THE SHORT CENTURY

Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1945–1994
Chronology
Compiled by Irene Small

Independence of Colonies

Algeria, 1962 (France); Angola, 1975 (Portugal); Benin, 1960 (France); Botswana, 1966 (Britain); Burkina Faso, 1960 (France); Burundi, 1962 (Belgium); Cameroon, 1960 (France, France); Cape Verde, 1975 (Portugal); Central African Republic, 1960 (France); Chad, 1960 (France); Comoros, 1975 (France); Congo, Democratic Republic of the, formerly Zaire, 1960 (Belgium); Congo, Republic of the, 1960 (France); Côte d’Ivoire, 1960 (France); Djibouti, 1977 (France); Egypt, 1922 (Britain); Equatorial Guinea, 1968 (Spain), Eritrea, 1941 (Italy), 1952 (Britain), 1993 (Ethiopia); Ethiopia, no colonization (Italian occupation 1936–41); Gabon, 1960 (France); Gambia, The, 1965 (Britain); Ghana, 1957 (Britain); Guinea, 1958 (France); Kenya, 1963 (Britain); Lesotho, 1966 (Britain); Liberia, no colonization (Independent Republic of Liberia, 1847); Libya, 1943 (Italy, 1951, Allied Administration); Madagascar, 1960 (France); Malawi, 1964 (Britain); Mali, 1960 (France); Mauritania, 1960 (France, Mauritius, 1968 (Britain); Morocco, 1956 (France); Mozambique, 1975 (Portugal); Namibia, 1920 (Germany), 1990 (South Africa); Niger, 1960 (France); Nigeria, 1960 (Britain); Réunion, no colonization (Portugal); Rwanda, 1962 (Belgium); Sã Tomé and Príncipe, 1975 (Portugal); Senegal, 1960 (France); Seychelles, 1976 (Britain); Sierra Leone, 1961 (Britain); Somalia, 1960 (Britain, Italy); South Africa, 1961 (Britain); Sudan, 1956 (Britain, Egypt); Swaziland, 1968 (Britain); Tanzania, 1964 (Britain); Togo, 1960 (France); Tunisia, 1956 (France); Uganda, 1962 (Britain); Western Sahara, 1976 (Spain); Zambia, 1964 (Britain); Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, 1965 (Britain)

1900

Henry Sylvester Williams convenes the first Pan-African Conference
French circus group projects the Lumière brothers’ L’Arroseur arrosé in Dakar

1902

End of the Anglo-Boer Wars in South Africa
Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, is founded and offers art lessons

1903

Aina Onabolu establishes himself as a modern portrait painter in Lagos and is the first modern Nigerian artist
Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Cairo, is established
Herero revolt in Namibia against German colonial rule is brutally suppressed by German colonial troops; thousands are massacred

1904

France consolidates its west African colonies into French West Africa

1908

Prince Yousef Karnal founds the School of Fine Arts, Cairo
France establishes French Equatorial Africa
Tunisia becomes a French protectorate

1910

Union of South Africa is formed

1912

African National Congress founded in South Africa as a political organization to defend the rights of disenfranchised blacks

1913

Muhammad bin Abubakar publishes the epic poem Utendi wa Lyongoro Fumo (Epic of Lyongoro Fumo) of the southeastern African oral tradition

1914

Modern Nigeria is created when Lord Frederick Lugard amalgamates the Northern and Southern British protectorates to form Nigeria. Establishes Lagos as the central capital of the colony

1919

W.E.B. Dubois organizes the first Pan-African Congress, in Paris

1920

Nigerian modern art pioneer Aina Onabolu completes art studies at St. John’s Wood School of Art, London
Spain is defeated by Abd el Krim’s forces in Morocco
Shooting of striking coal miners by colonial troops in Enugu, eastern Nigeria

1921

The Society of Fine Arts is founded in Egypt
Second Pan-African Congress is held, in London, Brussels, and Paris; it has a large contingent from Africa

1922

Egypt becomes constitutional monarchy
Mohamed Bayoumi’s short film The Civil Servant is the first to be made by an Egyptian filmmaker

1923

The Devonshire Memorandum declares the interests of the natives in Uganda paramount
Third Pan-African Congress is held, in Lisbon

1924

Achimota College is founded in Ghana, with G.A. Stevens as its first art master
The film The Girl of Carthage is directed by Chiky in Tunisia

1925

Thomas Mofolo publishes his third novel, the critically acclaimed Chaka the Zulu, written in Sotio Radio broadcasting begins in Algeria

1927

Kenneth Murray arrives in Nigeria at Aina Onabolu’s insistence to teach art at King’s College, Lagos. His art curriculum is later introduced into other major regional colleges
First Egyptian feature film, Leila, is directed by Istephane Rosti
Fourth Pan-African Congress is held, in New York

1929

Exhibition of watercolors by Albert Lubaki, from the Belgian Congo, is held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, and travels to three other European venues
Abe Women’s Riot, a major revolt in eastern Nigeria against colonialism

1930

Tshekiso Plaatje’s novel Mhudi is published in South Africa

1931

Ghanaian nationalist politician and publisher J.B. Danquah establishes Times of West Africa

1934

Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor found the Paris-based newspaper L’Etudiant Noir

1935

Italy invades Ethiopia
MISR Studio, Africa’s first film studio, opens in Egypt
Radio broadcasting begins in Tunisia
Nnamdi Azikiwe founds The West African Pilot, an African nationalist newspaper in Accra and, later, Lagos

1938

Ethiopia’s Emperor Haile Selassie flees from invading Italian troops to Geneva, and petitions, unsuccessfully, to win the support of the League of Nations to reestablish Ethiopia’s sovereignty

1937

Nnamdi Azikiwe publishes Renascent Africa, a book dedicated to the idea of African political and cultural independence
Nnamdi Azikiwe and Herbert Macaulay found the National Convention of Nigeria and Cameroons in Lagos, the first nationalist political party, with a broad national base and membership
Kenneth Murray exhibits the work of five of his students, including Ben Enwonwu, at the Zwemmer Gallery, London
The Fine Arts School is founded at Makerere College, Uganda, under the direction of Margaret Trowell.

