Chapter 5: Decolonization and the Global South

I. Introduction

A. Europe’s empires
B. The decolonization of Asia and Africa
C. The politics of nonalignment, nation-building, and economic development
D. The BRICs and global governance
E. An economic giant awakens

II. Europe’s Empires

A. The early conquerors: Spain and Portugal
   1. Built vast empires based on trade by the middle of the 16th century
   2. Used trading companies to expand their empires and created military and economic institutions to protect them
   3. Spain’s empire was established in the 1500s by conquistadores who sought precious metals and the mythical fountain of youth
      a. Conquest of America destroyed sophisticated indigenous civilizations
      b. To this day, in much of the region, descendants of the Amerindians remain poorer and politically less influential than descendants of the European conquerors
      c. At its height, Spain’s empire included all of Central and South America (except Brazil), Mexico, and much of North America and many Caribbean islands
   4. Portugal’s 16th-century trading empire included Brazil, East and West Africa, and the Malay Peninsula
   5. Latin America was among the first regions to achieve independence

B. Holland
   1. In 1602 the Dutch East India Company was established with a tax-free trade monopoly with Asia
   2. It was a private commercial-military enterprise
   3. Indonesia became the center of Holland’s empire

C. France and Britain
1. By the 17th century, the Dutch empire had been eclipsed by France and Britain

2. British–French rivalry in North America was an extension of their struggle for supremacy in Europe

3. This rivalry climaxed in the French and Indian War (1754–1763)

4. Britain also used private and semi-private companies to build its empire, notably the British East India Company (1600–1874)
   a. Ruled much of India for two centuries
   b. Enjoyed a trade monopoly in the East Indies
   c. Had sovereign rights that allowed it to wage war, negotiate treaties, print money, and make laws

5. European imperialism and colonialism led to the destruction of indigenous peoples and culture in the New World and accelerated the slave trade from Africa to the Americas, which had a devastating impact on Africa’s economic and social development

D. Late imperialism

1. Among the factors that produced a new scramble for territories in the 19th century were:
   a. industrialization in Europe and the need for new markets
   b. heightened nationalism in Europe
   c. the desire for naval bases and coaling stations, raw materials, and opportunities for capital investment
   d. a desire to “export” surplus population
   e. growing missionary zeal to spread Christianity
   f. belief that imperial possessions brought prestige
   g. a conviction in the superiority of European civilization

2. The US joined the imperial race in the late 19th century, seizing Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines in the Spanish–American War (1898)

3. Asia
   a. France seized Indochina
   b. Britain occupied Burma, Malaya, and Singapore
   c. Japan began to penetrate China and Korea by the late 19th century

4. Africa
a. Britain
   (1) British holdings in East Africa stretched the length of the continent from South Africa northward all the way to Egypt
   (2) The British tended to use indirect rule to govern their territories
b. France
   (1) French empire in Africa ultimately included Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Chad and Cameroon, and Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, Chad, Niger, the Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Djibouti, Madagascar, the Comoros, and Reunion.
   (2) France imposed direct rule and sought to assimilate indigenous peoples
c. Colonial rivalries in Africa produced friction among competitors
d. The Berlin Conference (1884–1885) reduced conflict among colonizers by dividing most of Africa into spheres of influence

5. Germany was a late colonizer and by 1914 had Pacific colonies, a sphere of influence in China, and a number of African protectorates

6. Italy was the last of Europe’s imperial powers, seizing Eritrea, the southern part of Somalia, and Libya, as well as acquiring a protectorate in Ethiopia.

III. The decolonization of Asia and Africa
   A. India: from colony to great power
      1. Gandhi and India’s decolonization movement
         a. The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885
         b. By 1900, it had come to represent Indians, mainly Hindus, from all the country’s regions
         c. In 1905 Indian nationalism was roused by the partition of Bengal
         d. In 1911, King George V reversed the partition
         e. The 1919 Government of India Act gave more Indians the right to vote and gave elected legislative councils more authority
         f. The two leaders of India’s nationalist movement were Mohandas K (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948) and
In 1935, India passed the Government of India Act, providing for a gradual process toward Indian self-government.

