The British Aren’t COMING
Why the French Intervene in their Former African Colonies and the British Do Not

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Abstract

Despite close parallels throughout their imperial histories, Britain and France have diverged greatly in how often they have intervened in former African colonies since independence. In this thesis, I explore how the nature and frequency of military interventions is directly rooted in the histories of the empires themselves, including imperial governance, decolonization, and post-colonial regimes. Through case studies of some of the most recent and prominent interventions for each country (Sierra Leone in 2000 for Great Britain; Côte d’Ivoire in 2002 and 2011 for France), as well as instances of non-interventions, I show how colonial legacies play a direct role in determining intervention. Although neo-colonial links and legacies have a significant and expected impact for France through its network of “Françafrique,” their influence on the British is subtler. History shows us that Britain did not value its African empire as much as France did, and consequently it intervened there less. Nonetheless, Prime Minister Tony Blair’s Doctrine of the International Community, under which the Sierra Leone and other interventions took place, had subtle neo-imperial undertones, suggesting a different kind of colonial legacy. This legacy has been indirectly continued across party lines by the government of Prime Minister David Cameron. Additionally, I find that interventions to protect certain postcolonial interests, such as significant expatriate populations, might elicit a swift, but limited, response that then evolves into a more robust mission. Other legacies, like regional military presence, facilitate interventions once decided or preclude their possibility. Finally, I conclude that assumptions that the international community can rely on former colonial powers to shoulder the military burden in Africa is inaccurate, having never been the case for Britain and decreasingly so for France, as it shifts to a less neo-imperial attitude toward Francophone Africa.
Acknowledgements

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Note to readers about language:

Studying the British and French create two linguistic difficulties for an American author. For the British, I have retained the traditional British spelling for official names of organizations (i.e. Ministry of *Defense*) and in quotations from written sources like books, newspapers, and archival material. For the French, I have italicized all French terms and phrases (but not names), and translated in the text those not commonly found in English, for instance, *tache d’huile.*
Chapter I: Introduction

Perhaps our story begins in Bamako, Mali on 2 February 2013. François Hollande, president of the French Republic, is greeted by the Malian people as a savoir and celebrity. Months after a coup allowed a northern rebellion to succeed, the Islamists who conquered most of Northern Mali are in retreat, thanks to the French invasion force that repelled them. While operations are not yet over, much of Mali has been liberated, and the tricolour waves around the former French colony.¹

Perhaps our story begins in Freetown, Sierra Leone in June 1997. President Ahmad Kabbah has recently been restored to power as the legitimate and democratically elected head of state, following a coup some months earlier. Peter Penfold, the British high commissioner known for his ardent support of Kabbah’s government, lands at the airport in Hastings, a town a few miles east of the capital, returning after several months in England. Penfold disembarks from the plane to a cheering crowd. King Naimbana II, a local tribal chief, announces that Penfold is to be made a paramount chief, one of the country’s highest honors. As the diplomat’s convoy snakes into Freetown, there are more crowds, jubilantly displaying British and Sierra Leone flags and signs welcoming Penfold back. Penfold is transferred to a hammock and carried through the streets until the procession reaches a municipal building, where a final ceremony takes place. “Here was I, a white man, a representative of the former colonial power,” Penfold later wrote in his memoirs, “being carried in a hammock though the streets of the capital of this African country nearly forty years after independence.”²

Perhaps it begins in London, in the Palace of Westminster, on 25 March 1807. After years of conservative opposition, support for banning the slave trade has reached new heights and finally Parliament passes the Slave Trade Abolition Act of 1807. The law establishes the West Africa Squadron, and the British navy is deployed to exert Britain’s moral and humanitarian will on the world. Over the next fifty years, the Royal Navy frees more than 150,000 slaves.³ A few years later, at the Congress of Vienna in 1814, Foreign Secretary Viscount Castlereagh makes it his mission to abolish the slave trade worldwide, and while his success is limited, his discussions mark the first such human rights discussion at a peace conference.⁴

Perhaps our story begins on 26 August 1789, in France.⁵ Influenced by the revolution in America, French liberals pass the first Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, asserting the republican principles that will overturn the ancien régime. Its proponents might lose control of the revolution, but their principles endured, becoming the values of liberté, égalité, and fraternité that would underpin French universalism from the late nineteenth century onward.

London are filled with East Africans and south Asians; the streets of Paris are filled with those from West Africa and the Maghreb. Britain has greater trade links with members of the Commonwealth; France underwrites some of its former colonies’ currencies. Francophone elites are educated at Sciences Po and the Sorbonne; Anglophone elites go to Oxford and Cambridge.

Writing a comparative history of imperial legacies is both a complex and simple matter. On one hand, some legacies are quite straightforward: a country ruled by the French is likely to be Francophone, while a country ruled by Britain is likely to be Anglophone. On the other hand, they can diverge quite a bit. When it comes to postcolonial institutions, for example, the differences could not be starker. Although the British monarch remains head of sixteen realms and there is a very formalized Commonwealth, Britain itself is no longer at the Anglosphere’s center. Instead of prolonging British hegemony, the Commonwealth’s goals are to foster links and best practices between its members. Conversely, the French president has no formal role in former colonies; instead he informally runs bilateral relations with former possessions in Africa through his office at the Elysée Palace. Often the French role has been one of kingmaker, not supportive friend.

To understand this divergence, it is important to understand the comparative histories of each nation and empire. Going back ten centuries, British and French histories have often intertwined, from the Norman Conquest to the Second World War to close bilateral relations today at the center of NATO. Each nation gained and lost empires in North America, replaced them with empires in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, expanded into the Middle East after World War I, and then gradually decolonized in the years following World War II. Despite these parallels throughout much of their histories, Britain and France—and their empires—are far from similar. Upon closer examination, they reflect different philosophies, interests, and priorities. Each country found pride through its empire—and now in its imperial past—but in fundamentally different ways.
These differences can be seen in subtle attitudes and quirky customs. But there is a more consequential difference between the two. Since decolonization, France has intervened in its former African colonies between thirty and fifty times. Britain has intervened once. This puzzle goes unexplained by the standard literature on interventions, which generally explains when an intervention is opportune and how it might be successful, but not who carries it out. Current literature focuses on a variety of questions, but leaves central puzzles unanswered. In *The Purpose of Intervention*, Martha Finnemore describes three instances whereby intervention is normatively legitimate in the post-Cold War order: violations of territorial borders, civil conflicts begetting humanitarian crises, and massive terrorists attacks. Although she lays out theories for what has become the norm, she does not account for cases in which that norm is not followed, (for instance, the 2003 Iraq Invasion), and does not identify why some countries might be more likely to intervene than others. Instead, she posits that for an intervention to be legitimate, it must be multilateral. As I am trying to understand the difference between largely unilateral interventions of the British and the French, and Finnemore assumes multilateralism and only a handful of “legitimate” objectives, her work is not useful. In their book *Foreign Military Intervention*, Levite, Jentleson, and Berman tackle the

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6 The issue of pinpointing an exact number is a vexing one; it lies somewhere between thirty and fifty times since 1960 in its former African colonies, but how to define an intervention? In Figure 1, I have listed the 40 interventions as enumerated by Griffin and updated by myself. Nonetheless, every such list is different. Some count operations that hardly involved more than an airlift; others count coups d'états. There is the issue of double counting a conflict with multiple (or recurring) operations that are in fact part of a larger one. Does it count if France intervened in a non-Francophone country to protect a former colony? What about participation in joint-operations or UN missions? All these issues make an exact number impossible to come by. Nonetheless, Griffin’s list is sufficient for the purposes of this thesis. See: Griffin, Christopher, “French Military Interventions in Africa: French Grand Strategy and Defense Policy since Decolonization,” (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2007), 35-37. For an alternative list, see: Charbonneau, Bruno, *France and the New Imperialism: Security Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2008), 68-72.

7 Although Figure 1 shows three British interventions, the first two, while after independence, were part of the aftermath of decolonization and are of an entirely different nature than the interventions studied herein. Consequently, I consider there to be just one post-colonial intervention in British Africa.

Figure 1: French and British Interventions in Former African Colonies, 1960-Present

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<td>Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>Biafra/Nigeria</td>
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dynamics of interventions themselves, but do little to further comprehend why states intervene.\(^9\)

While acknowledging that there are multiple objectives of an intervener in a given conflict, Patrick Regan, in *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers*, focuses on if, when, and how third-party interveners can stop violence, avoiding the question of who is the intervener and why they intervene altogether. For this thesis, it is much relevant if the intervention is successful, only why it occurred is pertinent; Regan answers all the wrong questions. Finally, there is an assumption that the former colonial power will intervene when events get out of hand in a former colony. While applicable perhaps to the French, it is patently false for other colonial powers, and fails to explain why Britain has only intervened once in a former colony in Africa, despite numerous occasions where such an intervention could be warranted.

If political science does not explain this divergence in British and French intervention policies, we must look elsewhere for answers if we are to understand such patterns and in which cases either power is most likely to intervene in the future. That elsewhere lies in history—in the *raisons d’être* of the British and French Empires, how they affected each nation’s self-image, how the loss of those empires—particularly in Africa—affectd the nature of Britain and France’s place in the world, and how these histories are relevant to the geopolitical paradigms today. Our story takes place in the streets of Freetown and in Konna, but it started in Paris and London, at conferences and at speeches, and in the moments in centuries past that shaped national identities—and how each nation interacted in the world—for posterity.

