

**NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN BRITISH COLONIES IN
AFRICA AFTER WORLD WAR II
(on the example of Sudan, Kenya, Somalia)**

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Abstract:

: In Africa further south during the Second Sahara there were no active hostilities - a world war. The exceptions were the territories of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. Having a multiple advantage in military equipment and manpower in the northeast of the continent, Italian formations went on the offensive there in July 1940. By the end of August, they managed to capture British Somalia, part of Kenya and several strongholds in Sudan. However, the intensified armed liberation movement of the Ethiopians and the assistance provided to the British by the population of Kenya and Sudan forced the Italians to stop offensive operations. Having brought the number of its colonial troops to 150 thousand people, the British command launched a decisive counter-offensive. In January 1941, Anglo-Indian and Sudanese troops and Free French units (mainly African) were sent from Sudan to Eritrea.

Keywords: war of independence, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia.

Introduction

The African population did not accept their fate and refused to be slaves to the European colonialists. After the final conquest of Africa, massive peasant uprisings broke out in different parts of the continent for many years and decades. This was the case, for example, in Nigeria and Cameroon, where they did not stop until the First World War. A continuous series of uprisings swept through French West Africa. The stubborn struggle to restore independence lasted with varying success for 20 years (from 1899 to 1921) in Somalia. It was headed by Mohammed bin Abdullah Hassan, nicknamed by the British "the mad mullah." The most significant in scale were the protests of peasants in South-West Africa against the German colonialists in 1904-1907. During their suppression, up to 3/4 of the rebels died. The Maji-Maji uprising in German East Africa claimed the lives of 120 thousand people. The Zulu uprising in 1906 in South Africa against Anglo-Boer rule was a major one. A liberation uprising against the French colonialists broke out in Madagascar in 1904, and the rebels fought here until.

The process of formation of the ideology of liberation began with representatives of the first generation of African intelligentsia, which arose in the second half of the 19th century. These were officials, clergy, people of liberal professions. Having received an education, mainly European, in different ways, some of them began to condemn colonial policies and against European domination and exploitation. They are usually called the first African educators. But among the African intelligentsia there were those who took the side of the colonialists and sincerely believed in the civilizing mission of Europe in Africa. Among those who stood at the origins of the emergence of African nationalism were the priest Samuel Crowther (1812-1891), the doctor James Horton (1835-1883), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liberia Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-



1912), and others.

They made calls for the unification of Africans in defending their rights, for self-government, for the preservation of cultural heritage, for the creation of an Afro-Christian church. E.W. Blyden is rightfully considered the father of African nationalism, the developer of the theories of Pan-Africanism and "African socialism". He was also the founder of the theory of "spiritual decolonization." The intellectual struggle of Crowther, Horton, Blyden and other educators laid the foundations for the ideology of liberation, which became the banner of new generations of independence fighters.

Africa during the First World War

During the First World War, the countries of the African continent played an important role in providing the metropolitan states with strategic mineral raw materials, food products and human resources. In English West Africa, in order to meet the increased needs of its military industry, Great Britain increased the production of minerals (bauxite and manganese ore on the Gold Coast, tin and coal in Nigeria). In addition, the British exported large quantities of meat, cotton, wool, palm oil, and cocoa from the colonies. In an effort to shift the hardships of wartime onto the indigenous population of Africa, British companies increased export duties, while simultaneously reducing purchase prices for local goods, which resulted in a fall in the real incomes of African workers and employees, as well as a significant increase in the cost of living. The colonialists recruited more than 25 thousand Africans to join the West African Frontier Force. Many of them died in battles for German-owned Togo (August 1914) and Cameroon (1914-1916), and then in East Africa in Tanganyika. Similar processes occurred in French Western and Equatorial Africa. Additional and emergency loans and taxes were imposed on its residents, leading to a decline in the general standard of living and starvation of the vast majority of the African indigenous population. In addition, the metropolitan government carried out forced mobilization, conscripting about 250 thousand people into the army, of which over 160 thousand participated in battles on various fronts of the First World War (including in Europe). Approximately 35 thousand of them died. Units of the Senegalese riflemen, staffed by Africans, fought together with British formations on the territory of the German colonies of Togo and Cameroon. At the beginning of 1916, after stubborn fighting, they managed to oust the remnants of the defeated German troops in Rio Muni. Here they were later interned by the colonial authorities of Spanish Guinea.