2. Decolonization in Asia after World War II
   a. World War II accelerated decolonization movements
   b. The mystique of European rule vanished
   c. Postwar European efforts to regain control failed in the face of local independence movements
   d. India
      (1) The Quit India Movement against Britain was organized in 1942, demanding immediate independence
      (2) In 1945, Great Britain became willing to accept Indian independence
      (3) In 1946, Nehru was selected president of the Congress Party and the future first leader of independent India
      (4) As independence approached, Hindu–Muslim violence mounted
      (5) India’s last viceroy, Lord Louise Mountbatten, proposed the country’s partition into India, a secular state with a Hindu majority, and Pakistan, a Muslim state
      (6) On August 15, 1947, India became independent
      (7) Partition triggered a massive population movement, with millions of Muslims moving to Pakistan and similar numbers of Hindus moving to India

3. The Kashmir dispute
   a. Under Indian political pressure, Kashmir’s maharajah and its elected Muslim prime minister opted to join India even though a majority of the state’s inhabitants were Muslim
   b. The first of three Indian–Pakistani wars over Kashmir was taken to the UN Security Council in 1948
   c. In Resolution 91 (1951), the Security Council imposed a ceasefire and called for a plebiscite to determine the final status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir
      (1) India never permitted the plebiscite to be held
d. In 1962, India and China clashed over the region of Aksai Chin. Since then, Kashmir has been divided between Pakistan (northwest region), India (central and southern Kashmir), and China (northeastern region).

e. The second Indian–Pakistani war (1965) led to the division of East and West Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh.

f. Following the third Indian–Pakistani war, the countries agreed to settle their differences by peaceful means and abide by the original ceasefire line.

g. An insurgency began in Indian-controlled Kashmir in 1989.

h. Another conflict in 1999, the Kargil War, triggered fears that a conflict might escalate into a nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan.

i. Post-9/11

(1) The US sought warmer relations with Pakistan after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and pressed it to reduce its support for Muslim militants in Kashmir.

(2) A terrorist attack on India’s Parliament in 2002 increased tensions again, but diplomatic efforts culminated in a November 2003 agreement for a ceasefire along the border.

j. Any future agreement will probably involve the continued division of Kashmir.

B. Decolonization in Africa

1. British Africa

a. The decolonization of British Africa was relatively peaceful, with the major exception of the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya.

b. Rhodesia

(1) Split into Northern (Zambia) and Southern (Zimbabwe) Rhodesia in the 1960s.

(2) Southern Rhodesia’s White minority government declared independence from Britain in 1965.

(3) In 1980, the White government surrendered control to a majority African government.

(4) By the late 1990s, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe...
had become a tyrant, destroying his country’s economy and shredding its constitution to hold power

c. South Africa
(1) Following the Boer War (1899–1902), Britain incorporated the Boer areas into the Union of South Africa
(2) South Africa was governed by a Boer (Afrikaner) government that in 1948 introduced a policy of apartheid
(3) The struggle against apartheid continued until the early 1990s, when the apartheid laws were revoked
(4) In 1994, South Africa elected its first majority government and Black president, Nelson Mandela
(5) Under Mandela’s successors, South Africa became Africa’s most politically influential country

2. French Africa
a. The French experience was more difficult than the British
b. France confronted wars of liberation in Indochina and Algeria
c. The Algerian conflict raged eight years and was complicated by a large population of European settlers who violently opposed French abandonment of the country
d. French President Charles De Gaulle began the process of granting Algeria its independence following his return to power in 1958
e. The Evian Accords of 1962 ended hostilities and granted Algeria independence