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Chapter II: A Tale of Two Empires: British and French Colonialism in Historical Perspective

In this chapter, I do not presume to write a history of the British and French Empires—many have undertaken that task and delivered at a far greater capacity than can be done here. Nonetheless, to truly understand how Britain and France treat their former empires, we must come to terms with the empires themselves. What follows is an extremely abbreviated history of the British and French Empires.

Imperial Beginnings

For both Great Britain and France, the first overseas colonies were in the Western Hemisphere. Following the success of Spain and Portugal in the New World, the British and the French followed suit in North America. Save some early navigation and failed settlements, overseas empire started with two settlements in the early seventeenth century. For the French, it was Nouvelle France, with Samuel de Champlain and the walled city of Québec in 1608. For the British, it was Jamestown, founded by John Smith in 1607. Gradually, two colonial systems matured over the next 150 years into small nations; the French occupying Canada, much of inland North America, and many islands in the Caribbean; the British, the Atlantic seaboard and a few Caribbean islands as well.

Both sides had different models of empire. For the French, it was a hybrid mix of traders, planters, and missionaries. Although initially focused on fisheries, continental colonists shifted their attention to fur, the trade of which did not lead to large settlements. Despite attempts at colonization starting as early as 1534, the first significant settlement was Québec, with further population centers in Trois-Rivière, Montréal, and in the south, Nouvelle Orléans (New Orleans). The French in North America interacted frequently with Native Americans, and with the desire for fur came new zeal for spreading Catholicism. Like the Spanish, French missionaries accompanied
colonists, who did their best to convert Native Americans, though their efforts were often secondary to trading interests. In the West Indies, the French established successful colonies that supplied an ever-increasing European demand for sugar. Such attention in the west did not mean total abandonment in the east, however; at the same time as French colonies prospered in America, the establishment of an outpost in Pondicherry in 1674 gave the French a foothold on the Indian subcontinent.

The British Empire started at almost the same time as its French counterpart. Like the French a bit late to the game, Britain finally established its first permanent settlement in 1607 in Jamestown, Virginia. Unlike the French colonization, British efforts were more focused on settler colonies on the North American coast, where over a dozen colonies with different founding missions sprung up. Some like Virginia were designed to make money, others like Massachusetts were havens for persecuted sects. In any case, trade was based on agricultural commodities, not fur, and life was far less transient than in French Canada, allowing for the growth of a significant colonial population and society. Though Great Britain maintained sugar colonies in the Caribbean, its colonial jewels were its continental settler colonies, which would prove the model for much British colonization later. Britain also traded in India and Africa; indeed efforts to subsidize the East India Company were a contributing factor to events that would lose America for Britain.

Both empires suffered great setbacks when they lost the vast majority of their “first” empires within twenty years of one another. At war with each other on and off for a great deal of the eighteenth century, the British and French would ultimately do themselves in. For the French, the death knell was the Seven Years’ War, a conflict that engulfed most of the European powers from 1756 to 1763. Expanding the fight from Europe to India and America (where the war was called the French and Indian War by British Americans), the two empires sought to gain advantage over one another, with the British ultimately prevailing. In the 1763 Treaty of Paris, the French lost the
entirety of their North American territory, retaining just a few of their valuable sugar colonies in the Caribbean and islands in the North Atlantic. For the British, victory meant North American hegemony, but such spoils were not to last. Inspired by their own tradition of liberty and such events as the Glorious Revolution, the North American colonists of Great Britain revolted over Parliament’s assertion of its authority to impose taxes (most famously on the East India Company’s tea) on the colonies. Aided by the French, the American colonists managed to defeat the British armies sent to quell them. When the American Revolutionary War ended in 1783, Britain lost its North American empire, save Canada. With the French distracted by revolution and its ensuing wars and the British distracted by containing the French, little attention was paid to America for the remainder of the eighteenth century. Having lost much of its naval capability in the Revolution, France’s further attempts at American empire were half-hearted. Although the Caribbean colonies remained in place, a rebellion in Haiti prompted Napoleon (then First Consul) to relinquish the dream of continental empire, and he sold Louisiana (which France had regained at the end of the American Revolutionary War) to the United States in 1803. France’s imperial ambitions then turned inward to Europe, as the Napoleonic Wars imposed French hegemony on Europe. That success was short-lived; though it took every ounce of effort for the British and their allies to defeat Napoleonic France, they did so by 1815. By the end of the great European conflict, the British and French had gained and lost their first overseas empires in America and failed at their attempts to rebuild them. France was exhausted and would spend the next several decades recovering; victorious Britain on the other hand lived up to its patriotic song; Britannia truly did rule the waves. With the new regime of European stability promised by the Concert of Europe achieved at the 1814 Vienna Congress, Britain looked elsewhere for imperial glory, and that elsewhere was to the south and east.

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Since the early 1600s, the British had been trading in the east through the state-sponsored East India Company (of tea fame). Having defeated the French at the Battle of Plessey in 1757, the British were the ascendant European power on the Indian subcontinent. Meanwhile, the British discovered a huge new continent in the South Pacific in 1770. Australia became America’s replacement; as historian Niall Ferguson put it: “True, half a continent had been lost. But on the other side of the world a whole new continent beckoned.”11 With unchallenged naval superiority, it was the beginning of the Pax Britannica.

It is important to note that even at this point, at the turn of the nineteenth century certain imperial characteristics that would become more pronounced throughout the twentieth century were present. If the Revolution gave the French the Enlightenment ideals of liberté, égalité, fraternité, Napoleon gave the French grandeur and sense of importance on the world stage they have never forgotten. For the British, conflict between principle and power was no less dramatic. After losing its first empire to a Revolution predicated on the notion of neglected English liberties, Britain then championed those values by ending the slave trade, only to unceremoniously conquer India and Australia.

The nineteenth century saw both a normative “empire of liberty” with the formation and maturation of white settler colonies coupled with the more strategically-managed half of the empire that consisted of non-white subject peoples. As British colonists settled their empire, they, like their American cousins, were often able to achieve political freedom and economic opportunity unheard of in the mother country. In Australia and Canada, those from the lowest rungs of British society made new and better lives for themselves in what would become the white Dominions. Essentially granting them the status that Americans would have accepted instead of independence, the British granted the white settler colonies progressively forms of home rule throughout the mid-1800s.

Home rule became Dominion status starting with Canada in 1867 and gradually expanded to South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Newfoundland (at this point not part of Canada) by the start of World War I in 1914.

There was another, less savory half to empire, however, and in Asia, that manifested itself in the British Raj in India and militarism against China. Having evicted the French in the Seven Years’ War, the British only had to conquer the Indians, which they were gradually able to do over the course of the nineteenth century by playing local potentates off of each other. The incompetence of the East India Company led to a formal takeover by the British government, and India became the jewel in the British Crown in 1858. In China, gunboat diplomacy and the Opium Wars gave Britain Hong Kong and an informal trading empire within the large, but weak Qing Dynasty.

The French were unable to match the British in terms of global reach, but they did breathe new air into their deflated overseas empire. Algeria was invaded in 1830, and conquered by the end of the decade; it would be the only significant French settler colony. French missionary zeal preceded military intervention in Vietnam in the middle of the century; control of Vietnam led to a protectorate over Cambodia. The French also had a presence in the Pacific, acquiring possessions in Polynesia and New Caledonia in the 1840s, and maintained the sugar colonies in the Caribbean. Nonetheless, the early nineteenth-century globe was ruled not by France, but by Great Britain.

The British and French in Africa

Neither France nor Britain was new to Africa in the nineteenth century. For several centuries, the continent had served the two powers as both a source of slaves and a stop for ships on the way to Asia. Chief among British possessions in Africa was Sierra Leone, from which Britain exported slaves as early as 1562. In addition, after the Napoleonic Wars the British received the Cape Colony from the Dutch. The French had a presence in West Africa dating back to the 1600s, most prominently in Senegal, which was a major point of embarkation for slaves to the New World.
Over the course of the nineteenth century, both countries gradually consolidated these claims, with the most intense period of colonization occurring in the 1880s and 90s as multiple European powers sought to carve out for themselves territories in the rapidly opening continent. The so-called Scramble for Africa culminated in the Berlin Conference of 1884, in which the remaining unclaimed territories of Africa were carved up amongst the several European powers.

Stretching from Cairo to the Cape, British Africa was hardly a unitary polity. It was composed of both significant white settler colonies in places like Rhodesia, Kenya, and the Union of South Africa (whose constitution was complicated by the presence of the Dutch-descended Afrikaner settlers), and territories that had little European presence, like Gold Coast, Tanzania, Zambia, and Nigeria. Added to the mix was Sierra Leone, which while mostly African had a large population of former slaves from the end of the previous century.

