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Entangled political histories of twentieth-century West Africa: The case of Guinean exile networks

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Abstract

Following independence in 1958, hundreds of Guinean soldiers, students, and politicians fled their home country in order to build an opposition to President Sékou Touré in exile. This article examines how these exiles built regional and global networks in order to effect political change. In turn, West African states sought to manage exiles in order to apply political pressure on regional rivals. Despite their liminality in a region increasingly dominated by national politics and international organizations, exiles were at the centre of political contestations surrounding citizenship, sovereignty, and human rights that emerged in the three decades following decolonization. Their history underscores the importance of regional frameworks in shaping the post-colonial order in West Africa.

Keywords: exiles; citizenship; sovereignty; human rights; Guinea

In late July 1973, Amadou Sadio Diallo, born in Bamako (Mali) but at the time living in Dakar (Senegal), exited from a cab and walked up to the door of the Egyptian Embassy, demanding that he be allowed entry into the private residence. After coming to blows with a guard, breaking the window of a nearby car with a rake handle, and claiming that the cardboard box he held was a bomb (it was filled only with loose wires and transistor components), Diallo realized that he had, in fact, misidentified his real target: the Guinean embassy. Realizing his mistake, Diallo then asked the guard he had just assaulted for directions, hailed another cab, and yelled, for all who could hear, that he intended to assassinate the Guinean ambassador in order to ‘save all of humanity’, before being quickly restrained by onlookers and eventually arrested. The confrontation initially did not garner much attention outside of Senegal. Rather, it was the Guinean government’s reaction that spread through wire reports in the weeks following the assassination attempt and elevated the actions of what the Senegalese government described as an ‘unstable man’ to the level of an international incident, one that risked a break in relations or outright conflict. The failed assault on the embassy, the Guinean state media claimed, was part of a larger conspiracy by a cabal of Guinean exiles living in Senegal, mercenaries from Sierra Leone, and the French government to overthrow Sékou Touré, Guinea’s first president and his *Parti Démocratique de Guinée* (PDG), the only legal political party during Guinea’s First Republic (1958–84). According to PDG officials, these forces and their traitorous Guinean allies represented an existential threat to the Guinean nation itself and would not stop until the Guinean people ceded their sovereignty to foreign governments and corporations. That scuffle outside the Egyptian embassy,

according to an announcement on the state-run 'Voice of Guinea' radio station, was seemingly over nothing less than the soul and destiny of the Guinean people.¹

This failed assassination attempt was just one in a long series of alleged plots coordinated by exiled Guineans in order to overthrow the Touré regime. Some had basis in reality and represented very real threats to the Guinean government. On 28 September 1958, Guinea was the sole French territory to reject the constitution of the Fifth French Republic, choosing immediate independence instead. Many exiles saw Touré's embrace of African Socialism, ties with the Eastern Bloc, and, they argued, increasing authoritarianism as mortal threats to the new Republic. Some of these exiles sought support from the French government, which had been stung by Guinea's 1958 rebuke and alarmed by its supposed 'Marxist penchant' for internal policy, to achieve their goals of regime change.² Plausible or not, nearly all of the plots identified by Guinean intelligence services were used to support a permanent state of emergency starting in the mid-1960s. In turn, the Guinean government's repression of its opponents provided rhetorical ammunition for exiled opposition members wishing to cast light on abuses of power within Guinea, most commonly with the goal of forcing international intervention within Guinea or soliciting aid for those who had an interest in the overthrow of Touré and his regime. While after the early 1960s Guinea was largely closed off to foreign reporters and observers from the West, public statements by both the PDG government and the opposition in exile demonstrated that in post-colonial Guinea domestic and international politics were inextricably linked, with exiles and migrants serving as the figures that connected the two realms. In fact, these groups were often at the centre of diplomacy and conflict in post-colonial Africa, with states often supporting opposition members in order to undermine perceived foes or repressing exiles' political activities to smooth over rifts. As such, exiles and the networks they established that stretched throughout West Africa, the larger continent, and the North Atlantic played an integral role in shaping global politics, including at-times contentious debates surrounding post-colonial citizenship, sovereignty, and human rights during the thirty years that followed independence.

While resisting what they saw as an authoritarian regime in Guinea, these exiles manoeuvred over a rapidly shifting regional and international political terrain. A first generation of scholars of post-colonial Africa – including African politicians such as Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor – described independence as an unfortunate march towards an Africa comprised of individual nation-states. 'Balkanization' and the failure of several federal projects, they argued, weakened the positions of African nations and made them easy prey for world powers.³ The failure of a series of federal projects in West Africa by the mid-1960s intensified some politicians' concerns that newly won sovereignty and self-determination would be under assault from outside forces soon after independence.

Indeed, post-colonial African politicians had reason to be both wary and welcoming of foreign intervention. Scholars have pointed to the continued influence of former colonial powers in African politics past the moment of independence. For the former territories of French West and Central Africa, these types of 'neo-colonial' ties, referred to by its critics as 'Françafrique', were based on a network of personal politics linking French officials in the Elysée, members of the French intelligence services, and African politicians. This system, often associated with Jacques Foccart, close advisor to Charles de Gaulle and head of France's African affairs under de Gaulle and Pompidou, but in fact first advanced by Ivorian president Félix Houphouët-Boigny, imagined a privileged relationship between France and (some of) its former African colonies that was structured by the

¹Xavier Daufresne de la Chevalerie, Ambassadeur de le République Française au Sénégal to Michel Jobert, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, 'a/s communiqué de Radio Conakry,' 10 August 1973, 184PO 564, Centre des Archives Diplomatiques, Nantes (hereafter cited as CADN).

²French Foreign Affairs official quoted in Mairi Stewart MacDonald, *The Challenge of Guinean Independence, 1958–1971*, (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2009), 112.

³Frederick Cooper, 'Decolonization and Citizenship: Africa between Empires and a World of Nations,' in *Beyond Empire and Nation*, eds. Els Bogaerts and Remco Raben (New York: Brill, 2012), 39–67.

maintenance of French military bases and joint economic development projects.⁴ The networks that both Foccart and African politicians such as Houphouët-Boigny developed shaped relations between France and its former colonies as well as between individual nations in Africa.⁵

Proponents of *Françafrique* were also forced to contend with an emerging form of post-colonial politics shaped by the Cold War that engendered both instability and authoritarianism. Recent studies have pointed to the global Cold War as a key determinant of foreign policy in post-colonial Africa, focusing on how world powers, their proxies, and political actors in Africa and the West sought to advance both their ideologies and political interests through alliances and intervention, in the process often providing fuel for smaller, local conflicts.⁶ In turn, fears by governments in the 'Third World' that intervention by the United States, the Soviet Union, or a variety of other world powers would undermine stability and sovereignty gave rise to the non-aligned movement, of which Guinea was an early member.⁷

Foreign support for authoritarian regimes during the Cold War contributed to the development of a last form of politics that shaped debates about post-colonial sovereignty and self-determination: human rights. Studies on the mid-twentieth-century rise of human rights have elucidated the ways in which non-state actors – in particular non-governmental organizations established in the Global North – influenced the contested position of African governments within global politics and international law. Despite arguments that it emerged largely in the North Atlantic, politicians and activists both in Africa and in the broader world often invoked the language of human rights during decolonization and later. Bonny Ibhawoh, for instance, has examined the *longue durée* history of human rights in Africa, pointing to the key role African actors have played in the concept's development.⁸ Others have focused in particular on how the language of human rights was tied closely to the politics of decolonization and the ways in which politicians in Africa and the broader Global South profoundly shaped the emerging human rights debate in the 1950s and 1960s.⁹ Meredith Terretta has emphasized the networks that linked activists in Africa and in the broader world and the continued association of human rights with the politics of liberation well after decolonization.¹⁰ Lastly, Gregory Mann argues that human rights activism on behalf of political prisoners built upon anti-colonial networks and helped make human rights ubiquitous but also laid the groundwork for the later depoliticized form that was advanced by international groups such as Amnesty International.¹¹ African activists and politicians saw human rights as inextricably tied to fundamental questions of sovereignty and self-determination

⁴Jean-Pierre Bat, *Le syndrome Foccart: la politique française en Afrique, de 1959 à nos jours*, (Paris: Gallimard, 2012); Gabrielle Hecht, *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012); Alexander Keese, 'First Lessons in Neo-Colonialism: The Personalisation of Relations between African Politicians and French Officials in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1956–66,' *Journal Of Imperial & Commonwealth History* 35, no. 4, (2007): 593–613; and Victor T. Le Vine, *Politics in Francophone Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 340–2.

⁵Bat, *Le syndrome Foccart*, 270–334.

⁶For example, see Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on TERROR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea: 1946–1958* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Foreign Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); and Christopher J. Lee, 'Decolonization of a Special Type: Rethinking Cold War History in Southern Africa,' *Kronos: Southern African Histories* 37 (2011): 6–11.