1938

1939
Almé Césaire publishes the seminal long poem “Cahier d’un retour au pays natal” (Notebook of a Return to the Native Land), which marks the genesis of the Negritude movement, led by Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Léon Damas.

Imperial Institute, London, hosts an exhibition of Margaret Trowell’s students from Uganda.

The interdisciplinary group Art and Freedom is established in Egypt by poet George Hunein and artist Ramaz Younan Kamel al-Timmissani, among others.

Ernest Mancoba leaves South Africa and goes into exile, settling in Denmark.

1940
Nelson Mandela, future leader of liberated South Africa, is expelled from Fort Hare University for being involved in a student strike.

African colonial conscripts join the war against Nazi Germany.

1944
Nelson Mandela founds African National Congress Youth League with Oliver Tambo.

Italian troops are expelled from Ethiopia and Emperor Selassie returns.

Winston Churchill and Theodore Roosevelt issue the Atlantic Charter, which recognizes the right of all peoples to decide what form of government they wish to have.

The Group of Contemporary Art is formed around Hussein Yussef Amin in Egypt.

Dramatist and satirist Hubert Ogunde stages his first play, *The Garden of Eden*.

1945

October 15–21: Fifth Pan-African Congress, held in Manchester, England, is convened by George Padmore (Trinidad); H. Mekonnen (Ethiopia); Kwame Nkrumah (Gold Coast); Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya); and Peter Abrahams (South Africa). The result is the unanimous demand for an independent Africa.

July–August 37: General strike of government employees over wage demands, Nigeria.

Hubert Ogunde founds the first professional theater group in Nigeria, the Ogunde Concert Party, and writes *Strike and Hunger*, set against the backdrop of the general strike of workers against the exploitative wages paid by the colonial administration in Nigeria. The theme song, *Kobo Ojumo* (A Penny a Day), known as “the song of the people,” becomes a big hit.

Algerian nationalist demonstrations lead to riots, resulting in numerous deaths.

United Nations is formed in San Francisco.

Arab League founded in Cairo issues Arab Charter, a document of pan-Arab cultural, religious, linguistic, and political solidarity.

1946
Trade Unions legalized in the Belgian Congo. Alliance formed between the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress to oppose white rule.

March: New constitution in Gold Coast (present-day Ghana) makes it the first British African colony with a black majority in the Legislative Council.

Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques is founded in Algeria by Messaïl Hadj.

Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) is founded by Houphouët-Boigny (Ivory Coast) with Modibo Keïta (Mali) and others.

Forced labor is abolished in all French colonies.

French citizenship is offered to all inhabitants of overseas territories.

Léopold Sédar Senghor’s *Chants d’Ombre* is published by Editions Seuli, Paris.

1947
T.R. Mekonnen founds the Pan-Africanist Journal in London.

New constitution allows for a black majority in the Legislative Council, Nigeria.

Nationalist revolt in Madagascar against the French.

United Gold Coast Convention convoked by J. B. Danquah.

Kwame Nkrumah publishes *Towards Colonial Freedom*, a manual for the struggle to end colonialism.

East African High Commission is formed.

Alliance Dlop establishes Présence Africaine in Paris, a publishing house and a journal promoting African culture and literature, and a major organ of the Negritude movement in the postwar period.

Ben Enwonwu becomes the first Nigerian to hold the post of Federal Art Advisor.

South African artist Gerard Sekoto leaves South Africa and goes into exile in France.

1948
February: Twenty-nine are killed in anti-British riots in Accra, Gold Coast. World War II veterans protest colonial government, and institute a boycott of European goods. These events spur on the fight for independence.

African National Party, under the leadership of Daniel F. Malan, comes to power in South Africa, and the all-white Parliament begins to legislate apartheid policies.

University College Ibadan is founded in Nigeria.

The highly acclaimed village of New Gourna, Egypt, is built by Egyptian modernist architect Hassan Fathy. Fathy’s philosophy of combining modernist technology with low-cost traditional material is seen as a successful bridge between European and Maghrebian building traditions.

Seydou Keïta opens his photographic studio in Bamako.

Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) is formed.

Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais is founded by Léopold Sédar Senghor.

Alan Paton publishes *Cry, The Beloved Country* about life under apartheid in South Africa.

General strike in Zanzibar against colonial occupation.

Camden Arts Centre, London, exhibits Nigerian art.

Poly Street Art Centre is established in Johannesburg.

Léopold Sédar Senghor edits the first anthology of Negritude poetry, *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nigérienne*.

Ernest Mancoba participates in the “HÅST COBRA” exhibition in Copenhagen.

1949
Convention People’s Party (CPP) is founded in the Gold Coast by Kwame Nkrumah.

Gold Coast Film School established in Accra.

Makerere becomes a university college.

Mixed-race marriages declared illegal in South Africa.

1950

Sierra Leone People’s Party formed by Milton Margai.

Almé Césaire publishes *Discourse on Colonialism*.

Kola Ogumolua, Nigerian actor, playwright, and mime, stages his Yoruba-language play *Ife Owo* (Love of Money).

1951
Pressure mounts in Egypt for England to leave occupied Canal Zone.

Libya becomes an independent kingdom.

Gordon College is affiliated with Khartoum Technical Institute and becomes the School of Fine and Applied Arts and the center of the Khartoum School artists’ movement.

Poto-Poto school is founded in Brazzaville, Congo, by Pierre Lods.

Drum magazine is founded in South Africa.

Shaaban Roberts writing in Swahili emerges as East Africa’s leading poet and essayist with his best-known work, *Kusaddikia* (To Be Believed).

1952

All non-whites are forced to carry passes in South Africa. Political organizations launch a massive resistance campaign.

November 8–9: South African riots suppressed by security forces.

Mandela and other colleagues arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Kwame Nkrumah becomes prime minister of the Gold Coast.