Sierra Leone in some ways represented Britain’s new imperial mission, which was often as much Christian and moral as it was mercantile. A British Empire that was “at best, amoral”\(^\text{12}\) in the eighteenth century shifted to a more ethical ethos in the Victorian era.\(^\text{13}\) If at their worst the British fought to expand the trade of narcotics in China through gunboat diplomacy, at their best they abolished the slave trade and helped former slaves found a colony in Sierra Leone (which will play a prominent role as a case study later in this paper) as a sanctuary in the late eighteenth century. Sierra Leone became a British colony in 1808 (with a capital called “Freetown”), one of several such outposts in West Africa controlled by the British from the early nineteenth century. With the help of other European powers—including the French—it was the base of operations for the West Africa Squadron’s efforts against slave ships, and thus emblematic of Britain’s new moral imperialists, who strove for power and to “civilize” the “Dark Continent.” Although a large part of missionary work was to Christianize and convert, many British were not content to leave it at that, aiming to “spread

\(^12\) Ferguson, *Empire*, 116.
Figure 2: European Empires in Africa, 1910

Source: WikiCommons
over [Africa’s] gloomy surface light, liberty and civilization” as put by one prominent Evangelical. The famous explorer Stanley Livingstone started his career as a missionary and became an explorer. While respecting the native African populations, he dreamt of a colony in Zambia that would provide a staple crop for export, grown by free (and importantly not slave) labor, while coming under the influence of Christianity. It was in some ways the first multiple bottom-line enterprise. From the Liberal perspective, freedom was mixed with capitalism; John Stuart Mill saw the British as bringing among other things “a better government. . . Secondly, improvement of public intelligence; the decay of usages or superstitions which interfere with the effective implementation of industry; and the growth of mental activity, making the people alive to new objects of desire.”

While trade was the primary basis of the empire, imperial theorists like Mill neatly tied capitalism to moral progress, arguing that free trade would civilize the world by fostering the habits of work ethic and enterprise, thereby instilling the values of British liberalism. Convenient to this logic, of course, was that free trade almost always benefited the British position. One Member of Parliament and colonial official in India, Thomas Babington Macaulay, advocated educating Indians—but mostly because of its instrumental effects on British trade:

To trade with civilized men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would, indeed, be a doting wisdom, which, in order that India might remain a dependency, would make it an useless and costly dependency—which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves.

Such doctrine makes it hardly surprising that British rule in its colonies was far from benign. British rule in Africa was no exception, particularly where settler colonies were concerned. Men like Cecil Rhodes mercilessly manipulated native populations and the long-standing white Boers;

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14 Thomas Macaulay, Baron Macaulay in Ferguson, *Empire*, 122.
16 Macaulay, Thomas Babington, “Speech on the Government of India,” Speech delivered in the House of Commons, London, United Kingdom, on 10 July 1833. In *The Concept of Empire: Burke to Attlee, 1774-1947*, 2nd. Ed, edited by George Bennett, 71-75, (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1962), 72. Note: Macaulay is the same Lord Macaulay mentioned above; he was raised to the peerage after the speech was given.
opposition to British rule was often brutally suppressed. Indeed, he saw his efforts in Rhodesia as those of “another East India Company,” prizing commerce over liberty or Christianity.\footnote{Ferguson, \textit{Empire}, 229.} Ironically, the idealists were often in England while their compatriots in the colonies perpetuated racist and oppressive policies. “To protect the poor natives and to advance civilization,” was “the mission of Great Britain” in the eyes of Queen Victoria.\footnote{Queen Victoria in Ferguson, \textit{Empire}, 168.} The British statesman Lord George Curzon, who served in India, saw Britain’s respect of natives as central to its success:

\begin{quote}
[The King’s] Empire is strong. … because it regards the liberties and respects the dignities and rights of all his feudatories and subjects. The keynote of the British policy in India has been to conserve all the best features in the fabric of native society. By that policy we have attained the wonderful measure of success: in it we recognise an assured instrument of further triumphs in the future.\footnote{George Curzon in Ferguson, \textit{Empire}, 209-210.}
\end{quote}

Lord Frederick Lugard, the governor of Hong Kong and then Nigeria, codified Curzon’s administrative principles in his book \textit{The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa}.\footnote{Lugard, Lord Frederick, \textit{The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa} 5\textsuperscript{th} ed., 1922, (Reprint, London: Frank Cass \& Co. Ltd., 1965).} He established in the Muslim regions of northern Nigeria the idea of “indirect rule,” which was predicated on the notion that Britain had neither the capacity nor the will to directly govern its expansive territories and needed a practical alternative. Similar to the system of princely rule in India, Lugard used chiefs to govern locally, basing British power in indigenous legitimacy. Instead of trying to make Africans European (like the French did), he reasoned they should be allowed to govern themselves within the British system.\footnote{Fukuyama, Francis, “Indirect Rule,” from \textit{The Origins of Political Order, Vol. 2} (forthcoming, 2014), 5.} Such principles did not mean the Empire was not founded on racial superiority; however Africans still experienced much racism, especially at the hands of white working class colonists, and nonwhites were terribly disadvantaged compared to their white neighbors. Moreover,
European interests were often put ahead of even local allies; at the Berlin Conference of 1884, land promised native rulers was traded to maintain the balance of power amongst the Europeans.²²

British policy was slightly different in East and Central Africa, where white settlers flourished (unlike in West Africa, there was a lesser preponderance for fatal tropical disease)²³ and exerted a powerful influence on both the colonial government and Westminster. Settlers bristled at direct rule from London, and in 1923, the settlers in Rhodesia were granted self-government.²⁴ The situation in South Africa was even more complex, as the often more liberal British settlers contended with the conservative Afrikaner population, who were instituting the foundation of the apartheid state. The British Empire in Africa was thus a combination of mercantile and strategic interests fueled by a paternalism that was often more words from London than actions put into practice by local settlers who had no use for high principles.

The French Empire in Africa stretched not from north to south, but west to east. Mirroring its geographic dispersion, France’s approach to African colonization was all over the map; indeed Paris had no grand strategy for the continent, a fact underscored by its first major African foray after Napoleon’s failed bid in Egypt at the turn of the nineteenth century.²⁵ Motivated not by imperial motivations but by domestic political ones, King Charles X used a minor payment dispute with the déy in Algiers to justify military intervention in 1830, hoping a successful foreign adventure would buoy support for his increasingly fragile regime at home. The king was overthrown anyway in the July Revolution, but the Algerian campaign was a success. Over the next several decades, the French

²² Ferguson, Empire, 239.
military, supported by French colonists, firmly entrenched their control over what become France’s only significant settler colony.\textsuperscript{26}

In West Africa, Senegal was the center of French activity. Expansion there, as it was across Africa, was likened to a \textit{tâche d’huile} (or spot of oil); it was gradual and not always intentional.\textsuperscript{27} Mid-level bureaucrats and soldiers on the ground often attained new territory and presented it to imperially reluctant Parisian politicians as \textit{fait accompli}. Unlike in Algeria, settlers—neither encouraged nor forthcoming—did not flock to West Africa, and empire there took on a vastly different character.

Although the French never had enough manpower to adequately formally incorporate their Sub-Saharan colonies as they did Algeria (which became a French \textit{département}), they did have common ambitions for all of their possessions. Unlike the British, the French did not respect local customs, instead treating local rulers as direct agents of the French state.\textsuperscript{28} The French believed that Roman law could be applied anywhere and firmly intended to assimilate colonial peoples into the French system.\textsuperscript{29} That belief was more dream than reality and the closest assimilation came to reality was in the Four Communes, the four oldest French-controlled towns in Senegal whose citizens were granted special status. While there was never complete equality for Africans there, for the elite group that worked directly with the bureaucracy and French companies, French citizenship was possible. On and off from the mid-nineteenth century, the \textit{originaires}, as they were called, elected deputies to the French National Assembly in Paris, a privilege unique among colonial peoples.

France’s own colonial system betrayed ambitions to assimilate colonial peoples beyond the Four Communes. Although it aspired to be centralized, standardized, and dirigiste, the French colonial administration varied considerably across regions. While the French ruled through a

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 106.
\textsuperscript{28} Fukuyama, “Indirect Rule,” 12-13.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 12-13.
centralized administration in Indochina, they used native leaders in Morocco and governed Algeria as an integral part of France. Moreover, there was no single ministry in Paris that dealt with the colonies. The Colonial Ministry was created in 1894 but did not include Algeria, which as an integral part of France was under the aegis of the Interior Ministry, or protectorates, which given their nominal independence, were overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other ministries determined colonial policy in their respective areas, like defense or economic affairs.30 The inability to even uniformly govern the empire in Africa led to the realization that assimilation was unworkable. Unable and unwilling to underwrite the costs of making Africans good Frenchmen, some started to argue for a new doctrine: association. Similar to British indirect rule, association allowed Africans to retain traditional cultural practices and modernize at their own pace, so long as their autonomy did not threaten French interests. This took into account the reality that outside of the Four Communes, most of the colonial administration was done through the aid of African intermediaries,31 and that in fact, the French were no more successful than the British in actively shaping African society.32

If there was no grand strategy of imperial expansion or rule, were there any defining characteristics of the French Empire? While the answer is malleable across time and space, there were some guiding principles, if not ideologies, that leading French imperialists articulated should be the goals of overseas expansion. The leading maxim was that colonies should serve France, and if they did not, they should not be maintained. Colonies served France in a variety of ways, some political, some economic, and some cultural.

