–2015	131
9b	GDP per capita in selected African countries, 1960–2015	131
9c	GDP per capita in selected African countries, 1960–2015	132
10a	Cocoa production, 1961–2014	136
10b	Coffee production, 1953–2014	136
11	Commodity dependence in the Nigerian economy, 1938–1998	149
12	Migrants from West Africa trying to reach the Canary Islands, 2007. Desirée Martin/AFP/Getty Images	151
13a	Total population and population growth rate in sub-Saharan Africa, 1950–2015	163

13b	Total population in selected African countries, 1950–2015	163
14a	Life expectancy at birth and infant mortality rate in sub-Saharan Africa, 1960–2015	164
14b	Life expectancy at birth in selected African countries, 1960–2015	164
14c	Life expectancy at birth in selected African countries, 1960–2015	165
15a	Primary education: total number of pupils in selected African countries, 1946–2010	168
15b	Primary education: total number of pupils in selected African countries, 1946–2010	168
15c	Secondary education: total number of pupils in selected African countries, 1946–2010	169
15d	Secondary education: total number of pupils in selected African countries, 1946–2010	169
16a	Urban population as a percentage of total population for selected African countries and sub-Saharan Africa, 1960–2015	176
16b	Population of selected African urban agglomerations, 1960–2015	176
17	Tailors working in a street, Mopti, Mali, 1962. ©ECPAD/La Documentation Française	179
18	Pentecostal mass at Redeemed Church of Christ, near Lagos–Ibadan road, Nigeria, 2003. Jacob Silberberg/Getty Images	187
19	Arrival of pilgrims from the Mouride Brotherhood at the holy city of Touba, Senegal, 1956. ©ECPAD/La Documentation Française	189
20	The faces of war: a very young soldier for the MPLA, Huambo, Angola, 1976. AFP/Getty Images	209
21	Forced removals, Soweto, South Africa, 1987. Walter Dhladhla/AFP/Getty Images	215
22	South Africa on strike, August 1987. Trevor Samson/AFP/Getty Images	216
23	Soweto Revolt, June 1976. Bongani Mnguni/City Press/Gallo Images/Getty Images	218
24	Self-representations of power, Zaire, 1984. Martine Archembault/AFP/Getty Images	236
25	Demonstration in the streets of Accra after the military <i>coup d'état</i> that overthrew President Kwame Nkrumah, March 1966. AFP/Getty Images	243
26	Campaigning for the presidency, Ghana, 2004. Issouf Sanogo/AFP/Getty Images	245
27	Patrice Lumumba under arrest in the Congo, 1960. Bettmann/Getty Images	248
28	A “village of solidarity” (<i>kijiji cha ujamaa</i>), Tanzania, 1974. AFP/Getty Images	268

Maps

1 Africa: countries and cities, <i>c.</i> 2019	<i>page</i> xix
2 Colonial Africa	21
3 Decolonizing Africa	111
4 Railways	146

Tables

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1 Education: gross enrollment rates in sub-Saharan Africa,
1960–2014 (percent) | <i>page 170</i> |
| 2 Literacy rates in selected African countries, c.1960–2015
(percentage of males and females aged fifteen and above) | 171 |

Preface to the Second Edition

The original edition of this book was published in 2002. For a book that begins in 1940, the sixteen years between this edition and its predecessor is a significant portion of the history in question. Much has happened in Africa. New scholarly works with a variety of perspectives have emerged.

We are now at some distance from the millennial expectations that many people around the world held of the year 2000. Some Africanists in 2000 were caught up in those expectations. From one angle came visions of a new era of “millennial” capitalism, a new world of global connections, both linking Africa to economic and cultural trends elsewhere and fragmenting the social fabric. From another angle came the program Millennium 2015, with support from international financial institutions and economists; but despite its name (and the goal of achieving its benchmarks in fifteen years) the call was for a return to concepts of development that had been dominant in the 1950s and 1960s but which had gone into eclipse behind the market fundamentalism of the 1980s. The market model had been imposed on much of Africa under the name of “structural adjustment,” with disastrous consequences that were very much on people’s minds at the time of the first edition of this book.

For somewhat more than a decade of the new millennium the advocates of a return to vigorous development efforts seemed to be having their way: Africa was now experiencing a “normal” – or even better – pattern of economic growth and attracting attention and investment from people interested both in profits and in improving

the welfare of Africans. But by the middle of the second decade of the 2000s it was becoming less and less clear that the nature of economy and society in Africa corresponded to either the model of a new millennial capitalism or the older model of development. More consistent with the evidence is the recent insight of the economic historian Morton Jerven, who identifies a long-term pattern of “growth spurts” in African economies – that is, periods of rapid response to external markets, leading to growth in certain sectors of regional economies that after a time reaches its limits and is followed by relative stagnation. The challenge is to explain both the spurts – which isn’t hard – and their limitations, which isn’t easy. But what needs to be explained is quite different from a long-term or inherent condition characteristic of “Africa.” We may well have just witnessed another of Jerven’s growth spurts: rapid growth in primary-product exports largely driven by demand from the booming economies of China and India, followed by a slow-down as demand has stagnated, while the diversification and structural change in domestic economies remains limited.