Egyptian revolution overthrows King Farouk.

Amos Tutuola’s *Palm Wine Drinkard* is published by Faber and Faber.

Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Mask* is published.
1953
June 15: Over 100 Mau Mau fighters killed by British forces in Aberdare Forest, Kenya.

October 20: Jomo Kenyatta and five others convicted of organizing the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya. Kenyatta is sentenced to seven years in prison.

Grand Kalle (Joseph Kabasele), known as the father of Congo music, founds Orchestre African Jazz in Léopoldville.

E.T. Mensah and his band undertake their historic tour of Nigeria. The band receives enthusiastic welcome in Lagos.

Mammou Touré’s short film Moukamani is released in Guinea.

Algeria and other French colonies oppose colonial rule; FNL issues a manifesto and an armed struggle against French rule begins.

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is formed.


Egypt becomes a republic, with General Muhammad Neguib as president.

Julius Nyerere elected President of Tanganyika African Association.

France deposes the Sultan of Morocco.

The Nigerian College of Arts, Science, and Technology, Zaria, is established.

Camara Laye publishes L’Enfant Noire (The African Child).

1954

Television introduced in Morocco.

The first public broadcast of Western Nigerian Television.

Cyprian Ekwensi’s “People of the City” is published.

Colonel Nasser seizes power in Egypt; British troops are removed from Egypt and Nasser is elected Egypt's first president.

Algerian War of Independence begins, led by the Front Libération Nationale (FLN).

Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) is formed, with Nyerere as president.

Nkrumah’s CPP wins general election in Gold Coast; Britain promises independence.

Frank McEwen helps establish the National Gallery of Rhodesia (later the National Gallery of Zimbabwe). Thomas Mukarobga, employed as a gatekeeper, would later become a pioneering Zimbabwean artist.

Akwapim 6 is formed in Accra by six Ghanaian artists.

1955


Sudan gains independence from Britain.

Television introduced in western Nigeria.

Odu: A Journal of Yoruba and Related Studies is founded at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, by Subari Biobaku and Ulli Beier.

1956

Various representatives of African nationalist parties attend the Bandung Conference in Indonesia.

State of emergency is declared throughout Algeria; Moroccan Army of Liberation attacks French posts in West Algeria.

UPC banned in Cameroon.

Cameroonian author Mongo Beti publishes critical novel The Poor Christ of Bomba.

Ousmane Sembène publishes his first novel, Le Docker Noir (The Black Docket).

King Mohammed of Morocco is restored to throne by the French.

Sudan becomes an independent republic.

Oil is discovered in southern Nigeria.

Morocco and Tunisia become independent.

President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal, leading to International crisis. British and French invasion of Egypt fails to make Nasser a hero in the Arab and African independence struggle.

Dedan Kimathi, leader of the Mau Mau (Land and Freedom Army), is hanged in prison.

African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and the Populor Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) are founded.

Treason trial against opponents of apartheid begins in South Africa, and lasts until 1961.

1957

March 6: Gold Coast becomes independent Ghana, the first independent black state in Africa, under Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah.

E.T. Mensah's song Ghana Freedom is special song of the night. Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference is held in Cairo.

Tunisia becomes a republic.

Union des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noir founded by Sekou Toure in Guinea.

Black Orpheus, a journal for African arts and literature, is founded by Ulli Beier in Ibadan, Nigeria.

In an effort to affirm cultural continuity with the past, Ghanaian poet Kofi Awoonor begins to translate into English traditional African oral art forms, which he would draw from and recast in his own poetry and fiction.

Paulin Soumanou Vieyra’s and Mamadou Sarr’s film Afrique sur Seine (Africa on the Seine), on African students’ life in Paris, is the first film made by a black African in Europe.

Sekou Toure in a historical confrontation with General de Gaulle in Conakry demands outright independence for Guinea.

Egypt and Syria formally merge to form United Arab Republic with Nasser as president.

All-African People's Conference is convened by Kwame Nkrumah in Accra.

South Africa officially gains independence from Great Britain.

Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart is published.

Egyptian director Youssef Chahine's film Cairo Station is released.

French military raids Tunisia.

General de Gaulle advocates a federation called the French Community with internal autonomy for French overseas territories; announces independence of French Africa at Brazzaville.

October 2: Guinea becomes independent with Sekou Touré; all other African French territories remain within the French Community.

Zaria Art Society (later known as the "Zaria Rebels") is inaugurated at the Nigerian College of Arts, Science, and Technology, Zaria, by Demas Nwoklo, Bruce Onobrakpeya, S. Irene Wangboje, Yusuf Grillo, William Olaseebikan, Simon Okeke, and Uche Okeke. Okeke founds the Cultural Center, Kafanchan (later renamed Asele Institute). The Institute is moved to Nimo at the outbreak of the Civil War.

1959

Fifty are killed, three hundred wounded in anti-colonial demonstrations in Léopoldville (now Kinshasa), Belgian Congo, organized by the Alliance des Ba-Kongo (ABAKO).

Sanquille meeting is held between Presidents Nkrumah, Tubman, and Touré to plan the union of free African states and the establishment of the Monrovia Group, a move toward founding an African Community.

Ricts in the Belgian Congo.

United Nations condemns apartheid.

Senegal and Western Sudan (now Mali) demand independence and bring about the end of the French Community.

Second Congrès des Artistes et Écrivains Noirs, held in Rome.

Lionel Rogosin's Come Back Africa, a film examining the pass laws for blacks in South Africa, is released.

1960

At the Brussels Round Table Conference in January Belgium agrees to the independence of the Belgian Congo as of June 30.


Pan-African Congress organizes demonstration in Sharpeville; South African police kill sixty-seven National Anti-Pass Law Campaign demonstrators in what becomes known as the Sharpeville Massacre. The PAC and the ANC are banned.