31 Chafer, End of Empire, 30
Prime Minister Jules Ferry gave one of the most coherent rationales for empire. In a speech to justify an effort to conquer Tonkin in 1882-3, he listed three overarching motivations for colonialism. On economic grounds,

Colonial policy is the daughter of industrial policy. In rich states . . . export is an essential factor in in public prosperity. The field of action for capital, like the demand for labor, is measured by the size of the foreign market.

But there was more. France, as an advanced country, had a mission civilsatrice—a civilizing mission as well:

Can you deny, can anyone deny that there is more justice, more material and moral order, more equity, more social virtue in North Africa since France carried out is conquest? . . . Is it possible to deny that in India, despite the unfortunate episodes which have been encountered in the history of its conquest, there is today infinitely greater justice, enlightenment, order, public and private virtue since the English conquest? Is it possible to deny that it is the good fortune of the miserable population of equatorial Africa to come under the protection of the French nation or the English nation? Is it not our first duty, the first rule that France has imposed on itself, . . . to combat the horrible traffic of the slave trade and the infamy of slavery?

Finally, there was Realpolitik involved:

Exerting ourselves without action, without intervening in the affairs of the world, in trying to stay apart from European alliances, in regarding all expansion in Africa and the Orient as a trap or an adventure, to live in this way, believe me, is to abdicate [our position] and, in a shorter time than you think possible, to tumble from the first to the third or fourth rank [of nations].

These were not the only motivations for empire, but the most important ones. Empire served France in other ways, from helping solve national problems like emigration for the landless and unemployed to helping to develop French engineering and technology (as well as giving employment to the young graduates of technical institutions). Some colonies existed purely to connect other French colonies together. Britain, aiming to connect the Cape to Cairo, and France, trying to bridge Djibouti in the east with West Africa, almost went to war at Fashoda in 1898, when two rival expeditions pushing east (French) and south (British) confronted each other. Cooler heads (and

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cartographers) prevailed, but only Britain would end up with a contiguous continent-length belt of African empire.

In addition to the aforementioned motivations, the French held certain attitudes toward empire that were fairly constant. The colonies should return profit and not be costly to the metropole; indeed metropolitan interests should always take precedence over colonial ones. The Empire was also founded on racism; French civilization was superior, and so Europeans had not only the responsibility to uphold the *mission civilisatrice*, but had the right to force it upon native peoples. In the name of uplifting the savages beyond the sea, conquest by violent or unsavory means was not only necessary, but was legitimate, as was repression to ensure French control persevered.\textsuperscript{34}

A final motive and ideology of the French empire was spreading the Revolution of 1789 itself. Jean-François Médard posits the idea of French “messianism,” which, as described by Tony Chafer:

dates back to the French Revolution and its ‘universal’ message of liberty, equality and fraternity, as expressed through the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, which proclaimed a duty to export French republican ideals beyond the frontiers of metropolitan France and bring the message of liberty to peoples living under regimes less modern and progressive. In this way France’s revolutionary message led to, and became associated with, imperialism. It enabled France to create a discourse of French imperialism as emancipatory, progressive and modernizing, which served to legitimate it in the eyes of many across the political spectrum from right to left.\textsuperscript{35}

**Decolonization**

Britain and France may have won World War II, but the effort irreversibly weakened their imperia. The weight of empire, coupled with the cost of rebuilding at home, was simply too much and the White Man’s Burden now really was one. The process of decolonization started before the war, as stress on both empires led to talk of some degree of self-rule. Here is where divergence between the two empires became most evident.

\textsuperscript{34} Aldrich, *Greater France*, 91-93.
\textsuperscript{35} Chafer, *End of Empire*, 12.
Britain was better prepared for decolonization—both in accepting its inevitability and in its ultimate implementation. Initial hopes that Empire could be maintained were dashed fairly quickly, and several added factors made independence of the colonies more palatable. First, the fiscal costs to empire were increasingly high and decolonization was seen as the more cost-effective option; instead of economic development, constitutional concessions could be made instead.\(^{36}\) If the newly independent states remained in the British sphere of influence without the cost of British administration, then Britain could reap the benefits of empire without its price. More importantly, Britain’s status as a world power could be maintained despite decolonization. Simply put, Africa was not central to Britain’s empire and the loss of colonies there would not be fatal to its global position. Moreover, historical precedence was reassuring. The American Revolution taught the British to exercise prudence in administering its other settler colonies, setting the stage for the gradual devolution of power that culminated in the Statute of Westminster in 1931 and was later applied to Indian independence in 1947. The Commonwealth, as that group of nations was called, thus gave Britain a framework through which decolonization could occur in a controlled manner without completely losing its influence in the former colonies.\(^{37}\) Britain was still able to call upon Canada, Australia, and New Zealand during World War II, for instance, despite their devolved constitutional status.\(^{38}\) The empire’s decreasing relevance to British trade and banking also played a role in encouraging decolonization; Britain’s intervention in Egypt during the Suez Crisis in 1956 caused a run on the pound and convinced Prime Minister Harold Macmillan that maintaining the empire might cost the Sterling its status as a global reserve currency. Moreover, if Britain had any hopes of keeping the Commonwealth in the Sterling area, British leaders felt the need to transfer powers.

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\(^{36}\) Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, 637.


sooner, to ‘sterling-minded’ leaders, rather than later to those more hostile to British economic interests. In addition, while American pressure to relinquish colonies was an important motivation, the Special Relationship also reassured the British that they could shape world events through Washington; empire was no longer necessary to maintain great power status. Finally, after decades of indirect rule, Britain was ideologically prepared to lead its colonies to independence. As Martin Shipway so aptly puts it: “Central to British imperial self-perceptions was a long tradition of granting or conceding freedoms to dependent peoples whilst retaining them within the bounds of what had come to be known, since the First World War, as the ‘British Commonwealth of Nations.’”

Decolonization was not an easy process, however, and with it came successes and failures. In many cases, the principle of indirect rule was a convenient excuse to leave in a hurry. Independence for the Indian subcontinent was a disaster for the British, who essentially abandoned two new states with incredibly violent birth pangs. Millions of Hindus fled Pakistan and Muslims fled India; the resulting Partition, replete with ethnic and sectarian violence, cost the lives of at least 500,000. Stung by the hasty and bloody Partition, colonial officials aimed to avoid following in the Indian example and shifted their strategy to maintaining power as long as possible until political maturation could occur (ideally with a pro-British leader). Reflecting indirect rule, the solution to self-government was to be a bottom-up process to bring ordinary Africans into civic and political culture. This process would eventually evolve into self-government and then independence, as the

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43 Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact*, 121.
44 Abernathy, *Dynamics*, 315.
45 Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact*, 121.
The British Aren’t Coming

colony’s native leaders gradually acquired posts higher and higher in the administration, culminating in an elected prime minister and cabinet.46

In the end British leaders, confident that decolonization would not adversely impact British prestige or trade, acquiesced to colonial independence and (mostly) did not actively resist. “The wind of change is blowing through this continent,” Prime Minister Harold Macmillan said in 1960. “Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.” 47 Decolonization was the least bad option and as a consequence, the British Empire in Africa drew to a close.

The factors that facilitated British decolonization in Africa did not exist for the French, however. A realization that reform was necessary yielded some movement, but an unresolved debate raged on between proponents of assimilation and association. As a result, the French continued in an untenable position through the late 1950s, attempting to reform their African colonies. Having violently lost Indochina, and in the midst of a horrific war in Algeria, the Sub-Saharan African colonies had special meaning to France: continued possession meant continued status as a great power.

Neither power looked at the postwar period planning a dismantlement of empire, and in the event both tried to maintain great power status nonetheless. As we have seen, this was easier said for the British; for the French, Africa was their empire and the empire was France.48 The French Great Power Myth was linked with the Colonial Myth, whereby France obtained prestige, access to raw materials, new markets, and manpower during war while its colonies received the material and moral benefits of French civilization manifested as economic development, education, and the republican

46 Cooper, Frederick, Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present. (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 77.
48 Chafer, The End of Empire in French West Africa, 3.
tradition of (theoretically) democratic government. To lose its empire in Africa meant losing its global status, an untenable possibility right after the trauma of World War II. Consequently, France’s decolonization was more difficult than Britain’s. Two attempts to create a Commonwealth-like organization—the *Union Française* (French Union) in 1946 and then the *Communauté française* (French Community) in 1958—failed as they met neither the demands of Africans nor the desires of the French. Moreover, without the architecture of the Commonwealth to guide them, the French were relatively behind when they eventually copied the British and moved toward surrendering their empire to its subjects.