⁷Jürgen Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization, and Politics, 1927–1992* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2019), 85–6.

⁸See in particular Bonny Ibhawoh, *Human Rights in Africa* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

⁹Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Steven L. B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

¹⁰Meredith Terretta, 'From Below and to the Left?: Human Rights and Liberation Politics in Africa's Postcolonial Age,' *Journal of World History* 24, no. 2 (2013): 389–416; Meredith Terretta, 'Anti-Colonial Lawyering, Postwar Human Rights, and Decolonization across Imperial Boundaries in Africa,' *Canadian Journal of History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 448–78.

¹¹Gregory Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 209–42.

that were at the centre of post-colonial politics. As Mann argues, African sovereignty and human rights were 'longtime companions, albeit with their backs often turned to each other'.¹²

As a whole, scholars have demonstrated how political elites' negotiation of global political and economic structures were integral in determining the post-colonial trajectory of independent African states and indeed reflected a historically deeper external orientation of African states and societies.¹³ This broader recognition of the ways in which African communities, economies, and politics became increasingly integrated into world systems since the late eighteenth century has often been pursued through the rubric of empire and colonialism, with influential interventions arguing for placing metropolises and colonies into a single analytical framework.¹⁴ However, Jeppe Mulich argues that scholarship on empire has 'tend[ed] to focus on the relationship between core and periphery within individual empires, thereby neglecting the connections *across* peripheries' [emphasis in original].¹⁵ So too has scholarship on 'neo-colonial' world systems during the twentieth century focused chiefly on the interplay between Cold War and former colonial powers, on the one hand, and their global 'peripheries' on the other, rather than on the interactions between individuals, groups, and states across the Global South.¹⁶

Focusing on non- and quasi-state actors, and their interactions with local and international governments and officials, demonstrates that regional politics was an important dimension in the development of questions surrounding citizenship, sovereignty, and rights. Scholarship that places regional and continental interactions and networks at the forefront of post-colonial African political histories is just beginning to emerge.¹⁷ Yet this focus has the potential to shift the way that historians understand the processes through which African states, activists, and political movements sought to locate themselves in an emerging post-colonial order. In particular, it describes a post-war context where concerns about sovereignty and security were shaped by states' management of regional webs of migrants, exiles, and diplomacy in Dakar, Abidjan, and Accra in addition to interacting with governments in Washington, Paris, or Moscow.

In this article, I focus on how one such particular regional context – namely, networks of exiled opposition members who sought to overthrow Sékou Touré – shaped Guinean politics, was a key point of contention between the Guinean government and its neighbours, and helped fix Guinea's place within larger global historical frameworks after independence. I do so by placing figures marked by liminality¹⁸ at the centre of diplomacy and politics while charting the networks and relations these activists and groups constructed. The history of Guinean exiles in post-colonial West Africa demonstrates that key issues that linked national and global politics in West Africa were mediated and performed through regional politics. Exiles were at the centre of these contestations and debates.

¹²Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 214.

¹³Jean-François Bayart, 'Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion,' *African Affairs* 99, no. 395 (2000): 217–67.

¹⁴Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda,' in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1–56.

¹⁵Jeppe Mulich, 'Microregionalism and Intercolonial Relations: The Case of the Danish West Indies, 1730–1830,' *Journal of Global History* 8, no. 1 (2013): 79.

¹⁶Some notable exceptions include Christopher J. Lee, ed., *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2010); and Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2007).

¹⁷Abou B. Bamba, 'An Unconventional Challenge to Apartheid: the Ivorian Dialogue Diplomacy with South Africa, 1960–1978,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 47, no. 1 (2014): 77–99; Jamie Miller, 'Africanising Apartheid: Identity, Ideology, and State-Building in Post-Independence Africa,' *Journal of African History* 56, no. 3 (2015): 449–70; Elisa Prosperetti, 'The Hidden History of the West African Wager: Or, How Comparison with Ghana Made Côte d'Ivoire,' *History in Africa* 45 (2018): 29–57; and ed. Nathan Riley Carpenter and Benjamin N. Lawrence, *Africans in Exile: Mobility, Law, and Identity* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018).

¹⁸Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1991 [1969]), 95–7; Liisa Malkki, *Purity in Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), 4–8.

The politics of opposition in post-colonial West Africa

The long moment of decolonization in Africa, stretching roughly from 1945 to 1975, offered both ‘possibility and constraint’ to governments and exiled opposition groups alike.¹⁹ Beginning in 1957 with the independence of Ghana, many post-colonial governments sought to develop regional ties and formal political structures that transcended the nation-state. Diplomatic projects in West Africa took the form of short-lived attempts to build regional federations that in some cases were intended to grow into continent-wide political structures. In former French colonies in West Africa, such initiatives predated formal independence with the January 1959 establishment of the short-lived Mali Federation, comprised of the territories of Soudan and Senegal.²⁰ In 1958, two national leaders more clearly associated with ‘leftist’ politics in West Africa – Sékou Touré of Guinea and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana – pursued their own regional federation, the Union of Independent African States, though for much of its history the organization existed only on paper and in speeches.²¹ More durable regional governmental organizations focused on particular issues such as the *Organisation des Etats Riverains du Fleuve Sénégal* would arise from the failures of the two federations. While these organizations and their successors in some cases persist to the present, the project of creating integrated regional political systems had by 1965 largely dissipated.

Regional networks of exiles, on the other hand, persisted past this initial period of political experimentation. Citing either the ‘natural communalism’ of African politics and society, as well as the need for unity in order to advance nation-building and economic development, many states in West Africa quickly moved towards one-party systems or tight control of opposition parties. African heads of state also often argued that foreign governments would use multi-party systems to undermine the sovereignty of the newly established nations.²² Politicians and activists who found themselves outside of the ruling parties in their home countries fled into exile and congregated in a handful of West African cities.

One such city, especially for leftist exiles, was Accra, where Ghana’s president Kwame Nkrumah worked to advance the ideologies of African Socialism at home and pan-Africanism abroad. The Ghanaian government’s support for exiled opposition groups was institutionalized through the creation of the Bureau of Africa Affairs, which sought to combat (neo)colonialism throughout Africa. Many of the movements supported by the Ghanaian state had either been banned by or rose in opposition to ‘conservative’ governments in West and Central Africa that, in the Ghanaian government’s opinion, pursued too close ties with the former colonial metropolises. Opposition groups with offices in Accra included Sawaba, the Bakari Djibo-led party that had been ousted from power in Niger by the French government in what Klaas van Walraven has called Africa’s first coup d’état.²³ Another notable exile group in Accra was the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC), a nationalist movement in the UN-trust territory of Cameroon that had been forced into exile from 1955 to 1957 due to British and French repression.²⁴ Other groups suited Nkrumah’s more practical political ends. For instance, the Ghanaian government supported a

¹⁹Frederick Cooper, ‘Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective,’ *Journal of African History* 49, no. 2 (2008): 167–96.

²⁰William J. Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965); Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945–1960* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 372–430

²¹On Mali’s joining the Union and its participants’ goals of building a broader continent-wide political structure, see Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, 176; Klaas Van Walraven, *Dreams of Power: The Role of the Organization of African Unity in the Politics of Africa 1963–1993*, (London: Ashgate, 1999), 98–9; and Guy Martin, ‘Dreams of Unity: From the United States of Africa to the Federation of African States,’ *Asian and African Studies*, 12 (2013): 173–4.

²²Gwendolen M. Carter, ed., *African One-Party States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962); Aristide R. Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The Party-States of West Africa* (Chicago, IL: Rand McNally & Company), 1966.

²³Klaas van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief: A History of the Sawaba Movement in Niger* (Boston: Brill, 2013).

²⁴Meredith Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest “Maquis” to a Pan-African Accra,’ *Journal of African History* 51, no. 2 (2010): 189–212.

government in exile that sought to create a breakaway republic in the region of Sanwi in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire as a means to undermine Nkrumah's rival, Ivorian President Félix Houphouët-Boigny.²⁵

Regional opposition groups shared Accra with other individuals and movements that extended to the continent as a whole, and indeed the larger African diaspora. For instance, the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN), the armed movement that sought the overthrow of French rule in Algeria, established offices in Accra. Intellectuals and activists such as George Padmore and W.E.B. Du Bois held positions within the Ghanaian government, which also supported projects aimed towards building pan-African solidarity.²⁶ And the first All-African People's Conference, which promoted self-determination and independence in Africa and was held in Accra in December 1958, cemented Ghana and Nkrumah's position as centres of political activity within the continent, the African diaspora, and the global Third World movement.²⁷ Accra's prominent position resonated with Nkrumah's ideology of independence and unity in Africa and served to position Ghana as a leftist centre in an emerging post-colonial and Cold War milieu. Just as importantly, these groups and activists also served as leverage against and a means to effect change in neighbouring countries which, according to the Ghanaian government, were less dedicated to the liberation of the continent.