South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) is formed, with Sam Nujoma as president.
Army mutiny in newly independent Congo; Katanga province secedes as an independent nation from former Belgian Congo, under Moise Tshombe; UN troops deployed in Katanga to end secession from newly independent Congo. Unrest continues as another revolt against Congo's central government in Kasai province breaks out.

September 14: Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba is overthrown by Colonel Joseph-Désiré Mobutu in the former Belgian Congo.

Ulli Beier organizes the independence exhibition in Lagos, where the works of key members of the Zaria Society are shown.

E.C. Aihanze and his Music Band records Freedom Highlife to commemorate Nigerian independence.

Grand Kalle (Joseph Kabaale) composes Independence Cha Cha, the popular theme song of Congolese independence.

Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka writes A Dance of the Forests and forms the theater group 1960 Masks later renamed Orisun Players to perform it.

D.T. Niane publishes Soundjata ou l'Enquire Mandingue, a French translation of the Soundjata epic.

Chief Albert Luthuli, former African National Congress President, is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Harold Macmillan delivers "Winds of Change" speech in Cape Town and commences his "Winds of Change" tour around British Colonial Africa in anticipation of independence.

African heads of state meet in Monrovia to discuss the formation of an African Community Insurrection by French population in Algeria against de Gaulle's government.

1961

- Patrice Lumumba, Congolese prime minister, is murdered while in detention in Katanga.

Angolan independence struggle against Portugal is begun with an attack on a Luanda prison.

Chinua Achebe’s No Longer at Ease is published.

New Congo Federation is declared by President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Iléo.

Resistance struggle against Portugal begins under UNITA in northern Angola.


South Africa becomes a republic and, under apartheid, withdraws from the Commonwealth of Nations.

July Mbari Club is founded in Ibadan by a group of young writers and artists, including Wole Soyinka, John Pepper Clark, Christopher Okigbo, Demas Nwoko, Uche Okeke, and Ulli Beier. Ezekiel Mphahlele, a South African, is its first president.

Mbari also establishes a publishing house that issues first editions of many of the writers' and dramatists' early works, and exhibits the work of many modern African artists, such as Ibrahim el-Salahi (Sudan), Malangatana Ngwenya (Mozambique), Skunder Boghossian (Ethiopia), Vincent Kofi (Ghana), Jacob Lawrence (USA), Susanne Wenger (Austria), among many others.

Kenya is released from prison by British colonial authorities.

Tanganyika and Sierra Leone become independent states. Members of the Commonwealth UN forces attempt, unsuccessfully, to capture the capital of secessionist Katanga.

Million-acre scheme instituted in Kenya, where the government buys land from settlers and redistributes it to Africans in Kenya.

Frantz Fanon’s influential The Wretched of the Earth is published, in which he examines the psychological and material costs of colonization in Algeria.

Armed forces announce that they have taken control of Algeria; OAS terrorism begins; Algerian peace talks begin in Switzerland.

South Africa’s Afolu Fugard publishes The Blood Knot.

Mandela forms and becomes commander-in-chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe—Spear of the Nation—an organization to lead the ANC’s armed struggle.

Geïl Sotro, Sidney Kumalo, Giuseppe Cattaneo, and others form the Amadlozi Group in South Africa.

Frantz Fanon dies of cancer at the age of thirty-six in Washington, D.C.

Rajat Neogy founds Transition: An International Review in Kampala.

1982

Uganda becomes an independent state and a member of the Commonwealth.

Fela Ransome Kuti and a group of West African musicians form the Koola Lobitos in London.

Rwanda and Burundi become independent.

Kenya Constitutional Conference in London.

Christopher Okigbo’s Labyrinth is published.

Algeria wins independence after eight years of fighting; over 900,000 French settlers leave.

First African government is formed in Northern Rhodesia.

Frelimo headquarters are set up in Dar-es-Salaam.

Tanganyika.

Mbari Mbayo Club in Oshogbo, Nigeria, is opened with a performance of dramatist Duro Ladipo’s first play, Oba Moro. Many artists, including American painter Jacob Lawrence, Georgina Beiler, Dennis Williams, conduct workshops there.

First International Congress of African Culture, organized by Frank McEwen, is held in Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe). It seeks to address the contemporary aesthetics of African art and music. Among the participating artists are Vincent Kofi, Ben Enwonwu, and Malangatana Ngwenya, Alfred Barr, William Fass, S.O. Bikoaku, Roland Penrose, and Tristan Tzara attend.

Art from the Commonwealth is exhibited at the Commonwealth Institute, London.

Historic and controversial Conference of African Literature in English language is held at Makerere University, Kampala, to debate the state of post-colonial African literature. Those who attend include Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Lewis Nkosi, James Ngugi, Rajat Neogy. Several nationalist writers fail to acknowledge any literature written in non-African languages as being African.

1963

Ousmane Sembène’s first film, Borom Sarret, is released, winning first prize at the International Film Festival in Tours, France.

UN troops capture Katanga, Moishe Tshombe goes into exile.


Jomo Kenyatta becomes prime minister of Kenya after the country gains its independence from Britain.

Nigeria and Uganda become republics and members of the Commonwealth.

Egypt and Syria merge to become United Arab Republic, a short-lived experiment in pan-Arab unity, with Gamal Abdel Nasser as president.

Central African Federation of Nyasaland, Southern and Northern Rhodesia is dissolved.

Dennis Brutus, prominent South African poet, publishes Sisins Knuckles Boots.

Josiah Karukih publishes the autobiographical work Mau Mau Jetaime.

Zanzibar becomes independent.

Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada and other prominent liberation leaders are tried for conspiracy and sabotage at the Rivonia trial. All are found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. Mandela addresses court from the dock and refuses to renounce violence as self-defense in the fight against apartheid.

Conference on the Curriculum of Higher Education held at Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Obi Wall continues to quash the state of postcolonial literature and calls for the decolonization of African literature.

1994


UN forces leave the Congo.

Kenya becomes a republic, with Jomo Kenyatta as its first president.

Nyasaland becomes independent as Malawi, with Hastings Banda as prime minister. Northern Rhodesia becomes independent as Zambia, under Kenneth Kaunda.