**Approaches to Postcolonial Relations**

Once they decolonized their possessions, the British and French diverged considerably on their respective approaches of how to manage postcolonial relations. The British, having modeled decolonization on the Commonwealth, established a formal system. The French, lacking a formal structure, created a network of informal ties that would dominate relations. Regardless of their respective foreign policy and bilateral post-colonial foreign policies, there remained an unofficial expectation in the international community that the United Kingdom would lead on issues with Anglophone countries, while France would lead on issues with Francophone ones. According to former (and first) British Secretary State for International Development Clare Short, this became an unwritten rule in the UN Security Council; when Britain moved to significantly help Francophone Rwanda after its genocide in the late 1990s, there was opposition not just from the French, but also from diplomats and policy advisors, who were cognizant of the customary division of labor.

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49 Ibid., 85.  
50 Quinn, *The French Empire*, 224.  
The (British) Commonwealth

For the British, the intention from the outset was to create an informal empire through the Commonwealth. Britain’s symbolic connection to its former Empire is mostly readily seen in the person of Queen Elizabeth II. Currently queen regnant of sixteen realms, she has been the head of state of over thirty countries in her lifetime and the titular head of the Commonwealth of Nations since she ascended the throne in 1952. The ceremonial nature of these links between Britain to its former colonies today are not what was intended from the start, however.

The Commonwealth was meant to be a grander version of the Dominions as it was during World War II. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa had all supported British foreign policy aims while retaining domestic autonomy; adapting this format to the rest of the nascent states was the goal. In the context of the Cold War, keeping colonial states in the British sphere of influence was crucial; “Perhaps ironically,” historian Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon comments, “it was the end of the British Empire that would save all that the empire had stood for.”

As the Commonwealth’s importance to British economic and strategic links eroded in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Commonwealth’s purpose changed from a quasi-alliance to that more values-oriented forum. As early as the 1960s, the Commonwealth’s leadership saw it less as an extension of empire and more of an international organization. Writing in 1966, Commonwealth Secretary-General Arnold Smith commented on the Commonwealth’s unique framework:

The Commonwealth is not a power-bloc. Membership does not involve any legal obligations to other members. There is no written constitution. If one thinks of political activity and institutions in terms of social engineering or architectural blueprints, it is easy to conclude that the Commonwealth has no real existence.

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Smith saw the world as increasingly international (as opposed to Euro-centric), and the Commonwealth as an important tool for bridging the North-South divide. Calling it a “cross-section of humanity and of its problems” that was “much smaller and more manageable than that of the United Nations,” Smith saw the Commonwealth as an “instrument for taking political leaders and officials from a wide range of countries, and rubbing them together every now and then.”\textsuperscript{55} A way to “co-operate more closely in the future,” the Commonwealth, Smith wrote, “is based not on sentimentality about the past, but rather on intimations of a possible and desirable future.”\textsuperscript{56} This view was widely shared by other Commonwealth leaders. Tanzanian President (and Commonwealth Secretary-General) Julius Nyerere saw the Commonwealth in much the same light, describing it “as the best hope in the world today of lasting peace and friendship among the peoples of the world” through its ability to “[bind] together in friendship and in like-mindedness an astonishing variety of nations great and small, without distinction between them and without discrimination amongst them.”\textsuperscript{57} Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the Commonwealth continued to move away from strategic concerns towards a position as interlocutor between developed

\textbf{Figure 3: African Members of the Commonwealth, 2013}

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Source: WikiCommons

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 127.
and developing countries, advancing norms, facilitating dialogue, and emphasizing North-South relations. 58

Despite the increasingly normative framework of the Commonwealth, Britain’s relationship with its former colonies still had strategic value, giving the United Kingdom “privileged entrée” to 30 percent of the UN’s members, market access to a quarter of the world’s population, and support for British foreign policy objectives. During the ministry of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, Commonwealth support bolstered the British position on, among other things, the Falklands War, brokering the settlement that ended civil war and brought independence to Zimbabwe, support for Belize’s independence, promoting stability in Uganda, and aiding development around the world. 59 Moreover, having shed itself of the Sterling Area, Britain was still able to retain influence in international finance through its allies Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, while the English language gave British business an edge around the world. 60

Ironically enough, strategic differences threatened to tear the Commonwealth apart in the 1980s. Britain’s opposition to sanctioning apartheid South Africa ran against the position of the other Commonwealth states. Many states, if push came to shove, valued the Commonwealth over Britain, and Britain’s expulsion was seen as a possibility. While this did not come to pass, British post-imperial infrastructure had come full circle enough to, in the eyes of many, be completely capable of existence independent of the colonial power. 61 Symbolically speaking, this occurred when the British Commonwealth dropped the “British” in 1946.

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58 Ibid., 132.
60 Ibid., 135.
In the end though, the Commonwealth’s role as an organization facilitating democracy, human rights, and common values over strategic matters has prevailed. After the adoption of the 1991 Harare Declaration on human rights, Ghana’s president, Sir Dawda Jawara wrote about the importance of the Commonwealth’s mission to support political and human rights and provide mechanisms for states to improve development: “I cannot but refer to the reaffirmation of the strong commitment of the Commonwealth to the principle of good governance embracing justice and human rights, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, equality for women and accountable administration.” Jawara’s views were themselves reaffirmed in 1994 when South Africa was readmitted to the Commonwealth upon the end of apartheid. One prominent commentator described how for South Africa, the role of the Commonwealth changed over time, from that of a British club, a body for sanctions, a promoter of democracy, an election monitor, and finally an organization through which South Africa re-entered the community of nations.

As the twentieth-first century approached, the role of the Commonwealth has been confirmed as a champion of transnational cooperation for global issues, including the environment, security, economic activity, transport, and telecommunications, along with controlling pandemic diseases, deterring terrorism, and combatting illicit drug traffickers.

The Commonwealth’s shift over time from post-imperial apparatus to global facilitator mirrors that of Britain’s role with its former colonies. Thus discussion of the Commonwealth’s role reflects Britain’s changed role; far from an interventionist power, Britain’s postcolonial links have mostly been to foster such things as good governance, democracy, development, and human rights;

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incidentally all goals of the Commonwealth. In that sense, the Commonwealth sees itself as a model for international cooperation, but also as a direct heir to those who saw the Empire as a force for good.\textsuperscript{65}

\textit{British-African Relations Outside the Commonwealth}

While Britain’s postcolonial relations have mostly been governed by its participation in the Commonwealth, relations outside the Commonwealth structure are also important. Since the end of the Cold War and the Labour government’s creation of Department for International Development (DFID), British attention to Africa was almost exclusively in the aid and development arena; wary of the legacy of imperialism, Britain had often stayed aloof from African affairs. Under the government of Prime Minister David Cameron, this is shifting as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office increasingly manages relations with Africa, focusing not just on aid, but also on developing trade and deeper bilateral ties.\textsuperscript{66}

British economic interests in Africa are now varied across the continent, but top trading partners are mostly former colonies: South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Kenya, Ghana, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Senegal, Cameroon, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. South Africa is far and away Britain’s largest African trading partner, with £3.2 billion in exports and £24 billion in British investments. Energy dominates some trade relationships; British trade with Nigeria (£818 million in 2005), Angola, and Equatorial Guinea (£109 million in 2003)\textsuperscript{67} is almost all in the energy sector.\textsuperscript{68} Aside from a few strategic relationships and trade with South Africa and Nigeria, Britain’s economic relationship with Africa is quite minimal; in 2011 less than four percent of African exports

\textsuperscript{65} Johnson, Robert, \textit{British Imperialism}. (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 203.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., 35.
went to Britain, a figure nearly three times less than China. As a result, Prime Minister David Cameron, echoing Tony Blair and New Labour’s trade and aid programs, has advocated for more trade with Africa’s growing economies.69

Despite relatively minor trade links, Africa remains an important destination of British development aid, and former colonies figure prominently as aid recipients. Of the sixteen African countries who at various points ranked in the top twenty recipients of annual bilateral aid from DFID 2009-2012, eleven had British colonial ties; a twelfth was Rwanda, which is a member of the Commonwealth. In 2012, seven of the top ten British aid recipients were former British African colonies; an eighth was number eleven.70

Britain’s military presence in Africa is practically nonexistent. Britain has two Peace Support Teams of a handful of staff—one in Kenya and one in South Africa and a training unit of around 150 in Kenya. A small International Military Advisory & Training team—a legacy of the conflict that will be a case study in this paper—remains in Sierra Leone to train local forces.71 However, Britain has no

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permanent bases in Africa, and lacks forward deployment capabilities. Moreover, military deployments often do not factor into discussions of British-African relations.  

The African diaspora has become an important interest group affecting British policy in Africa. There are around half a million black Africans in the UK, the fastest growing immigrant group in Britain. These communities exert influence both in their home countries (through remittances and political connectivity), and in British policy toward Africa. As important economic actors, they have strengthened bilateral links between Britain and various African countries. For instance, Zimbabweans hoping to lend expertise to British policy toward their home country led to the formation of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Focus Group, which has subsequently informed Foreign Office policy toward the southern African country.

British expatriate communities in Africa also reflect the former Empire. As shown by Figure 3 (the greater the British expatriate population the darker the country), British emigration to Africa looks like a map of the British Empire, centered primarily in former colonies. South Africa has by far the largest expatriate community at two hundred twelve thousand; the next largest community was in Kenya with twenty-nine thousand. These communities arouse British attention in times of strife; as we will see in the next chapter, protecting Sierra Leone’s expatriate community of two thousand was a contributing factor to British intervention there.