Conakry emerged as the twin node in leftist networks in West Africa. The Guinean capital hosted branches of the UPC, which moved its headquarters to the city in 1958, the FLN, and Sawaba.²⁸ Conakry also became the centre for exiled parties of anti-colonial movements from neighbouring territories. Most notably, Sékou Touré provided crucial early support to the Amílcar Cabral-led *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC), which starting in the late 1950s took up armed resistance to Portuguese colonial rule in what would become Guinea Bissau.²⁹ Conakry also mirrored Accra's position as a setting for a series of international conferences. In 1960, for instance, the Guinean capital was host to a meeting of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, which was dedicated to colonial liberation and Third World solidarity, and was home to the African Labor University, a school funded by the World Federation of Trade Unions and dedicated to the training of African union leaders.³⁰ Lastly, Conakry was also a centre of activism in the arts within the African diaspora. *Les Ballets Africains*, established in 1952 by Guinean choreographer (and later politician) Keïta Fodéba, promoted a pan-African politics and aesthetics while touring through the Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1964, the Guinean government with the assistance of activist and musician Harry Belafonte established a national dance company, the *Ballet Djoliba*, which toured globally.³¹ Activists and artists also saw Conakry as a centre of the larger pan-African diaspora and at the vanguard of a wave of African nationalism. For

²⁵Aristide Zolberg, *One-Party Government in the Cote d'Ivoire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 290; Saadia Touval, *The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 161; Catherine Boone, *Political Topographies of the African State: Territorial Authority and Institutional Choice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 232–8.

²⁶Jean Allman, 'Kwame Nkrumah, African Studies, and the Politics of Knowledge Production in the Black Star of Africa,' *International Journal of African History Studies*, 46, no. 2 (2013): 181–203.

²⁷Jeffrey S. Ahlman, 'Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa,' *Kronos: Southern African Histories* 37 (2011): 23–40.

²⁸Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global,' 204; Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 82; van Walraven, *Yearning for Relief*, 423.

²⁹Aliou Ly, 'Amílcar Cabral and the Bissau Revolution in Exile: Women and the Salvation of the Nationalist Organization in 1959–1962,' in *Africans in Exile*, 153–66.

³⁰Duncan Yoon, *Cold war Africa and China: The Afro-Asian Writers' Bureau and the Rise of Postcolonial Literature* (PhD diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2014), 32–51; Françoise Blum, 'Une formation syndicale dans la Guinée de Sékou Touré: l'université ouvrière africaine, 1960–1965,' *Revue Historique* 667 (2013): 661–91.

³¹Joshua Cohen, 'Stages in Transition: Les Ballets Africain and Independence, 1959 to 1960,' *Journal of Black Studies* 43, no. 1 (2012): 11–48.

instance, in 1968 South African singer Mariam Makeba and her husband Kwame Ture (née Stokely Carmichael), who had played a central role in establishing the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panthers in the United States before fleeing into self-imposed exile, moved to the Guinean capital. The two would come to act as ambassadors for Touré's articulation of African socialism and solidarity.³²

Like its Ghanaian counterpart, the Guinean government also used other exiled opposition groups to undermine regional rivals. Touré and Houphouët-Boigny often found themselves at odds, rooted in large part in a rivalry that dated back to their participation in the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), a pre-independence French West Africa-wide political party.³³ While Touré was firmly establishing both himself and Guinea more broadly as leading fixtures in African nationalism, non-alignment, and Third World socialism following independence, Houphouët-Boigny sought close ties with the French government and businesses and was widely considered one of the most prominent 'conservative' politicians in West Africa. In order to undermine his rival, starting in the early 1960s Touré hosted and supported a series of exiled opposition members from Côte d'Ivoire, including the union activist Yao Ngo Blaise and Camille Adam, a leader in the Comité de libération de la Côte-d'Ivoire.³⁴ Touré also sought to use opposition politicians to undermine his other regional rival, Senegalese president Léopold Sédar Senghor, who had maintained close ties to the French government. In 1961, the Guinean government welcomed an official visit by Majhemout Diop, Secretary General of the 'orthodox communis[t]' Parti Africain de l'indépendance (PAI), whose leaders had been arrested by the Senegalese government following election clashes in Saint Louis in 1960.³⁵ While Diop was supposedly 'received like a head of state', there were limits to Touré's toleration of political agitation; the following year, the Guinean government arrested several PAI leaders after they participated in a teachers' strike.³⁶ These efforts to support exiled opposition groups established Conakry as a centre, along with Accra and Dar es Salaam, for networks of leftist activists and parties throughout the continent and in the broader world.

Shifting focus to political networks and hubs such as Conakry and Accra changes our understanding of political geographies of post-colonial Africa. Countering the official 'balkanization' of West Africa and the broader continent after independence – and their related diplomatic orientation towards world powers both old and new – regional frameworks continued to integrally shape politics and diplomacy after the disintegration of colonial and post-colonial federal structures. At the centre of these negotiations and contestations were the 'out of place' exiles who, like the would-be assassin whose story began this article, sought to shape an emerging post-colonial order through any means necessary.

Navigating a post-colonial order

The incident outside of the Egyptian embassy in Dakar that, according to the Guinean government, became the centre of a larger conspiracy by Guinean exiles to overthrow the Touré regime reflected a long history of Guineans in the Senegalese capital. By both origin and orientation, mid-twentieth-century Dakar was a colonial city. Founded first as a port to facilitate the growing peanut trade of the nineteenth century, the eventual capital of French West Africa (AOF) soon emerged as the economic and administrative centre of Senegambia. The construction of a railroad that linked Dakar with the main peanut-growing areas of Senegal and labour reservoirs in the

³²Yair Hashachar, 'Playing the Backbeat in Conakry: Miriam Makeba and the Cultural Politics of Sékou Touré's Guinea, 1968–1986,' *Social Dynamics* 43, no. 2 (2017): 259–71.

³³Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation*, 314–17.

³⁴Andre Lewin, *Ahmed Sékou Touré (1922–1984), Président de la Guinée*, vol. 3 (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 2010), 76.

³⁵Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa* (Oxford, UK: the Clarendon Press, 1964), 336; Donal Cruise O'Brien, 'Political Opposition in Senegal: 1960–1967,' *Government and Opposition* 2, no. 4 (1967): 557–66.

³⁶Andre Lewin, *Ahmed Sékou Touré (1922–1984), Président de la Guinée*, vol. 4 (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 2010), 194–7.

interior also established the rapidly growing city as a major site of immigration, with seasonal agricultural labourers, known as *navétanes*, travelling to the city in search of wage labour during the dry season rather than returning to their home communities. Starting in the 1930s, Guinean migrants represented both a growing proportion of the *navétanes* and a rapidly expanding community in Dakar, where many worked as fruit sellers, charcoal makers, and domestic workers.³⁷ For instance, one French administrator writing in 1947 remarked with only some hyperbole that ‘In Dakar, currently, there are as many Guineans as there are Senegalese’.³⁸ Still today, the city hosts one of the largest Guinean communities outside of Guinea.

Guinea’s precipitous independence in 1958 represented a dramatic break for Guinean migrants in West Africa. On September 28 of that year, a vast majority of Guineans voted ‘no’ on the constitution of the Fifth French Republic, choosing immediate independence over membership in a reformed French Community. While Sékou Touré sought to negotiate continued ties between the former metropole and colony, the vengeful reaction of French President Charles de Gaulle ensured that the process of unravelling the links between the two nations would be rapid and chaotic. In addition to cutting all material and technical support for the former territory, as well as dismantling government property and burning records,³⁹ the French government was confronted with the problem of some 15,000 Guinean soldiers in the French army. The status of these Guineans was ambiguous in the months following independence, and the soldiers themselves wrestled with the possible choice of retaining their place in the French army and possibly their citizenship in the French community, on the one hand, or embracing an emerging Guinean nationalism and preserving ties to their home on the other.

Most Guinean soldiers either decided to return to Guinea or were discharged and repatriated by the French government without choice. A small number, most of them long-serving officers, appealed to the French government to remain in the army or attempted to obtain residency in neighbouring territories in West Africa. They had multiple reasons to do so. One French officer reported that the soldiers feared that if they were to refuse to go back to Guinea they would be labelled as traitors by the government and their families would face reprisals.⁴⁰ Others rightly feared that if they were to return to Guinea they would not receive their pensions, and indeed, payments to veterans in Guineans were halted between 1959 and 1977 due to the French government’s refusal to allow the Guinean government to control dispersal of the funds.⁴¹ One Guinean non-commissioned officer, Abdoulaye Sow, explained his decision to remain abroad by pointing to both political and material concerns. He did not join the PDG in the 1950s, siding with a leftist opposition party before independence. Furthermore, the rupture in relations between Guinea and France after the 1958 referendum meant that he could not receive a pension if he returned. He decided to stay in Dakar, took a position as a *surveillant* at the Lycée Delafosse, and would later join a series of opposition parties whose primary goal was the overthrow of the PDG regime.⁴²

The French and Guinean governments would continue to wrestle over the status of these exiled soldiers and veterans for nearly a decade more. The Guinean government rejected one attempt in

³⁷Papa Ibrahima Diallo, *Les Guinéens de Dakar: migration et intégration en Afrique de l’Ouest* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2009), 45–46.