Frelimo begins armed struggle against the Portuguese in Mozambique.

Revolution in Zanzibar; Sultan overthrown and Karume becomes President. Tanganyika is united with Zanzibar to form Tanzania.

Arna Aata Adico’s The Dilemma of a Ghost is published.

The three books in Duro Ladipo’s trilogy on the history of the kingdom of Oyo, Oba Kosoko (The King did not Hang), Oba Moro (The King of Ghosts), and Oba Waje (The King is Dead), are published at critical acclaim. Ladipo and his theater make a successful appearance at the Berlin Festival with his Yoruba Operas Oba Kosoko and Eda; the group tours other European cities, including Brussels.
1927

Conference at Aburi, Ghana, fails to prevent succession of Biafra from Nigeria.

New Ugandan Constitution abolishes traditional kingdoms. Kabaka of Buganda is restricted to internal exile, creating constitutional crisis.
Tanzania’s President Nyerere proclaims the “Arusha Declaration,” calling for a policy of self-reliance and the dedication of Dodoma as the new capital of Tanzania.
Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda form the East African Community.
Six-day war between Egypt and Israel ends in Egyptian defeat, a blow to Nasser’s pan-Arabism.

President Mobutu begins “Authenticité” campaign, changes his name from Joseph-Désiré to Mobutu Sese-Seko, renames the Congo Zaïre, and orders the removal of public view of all symbols of colonial rule, including the bronze monument of Belgian King Leopold II in the center of Kinshasa.
Fédération Pacifique Africaine des Cinéastes (FEPACI) is formed in Algiers.
Burkina Faso nationalizes film distribution and production, creating SONAVIC.

1971

Idi Amin deposes President Milton Obote of Uganda, in a military coup, beginning one of the most repressive regimes in Africa.
Central African Republic recognizes South Africa; receives economic aid.
Declaration of Mogadishu issued by eastern and central African states announcing their intention to continue armed struggle to liberate South Africa.
African National Council formed in Rhodesia by Bishop Abel Muzorewa.

1972

Kwame Nkrumah dies in exile in Guinea.
Wole Soyinka publishes The Man Died, his prison memoirs.
Hutu guerrillas in Burundi kill over 10,000 Tutsis in an attempted coup.
Tanzania and Uganda sign peace treaty.
Safi Faye makes her first, short film, The Passerby, as the first black African woman to direct a feature film.
Chad and Nigeria sign treaty of cooperation and mutual assistance.
Asians expelled from Uganda by General Amin.
Pearce Commission in Rhodesia reports that the African population says “no” to settlement proposals.

1973

Mali and Nigeria sign treaty of cooperation and mutual assistance.
Zambia-Rhodesia border closed by President Kaunda.
Massive strikes by black mine workers in South Africa.
First All-African Games held in Lagos.
Ojibiri Dipo Mambetsi’s seminal film Touki Bouki is released in Senegal.
Youssouf Chahine’s Sparrow is released.
Ethiopian director Haile Gerima’s Harvest 3000 is released.
Prime Minister Ian Smith of Rhodesia begins talks with African nationalists in an attempt to reach an internal settlement.

1974

Emperor Haile Selassie is overthrown by a military coup ending the rule of the world’s longest royal dynasty.
Sixth Pan-African Congress held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, with representatives from various liberation movements, including the ANC, South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO), and Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).
1976
Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola gain independence from Portugal.
General Yakuba Gowan is overthrown in Nigeria’s third, bloodless military coup, to be replaced by Brigadier Murtala Ramat Muhammed.
Dahomey is renamed People’s Republic of Benin.
Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia dies in detention; his body is secretly buried by a military junta.
Lomé Agreement signed between the EEC and thirty-seven African states.
Great year for African cinema: Ousmane Sembène releases his influential film Xala; Lakhdar Herrina’s film Chronique des années de braise is awarded the Palme d’or at the Cannes Film Festival.
Economic Community of West African States is founded; Treaty signed by fifteen states.
Tanzam Railway is opened between Zambia and Tanzania.
Four “frontline” presidents at Quelimane pledge support for the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army.
South African troops invade Angola in support of UNITA forces.

1976
Nigerian head of state, General Murtala Muhammed, is assassinated in an unsuccessful coup d’état and succeeded by Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo.
Israel Commandos raid Entebbe Airport in Kampala and successfully rescue Israeli hostages held by Palestinian Liberation Organization guerrillas.
Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia sign an agreement on regional defense cooperation.
Soweto uprising begins in South Africa; Hector Peterson, aged eleven, becomes first student killed.
South Africa declares Transkei, one of the Bantustans created by the apartheid regime to enforce further black segregation from the white population, independent.
Sati Faye directs her first full-length feature film, A Letter from My Village.
Institut Africain d’Éducation Cinématographique (INAPEC) is set up in Burkina Faso to train film-makers.

1977
Steve Biko, founder and leader of Black Consciousness Movement, dies in police custody.
UN imposes embargo on arms trade with South Africa.
Djibouti becomes independent state; final withdrawal of the French from African territory.
Central African Empire proclaimed by Jean Bedel Bokassa, who crowns himself emperor.
Assembly meets in Nigeria in preparation for return to civilian government.
Second World Black Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC), the largest cultural event ever on the African continent, is held in Lagos, with over 17,000 participants from over fifty countries.