3. Portuguese Africa
a. The Portuguese were the first to colonize Africa and the last to leave, and their departure proved difficult and violent
b. Angola
(1) Portugal had entered Angola in the late 15th century and the colony became central to the slave trade
(2) Portugal refused to relinquish its empire, sapping the country’s economy
(3) Three Angolan independence movements emerged, each with a different ethnic base and ideology
(a) The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
   I. Kimbundu people in the provinces surrounding the capital
   II. Received support from the USSR

(b) The National Front of Angola (FNLA)
   I. Bakongo people of northern Algeria
   II. Received aid from the United States

(c) The National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)
   I. Ovimbundo people of central and western Angola
   II. Aided by China

(4) Following independence in 1975, the country descended into civil war among the three movements

(5) In addition to its ideological aspect, the civil war also involved conflict for control of Angola’s rich resources

(6) A 1994 peace agreement provided for the merger of government and UNITA forces and a government of national unity took office in 1997

(7) Violence erupted again from 1998–2002, making this one of the longest running conflicts in the world

c. Mozambique

(1) In 1962 the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) launched a guerrilla war against Portugal

(2) The conflict continued until the country’s independence in 1975

(3) An anti-FRELIMO insurrection, aided by South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, raged until 1992

IV. The politics of nonalignment, nation-building, and economic development

A. Nonalignment

1. Nonalignment was typical of many LDCs during the Cold War

2. Nonalignment involved seeking trade and aid while maintaining political independence

3. The nonaligned regularly tried to play off East and West in order
to get assistance from both

4. Nonalignment was justified as a strategy to keep the Cold War from spreading to the LDCs

5. Nonaligned states based relations with one another on five principles
   a. mutual respect for one another’s territorial integrity and sovereignty
   b. mutual nonaggression
   c. noninterference in one another’s internal affairs
   d. equality and mutual benefit
   e. peaceful coexistence

6. Central to nonalignment was the effort to reduce global economic inequality, with an emphasis on
   a. Regulating transnational corporations
   b. Transferring technology from rich to poor
   c. Reforming global trade to assist LDC development
   d. Canceling or renegotiating LDCs’ debts
   e. Increasing economic aid to LDCs
   f. Changing voting procedures in international economic institutions to give LDCs more influence

7. The end of the Cold War removed the rationale for nonalignment

B. Modernization and postcolonial theory

1. Popular in the 1950s and 1960s, modernization theorists assumed there was a linear progression of stages from traditional societies, which lacked a belief in progress, to modern ones through industrialization

2. Modernization theorists argued that internal factors such as traditional values and the absence of capital investment prevented development

3. The shift to modernity involved changes to political culture: the pattern of beliefs, identities, and values of members of a society

4. Criticisms:
   a. They assumed “modern” was progressive and superior
   b. They seemed to suggest that the process would make countries more alike and that this was a virtue
   c. They saw the process as irreversible
5. Postcolonial theorists were highly critical of Western practices
   a. Though formal colonialism had ended, they argued that rich countries retained the ability to control LDCs through neocolonialism
   b. The structure of global politics perpetuated the inferior position of the poor

C. Failed and fragile states
   1. When colonialism ended, a combination of ethnic conflict, corruption, poverty, overpopulation, and environmental stress caused state institutions in some LDCs to collapse, resulting in “failed” or “fragile” states
   2. Twelve conditions are associated with state fragility:
      a. Demographic pressures in which population outstrips resources like food
      b. Refugees and internally displaced persons who have grievances against the government
      c. Vengeance-seeking groups with grievances based on a belief that they are unfairly treated
      d. Chronic and sustained flight from the country by trained and educated citizens
      e. Uneven economic and social development in which some groups have fewer economic and educational opportunities than others
      f. Sharp and severe economic decline reflected in unemployment and corruption
      g. The loss of legitimacy by the state in which citizens no longer regard it as authoritative and view it as serving only the interests of a corrupt minority
      h. The absence or collapse of public services such as education and health care
      i. The rule of law and human rights are applied unevenly
      j. The security apparatus has fractured into “states within the state” and take the form of militias favoring particular groups or leaders rather than providing security for the general population
      k. The risk of fractionalized elites is high as in Iraq where Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish leaders vie for power
      l. The intervention of other states and external actors in the country’s domestic affairs
3. As of 2016 fourteen of the 20 most fragile states were African, three were Middle Eastern (Yemen, Iraq, and Syria, all sites of sectarian violence), two were South Asian (Afghanistan and Pakistan), and one was in the Western Hemisphere (Haiti)