³⁸P. René, ‘Nomades Guinéens,’ *La Guinée Française*, 25 June 1947, 17G 421, Archives Nationales du Sénégal (hereafter cited as ANS).

³⁹Schmidt, *Cold War and decolonization in Guinea*, 168–78.

⁴⁰Note à l’attention de Monsieur le Vice-Amiral, Chef de l’État-Major de la Défense Nationale, ‘Options des militaires guinéens,’ no. 2248 MA/CAB/EMP/5, 21 October 1958, 51QO 33, Centre des Archives Diplomatiques, La Courneuve (hereafter cited as CADC).

⁴¹Gregory Mann, *Native Sons: West Africa Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 140–2; Sarah Jean Zimmerman, ‘Living beyond boundaries: West African servicemen in French colonial conflicts, 1908–1962,’ (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2011), 132; Ministère des Armées to Ministre des Finances et des Affaires Économiques, ‘Paiement des prestations dues aux anciens militaires guinéens ou à leurs familles résidents en Guinée,’ no. 525/MA/CM/S, 19 November 1962, 51QO 41, CADC.

⁴²Interview with Abdoulaye Sow, Dakar, Senegal, 7 April 2012.

January 1963 by the French government to repatriate 250 discharged Guinean soldiers and their families, which was part of a broader process of decommissioning the remainder of the colonial army.⁴³ Sylvanus Olympio, the Togolese president, had been assassinated during a coup d'état just weeks before, and perhaps Touré saw the returning soldiers as a security threat. In 1964, the Guinean government shifted policy and made a second effort to repatriate Guinean veterans living in Dakar, likely as a means to stifle the exiled opposition that was beginning to emerge. Negotiations between the Guinean, French, and Senegalese governments failed, however, when the soldiers asked for a guarantee from the French government that they would not be punished upon their return to Guinea.⁴⁴ The ambiguous legal and political status of these soldiers represented rapidly changing ideas of citizenship and belonging during the long moment of decolonization that stretched past formal independence. The decision they faced between continuing to leverage imperial ties or embracing an emergent African nationalism – something that African soldiers had struggled with dating back to the end of the Second World War⁴⁵ – as well as the central position they played in the limited diplomatic negotiations between the French and Guinean governments reflected the attempts by both individuals and governments to locate themselves in the post-colonial world. Indeed, the soldiers' very liminality ensured their centrality in contestations over the emerging post-colonial order. By laying claim – or rejecting responsibility – over persons, states extended and defined sovereignty while exiles attempted to negotiate relationships of support or opposition.

Independence also represented a break for Guinean students who studied in Dakar. The French West Africa colonial administration had established its 'flagship' educational institution for boys, the École William Ponty, on the city's outskirts. Along with a parallel school for girls in Rufisque, Ponty was intended to train a small but influential number of students from throughout the AOF to be civil servants and teachers.⁴⁶ Although smaller in number than their Senegalese or Soudanese counterparts, many students from Guinea were '*pontins*', as the school's graduates were known, and Ponty graduates constituted significant number of the first and second generation of Guinean politicians who emerged after the end of the Second World War.⁴⁷

Following independence, the Guinean government undertook a drastic reorganization of the educational system. Party ideology placed the heart of the Guinean nation in the country's rural population, and much of the party's rise in the interior relied upon promises to extend to the wider public the benefits of education that had under colonial rule been restricted to a small elite. In order to achieve this goal, the government emphasized mass literacy campaigns, gender equity in access to education, and later the use of national languages in instruction.⁴⁸ While the

⁴³Jean-Louis Pons, *Ambassadeur de France en Guinée* to *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères*, no. 65/AL, 23 January 1963, 51QO, 41, CADC; *Ministre des Armées* to *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères*, 'Libération de militaires guinéens en service dans les forces armées françaises,' no. 907/MA/CM/S, 31 January 1963, 51QO 41, CADC.

⁴⁴Colonel Griffet, *Conseiller Militaire*, *Ambassade de France au Sénégal*, 'Éventuel rapatriement de Guinéens retraités au Sénégal,' no. 3319 CONSMIL/SEN.2.S., 13 October 1965, 184PO 564, CADN; *Diplomatie Paris* to *Ambassade de France au Sénégal*, tel. no. 3319, 13 October 1964, 184PO 564, CADN.

⁴⁵See Mann, *Native Sons*, 108–47.

⁴⁶Jean-Hervé Jézéquel, 'Les enseignants comme élite politique en AOF (1930–1945): des "meneurs de galopins" dans l'arène politique,' *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 45, no. 2 (2005): 519–43; Pascale Barthélémy, 'La formation des Africaines à l'École normale d'institutrices de l'AOF de 1938 à 1958: instruction ou éducation?' *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 43, no. 169–170 (2003): 371–88.

⁴⁷One notable exception was Sékou Touré, who had been educated at a vocational school in Conakry, received his ideological education through a Communist Study Group in Conakry, and charted his rise through African labor unions. Guinean *pontins*, on the other hand, had constituted the core of the PDG's rival parties in Guinea during the 1950s. See Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, 70–72; and John Straussberger, 'Storming the Citadel: Decolonization and Political Contestation in Guinea's Futa Jallon,' *Journal of African History* 57, no. 2 (2016): 234–7.

⁴⁸Dianne White Oyler, 'A cultural Revolution in Africa: Literacy in the Republic of Guinea since Independence,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34, no. 3 (2001): 585–600; Carol Bendon and Mark Lynd, 'National Languages in Education in Conakry: Re-Emancipation in Progress?' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 209 (2011): 113–29.

Guinean government opened a series of high schools in most of the country's major cities, it did not establish a university until 1963. Even then, one former student told me, the level of instruction was lacking and political influence often drove the curriculum.⁴⁹ Opportunities to study abroad were similarly limited. The French government ended support for Guinean students wishing to study in Senegal after the 1958 referendum. The Guinean government offered some scholarships for study abroad, but rumours of political and ethnic favouritism clouded the programme throughout its short existence.⁵⁰ In response, students who before might have continued their studies at the École Ponty or beginning in 1957 at the newly established University of Dakar responded by opting out of Guinean system altogether. In the months following Guinean independence, eighty-two young men chose to pack up and travel to Senegal, clandestinely and under the cover of night, in order to continue their studies.⁵¹ As exiled students expected to suffer reprisals and perhaps prison if they returned home, their departure was, at least at the time, definitive.⁵²

Once in Dakar, the students found themselves at the centre of negotiations between the French, Senegalese, and Guinean governments. One former student said that the group of Guineans referred to themselves *les fugitives*, or 'the runaways'. Some of them had relatives in Dakar who could help, but others who did not were not able to receive any scholarships due to their irregular status. With the assistance of a Senegalese students' organization, they were able to convince the rector of the University of Dakar to give the Guinean students tuition, housing, and dining vouchers. In 1963, their prospects improved when the French government offered scholarships to the Guinean students in Dakar. The French proposal, though, came with one stipulation: in an attempt to alleviate the perception that the French state was directly supporting a group of Touré critics, it required that the students had to secure permission from the Guinean government. According to one former student, the Guinean government refused, claiming that 'the only real Guineans are in Guinea'.⁵³ By 1965, about 250 Guinean students had made their way through Dakar to French universities, but their footing was not on solid ground. The Guinean government continued to refuse to recognize the students' status as Guinean citizens and thus denied them passports, making the procurement of official documents like visas difficult.⁵⁴ Exiled Guinean students found themselves in a type of legal and political no man's land, caught between two hostile powers that were reticent to engage fully save for moments when they thought there was political gain to be had.

The experiences of Guinean soldiers and students, as well as the much larger population of labour migrants, were indicative of a much larger process of sorting out citizenship and sovereignty in the years immediately following independence in Africa, and indeed throughout the post-colonial world. Beginning most notably with the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan and the related displacement of nearly 20 million persons in the subcontinent, and continuing throughout the twentieth century, decolonization was a period marked by expulsion and uncertainty over whom belonged to what nation-state and in what capacity.⁵⁵ Africa was particularly active in this regard. In just the thirty years following Ghana's independence in 1957, West Africans were subject to mass expulsions no fewer than thirty-one separate times from countries

⁴⁹Interview with Barry Bago, Dakar, Senegal, 2 July 2012.