*Françafrique?*

When France ended its empire, it made sure that Africa remained an area of French influence, maintaining close ties with its colonies in a wide variety of areas, including business,

Françafrique is both normative and strategic. On the normative level, it represents a goal unto itself; for France to be great, French hegemony in Africa must continue. Maintaining power in any sphere—political, economic, cultural, military—through any manner—alliances, foreign aid, linked currencies, military bases—thus serves to perpetuate the Great Power Myth. Military intervention has been at times but one more tool in the toolbox. France is a rational state, however, and whatever it does for prestige, it also hopes furthers strategic goals. Consequently, much French involvement in Francophone Africa is interest-based, and can be analyzed through the aforementioned categorical spheres.

Central to French-African relations have been close personal ties between the French presidency and African leaders. Starting with Jacques Foccart, President de Gaulle’s Africa advisor, relations between African leaders and the French presidency became quite personalized, in many cases bypassing the Foreign Ministry. French support propped up African dictators, who in turn supported French foreign policy and business interests. Paris has often ignored autocratic tendencies of its allies (for example during the suppression of riots in Cameroon in 2008) and informally supported them in elections. For instance, President Nicolas Sarkozy’s African advisor, Robert Bourgi, lent his support to one candidate in Gabon’s 2009 election, saying that “In Gabon, France does not have a candidate, but Robert Bourgi’s candidate is Ali Bongo [son of former president Omar Bongo]. And I’m a very influential friend of Nicolas Sarkozy. Subliminally, voters will understand.”

France’s African allies have been supported by its ongoing continental military presence since decolonization. Upon independence all of the newly independent former French colonies

except for Mali and Guinea signed mutual defense treaties, which placed them under an umbrella of French protection. The accords gave the French over flight rights, access to African airfields and ports, the sole right of supply for most military equipment, significant training responsibilities, and the ability to move troops in and out of African states. Standing at fifty-nine thousand in 1962, as decolonization proceeded, troop numbers declined to twenty-one thousand by 1964. While those levels have declined even more since decolonization they have remained more or less constant since the 1970s, when they dropped to around ten thousand with fluctuations occurring due to operations. Despite plans to reduce troop levels to as low as 5,600 in 2002, they actually increased to over ten thousand from 2004-7. Currently, there are between 2,500 and three thousand prepositioned French troops in bases in Africa, with 6,790 currently deployed operationally.

Bases have been the key to the military presence in Africa, and consequently a significant part of France’s overall strategy toward the region. Since the 1970s, France has economized its presence to a few key bases. Arranged in a strategic geographic “cross” pattern across the continent, the bases allow easy deployment in emergencies to different regions in Africa. Although some have closed (including most recently in Senegal), the French have retained their continuous presence in their permanent bases in Djibouti and in Gabon and at sea through Operation Corymbe, through which the French navy has continuously deployed at least one ship in the Gulf of Guinea since 1990. Training has also been an important component of the security relationship. From

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80 “La Françafrique est morte, vive la Françafrique,” *Africa Confidential*, (49, 28 March 2008).  
Figure 5: The French Military Presence in Africa, 2012
decolonization until 1997, France trained some forty-seven thousand African military officers. This relationship endures; in 2004, 2,069 trainers were operating in twenty-seven African countries in numbers ranging from one to 227. This was a five-year high in the period from 1999-2004, with the low being 1,381 in 1999. French military influence is not contained to Francophone Africa; it is noteworthy that among the thirty-three countries that had at least one trainer in that six-year period were Anglophone countries like Kenya, Gambia, Ghana, and Zimbabwe, and Lusophone countries like Angola.

French economic links to Africa are just as strong as the military ones. By underwriting the West African and Central African CFA (Communauté Financière Africaine) Francs, the French government maintains great power over the monetary and economic policies of the fifteen countries (thirteen Francophone countries plus Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau) that share the currency. These close monetary links are paralleled in trade and aid ties. From 1991 to 2008, France was Africa’s largest trading partner, with a trade surplus of thirty-two billion francs; in 2009, France was surpassed by China for the first time. Nonetheless, French companies doing business in the Franc zone benefit from emergency credits, tax cuts, and the comfort in knowing that the French Treasury

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backs the local currency. Moreover, many large French business groups, like Bouygues and Bolloré, have significant African operations.

More than trade, France sought to retain access to Africa’s strategic resources after independence. French energy dependence on African imports—30 percent in 1950—only increased by the late 1980s, reaching 80 percent in 1989. At varying points post-decolonization France obtained 100 percent of its uranium, 90 percent of its bauxite, 76 percent of its manganese, and 59 percent of its cobalt from Africa. 70 percent of the oil state-owned energy company Elf extracted during the 1980s came from Gabon, Cameroon, Angola, and Congo.

Although France is one of the primary donor countries in Africa (with one quarter of development assistance going to Franc zone countries in West Africa alone, excluding the other Francophone countries in Africa), much is spent not on development programs, but on subsidizing friendly governments and militaries and ensuring most of it returns to France. Ninety percent of the total is conditional on spending it on contracts with French companies. Other monies are loans; when governments default on them, they are indebted to French banks, whose loans are in any case guaranteed by the French government.

Despite the lack of a strong organization like the Commonwealth, there is La Francophonie, an international organization of French-speaking nations. Unlike the Commonwealth, La Francophonie has not been as active in promoting democracy, human rights, or development as the Commonwealth, and certainly has not taken the same kind of punitive actions against member states that do not live up to France’s universalistic standards. In fact, member countries like Canada and

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92 Banque de France, The Franc Zone, 11.
France itself have been unhappy about attending meetings in countries with human rights abuses like Congo.\textsuperscript{93}

The cultural ties of La Francophonie nevertheless underscore the strong linguistic and cultural connection that France shares with much of Africa. Given the linguistic commonalities, many Africans are consumers of French media and literature, giving France a significant soft power advantage in its former colonies.

A final and not insignificant part of Franco-African relations is the continued presence of French citizens throughout Africa. Some thirty thousand French expatriates reside in West Africa,\textsuperscript{94} with most of them in Côte d'Ivoire.\textsuperscript{95} Often targets of terrorism, kidnapping, and political violence, French expatriates both extend their country’s influence in Africa and increase government involvement there when they are threatened.

This brings to mind one crucial caveat in this project, which is the albatross around French African policy: Algeria. Unlike its other colonies in Africa, Algeria was a settler colony that was incorporated into France. This political incorporation—buttressed by a large settler population, called the pied-noirs, supported a brutal French military effort to resist Algerian independence. The struggle reached into the heart of France—the French Fourth Republic fell due to the 1958 Algiers Crisis—and deeply traumatized the country. It is important to understand that many French see Africa through the lens of Algeria, but Algeria was and continues to be a unique case for French decolonization. Its unique circumstances make it an outlier as a case in any regard, and so will not be considered in this thesis.


As I have shown in this chapter, Britain and France had both comparable and vastly different empires. Despite similarities in scope in Africa, each had fundamentally different characters. The British imported indirect rule from India while the French tried to make Africans European. Meanwhile, the Indian Raj and the Dominions gave British imperialists a diversified colonial portfolio and a framework for transitioning to self-rule. The French, holding on to a Colonial Myth with Africa at its center and smarting from the loss of Algeria and Indochina, were much more reluctant to let Africa go. Both African decolonizations were relatively painless (although the British did intervene in the Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya and France had its devastating struggle in Algeria), but each empire had a different end goal in mind. The British led their possessions to self-rule and then mostly left; the French led theirs to self-rule in order to better maintain influence in them. To this day, Africa is a priority in French foreign policy; it has been largely ignored by Britain.

Colonial legacy informs contemporary British and French foreign policy in two ways. First, the very worldviews from London and Paris reflect histories of empire. These worldviews call for engagement with the world, and leaders from both Britain and France see continued great power status for their respective countries. Second, the strategic legacies of imperialism are at the core of the bilateral relationships between Britain, France, and their former African colonies. For France, these bilateral relationships are quite strong; for Britain, not so much. Together, these two forms of colonial legacy explain why the French have intervened so much more than the British.

When Prime Minister Tony Blair came to power in 1997, Africa and interventionism shot to a prominent place in Britain’s foreign agenda. Nonetheless, despite his robust support for Africa and humanitarian intervention, Britain only intervened in Africa once during his tenure. That conflict, in Sierra Leone, is the subject of Chapter Two; in that chapter, I will explore the mixing of post-
colonial and humanitarian conditions in Sierra Leone, and try to understand whether or not it was a post-colonial intervention, a humanitarian intervention, or something in between.