In the Belgian Congo, rich in deposits of copper, cobalt, zinc and tin, the war spurred the development of the mining industry, which brought large profits to the foreign monopolies involved in their development. But the main burden of military trials fell on Africans. The rank and file of the army were formed from them, and the Belgians forced men who were not conscripted to manually deliver military cargo and food across the country to the eastern borders of the colony, where until April 1916 there were local battles with German troops, who were trying to unite their North African possessions with Cameroon. Only after receiving sufficient reinforcements from the mother country did the Belgian units go on the offensive, capturing the administrative center of German East Africa Tabora in September 1916 and reaching the Indian Ocean coast in 1917. Portugal was also an ally of the Entente countries during the First World War, and with the financial support of England, it intensified the exploitation of the population of the colonies under its control. However, its participation in military operations was generally



insignificant and was reduced to the opening of the front against the Germans from Rhodesia and relatively short clashes with the significantly thinned German detachments that broke through to Mozambique at the end of 1917. Due to the long-standing Anglo-Boer antagonism, it cost Great Britain to involve the South African Union in the war against Germany. However, contrary to the overt nationalistic revelations of the Boers, the London-oriented South African Army sent tens of thousands of soldiers first to South West Africa in the summer of 1915.

- to Egypt and Europe, and then to German East Africa. Here the South African divisions, suffering significant losses, fought until the very end of the world war.

The longest battles took place in vast areas in the eastern part of the African continent. England and Germany, which initially had approximately 5 thousand soldiers and officers each, in 1914-1915. were limited mainly to carrying out local operations of local importance, which did not give a serious advantage to any of the warring parties. Left without the support of the mother country due to the naval blockade, the German colonial authorities built small enterprises in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro for the production of army equipment - cartridges, ammunition and clothing. At the same time, to create reserves of raw materials and food, they expanded, using the forced labor of Africans, the areas for agricultural food and industrial crops. The advantage of the forces of the anti-German coalition was clearly determined only in 1916. Having transferred large military formations to Kenya and Uganda, Great Britain, together with the allied Belgian and Portuguese units, launched an offensive against the 2,000-strong group under the command of Lettow-Vorbeck, blocked on all sides, which in November 1917 managed to break through to Mozambique, and from there in 1918 to Northern Rhodesia, where, having learned about the end of the war in Europe, she laid down her arms. By that time, it consisted of 1,300 soldiers and officers and 1,600 porters. The combined forces of England, Belgium and Portugal, whose number exceeded 300 thousand military personnel, acted against her. The war, to one degree or another, also affected those African countries whose territory was outside the main hostilities. Sudanese units, at the behest of the British command, fought in the regions of East Africa and French Equatorial Africa, and participated in patrolling the Suez Canal zone and the Sinai Peninsula. In 1915, thousands of Sudanese were used by the British in the construction of fortifications and sapper work during the Dardanelles operation.

With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, internal political disagreements in the ruling circles of Ethiopia sharply worsened. Incited by the German-Austrian and Turkish missions in Addis Ababa, Michael's party was increasingly inclined to declare war on the Entente powers. However, her agents, with the help of the Old and Young Ethiopians, managed to carry out a palace coup in 1916. As a result, the daughter of Menelik II, Zauditu, was proclaimed empress. Power was shared with her by the regent Tafari Mekkonen, who later ascended the throne of the Emperor of Ethiopia under the name Haile Selassie I.

Liberia, which declared political neutrality shortly after the start of the war, initially tried to maintain its former ties with its main foreign trade partner, Germany. But due to the tight naval blockade established by Entente ships and separating the country from the economically important German market, the Liberian leadership, under pressure from the governments of the anti-German coalition, declared war on Germany in 1918, which subsequently allowed the Monrovia delegation to participate in the meetings of the Versailles Peace Conference.



The First World War, accompanied by enormous loss of life, increasing economic oppression, endless requisitions and the introduction of new taxes, contributed to the growth of anti-colonial sentiment and became the impetus for a large number of uprisings among the indigenous inhabitants of the African continent. Massive anti-British protests took place in the territories of Sudan, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast. The population of Chad, as well as the Upper Volta and Niger river basins, repeatedly rose up in arms against the oppression of the French colonial administration. In the Belgian Congo, rebel detachments in the Lomami district fought with particular tenacity against foreign enslavers. Portugal had to fight not so much with German troops, but with the sharply intensified liberation movement of the Angolan people, which primarily covered the southern regions of the country. The destruction of the traditional way of life, combined with increased exploitation and exorbitant exactions, caused numerous riots in South-East Africa, the most significant of which was the Nyasaland uprising of 1915.

Despite the fact that the spontaneous and scattered actions of the Africans were ultimately suppressed, the sacrifices made became for them an important school of experience for further anti-colonial struggle, which moved into a new phase after the end of the First World War.