⁵⁰Interview with Sidiki Kobélé Kéïta, Conakry, Guinea, 8 February 2013.

⁵¹Interview with Barry Bago, Dakar, Senegal, 2 July 2012.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴Jacques Grellet, Consul Général de France, to Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, 'a/s: Guinéens du Sénégal,' 12 July 1966, 184PO 564, CADN.

⁵⁵On the role partition and expulsion played in emerging articulation of Pakistani and Indian nationhood, see Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

throughout the African continent, ranging from Libya to Zaïre.⁵⁶ Indeed, the 'endemic nature' of expulsion has been a key aspect of post-colonial African politics, statecraft, and diplomacy.⁵⁷

In justifying the forced relocation of hundreds if not thousands of individuals deemed to be 'illegal' non-citizens, African states often cited the common excuse of economic exploitation by these minority groups or their taking jobs that should be held by nationals, as was the case for the 1983 'Ghana must go' episode in Nigeria.⁵⁸ The reasons for expulsion, however, were often explicitly political. For instance, when Kwame Nkrumah announced in 1960 the preventative detention of leaders of the Togoland Congress, an opposition party that sought a federal structure in Ghana and a potential union of former French and British Togoland, he was silencing vocal critics while also protecting his cornerstone development project to dam the Volta river and provide electricity for Ghana's public and a growing industrial sector. In total, around 5700 exiles would flee eastern Ghana between 1956 and 1961 and seek refuge in neighbouring French Togoland in order to 'ease the anxieties of emerging states'.⁵⁹

Contestations over exiles, refugees, and 'illegal' migrants were also about the nature of sovereignty and citizenship in post-colonial Africa. Nkrumah's repression of the Togoland Congress and the exile of the group's activists and supporters were part of a larger project of implementing a unitary constitution in Ghana and the maintenance of claims over Togoland as a whole, an annexation project that Nkrumah actively pursued until his own exile in 1966.⁶⁰ Other states used migration and exiles in order to construct a particular type of citizenship. Sékou Touré classed those who left Guinea as migrants or exiles with 'the thief, the prostitute, the alcoholic,' all aberrant Guinean citizens who were undermining the socialist nation-building project.⁶¹ Touré's ally Modibo Keita cast migrants who left Mali to work in other parts of Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas as 'adventurers' who deserted the 'national project'.⁶² Lastly, while articulating their concept of African socialism, Julius Nyerere and his Tanzanian African National Union party cast internal urban migrants and other 'exploitative' city dwellers as national enemies who engaged in *unyonyaji na mirija*, or 'sucking with straws' the blood and sweat of the hard-working ideal Tanzanian citizen.⁶³ In this manner, post-colonial governments in Africa used mobility as a tool to fix (or redraw) the borders of the nation-state and to attempt to define its content.

Exiles were a smaller, often more elite subset of migrants. Yet due to their mobility and political activity, they played a central role in contestations regarding citizenship and sovereignty throughout post-colonial Africa. Indeed, it was their very 'out-of-placeness' that marked exiles from Guinea and elsewhere as troublesome figures. They had negotiated imperial networks before 1958, but independence and the unravelling of empire opened up a period of uncertainty and political manoeuvring, one during which exiles often found themselves at the centre of contestations between the former colonial metropole and colonies. As the 1960s wore on, Guinean exiles would also be at the centre of diplomatic and military conflicts that would, according to the PDG, threaten the fundamental sovereignty of the Guinean state.

⁵⁶Sylvie Bredeloup, 'Expulsions des ressortissants ouest-africains au sein du continent africain (1954–1995),' *Mondes en Développement* 91 (1995): 117–22.

⁵⁷Aderanti Adepoju, 'Illegals and Expulsions in Africa: The Nigerian Experience,' *International Migration Review* 18, no. 3 (1984): 426–36.

⁵⁸Adepoju, 'Illegals and Expulsions in Africa,' 431–2.

⁵⁹Kate Skinner, 'Brothers in the Bush: Exile, Refuge, and Citizenship on the Ghana-Togo Border, 1958–1966,' in *Africans in Exile*, 169.

⁶⁰Skinner, 'Brothers in the Bush,' 170–3.

⁶¹Ahmed Sékou Touré, 'Enterrer le racisme peulh: Discours au meeting d'information du Comité Central le 22 août 1976,' in Ahmed Sékou Touré, *Unité Nationale* (Conakry: Imprimerie Nationale Patrice Lumumba, 1978 [1976]), 186.

⁶²Daouda Gary-Tankoura, 'Quand les migrants demandent la route, Modibo Keita rétorque: 'Retournez à la terre!' les *Baragnini* et la desertion du 'chantier national' (1958–1968),' *Mande Studies* 5 (2003): 49.

⁶³James R. Brennan, 'Blood Enemies: Exploitation and Urban Citizenship in the Nationalist Political thought of Tanzania, 1958–1975,' *Journal of African History* 47, no. 3 (2006): 398.

Resistance and liberation

The Guinean government's fixation on its borders – and the 'troublesome' persons and objects that crossed them – extended beyond establishing sovereignty to more pressing concerns regarding security. As the decade wore on and Touré's rhetoric against Guinean exiles and their alleged backers in neighbouring countries became more heated, the Senegalese border began to serve as both a real and symbolic frontline against neo-colonial threats to the Guinean nation. Conflict between the two West African neighbours boiled over in 1960. On April 21, the Guinean government claimed that French intelligence services had worked with the Senegalese and Ivorian governments to arm exiles in anticipation of future invasion to topple the Touré regime. The Senegalese government corroborated some of the claims, noting that their security forces had discovered hidden arms caches along the Guinean border, but also stated that their sources denied the French government's participation in the alleged plot.⁶⁴

In particular, Touré claimed that Senghor had been willingly harbouring large numbers of Guineans who were plotting coup attempts and loudly criticizing the Guinean government. Indeed, political activity among exiles expanded significantly starting in 1960. Up to this point, the only organization representing Guinean immigrants in Senegal, Solidarité Guinéenne, had been explicitly non-political, focusing solely on serving as a conduit between Senegalese officials and the Guinean community. A schism in Solidarité and the larger Guinean community emerged, however, when a pro-Touré group formed a separate organization, the Union Fraternelle Guinéenne (UFG) and allied themselves with a prominent opposition party in Senegal. Senghor banned the UFG following the 1960 conflict with Guinea, while exiled opposition members took over what remained of Solidarité.⁶⁵ Among the most active participants in the newly aligned organization were the Guinean students who had left Guinea after independence.

Guinean exiles' political activities turned in a new direction in 1966, when prominent members adopted the tactics and rhetoric of armed liberation. In April of that year, Solidarité Guinéenne – recently rechristened the Regroupement des Guinéens au Sénégal (RGS) – joined a newly organized opposition umbrella organization named the Front de Libération Nationale de la Guinée (FLNG). Established earlier that month in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) – at the time host to around 200,000 expatriate Guineans – the FLNG spread rapidly to Senegal, Liberia, Haute Volta, Sierra Leone, Niger, and finally to France, where leaders set up a central office.⁶⁶ The group had some broad support among the Guinean exile community – some 10,000 people attended the group's first rally in Abidjan – though the leadership was nearly exclusively elite. The FLNG's board included a professor of history (Ibrahima Kaké), two doctors, three economists or accountants, and Siradiou Diallo, a recent university graduate and future *Jeune Afrique* editor-in-chief. The FLNG's list of accusations against the PDG was long: the government had ruined the Guinean economy by stifling agricultural exports, seizing merchandise, and eliminating independent labour unions; forced the population to participate in mass meetings and 'self-criticism' sessions; exiled any who dared oppose the government; and, attempting to resonate with Guinea's status as a post-slavery society⁶⁷, 'transformed [the Guinean people] into a slave force ready to serve'.⁶⁸

For members of the FLNG, the struggle against the Touré and the PDG was tied to a broader liberation movement against repressive regimes both present and past. An open letter distributed by the organization's Paris branch in April 1966 made clear that to exiles the dream

⁶⁴Mamadou Dia to Sékou Touré, 30 May 1960. Fonds du Fédération du Mali 26, ANS.

⁶⁵Diallo, *Les Guinéens de Dakar*, 132–3.

⁶⁶Victor D. Du Bois, *The Rise of An Opposition to Sékou Touré*, vol. 9, no. 7 (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1966), 1–22.

⁶⁷Benedetta Rossi, 'African Post-Slavery: A History of the Future,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 48, no. 2 (2015): 303–24.