One can identify “spurts” of other sorts, for example in citizenship initiatives, as in Senegal in 2012 or Burkina Faso in 2014, when ordinary citizens, especially youth, carried out effective demonstrations that forced heads of state who wanted to prolong their time in power to back down. One needs to look as well for examples of relatively durable patterns of democratic governance, as in Ghana since the 1990s, where incumbent parties sometimes lost elections, compared to other places where aging dictators cling to power or warlords vie for control of large regions. This edition of *Africa since 1940* will look at related patterns of openings and closures, at moves toward more democratic politics and assertions of dictatorial control, at violent conflicts erupting and violent conflicts being resolved. It emphasizes the unevenness of historical patterns, that “Africa” is not a single place moving toward a singular destiny. The nature of its connections with the rest of the world are varied and volatile.

A basic objective of the second edition of *Africa since 1940* is much the same as that of the first: to understand the past of the present. To get to the present, however, we cannot proceed as if history must inevitably lead to what we see today. The men and women who made history at any moment in the past did not know how things would turn out, and they acted on the basis of what they could see and what they wanted, in the face of the constraints of their time. The pathways they followed may have turned out to be blind alleys or highways to a

promising future, but people at any time were mobilizing resources, forging relationships, and making choices on the basis of continually changing sets of possibilities and constraints. We need to reconstruct those changing worlds if we are to understand how Africa got to be where it is today.

Each chapter is followed by a short list of suggested readings as well as references to scholarly works cited in the text. Some material from my own research also appears in the text, and full references, mainly from French and British archives, can be found in my books *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and *Citizenship from Empire to Nation: Remaking France and French Africa 1945–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014). A more comprehensive bibliography, keyed to chapters in this book, is available on the web site of Cambridge University Press, at <http://www.cambridge.org/CooperAfrica2ed>. It will be updated periodically.

Dongil Lee redid the graphs and tables for this edition, using up-to-date data sets. The sources for the updated graphs (figures 9–10 and 13–16), all online, are World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, Food and Agriculture Organization, *FAOSTAT*, United Nations, *Statistical Yearbook*, and UNESCO, *UIS.Stat*. I am grateful for Mr. Lee's careful work. Figure 11 is reproduced from the first edition of this book.

The preface to the first edition is reproduced in this volume, and the help I received from colleagues at that time deserves recognition again. In addition, I would like to thank Eric Allina, Lisa Lindsay, Kate Luongo, and an anonymous reader for the Press for their critical reading of the text of this edition. I am grateful to Maria Marsh and Marty Klein for encouraging me to undertake this new edition.

Preface to the First Edition

It is now forty years since the exciting, hopeful days when most French, British, and Belgian colonies emerged as independent states. Still, much writing on politics, development, or other aspects of contemporary Africa treats this period, or the post-World War II era generally, more as background than as a subject for consideration, while most textbooks and many courses in African history treat this period more as an epilogue than as a full part of the continent's history. The present book attempts to meet the needs of general readers, students, and teachers who would like to do more than that, who want to look at the past of the present in a more coherent way. The dividing line between colonial and independence eras is sometimes thought of so axiomatically that no one asks just what difference acquiring sovereignty made – especially given the continued inequalities of the world order – and just what processes unfolded over a longer time frame. In many ways, the time of World War II (really the late 1930s through the late 1940s) is as important a break point as the moment of independence. More precisely, different aspects of African history present different rhythms and ruptures, different continuities, adaptations, and innovations – a theme developed in the “Interlude”.

The book is organized to promote discussion of such issues. *Africa since 1940* is thus intended for readers with an interest in both history and current affairs, to encourage the former to look farther forward – to see that history doesn't come to an end point – and the latter to look farther backward – to see that the unfolding of processes over time is essential to understanding the present. I have written this book both

within and against the genre of a textbook. Within, because it is intended for readers, students, and others, who seek an introduction to a subject and who are not presumed to have prior knowledge of it, and against, because I have eschewed both the comprehensiveness and the blandness characteristic of textbooks. In putting themes ahead of coverage, readers may find that a part of Africa that particularly interests them, say Ethiopia, is neglected, but they should find that it is easier to obtain specific information elsewhere than it is to find a framework through which to analyze and debate the post-war period as a whole. The choice of examples is shaped both by what I know – and there is more to know about Africa than any one scholar can assimilate – and by what works well within the thematic structure and space constraints of the book. Such choices should not be taken to mean that one part of Africa is more interesting or important than any other.

Africa since 1940 is as much an interpretive essay as a textbook, and its contents are intended more to provoke discussion than to be learned. It is argumentative and even opinionated, but I know of no other way to write African history than to do so from my own point of view and to acknowledge that it is one among many ways of approaching the subject.

It was Martin Klein's innovative idea for a series of modular texts on different themes of African history that inspired me to write this book, and my attempt to make it accessible to students of political science, development, and perhaps world history as well is, I think, compatible with Marty's goals for the series. I am grateful to Marty and to his advisory committee for several rounds of suggestions on my prospectus and the draft of the book. I would also like to thank Mamadou Diouf, Devra Coren, Nancy Hunt, Andrew Ivaska, David Newbury, Luise White, and Jennifer Widner for their helpful critiques of earlier drafts.

Devra Coren's skills in building and using databases and presenting them graphically deserve the credit for the figures and tables presented in chapter 5. I am grateful to Agence France Presse, Documentation Française, Bettmann/CORBIS, and the Eliot Elisofan Photographic Archive of the National Museum of African Art of the Smithsonian Institution for permission to reproduce photographs. I am also grateful to the staff of the Map Room at the University of Michigan Library, and particularly Karl Longstreth and Chad Weinberg, for working with me on the maps.



MAP 1 Africa: countries and cities, c.2019