The decisions of the first four congresses were generally moderate. The movement was in its infancy. It has not yet clearly defined its ultimate goals and has not developed a program of radical political action. In general, Pan-Africanism of these years was more an idea than an action. And at the same time, despite the moderation of the political positions of the movement, it played a significant role, if only in that it attracted the attention of the world community to African problems. The movement influenced the political awakening of Africa and the formation of a program of national liberation. There was a voice of protest against colonial exploitation and racial oppression. After World War II, the Pan-African movement became a genuine and recognized exponent of the anti-colonial sentiments of African peoples and their inspiration.

Among the new forms of anti-colonialism, one of the earliest and most widespread were religious and political, primarily African-Christian, movements. Afro-Christian churches and sects arose initially in South Africa. Later, the Belgian Congo became the center of their development, and then they spread to the coast of West Africa, in several areas of Central Africa.

In South Africa, the Afro-Christian movement arose back in the 80s. XIX century as a form of protest against the colonialist role of European Christian missions. The anti-colonial protest among adherents of Afro-Christian churches and sects was caused by deep disappointment in Europeans as genuine Christians who betrayed the commandments of Christ and turned into racists and exploiters.

In the 20s religious and political movements of Christian Africans cover the Belgian Congo and the adjacent areas. The most significant was the performance of the Simon Kimbangu sect. In his sermons the thesis about the "chosenness of God" of Africans was often heard. He was extremely popular not only among the Congolese, but also other African peoples. Kimbangu's followers saw him as a prophet and savior. Thousands of peasants, workers, and townspeople flocked to him. Having arisen spontaneously, Quimbangism essentially became a broad anti-colonial peasant movement that took on a religious form. By 1921 it had reached an unprecedented scale. The Kimbanguists opposed both secular colonialists and European Christian missionaries, proclaiming the slogan "Congo for the Congolese!" From passive forms of resistance to the colonial authorities - non-payment of taxes, refusal to work on European plantations, to grow food for them, etc. -



they moved on to active actions, providing physical resistance. Strikes swept the country. Mass demonstrations took place.

Africa During World War II

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Hundreds of thousands of Africans, recruited into the armies of the metropolises, were forced to fight in North Africa, Western Europe, the Middle East and even in Burma and Malaya. Even more of them had to serve in the auxiliary troops and work for military needs.

After the defeat of France in its African possessions, a struggle developed between the proteges of the Vichy "government" and the supporters of the Free French, which did not lead to particularly serious armed clashes. The adherents of General de Gaulle, who ultimately won, held a conference in Brazzaville (French Congo) in January-February 1944 on the post-war status of French colonies in Africa. Its decisions envisaged the formation of representative government bodies from the indigenous population, the introduction of universal suffrage, as well as the implementation of broad democratization of public life. However, the leadership of the French National Liberation Committee (FCNL) was in no hurry to implement the declarations adopted in Brazzaville.

During the war, the position of European states regarding the involvement of Africans in military operations was ambivalent. Striving, on the one hand, to make maximum use of the human resources of Africa in the fight against the Hitler coalition, the metropolis was at the same time afraid to allow the indigenous inhabitants of the continent to modern types of weapons, attracting them mainly as signalmen, vehicle drivers, etc. Racial discrimination had place in all, without exception, colonial armies formed by Europeans, but in the British troops it was stronger than in the French.



In addition to human resources, African countries served as suppliers of the necessary strategic mineral raw materials, as well as various types of agricultural products, to the metropolises. Meanwhile, due to the reduction in imports of industrial goods caused by the breakdown of world trade relations, in some colonies, primarily in Southern Rhodesia, the Belgian Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, and French West Africa, certain branches of manufacturing and light industry began to develop rapidly. The heavy industry of the Union of South Africa has made a significant step forward. The increase in industrial production entailed an increase in the number of workers who, increasingly separated from the village, became proletarians receiving the wages of *otkhodniks*. Taking advantage of the sharp decrease in factory exports from Europe, the United States of America has noticeably intensified its penetration into the economies of a number of African countries.

A significant weakening during the war of the authority of the metropolises, which repeatedly, especially at the initial stage, suffered defeats from the Hitlerite coalition, as well as the Atlantic Charter signed in August 1941 by the leaders of England and the USA (which declared the right of peoples to choose their own form of government) in combination with the successes of the world anti-fascist movements, in which the Soviet Union played a leading role, contributed to the growth of broad anti-colonial sentiments in Africa. Contrary to the prohibitions of the colonialists, new political parties and associations appeared. The most important of them was the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon, formed in August 1944, which decided to seek a regime of self-government, introduce a democratic constitution that provided for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, and ensure the comprehensive development of education in the country to eradicate the remnants of colonialism.