⁶⁸La Section Européenne de FLNG, 'Tous les patriotes guinéens doivent de regrouper.' IPO1 40, CADN.

of September 28, which was supposed to 'lead us to a new day, one of dignity, freedom, and happiness', had been corrupted by the Touré regime. The letter 'summoned . . . to battle and victory' groups who had constituted Touré's base during his 1950s rise to power – peasants, workers, civil servants, small businessmen, and women – to overthrow the 'bloody tyrant' Touré in the name of 'dignity and freedom regained'. The FLNG's plea made explicit connections to the fight against colonialism, stating that the people remember that 'shoulder to shoulder we made our reply to every blow of the colonial administration' and that during the struggle the Guinean people proved that they 'deserved something better'. Sékou Touré had, through his actions and policies, 'scoffed' at the 'popular rights' of the people, but, just as the 'colossus of Ghana [who] had feet of clay' (i.e. Kwame Nkrumah, who had sought refuge in Guinea after a 1966 coup d'état that removed him from power), so too would Touré fall.⁶⁹ In this manner, the leaders of the FLNG were engaging with a model of human rights that explicitly embraced national liberation. This model may have waned after 1960 in the Global North, being displaced by a form of human rights centred on individual liberty. In early post-colonial Africa, however, it was still at the centre of ideological justifications for movements aligned against those political leaders who had supposedly ushered in self-determination.⁷⁰

The FLNG also needed to develop enough political and material support to undermine Touré. To do this, leaders of the organizations sought out benefactors. Félix Houphouët-Boigny soon emerged as the FLNG's most strident supporter, pledging material support and welcoming Guinean exiles in Côte d'Ivoire. The Ivorian president had decided to openly back the Guinean exiles after Touré accused Houphouët-Boigny of backing a plot to overthrow the Guinean government in 1965 and later threatened to march Guinean troops across Côte d'Ivoire in order to reinstall Kwame Nkrumah as the president of Ghana. The group found less room for manoeuvre in Senegal and France, where, keeping open the possibility of rapprochement with Guinea, the governments made clear that the FLNG would be tolerated as long as they did not become too 'zealous' in their activities.⁷¹

In mobilizing the language of self-determination while negotiating regional and international networks of support, the FLNG fit squarely within the politics of liberation in Africa during the 1960s and 1970s. FLNG activists, like other fighters in Southern Africa and liberation organizations such as the Algerian FLN and Guinea Bissauan PAIGC, saw their struggle as one against subjugation and for the right to self-determination.⁷² For the FLNG, the Touré regime had continued (or even exacerbated) the repression of the colonial state, and thus, their movement fit within the larger struggle against colonialism and the successor dictatorships that emerged after flag independence. In order to foster ideological and material support, exiles such as those in the FLNG built regional networks that intersected with but were not subsumed within international political contexts such as the Cold War. Finally, exile proved to be integral in shaping both the development of these opposition movements as well as the trajectories of the post-colonial nations they sought to liberate. Where the FLNG would depart from these other movements, though, was their willingness to forge alliances of convenience with governments explicitly opposed to

⁶⁹Du Bois, *The Rise of An Opposition to Sékou Touré*, vol. 9, no. 7, 9–15.

⁷⁰Terretta, 'From Below and to the Left?', 391.

⁷¹Ibrahima Baba Kaké, *Sékou Touré; le héros et le tyran*, (Paris: Jeune Afrique Livres, 1987), 133; Victor D. Du Bois, *The Rise of an Opposition to Sékou Touré* vol. 9, no. 4 (New York, NY: American Universities Field Staff, 1966), 4–10.

⁷²Southern Africa was notably for its density of exile networks that sought to end white minority rule. See Melissa Armstrong, 'Healthcare in Exile: ANC Health Policy and Healthcare Provisions in MK Camps, 1964 to 1989,' *South African Historical Journal* 66, no. 2 (2014): 270–90; Stephen Ellis, *External Mission: The ANC in Exile, 1960–1990* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 293–99. Gerald Chikozho Mazarire, 'ZANU's External Networks 1963–1979: An Appraisal,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 43, no. 1 (2017): 83–106; Sean Morrow, Brown Maaba, and Loyiso Pulumani, *Education in Exile: SOMAFCO, the ANC School in Tanzania, 1978–1992* (Cape Town: Human Science Research Council Press, 2004); and Seth M. Markle, *A Motorcycle on Hell Run: Tanzania, Black Power, and the Uncertain Future on Pan-Africanism* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2017), among others.

African sovereignty. This ‘win at all costs’ approach would eventually be the undoing of the Guinean exiles’ liberation movement.

On 22 November 1970, the leaders of the FLNG would realize their goal of launching an assault on the Touré regime. That morning, a small number of Portuguese Special Forces, around 300 mercenaries, and a significant number of FLNG-affiliated fighters launched from a base in the neighbouring Portuguese colony of Guinea Bissau and landed in Conakry, quickly occupying strategic points such as the state radio broadcasting station and the isthmus that links Tombo island, the capital’s city centre, with the rest of the Kaloum peninsula. The assault had been primarily funded by the Portuguese government, which sought to free twenty-three of its soldiers who had been captured by the PAIGC and were being held in Conakry, and if possible assassinate Amílcar Cabral, the leader of the liberation movement.⁷³ Believing that an increasingly discontented Guinean populace would seize upon any crack in the PDG’s veneer to rise up, FLNG fighters intended to piggyback on the Portuguese assault to overthrow Touré. The combined forces were able to occupy parts of the city for more than 24 hours, due in part to the disorganization of the government’s security forces. However, once the Portuguese forces and their mercenaries retreated, the popular revolt never materialized, and the FLNG halted a planned land invasion of the northern Futa Jallon plateau. Those FLNG fighters who survived were arrested, tried, and executed.⁷⁴

The effects of the assault fundamentally altered Guinea’s post-colonial history. The Guinean government immediately demanded and received a formal condemnation of the Portuguese government’s actions from the United Nations.⁷⁵ The image of one of Africa’s last and most repressive colonial powers attacking the sovereignty of one of Africa’s leading examples of post-colonial nationalism was toxic to a degree that Guinea’s regional foes, including the governments of Senegal and Côte d’Ivoire, distanced themselves from the Guinean exiles, though they themselves had supported the FLNG to varying degrees in the past. Both Cold War superpowers, despite their covert support of similar actions throughout the Global South, also condemned the attacks.⁷⁶ The newfound international support of the Guinean government gave Touré and his core supporters cover to intensify the elimination of political opponents, a tactic that dated back to the 1968 enactment of the Mao-inspired Socialist Cultural Revolution policy. Whereas a handful of rivals to Touré’s influence in Guinea – most notably former 1950s opposition foe Barry Diawadou and former Minister of Internal Affairs Keïta Fodéba – had been arrested and executed in the previous two years, after the assault the purges expanded dramatically. Armed with proof of a what Touré called a ‘fifth column’ within Guinea, government security forces arrested and executed any official deemed to be a traitor to the Guinean government, including several of whom the government considered prone to collaboration with neo-colonial forces due to one of their parents having been a French national.⁷⁷

The failed assault also fundamentally disrupted the Guinean exile movement. For nearly a decade the FLNG and its predecessor organizations had immersed themselves in the language and tactics of liberation politics. Exiled leaders had, by and large, envisioned an overthrow of what they considered to be an illegitimate Touré regime. Their failure to dislodge the Guinean president and the lack of any popular revolt materializing made future attempts at overthrow seem doomed.

⁷³Secrétariat Général de la Défense Nationale Bulletin Particulier de Renseignement No. 11.101, 27 Nov 1970, Papers of Jacques Foccart, Fonds Publiques (hereafter cited as FPU) AG5 2373, Archives Nationales de France, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine (hereafter cited as ANF); Secrétariat Général de la Défense Nationale, Bulletin Particulier de Renseignement no. 11.126, 4 Dec 1970, FPU AG5 2373, ANF.

⁷⁴Parti Démocratique de Guinée, *L’imperialisme et sa 5ème colonne en République de Guinée (Agression du 22 novembre 1970)*, (Conakry: Imprimerie Nationale Patrice Lumumba, 1971).

⁷⁵United Nations Security Council, Resolution 290 of 8 December 1970.

⁷⁶MacDonald, ‘The challenge of Guinean independence, 1958–1971,’ 227–35; Lewin, *Ahmed Sékou Touré*, vol. 6, 7–23.

⁷⁷Services Techniques du Secrétariat d’État chargé de l’Intérieur et de la Sécurité, Synthèse Hebdomadaire no. 5/SEIS/DSE, 6–12 August 1971, 374W 6, Archives Nationales de Guinée.