1978
South African Black Consciousness Movement’s Azanian People’s Organization (AZAPO) is formed.
South African forces attack South West African People’s Organization refugee camp in Angola.
Jomo Kenyatta, statesman, nationalist, independence and anti-colonial leader, pan-Africanist, and Kenya’s first president, dies in Mombasa.
Transitional government under Bishop Abel Muzorewa is formed in Rhodesia.
Anwar Sadat of Egypt signs the historic Camp David Peace Treaty in Washington, D.C., with Israel’s Menachem Begin, and becomes first Arab leader to visit Jerusalem.
Malian film director Souleyman Cissé makes Baara.
Ivorian sculptor Christian Lattier dies in Abidjan.
1979
Tanzanian and Ugandan exiles, as part of Ugandan Liberation Front, invade Uganda to overthrow Idi Amin, who flees from the country after the fall of Kampala.
Ethiopia and Kenya sign cooperation treaty.
Souleyman Cissé is arrested by the Malian government for making the film Den Moussa.
Civilian rule is restored in Ghana after Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings attempts, for several months, to seize power in his first attempted military coup.
Elections and return of civilian rule in Nigeria and the inauguration of second republic.
Emperor Bokassa is overthrown and Central African Republic is established.
Consortium Intér-Africain de Distribution Cinématographique (CICOC) is formed to create a common market for cinema in Francophone Africa.
1980
Ceasefire in Rhodesia ends civil war; Robert Mugabe’s ZANU wins fifty-seven of eighty contested seats in the Rhodesian election. Rhodesia gains independence from Britain, becoming Zimbabwe.
Reggae star Bob Marley performs at the independence inauguration of Zimbabwe.
President Serhong of Senegal resigns from office.
Vice President Abdou Diouf succeeds him.
Federated Union of Black Artists (FUBA) Academy is founded in Johannesburg.
1981
Kenya and Somalia sign cooperation and border agreement.
Jerry Rawlings seizes power in Ghana, in his second military coup, remaining president of the country until 2000.
OAU demands the withdrawal of Libyan troops from Chad.
President Kaunda of Zambia meets South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha on the border of Botswana and South Africa.
Kenya officially becomes a one-party state.
Libyan jets are shot down by United States aircraft.
South African troops advance into southern Angola to fight against SWAPO guerrillas.
President Anwar Sadat of Egypt is assassinated in Cairo by an Islamic fundamentalist.

1982
FEPACI meets in Niamey (Niger) and issues the Niamey Manifesto.
Spilt in South Africa’s National Party occurs following opposition to Prime Minister P.W. Botha’s proposals for constitutional change.
South Africa raids ANC bases in Mozambique.
1983
Souleyman Cissé’s Fnye wins the Grand Prix at FESPACO in Ouagadougou.
Centre International des Civilisations Bantu (CICIBA) is established in Libreville, Gabon.
South African anti-apartheid organization United Democratic Front is launched in Cape Town.
Nigerian civilian government of President Shehu Shagari is overthrown in fourth coup headed by Major-General Muhammadu Buhari.
New Constitutional Bill in South Africa.
Captain Sankara seizes power in Upper Volta to initiate radical reforms in the country, which is renamed Burkina Faso.
Discussions begin over the future of Namibia between South Africa and the United Nations.

1984
Mozambique and South Africa sign Nkomati Accord, a mutual non-aggression pact.
President Sékou Touré, Guinea, dies. Military Committee for National Recovery, under the leadership of Colonel Lansan Conté and Colonel Diarra Traoré, seizes power.
Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo sign cooperation agreement.
First Cairo International Biennale.
P.W. Botha becomes President of South Africa.
Archbishop Desmond Tutu is awarded Nobel Peace Prize.
Lomé III Treaty is signed to order trade relations between European Community and African States.
“A Hundred Years after the Berlin Conference: Perspectives on Africa’s Liberation” is held at Makerere University.

1985
December 25: Six-day war between Mali and Algeria over disputed Agacher strip.
State of emergency is declared by South Africa’s apartheid government.
The Congress of Trade Unions (COSATU) is launched in response.
South African troops withdraw from Angola.
Transitional government is set up in Namibia.
President Nyere resigns from office in Tanzania.
The government of Israel conducts an airlift of Ethiopian Falashas Jews to Israel.
First Biennale of Contemporary Bantu Art, Libreville, Gabon.
A seminal exhibition opens in Johannesburg, “Tributaries: A View of Contemporary South African Art,” curated by Ricky Burnett, which brings together for the first time the work of both mainstream and rural African artists.
Chronology

1985-87
Ousmane Sembène (Senegal), Souteyman Clasé (Mali), and other African filmmakers found the West African Film Corporation (WACOF) as an inter-African film body instrumental in cultural advancement and preservation
First People’s Parks created in Soweto, South Africa

1986
Military leader General Babangida announces civilian rule shall be restored in Nigeria in October 1990
Popular Nigerian journalist and editor Dele Giwa, who is critical of Babangida’s government, is murdered by a letter bomb
Pass Laws—which have, for more than two decades, required black South Africans to carry official cards, without which they could not move freely in cities—are abolished
Bishop Desmond Tutu is awarded Martin Luther King, Jr. Non-Violent Peace Prize for antiapartheid activity
Yoweri Museveni is inaugurated president of Uganda following the capture of Kampala by National Resistance Army
Edward Perkins is appointed first black American ambassador to South Africa
1KR military forces bomb Tripoli, capital of Libya: Gadafi escapes injury
Referendum in Central African Republic approves establishment of one-party state
Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka is awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize for Literature
South African backed coup in Lesotho; South African raids into Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana
Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, holds exhibition entitled “From Two Worlds,” which includes the works of Sokari Douglas Camp, Gavin Jartjes, and other African artists
Widespread boycotts and violence lead to declaration of state of emergency in South Africa; hundreds killed by government forces, over 7,000 detained. United States implements trade sanctions and divestment by US companies begins
President Samora Machel of Mozambique is killed in plane crash and is succeeded by Joaquim Chissano

1987
Ugandan government forces kill 350 Uganda People’s Front opponents in Battle of Comor Kliaa
Nigerian military government postpones restoration of civilian rule from 1990 to 1992
Award-winning Zimbabwean writer Dumuzi Maruchera dies in Harare
Conservative Party becomes official opposition after whites-only elections in South Africa
Sousieyman Clasé’s Yeelen wins the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival
Meeting in Dakar between ANC leaders and dissident white Afrikaners
Army coup in South African Bantustan of Transkei
Military coup in Burkina Faso: President Thomas Sankara is assassinated
Conference in Amsterdam to form Culture in Another South Africa (CASAA); sponsored by the ANC and the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement, and is occasion for more than 300 South African artists to meet and discuss the future of a multiracial South Africa