Despite many interventions during the Cold War and the strong, continuous links on many levels between France and its former colonies, recent decades have seen a shift in rhetoric, if not in action. In 1990, François Mitterand announced that France would tie aid to efforts at democratization;\(^{96}\) Prime Minister Lionel Jospin continued this trend in 1995 through his policy of “\textit{Ni ingérence ni indifférence},” or “no interference, no indifference.” While this informed French foreign relations for the better part of the late 1990s, France, as I will explore in Chapter Three, nonetheless intervened in Côte d’Ivoire in 2002, after which Chirac declared over Jospin’s “\textit{ni-ni}” policy,\(^{97}\) and in 2011. Interventions continue to this day as French leaders continue to see a global role for France,\(^{98}\) yet struggle over whether to continue Françafrique in some form, or quietly disguise it (through for instance, multilateralism).\(^{99}\)

In the following chapters, I will examine more closely how different aspects of the post-colonial relationships—military bases and alliances, trade and monetary policies, expatriates and migrants—have influenced when, where, how, and the doctrines under which these interventions take place. France, having closer ties on almost every level, has been the more active intervener, but which ties in particular have caused this? What has prompted either country to not intervene in instances where such action might be expected? In a world where the colonial power is expected to take the lead on issues relating to former colonies, understanding which parts of that relationship trigger a military response and which do not will be greatly informative in a geopolitical environment that features frequent and seemingly capricious Western interventions.

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Chapter III: White Man’s Burden: How Humanitarian and Post-Colonial Collided in Sierra Leone

Since the decolonization period, Britain has intervened but once in a former African colony. As the single instance in the universe of such cases, understanding the 2000 intervention in Sierra Leone is crucial for comprehending how British leaders viewed and continue to view Africa, intervention, and former colonies. However, it was not the only British intervention in the period, coming on the heels of conflict in Kosovo and right before the invasion of Afghanistan. In this way, Britain’s intervention in Sierra Leone was both humanitarian and postcolonial. Although this might confound the exact motives for the military action, the fact that Britain’s sole African intervention was a humanitarian one as well is greatly instructive about Britain’s postcolonial attitudes.

While separate, these two strands are connected to imperial legacies and must be explored before properly analyzing the Sierra Leone conflict itself. The most significant imperial connection manifests itself in the typical links between Britain and its former colony that facilitated an intervention, not least of which was a healthy pro-British sentiment in Sierra Leone. I will subsequently explore these links to contextualize bilateral relations at the time of the British military action. But Britain’s war in Sierra Leone cannot be seen in isolation; as one of Prime Minister Tony Blair’s several wars fought under his Doctrine of the International Community, it is also important to understand the background of Blair’s “Ethical Foreign Policy” and how imperial legacy contributed to its formation.
British-Sierra Leonean Relations in Historical Perspective

Colony, Independence, and Early Post-Colonial Relations

Britain’s relationship with Sierra Leone stretches back over two hundred years to its founding in 1772 as a haven for ex-slaves. The Mansfield Declaration established a formal British polity in the territory, governed mostly by Creole blacks that had moved from England. The British fixed its borders with French Guinea at the Berlin Conference of 1884, but only formally declared it a protectorate in 1896. Like Nigeria, administration of Sierra Leone followed Lugard’s principles of indirect rule, and power was concentrated in the hands of the Creole elite. British intentions toward Sierra Leone were liberal, however; evolution toward self-rule started with the 1924 Constitution and was aimed at eventual independence. Progress was gradual and slow, as the Creole elite resisted greater participation of the protectorate political class. Despite wrangling between the groups, a new constitution in 1951, which laid the groundwork for eventual independence, putting the Sierra Leone’s future in the hands of its leaders.

Complicating the British position was concern over which of the new political parties would be in control when the moment of independence arrived. The most prominent new political party, the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) of Sir Milton Margai, won the 1951 election, and maintained close relations with Britain. Frustrated by lack of progress on independence, Sir Milton’s brother, Albert, along with Siaka Stevens, 100 These were in fact different groups of people.

Figure 7: Map of Sierra Leone

Source: CIA World Factbook
another prominent political leader, left the SLPP in 1957 to found the People’s National Party (PNP). These developments made it clear that the SLPP was no longer politically dominant. Concerned that a PNP government would not be as favorable to British interests when negotiating independence, the Colonial Office endeavored to delay new elections until after independence, thereby keeping Sir Milton, the SLPP, and a pro-British government in office.101

In April 1961, while Sir Milton remained in power, the British Parliament passed an independence act with a constitution that specially protected minorities and was difficult for future leaders to alter. Nonetheless, Sierra Leone retained Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. While the British timed independence to ensure that Sir Milton was in power at the time of the transition and attempted to maintain some degree of privileged ties, they were also weary of charges of neo-colonialism, and conducted themselves quite cautiously. In this way, Anglo-Sierra Leonean ties paralleled British relations with its other former African colonies.

After the obligatory entry to the Commonwealth, Britain’s chief bilateral goals focused on ensuring access to raw materials, keeping out the Communists, gaining support for British diplomatic positions, and being able to protect expatriate nationals and assets. A fundamental shift had occurred though, and aid was now the currency of British-Commonwealth relations in Africa. Despite constraints on the budget, the British, pressured by the international community, were the most substantial donors to Commonwealth Africa; sixty percent of all aid to the region in 1965 was British, a sum that was a quarter of total global bilateral British aid.102

If Britain hoped for reciprocal support of its goals from its aid program, Sierra Leone could not expect robust security support from Britain. Despite British interventions to stave off rebellions

102 Ibid., 64-5.
in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika, the British refused any military assistance to Sierra Leone that might give the impression it was not fully independent and autonomous. In the face of a military revolt in 1966-7, Sir Albert Margai, Sir Milton’s brother and successor as prime minister, requested both British troops for a court martial and later the visit of a Royal Navy vessel to bring stability to the country. In both cases, S. G. Fingland, the British High Commissioner, turned down the request, believing that such action would be subject to “likely accusations of neo-colonialist activity.” So cautious of ensuring visible independence were the British that they declined to intervene in multiple constitutional crises in the 1960s and 1970s, even recognizing coup governments rather than risk actively intervening. When Siaka Stevens led the country to declare itself a republic in 1971, the British government did not stand in its way.

*Anglo-Sierra Leonean Relations and Developments under the Major Government*

Although Britain’s military involvement would not come until 2000, the Sierra Leone Civil War actually started in 1991, and so dominated bilateral relations under the premiership of John Major, which started in late 1990. Although Major had adopted a more normative and principled foreign policy toward developing countries than his predecessor, Margaret Thatcher, and took part in the Harare Declaration of 1991, he also took the generally Conservative view that intra-state conflicts were intractable and not ripe for the West to impose peace.

Major was forced to pay attention to events in Sierra Leone in 1991, when President Joseph Momoh requested British aid due to the invasion of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from Liberia. Sierra Leone had been helpful during the Falklands War and contributed to the coalition in

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103 These interventions all occurred in the shadow of decolonization, and so I do not count them as “post colonial interventions.” In 1964, British troops helped stave off a mutiny in Uganda against the newly independent government. British troops brutally crushed the Mau Mau Uprising in the 1950s, before independence in 1962. Britain intervened in 1964 to prevent a revolution from occurring in Zanzibar, an island that was part of Tanganyika (now part of Tanzania).

104 Fingland in Ibid., 67.

105 Kargbo, Michael S., *British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone*, 241-248.
the First Gulf War, so its leaders expected some degree of reciprocity from the British. Instead, apathy won the day; Major did not feel the conflict was important enough to warrant serious assistance. Britain instead encouraged Sierra Leone to develop a system of multiparty democracy, which was well received by the Sierra Leonean people. However, a coup by members of the army disrupted the proceedings in 1992. Britain condemned it and cut off aid, but did little more. Having ceased to be the primary bilateral donor to the country anyway, the suspension of aid had no significant impact.

The new junta pledged a return to civilian rule, a pledge that was upheld in spite of a palace coup in 1996. The West urged elections once again, which were held and brought to power Ahmad Kabbah, of the Sierra Leone People’s Party. Peace never having been fully achieved, President Kabbah set to work to do so. The result: the Abidjan Peace Agreement, which officially marked the end of the civil war in 1996. However, the British had backed Kabbah, and this policy undermined the rebel group Revolutionary United Front’s (RUF) trust in the proceedings, which only compounded the fact that Kabbah had rushed negotiations to a point of weakness for his government. Despite the agreement, the RUF was suspicious that international arbiters were working against them and rearmed. According to author Michael Kargbo, British backing of the peace accords was just enough to provoke the RUF, but not enough to truly strengthen Kabbah’s government. Kargbo points to Britain’s insistence on the termination of the contract with Executive Outcomes, the South African private military company that had successfully forced the RUF into a corner earlier in the conflict, as particularly fatal to Kabbah’s subsequent position. Upon Tony Blair’s assumption of power in 1997, the security vacuum that met Executive Outcomes’ departure meant that conditions for Kabbah were increasingly dire.

106 Ibid., 248.
107 Ibid., 250.
108 Ibid., 259.
Foreign Policy of Tony Blair

When Tony Blair swept into office in 1997 as the first Labour prime minister in almost two decades, foreign policy was not high on his priority list. By the end of his ten years in office however, Blair had been involved in five wars on three continents, and become one of the world’s most active leaders. Blair’s interest in foreign policy developed in two spheres that were often intertwined: a so-called ethical foreign policy and a deep commitment to the poor countries, especially on the African continent. “Africa struck a very big chord with him,” recalls Sir David Manning, Blair’s foreign policy advisor and later ambassador to Washington. “He’s a center-left politician. He believed very strongly in trying to help the developing world develop.”