Furthermore, the FLNG's collaboration with the repressive Portuguese government – an alliance of convenience, but politically crippling once publicly revealed – critically undermined the exiles' political position. The fact that the FLNG had worked closely with the Portuguese, despite the opposition organization's obviously false statements that they alone funded and led the assault, only discredited the movement even more, drawing into stark relief the seemingly dubious claim that FLNG leaders were dedicated to democracy and liberty for all Africans.⁷⁸

Mass defections from the FNLG followed, and by mid-1971, the group was effectively defunct.⁷⁹ David Soumah, an exiled former trade union activist who had helped organize the assault and was the head of the FLNG's Dakar branch, was ordered by a Senegalese court to repay around fifty million francs CFA that he had embezzled from a local housing corporation in order to train and arm fighters.⁸⁰ The assault also led to the repression of Guinean exile movements. In Senegal, Senghor implemented tight restrictions on the political actions of the opposition and in early 1971 detained the most politically active Guinean exiles in Dakar and deported them to France.⁸¹ The Gambian government extradited thirty-eight exiled opposition members after a request by the Guinean government.⁸² Lastly, while France offered asylum to some now twice-exiled opposition members, particularly those who had not taken an active role in planning the attack, the government cautioned that protection came with the expectations of practising 'reserve' when attacking the Guinean government in public statements.⁸³

The Conakry assault marked the closure of the politics of liberation for Guinean exiles. Despite its ultimate failure, the type of political action championed by the FLNG integrally shaped regional, international, and domestic politics in West Africa in the decade following independence. Relations between nominally hostile governments in the region revolved around the support of opposition movements. These exile organizations may have not represented the greatest threat to post-colonial regimes – one could argue that army-led coup d'états were a more real possibility – yet managing exiles nationals and their relations with other countries became one of the central focuses of regional diplomacy. In the case of Guinea, the actions of exiles gave diplomatic cover for a regime that was increasingly considered a pariah and accelerated a trend towards political repression. As such, exiles were not simply at the centre of significant political developments in West Africa – they often drove developments that altered the post-colonial trajectory of independent nations.

Modern nations and human rights

With their dreams of sparking a revolution in Guinea having been effectively quashed, exiles turned to other, emerging discourses to undermine the Touré regime. These new lines of critique were often made for an international audience rather than for Guinean consumption. Exiles often highlighted in particular what they considered to be the Touré regime's failure to govern properly and fulfil the roles domestically and internationally of a 'legitimate' nation. Furthermore, exiles increasingly focused on the growing number of political prisoners who had been arrested in the wake of the failed 1970 assault on Conakry.

A central figure behind the shift in tactics was Siradiou Diallo. Formerly part of the FLNG's Paris branch leadership, Diallo used the organization's failure during the Conakry assault to create

⁷⁸Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 10 December 1970. FPU AG5 1257, ANF.

⁷⁹Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 2 August 1971. FPU AG5 1257, ANF.

⁸⁰Prefet, Direction du Service de Coopération Technique Internationale de Police to Foccart 'Note concernant les activités au Sénégal des associations de Guinéens hostiles au régime du Président Sékou Touré,' 19 April 1974, FPU AG5 1359, ANF.

⁸¹SISYPHE, 'Relations sénégal-guinéennes – Expulsions de ressortissants guinéens et français d'origine guinéenne,' no. 545, 24 March 1971, 148PO 565, CADN.

⁸²Lewin, *Ahmed Sékou Touré*, v. 6, 18, fn. 15.

⁸³Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Directeur des Affaires Africaines et Malgaches, 'a/s relations avec la Guinée,' 6 December 1974, 184PO 564, CADN.

his own organization of exiled opposition members, the Regroupement des Guinéens de l'Extérieur (RGE). The RGE grew out of an organization called the Regroupement des Guinéens en France created by Diallo in 1969, a group that, according to its leadership, was non-political and meant to serve as a mutual aid group and a 'forum for discussion'.⁸⁴ Following the FLNG's failure, Diallo remodelled the RGE into an opposition organization and made early moves to constitute a government in exile.⁸⁵ By 1973, the RGE had local branches in several French cities, including Paris, Marseille, and Lyon, as well as in Lausanne, Dakar, Abidjan, and Washington, D.C.⁸⁶

The RGE turned its attention in particular to alleged systematic state failures within Guinea. Many of the organization's early critiques appeared in a monthly journal, *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, which began publishing in 1972. Diallo sought to use the journal to rally international support for the opposition movement, sending copies to prominent heads of states and 'political personalities' free of cost to 'raise awareness' of the plight of Guineans both inside Guinea and in exile.⁸⁷ *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives* also positioned itself as a window onto the 'closed', 'totalitarian' state of Guinea. One of the recurring themes in the journal was a series of anonymous letters purportedly from 'inside Guinea' describing the country's slow descent into dysfunction and despair. One letter claimed that the PDG's alleged requirement that all Guineans to celebrate 'Gowon, Ahidjo, Boumédiène, and Mobutu' (the heads of Nigeria, Cameroon, Algeria, and Zaire, respectively, who had all been accused of creating totalitarian regimes) was reflective of Touré's abandonment of ideals in favour of the naked pursuit of power.⁸⁸ Another article focused on the plight of medical doctors, noting that of the fifty who were in Guinea at the moment of independence, only ten remained in 1972 and some twenty had been jailed in Camp Boiro after the 1970 Conakry assault.⁸⁹ Critiques of the Touré regime even extended to the Guinea's national sports teams; one author bemoaned the sorry performance of the Guinean athletes in the 1973 Lagos Pan-African Games, pointing in particular to the corrupting influence of the politics (though the author did begrudgingly note that the men's national soccer team had earned a silver medal).⁹⁰ Other authors criticized the Guinean government's shirking of promised contributions to the African Development Bank, a multilateral development organization established in 1964.⁹¹ The sum total of these particular criticisms was meant to undermine Guinea's status as a proper, 'modern' nation that guaranteed rights and provided services to its citizens while participating fully in international society. In essence, the exiles argued, while the Guinean government had secured a basic form of sovereignty, it had not taken up the role of the modern developmentalist state, or, though interventions such as providing health care and managing economic policy, assumed the role as the 'prime mover for raising the standard of living' of the Guinean people.⁹²

In the years that followed, exiles and opponents of Touré pursued additional lines of critique tied to alleged human rights violations with the aim of undermining the Guinean government's international standing. In doing so, these critics were engaging in a discourse in Africa that stretched back to the earlier era of liberation politics, but which had gained newfound salience and prominence in the Global North during the 1970s. A 1973 article in *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives* called on the Organization of African Unity to form a human rights commission

⁸⁴Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 9 October 1970. FPU AG5 1257, ANF.

⁸⁵Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 2 August 1971. FPU AG5 1257, ANF.

⁸⁶Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 2 January 1973, FPU AG5 1366, ANF.

⁸⁷Rapport, Prefecture de Police (Paris), 7, November 1972, FPU AG5 1257, ANF.

⁸⁸Anonymous, 'Lettre de Guinée,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 22 (August 1972).

⁸⁹La Rédaction, 'La Santé Publique dans la Guinée de Sékou Touré en 1972,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 23 (September-October-November 1972).

⁹⁰Sport et Politique en Guinée,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 33 (January 1974): 11–18.

⁹¹'Le Président de la B.A.D. à Conakry,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 29 (July 1973), 20.

⁹²Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 92.

in order to investigate crimes committed in Guinea.⁹³ Another author criticized a planned 1974 stop in Conakry by U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, arguing that the visit would ignore the Touré regime's crimes committed in the wake of the 1970 invasion while lending a veneer of respectability to his government. 'As for the people of Guinea', the author wrote, 'the fact that Sékou Touré every day violates the U.N. charter has not, to the present, provoked any real reactions beyond lip service'.⁹⁴

Beginning in the mid-70s, international non-governmental organizations also turned their attention to the alleged abuses in Guinea. Chief among them was Amnesty International (AI), which published a series of reports that claimed that some 2,900 political prisoners had disappeared in Guinea. AI and the League of Human Rights, which in 1977 produced a 300-page report on human rights violations in Guinea, relied upon accounts from political prisoners who had been released from Guinean prisons in 1975, a condition for the reestablishment of official relations between Guinea and France.⁹⁵ These former political prisoners, in both media interviews and eventually through published memoirs, recounted the system of death by starvation (known as the *diète noire*) and disappearance of thousands of others arrested by the state.⁹⁶ Exiles were joined in their condemnation of the treatment of political prisoners in Guinea by outside human rights groups. Nadine Barry, the French-born spouse of a Guinean civil servant who was arrested in 1972, established the Association of French Families of Political Prisoners in Guinea in 1980 after nearly five years of behind-the-scenes advocacy. Barry undertook a sustained – though ultimately unsuccessful – campaign to pressure Touré through the French Government to either release the political prisoners in Guinea or provide their death certificates.⁹⁷

A similar advocacy campaign was taking place at the same time that focused on freeing political prisoners across Guinea's border in Mali. A military coup in 1968 ousted Modibo Keita's government and led to the arrest of several prominent politicians. Once reports circulated of the horrible conditions these prisoners were being held in at Taoudeni, a military camp/prison in the Saharan Desert, as well as rumours of deaths, Amnesty International's Secretary General travelled to Mali in order to campaign for the release of the prisoners. While composing reports on prisoners in Mali, Amnesty International relied upon information provided by the Committee to Defend the Democratic Liberties of Mali (CDLDM), which was composed of Malian exiles in Paris and their allies. The CDLDM maintained contact with prisoners at Taoudeni, as well as their families who would periodically receive letters from their imprisoned relatives, and were able to accurately describe a series of untreated health problems from which the prisoners were suffering.⁹⁸ Indeed, opposition to authoritarian regimes throughout post-colonial Africa was often expressed using the language of international human rights. Activists and politicians such as Joseph Danquah in Ghana, Odinga Oginga in Kenya, Ferhat Abbas in Algeria, and Vera Chirwa in Malawi all framed their opposition, imprisonment, and for some liberation by invoking the concepts of freedom and rights. As Bonny Ibhawoh has argued, it was opposition politicians and activists who sustained advocacy for constitutional and human rights after independence,

⁹³L'O.U.A. et les driots de l'Homme et du Citoyen Africain,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 29 (July 1973), 3–4.