1988
Egyptian novelist and writer Nabih el Mahfouz is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, becoming the first African writer and winner with Arabic as native tongue
Barbican Art Gallery, London, shows contemporary stone sculpture from Zimbabwe
Nigerian photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode dies of AIDS in London
Talks in London, New York, Geneva, and Brazzaville lead to government withdrawal from Angola and independence for Namibia
Strikes in South Africa against government anti-strike laws
Cuban and South African troops withdraw from Angola
Civil War begins in Somalia
Ousmane Sembène’s Camp de Thiaroye is refused entry at Cannes Film Festival
Férid Bouhouch directs Camera Arabe, a major documentary on Arab cinema
President Botha meets President Chissano of Mozambique, agreeing to end South African aid to rebels in Mozambique

1989
Ban on political activity lifted in Nigeria; two government-sponsored political parties—the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention—are formed in Nigeria
Arab Maghreb Union common market set up by Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania
“The Other Story: Afro-African Artists in Post-War Britain,” curated by Rasheed Arasan, is shown at the Hayward Gallery, London
Idris Ouedraogo’s acclaimed film Yaaba is released
- President F.W. de Klerk conducts secret talks with Nelson Mandela, who remains imprisoned
P.W. Botha resigns and is succeeded by F.W. de Klerk; after elections de Klerk announces program to reform apartheid system
Walter Sisulu of the ANC is released from South African prison
“Magiciens de la Terre” is held at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

1990
President F.W. de Klerk lifts ban on over sixty opposition organizations in South Africa, including ANC, Pan-Africanist Congress, and the Communist Party
Mandela is released from prison after twenty-seven years in jail
Negotiations between the ANC and the South African government threatened by police killing of eleven black demonstrators in Sebokeng
Mandela heads ANC delegation to begin formal talks with the South African government

The ruling Parti Congolais du Travail (PTC) abandons Marxism, Leninism and monopoly of power
ECOWAS peacekeeping force (Ghana, Guinea, Gambia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone) of 4,000 men is deployed to Liberia
South West Africa People’s Organization candidates win forty-one of seventy-two seats in pre-independence Constituent Assembly
South West Africa becomes independent Namibia
South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) wins majority of votes in parliament; Sam Nujoma, its president, becomes president of Namibia
Idris Ouedraogo’s film Tilal wins the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival
Férid Bouhouch’s film Halfaouine is released

1991
Over 200 are killed in rioting between Christians and Muslims in northern Nigeria
Ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) abandons Marxist-Leninist platform for socialist democracy
Estoril Accord ends sixteen-year civil war between Angolan government and UNITA rebels
Release of Land and Group Areas Act marks official and legal end of apartheid in South Africa
Oliver Tambo is succeeded as president of ANC by Nelson Mandela
Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) forms opposition groupings. Kenya Opposition Democratic Party is formed in Kenya by former minister, Mwaliki Kibaki. General strike in Kenya is called by Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), demanding release of political prisoners and multiparty elections
ANC announces end of thirty-year struggle against apartheid regime in South Africa
Convention on a Democratic South Africa (CODESVA) representing nineteen parties begins meeting in Johannesburg
Apartheid is abolished; South Africa prepares for multiracial elections.
South African writer Nadine Gordimer is awarded Nobel Prize for Literature
Susan Vogel curates “Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art” at the Center for African Art, New York
“Africa Hoy,” curated by André Magnin opens at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; it is mounted at other venues under the title “Africa Now” and, at the Saatchi Gallery, London, as “Out of Africa”
Nigerian writer Ben Okri’s The Famished Road wins the Booker Prize for Literature
Revue Noire, a magazine of contemporary African art, is published in Paris by Jean Loup Pivin, with Simon Njami as editor

1992
Boutros Boutros-Ghali becomes first African Secretary General of the UN
Two-day general strike in Lagos against rule of President Babangida

ANC begins “mass action” campaign to remove F.W. de Klerk from power

Forty people are killed in South African township Bopaitong by Inkatha Freedom Party supporters

National Assembly elections, Nigeria, won by government-sponsored Social Democratic Party against government-sponsored National Republican Convention

Four million black workers support two-day general strike against white government called by Congress of South African Trade Unions

President Eduardo dos Santos is re-elected in Angola

Kenyan opposition party Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) splits into FORD-Asili and FORD-Kenya

Constitutional Amendment Act, entry of black South Africans to cabinet

1,000 killed in fighting between MPLA government and opposition UNITA forces, Angola, after disputed election results

Jerry Rawlings elected president of Ghana; Rioting by opposition

President Daniel arap Moi returns to office in first multiparty election, Kenya

DA-KART, the Dakar Biennale, is founded as major exposition of contemporary international art

First Egyptian International Print Triennale, Cairo

The Eye: A Journal of Contemporary Art is published in Zaria, Nigeria, by the Eye Society

Mo Edoga’s and Ousmane Sow’s participation in documenta IX, Kassel, marks the first African presence there

1993

Eritrea, a former region of Ethiopia, becomes an independent state

Democratic election results are annulled by the military dictatorship in Nigeria. Nigerian Transitional Council under Ernest Shonekan sworn in instead

Kenyan opposition parties Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), FORD-Asili, FORD-Kenya, and the Democratic Party forms a united front

High Council of Republic of Zaïre declares Mobutu guilty of treason for dissolving cabinet

Second International Symposium on Nigerian Art, Lagos

The Museum for African Art, New York, presents five African artists at the Venice Biennale

Haile Gerima’s Sankofa is released

First black members of South African cabinet appointed, by F.W. de Klerk

Chris Hani, South African Communist Party leader and ANC executive member, is assassinated