4. Cases:
   a. South Sudan: civil war between ethnic groups and political leaders began in December 2013 and persisted into 2016
   b. Somalia: the death of 18 US soldiers there in 1993 drove the Clinton administration to avoid other humanitarian interventions
   c. Rwanda: the prototype of ethnic genocide
   d. Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): a model for transnational war

D. Other fragile states
   1. Pakistan struggles with social, economic, and political instability
   2. Nigeria faces a variety of bitter identity cleavages and resources conflicts

V. The BRICS, emerging markets, and global governance
   A. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa have become major contributors to global economic growth and collectively are known as the BRICS
   B. With economic power has come enhanced political status that began to shift global influence away from the G-7, toward the G-20
   C. Between 2006 and 2015, the emerging and developing economies’ annual growth averaged 5.9 percent per year, compared to 1.4 percent in developed countries
   D. When the global financial crisis began, these countries weathered the crisis significantly better than the advanced economies
   E. However, the precipitous drop in commodity prices in 2016 owing to overproduction and weak global demand hit the BRICS and other emerging economies especially hard
   F. Cases
      1. Brazil and Latin America
         a. Brazil is Latin America’s largest economy and prospered owing to a period of macroeconomic stability, low inflation, a floating currency, manageable debt, and political stability, as well as the discovery of massive oil reserve off its southern coast in 2007
         b. The country also reduced poverty and inequality under the
presidency Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2011) and the Workers’ Party

c. The dramatic drop in commodity prices such as iron and soya caused an economic crisis in 2015
d. Additionally, several scandals involving massive corruption by politicians became public
e. in 2016, Brazil was struck by the Zika virus
f. Brazil’s changing political and economic climate is not unique in Latin America

2. Russia
a. Between 1999 and 2008, Russia also experienced impressive economic growth, doubling its GDP, tripling wages in real terms, and reducing unemployment and poverty
b. Like much of the world, Russia’s economy slowed significantly during the Great Recession.
c. It recovered by 2011, but worsened again owning to dependence on energy production and export, low global oil prices, and Western sanctions

3. India
a. India’s economic growth reflects what the BRICS have achieved
b. India has become the world’s third largest economy

4. China
a. Mao Zedong was a dedicated Marxist who wished to follow a uniquely Chinese path to socialism
b. Mao’s successor, Deng Xiaoping, promoted China’s economic growth by introducing material incentives and private property
c. Under the slogan “Socialism with Chinese characteristics,” Deng’s market reforms unleashed China’s immense economic potential
d. Deng was not prepared, however, to surrender the communist party’s monopoly of power
e. Today, China practices state capitalism, but the country’s growth has been uneven and has produced widespread corruption and domestic food safety and environmental problems
f. China integration in the world economy has made it a
leading recipient of foreign investment, and a growing factor in world trade

g. Despite the privatization of many enterprises, others, notably heavy industries, are unprofitable and remain state owned

h. Rural China remains poor, and large numbers of the country’s 250 million migrant workers left rural communities to work in urban areas where many reside illegally

i. China’s uneven economic development poses additional dangers, including regional disparities

5. South Africa

a. South Africa was the last of the BRICS, joining the group in 2010 and is the smallest of those five economies

b. South Africa is Africa’s second largest economy and the most highly developed

VII. Conclusion

A. This chapter has traced the evolution of the global South from its colonial past to the present

B. The effects of colonialism are seen globally

C. In recent years, several LDCs have achieved political stability, high levels of economic growth, and greater political and economic power