⁹⁴Jika, 'Monsieur Waldheim à Conakry,' *Guinée: Nouvelles Perspectives*, 35 (March 1974), 10.

⁹⁵The International League for Human Rights, 'Communication to the United Nations on a consistent pattern of violations of human rights in Guinea,' (1977), 3. On the reasons for rapprochement, see Lewin, *Ahmed Sékou Touré*, vol. 6, 157–80.

⁹⁶Most notably, Jean-Paul Alata, *Prison d'Afrique: cinq ans dans les geôles de Guinée*, (Paris: Éditions Le Seuil, 1976).

⁹⁷Nadine Barry, Présidente, Association des Familles Françaises de Prisonniers Politiques en Guinée to Yvon Omnès, Ambassadeur de France en Guinée, 4 November 1980, 163PO 39, CADN; Barry to Martin Kirsch, Conseiller à la Présidence pour les affaires africaines, 30 September 1980, 163PO 39, CADN; Barry to Omnès, 17 September 1980, 163PO 39, CADN; Barry to François Sheer, Directeur de Cabinet du Ministre des Relations Extérieures (France), 9 September 1982, 163PO 39, CADN; Barry to Claude Cheysson, Ministre des Relations Extérieures, 6 April 1982, 163PO 39, CADN; and Céline Pauthier, 'La femme au pouvoir, ce n'est pas le monde à l'envers': le militantisme au féminin en Guinée,' in *Femmes d'Afrique et émancipation: entre normes sociales contraignantes et nouveaux possibles*, ed. Muriel Gomez-Perez (Paris: Karthala, 2012), 97.

⁹⁸Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 223–5.

well before the intervention of international organizations based in the Global North.⁹⁹ Guinean exiles' early pivot towards the language of human rights and their later work with international advocacy organizations, therefore, was part of a much broader form of oppositional politics in post-colonial Africa.

Guinean exiles' accounts had an effect on Guinea's diplomatic standing. The United States government attached a 'human rights clause' to a Food for Peace agreement with Guinea and four other countries, which stipulated that aid would be distributed only to at-risk communities and not government security forces.¹⁰⁰ In the run-up to a landmark December 1978 state visit of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing – the first French head of government to travel to Guinea since De Gaulle's disastrous tour stop in the run-up to the 1958 referendum – the Guinean government enacted a series of reforms meant to placate critics, including democratizing control of the influential Political Bureau, releasing a group of political prisoners, and ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which it had initially signed in 1967.¹⁰¹

While the Guinean government was willing to negotiate diplomatically, its public response to criticisms of the country's human rights record was unequivocal. The Guinean government argued that Western, 'individualized' human rights represented a neo-colonial plot to undermine African sovereignty. Groups such as Amnesty International, the government argued, were being used by exiles and foreign governments in order to 'destabilize' the Guinean government.¹⁰² A more nuanced critique of the emerging consensus on human rights in the Global North put forward by the Guinean government argued for cultural specificity. A cornerstone of sovereignty, the government argued, was that each nation and its people determined their own laws and the rights enumerated within, both of which reflected the particular character of their society and culture. As long as those decisions were made democratically – which, the Guinean government argued, occurred through a process of consensus building under the umbrella of the one-party state – the detention of political opponents (or 'saboteurs', to use official language) was perfectly compatible with an embrace of human rights. It was the right of the people, in other words, to shape their own 'human rights'.¹⁰³

Thus, at the same time that organizations and states in the Global North were coalescing around an 'anitpolitical' universal articulation of human rights that often promoted intervention, governments in the Global South sought to protect the central goal of the anti-colonial and liberation struggles – sovereignty and self-determination – and offer up an alternative.¹⁰⁴ Historians have often focused on the central role activists in the Northern Atlantic played during the 1970s to cement individual human rights as a central concept in international society. Guinea's particular negotiation within this emerging framework, however, demonstrates that exiles and opposition members were key conduits of information and applied early pressure on regimes they saw as authoritarian.¹⁰⁵ Just as importantly, these governments recognized the central role opposition members abroad played in undermining international legitimacy. The exiles' identities were obscured in non-governmental organizations' reports for their own protection, but they nevertheless played a central role fixing a form of human rights within African politics and international diplomacy.

⁹⁹Ibhawoh, *Human Rights in Africa*, 198–202.

¹⁰⁰*Amnesty International Annual Report 1978* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1978), 53.

¹⁰¹*Amnesty International Annual Report 1978*, 53–6; *Amnesty International Annual Report 1979* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1979), 21.

¹⁰²Amnesty International, *Human Rights Violations in the Popular and Revolutionary Republic of Guinea* (New York: Amnesty International USA, 1982), 19–20; Ahmed Sékou Touré, *Des droits du peuple aux droits de l'homme* (Conakry: Bureau de presse de la Présidence de la République, 1978), 40–1.

¹⁰³Touré, *Des droits du peuple aux droits de l'homme*, 43–56. The conflict between this conception of human rights and the Western liberal alternative would continue during the debate over the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, adopted by the OAU in 1980. See Pal Ahluwalia, 'Human Rights in Africa: A Post-Colonial Perspective,' *Africa Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (1998): 21–37.

¹⁰⁴Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 212–13.

¹⁰⁵On the early work that intellectuals, lawyers, and activists in Africa did to advance the concept of human rights, see Terretta, 'From below and to the left.'

Conclusion

As the evidence provided above demonstrates, it is impossible to write a history of post-colonial Guinea without including the political and ideological work of exiles. And yet, their roles in shaping fundamental questions about citizenship, sovereignty, and human rights have not received adequate attention from scholars. I contend that this absence is due to two broad assumptions. First, both contemporary observers and subsequent scholars concluded that the ubiquitous single-party states in the years immediately following independence meant that the politics of opposition was irrelevant. Those wishing to achieve political change were better served by working within the single party or seeking out allies in the military. Those who fled into exile largely became sidelined. As a result, there has been significant research on fractures, contestations, and forms of resistance within single-party systems. Yet this focus at times has had the effect of reifying state constructions of exiles as liminal, vestigial characters who sought only to deconstruct rather than build their own forms of politics and diplomacy. More scholarship on the politics of opposition after independence is integral to better understanding key questions of diplomacy, citizenship, and sovereignty during this period of African history.

Second, and more significantly, the marginal position of exiles demonstrates the long shadow that colonialism has cast on histories of post-colonial Africa and more broadly histories of Africa in the twentieth-century world. Narratives of decolonization cast the main characters as colonial administrators and the African politicians (or broader grassroots population) who resisted and/or negotiated with them. These same struggles continued after independence, when groups and activists both within and outside nation-states resisted against increasingly authoritarian regimes. Likewise, post-colonial political histories of Africa – especially those that explore beyond the boundaries of single nation-states – emphasize the long (and largely unfulfilled) struggle against colonialism and the creation of new neo-colonial models.¹⁰⁶ In this formulation, it is individual African states' interaction with world powers, institutions of international governance, and foreign non-governmental organizations that have largely determined new and old forms of politics after independence.

Decolonization was as much about sorting out the post-colonial order among African interest groups and political parties as it was the overthrow of colonial overlords. Those who 'lost out' during decolonization often became post-colonial exiles, especially after the rise of one-party states. Exiles continued to play a central role shaping debates surrounding fundamental questions of sovereignty, citizenship, and rights. To do so, they formed regional, continental, and global networks to build support for their movements and leveraged diplomatic tensions between African states in order to find a place in an inchoate post-colonial order. After independence, political projects and contestations within the nation-state, on the one hand, and the relationships between African states and global powers, international organizations, and NGOs in the Global North on the other helped shape the politics of post-colonial Africa. What existed between balkanization and world – including networks of exiles and opposition members – played an equally important role in shaping debates surrounding fundamental questions of self-determination and sovereignty.

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¹⁰⁶Stephen Ellis, *Seasons of Rain: Africa in the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 147–9.