Election for civilian president in Nigeria is won by Chief Moshood Abiola of Social Democratic Party. Nigerian military government announces presidential elections to be invalid. Demonstrations in Lagos demanding end of military rule. Nigerian military leader, Major-General Ibrahim Babangida, relinquishes power to interim president, Ernest Shonekan

Nineteen die and twenty-two are wounded in shooting at Wadeville industrial area, Johannesburg. Thirty-one are killed in “Day of Terror” as South African Parliament begins discussing establishment of a Transitional Council

Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk are awarded Nobel Peace Prize

Nigerian interim president, Ernest Shonekan, is replaced by General Sani Abacha. Banning of political parties, restoration of civilian rule delayed until August 1993

1994

At least 500,000 Tutsi civilians are massacred by Hutu vigilantes in Rwanda

500 Nigerian troops occupy Diamond Island and Dibane, Cameroonian islands in the Gulf of Guinea. Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army offers to surrender for resettlement aid

Ghanian diplomat Kofi Annan replaces Boutros-Ghali as UN Secretary General

Nigerian artist Ben Enwonwu dies in Lagos

Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art is founded by Okwui Enwezor in New York


Pan-African Congress announces end of armed struggle in South Africa

Oginga Odinga Kenyan Nationalist leader dies. 1,000 people die, 150,000 are displaced in a week of clashes in northern Ghana between Komboka and Namumba ethnic groups

President Mwanga is forced to resign in South African “homeland” of Bophuthatswana First multiracial elections in South Africa end 350 years of white domination

Mandela is inaugurated as president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki as first deputy-president, marking the first institution of black majority rule in South Africa. First multiracial cabinet is appointed

Moshood Abiola, winner of 1993 Nigerian presidential elections, is arrested for treason after calling for an uprising

Peace accord signed between MPLA in Angola and UNITA forces

November 17: Bomb explodes at Lagos International Airport

*23e Rencontres de la Photographie Africaine* in Baunaiko, Mali

1995

US lobbying organization TransAfrica condemns Nigerian military regime for its infringement of human rights

Truth and Reconciliation Commission established to investigate apartheid atrocities, with Bishop Desmond Tutu and Alex Boraine chairman

ANC candidates win more than two-thirds of the votes in local elections in South Africa. First African Johannesburg Biennale held in Johannesburg


Ghanian sculptor El Anatsui wins the Kansai Telecasting Prize at the Osaka Triennale

Nigerian-born artist and photographer Iké Udé founds the international magazine artNow in New York

1996

South African Supreme Court orders the predominantly white Potgieter'srus Primary School to admit black pupils in a landmark post-apartheid ruling

Lord's Resistance Army guerrillas kill over 200 people in attacks in northern Uganda

First Nigerian president and independence leader, Nnamdi Azikiwe, dies at age ninety-two

“In sight: African Photography, 1940 to the Present” is held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Isaac Julien’s *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Masks* is released and broadcast on BBC in London

Cameroonian novelist Calixte Beyala wins the Grand Prix du Roman award in France with her novel *Les Hommes Perdus*. She is the first black person to win the prize

White National Party withdraws from South African Government of National Unity with the ANC

Kudirat Olayinka Abiola, wife of imprisoned victor in 1993 Nigerian presidential elections, Chief Moshood Abiola, is murdered in Lagos

President Mandela signs sweeping and liberal new South Africa Constitution in Sharpeville

Writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and the “Ogoni Nine” are hanged by the military dictatorship in Nigeria

Ouattara (Ivory Coast) and Magdalene Odundo (Kenya) are included in Marilyn Stokstad’s *Art History*, marking the first occasion on which the work of contemporary African artists is included in a major survey of world art

1997

Moshood Abiola, the presumed winner of 1993 democratic elections in Nigeria, dies in detention after more than three years in captivity

Acclaimed Nigerian musician, composer, and political activist Fela Akukula Kuti dies of AIDS in Lagos. Tens of thousands attend his funeral in Lagos

Senegalese film director Djibril Diop Mambety dies in Senegal

Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel wed

Second Johannesburg Biennale is held in Johannesburg and Cape Town

Fifteenth FESPAKO film festival attracts some 400,000 visitors
William Kentridge (South Africa), Abderrahmane Sissako (Mauritania), and Olaudé Aiby of Barinboyné (Nigeria) exhibit at documenta X in Kassel.

Mobutu Sese Seko is overthrown by the rebel forces of Laurent Kabila, fleeing from Zaire after more than three decades in government. Laurent Kabila assumes power and changes the name of the country to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

1998
Olawu Enwezor is appointed artistic director of documenta X.
Fifth Dakar Biennale is held.
Nigerian artist Chris Okpali wins England's premier art award, the Turner Prize.
Nigerian dictator General Sani Abacha dies in office of apparent heart attack; a new transitional government begins the process of restoring democracy and civilian rule.

1999
After sixteen years of military rule, Nigeria returns to civilian rule. Olusegun Obasanjo wins general elections and becomes president of the fourth republic.
Peace Treaty is signed in Lome, Togo, officially bringing to an end the civil war in Sierra Leone.
King Hassan of Morocco dies.
Ghada Amer wins the UNESCO Prize at the Forty-Eighth Venice Biennale; Georges Adéagbo receives an honorable mention.

2000
A three-day seventieth birthday Festschrift for Chinua Achebe at Bard College. He is honored by three Nobel laureates—Wole Soyinka, Nadine Gordimer, and Toni Morrison—and many international scholars, writers, and artists in a symposium acknowledging Achebe's seminal role in contemporary African literature.
Warlord Fode Sanfoo breaks the treaty of Lome and resumes fighting in Sierra Leone. He is captured a few weeks later by government forces.
J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace wins the Booker Prize, the author's second.
Eritrean and Ethiopian border war marks the end of a fragile peace in the horn of Africa. The war officially ends with a peace treaty brokered by the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations and signed in Algiers.
Abdoulaye Wade is elected president of Senegal, marking the end of Léopold Sédar Senghor's forty-year presidential term and Abdou Diouf's Socialist Party.