The socio-political and economic changes that took place on the African continent during the Second World War caused deepening contradictions between the mother countries and the forces of national liberation and created the preconditions for the further rise of the anti-colonial democratic struggle in the post-war period.

The Congress was the most representative of all Pan-African congresses in terms of the number of African delegates. They represented the trade union labor movement, the peasantry, the radical intelligentsia, various political parties and organizations, and veteran soldiers. Most of them were determined to fight. Almost all the reports at the congress were made by Africans and were clearly anti-colonial in nature. William DuBois presided over the congress. Among the 200 participants in the congress, the most active were Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Hastings Banda, who later became presidents of Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South African writer Peter Abrahams, prominent public figures - Wallace Johnson (Sierra Leone), Obafemi Awolowo (Nigeria.) and etc.

At the congress, the situation in all African colonies was discussed, and strong support was expressed for the revolutionary uprisings of the population that covered many regions of the continent. Among the adopted resolutions, three were of greatest importance: "Challenge to the colonial powers", "Appeal to the workers, peasants and intelligentsia of the colonial countries" and "Memorandum to the UN". The text of the "Address" called for the widespread organization of the inhabitants of the colonies to fight for the liberation of their countries and all of Africa and proposed to use all means available to them, including armed struggle.

At first, World War II did little to change the political map of Africa. Ethiopia freed itself from



Italian rule and in 1941 again became an independent state. Eritrea had been under the control of British troops since 1941, and in 1950 the UN General Assembly decided to create a federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Italian Somalia was also occupied by British troops since 1941. In 1949, the UN General Assembly transferred this country to Italian trusteeship for a period of ten years. Former mandate territories of the League of Nations became UN trust territories under the tutelage of the former mandate powers: Tanganyika, British Togo, British Cameroon - Great Britain; French Togo and French Cameroon - France; Rwanda and Burundi - Belgium.

But important changes have taken place in the economies and social structures of African countries. After the war, the mother countries were especially in dire need of raw materials and food from African countries. By intensifying the exploitation of the colonies, the metropolis sought to make up for the losses incurred during the war. The production of tin and zinc ores, uranium, cobalt, graphite, diamonds, antimony, asbestos, coal and many other minerals increased. Particular importance began to be attached to the development of infrastructure. Ports were expanded and modernized, new roads, airfields, and warehouses were built. Military enterprises and repair shops built during the war years were transferred to civilian authorities. The exploitation of human resources also intensified. The influx of Africans into cities and mines increased. The number of hired workers grew rapidly. The village suffered from extortions or from a lack of people, but at the same time, the income of part of the population increased due to rising demand and food prices. All this accelerated the processes of transformation of social structures. The labor force remained largely migratory. But the proportion of employed people grew much faster than before the war. The separation of a large number of workers from the village became a fait accompli. The transformation of a migrant into a proletarian would be complete provided that a "family" wage is established for the worker, designed to reproduce the labor force in the city. The interests of the numerous new European firms that appeared in Africa after the war also demanded the same: the growth of the purchasing power of the African population would lead to an expansion of the market for European goods. But the inertia of established structures and the views of colonial officials prevented change.

The colonial model of socio-economic structure, based on low wages for migrants and the presence of a subsistence sector in the countryside, gradually became a brake on the development of capitalist relations. Colonial administration until the mid-50s. ignored this trend and, in the interests of the colonial circles of the metropolises, tried to maintain the previous type of exploitation and restrain the social transformation of African societies. After the war, socio-economic changes accelerated in Africa. The number and influence of workers grew, and the role of various groups of the African bourgeoisie and intellectual elite increased. The nature of the emergence of neocolonial social structure varied greatly among countries and regions. Colonial authorities in the 40-50s. They saw the new social forces not as an ally, but as a rival, and usually used repressive tactics. This short-sighted policy became one of the reasons for the intensification of the anti-colonial struggle in the 1940-1950s.

Africa's role on the world stage has changed. News of the liberation of Asian countries (China, Korea, Vietnam, India, Burma, Indonesia) reached African countries and convinced them that colonialism would not last forever. Cooperation was established between representatives of new political organizations in African countries and the leaders of anti-colonial movements and independent Asian countries. Young political leaders in Africa looked with hope at the anti-



colonial forces of the metropolises and enjoyed their support. Establishing ties with the USSR and other socialist countries also played an important role. The shrinking sphere of colonial domination in the world led to more intense inter-imperialist struggle for Africa. The main rival of the metropolises was the United States. American penetration into Africa began to intensify in the 50s. First of all, the United States sought to expand its economic and military-strategic positions in both independent states of Tropical Africa - in Ethiopia and especially Liberia.

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