A devout Christian, his religion significantly affected his worldview as well. While Africa and the Commonwealth factored highly in his agenda, Blair applied these principles globally and not just to former British colonies. In order to follow through on these principles, he adopted a muscular view of the use of military force, believing that there are moments that oblige intervention from countries capable of it. This belief irrevocably linked “ethical foreign policy” and interventionism, two otherwise separate policies.

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109 Porteous, Tom, Britain in Africa, 1.
110 Manning, Sir David, interview by author, Skype, Stanford, CA and London, United Kingdom, 28 February 2013.
112 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
113 Senior British Official, email to author, 20 March 2013.
Blair's foreign policy was not born in a vacuum, however. Although foreign policy was traditionally an area that engendered consensus across the two parties, Labour had been the party historically more sympathetic to the developing world. The trend over several decades may have been in the “ethical” direction, but such rhetoric had not taken hold in the Foreign Office by the time Blair took office. Foreign aid, for instance, had been minimized under the Thatcher and Major governments, and was mostly used to support political, rather than developmental, objectives. Nevertheless, awareness of the need to move toward a more humanitarian approach could be found in more than just the Labour Party. After Robin Cook, at that point shadow foreign secretary and later Blair's first foreign secretary, asked her what was lacking in the Conservatives’ foreign policy, Pauline Neville-Jones (now Lady Neville-Jones), still a diplomat and not yet a member of the Conservative Party, told him, having lived through the conflict in Bosnia, that there had been several misses on human rights. Some Conservatives bristled at the notion that their foreign policy had not been “ethical.” Still others saw little difference. Field Marshal Lord Guthrie (then General Sir Charles), the nonpartisan chief of the defence staff, saw little change: “I always thought that Tony Blair’s ‘Ethical Foreign Policy’ was political rather than a reality. We saw no difference from what had been the policy of the Conservative Government.”

Blair’s policy was also not all Blair’s. Shortly after Labour came to power in 1997, Cook gave a speech in which he called for foreign policy with an “ethical dimension,” a theme of morality attached to self-interest. “The Labour Government does not accept that political values can be left behind when we check in our passports to travel on diplomatic business. Our foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other peoples for the democratic rights

114 Gallagher, Britain and Africa Under Blair, 9.
115 Pauline Neville-Jones, Baroness Neville-Jones, of Hutton Roof, interview by author, phone, Stanford, CA and London, United Kingdom, 1 March 2013.
116 Charles Guthrie, Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank, letter to author, 19 February 2013.
on which we insist for ourselves,” he declared.117 Blair and Cook practiced this most prominently right after Labour won the 1997 election by creating the Department for International Development (DFID), a cabinet-level ministry for overseas aid and development, which incorporated a “moral duty” in its raison d’être, and was emblematic of Blair’s ‘New Labour’ movement118

It was the genocide in Kosovo, though, that turned an ethical component to foreign policy into a major doctrine. Blair was highly distressed by the crimes against humanity in the Balkans, writing in his memoir:

I saw it essentially as a moral issue. And that, in a sense, came to define my view on foreign and military intervention. I also saw it as an act of enlightened national self-interest, for I believed that if we left the issue to fester or allowed ethnic cleansing to occur unchecked, it would eventually spill over into the other parts of Europe. However, my primary motivation was outrage at what was happening. Here were ordinary civilians being driven from their homes and turned into refugees, killed, raped, beaten up with savagery and often sadism, whole families humiliated or eliminated. God, had we learned nothing from Europe’s history? It was shocking.119

Manning equally recalled Blair’s horror: “I remember him say: ‘I never thought we would see people put into cattle trucks again in Europe.’ and certainly he was determined to stop that.”120

Following NATO’s campaign in Kosovo, Blair resolved to apply the moral principles that had guided him then more broadly. On 22 April 1999 he gave a speech at the Chicago Economic Club in which he presented his Doctrine of the International Community. Among other elements of global cooperation, he discussed the obligation for more active humanitarian interventions, and named five criteria for when such actions should occur:

First, are we sure of our case? War is an imperfect instrument for righting humanitarian distress; but armed force is sometimes the only means of dealing with dictators. Second, have we exhausted all diplomatic options? We should always give peace every chance, as we have in the case of Kosovo. Third, on the basis of a practical assessment of the situation, are there

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120 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
military operations we can sensibly and prudently undertake? Fourth, are we prepared for the 
long term? In the past we talked too much of exit strategies. But having made a commitment 
we cannot simply walk away once the fight is over; better to stay with moderate numbers of 
troops than return for repeat performances with large numbers. And finally, do we have 
national interests involved? The mass expulsion of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo demanded 
the notice of the rest of the world. But it does make a difference that this is taking place in 
such a combustible part of Europe.\\footnote{Blair, Tony, “Doctrine of the International Community,” speech delivered in Chicago, 22 April 1999, \textit{British Political Speech Archive}, accessed 19 May 2013, \url{http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=279}.}

Blair was increasingly interested in foreign policy and Africa in particular, but was he 
influenced by any imperial legacy? Although Blair and his ministers avoided direct linkages between 
contemporary foreign policy and old imperial mission, their attitudes and rhetoric echoed—both 
consciously and unconsciously—those of their imperial forbearers. \textit{The Economist} unfavorably 
compared Blair to Lord Palmerston, the Victorian prime minister who in an historical echo himself 
to the Roman Empire promised to defend British citizens everywhere in the world; Blair, \textit{The 
Economist} pointed out, “has extended his protection to anyone in the world, no matter their 
nationality.”\\footnote{“Getting Above His Station,” \textit{The Economist}, 4 October 2001, accessed 20 May 2013, \url{http://www.economist.com/node/806555}.} Moreover, although Blair and other British leaders no longer thought of Britain as a 
great power, the preservation of British prestige on the world stage was still considered important. 
In his 1994 leadership statement, Blair articulated a principled but no less assertive foreign policy 
objective: “Britain must adopt a foreign policy that is clear and consistently applied in order to 
Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2000), 7.} Others, like Lord Guthrie, no longer saw Britain as a great power, 
but as a country with important international obligations because of its membership in NATO and 
permanent seat on the UN Security Council.\\footnote{Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 19 February 2013.} Nonetheless, history plays a role in British foreign 
policy, According to Manning, the British people have a “sense that we ought to play a part in the 
world. . . [Unlike Germany and other European powers, Britain and France] were countries that had
empires, have a worldview, and have a world sense of ourselves that hasn’t completely evaporated fifty years after the end of empire.”

Robert Cooper, one of Blair’s top advisors on foreign affairs, made perhaps the most overt connection between empire and New Labour’s foreign policy in a 2002 essay, “The Post-Modern State.” Despite coming after the intervention in Sierra Leone, it revealed much of the thinking that went into Blair’s humanitarian interventions. Cooper called for a “new liberal imperialism” rooted in the nature of a new international system. He described the world as divided between three types of countries: pre-modern, often failed states that live in a Hobbesian world; traditional modern states that behave as rational actors; and post-imperial and post-modern states—former colonizers that prioritize not sovereignty, but cooperation. The member countries of the European Union, with oft-blurred lines between domestic and foreign affairs, epitomized the new post-modern state, with additional characteristics such as mutual interference, irrelevance of borders, and interdependence. The United States, jealous of its sovereignty and weary of international institutions, was not included as a post-modern state.

While different states might have different worldviews, Cooper argued, the events in pre-modern states could still threaten the security and interests of the post-modern ones. Cooper thus “imagine[d] a defensive imperialism,” complete with interventions to bring order to “pre-modern chaos.” Cooper commented on the ironies of imperialism’s legacies:

The most logical way to deal with chaos, and the one most employed in the past is colonisation. But colonisation is unacceptable to postmodern states (and, as it happens, to some modern states too). It is precisely because of the death of imperialism that we are seeing the emergence of the pre-modern world. Empire and imperialism are words that have become a form of abuse in in the postmodern world. Today, there are no colonial powers willing to take on the job, though the opportunities, perhaps even the need for colonisation is as great as it ever was in the nineteenth century. . .

125 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
All the conditions are there, but both the supply and demand for imperialism have dried up. And yet the weak still need the strong and the strong still need an orderly world. A world in which the efficient and well governed export stability and liberty, and which is open for investment and growth—all of this seems eminently desirable.

What is needed then is a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values. We can already discern its outline: an imperialism which, like all imperialism, aims to bring order and organization but which rests today on the voluntary principle.127

Though couched in terms of stability and human rights, Cooper’s essay essentially justified the right of the more evolved post-modern Europe—Britain in particular—to interfere in other countries’ domestic affairs, while relegating other countries to a less evolved, and second-class status. Without consciously referring to the British Empire, Cooper nonetheless repeated many of its paternalistic and moralizing tropes, namely that that the West knows what is best for the rest of the world, that it has the right to act on its beliefs, and that the rest of the world should accept this as legitimate.

Not all of Blair’s advisors saw historical legacy the same way, however. Cooper’s theories contrasted with the view of some at the Foreign and Commonwealth office, who, according to Manning saw the post-imperial role as being much more subtle:

A lot of [former African colonies] until very recently would look to Britain to help them if they got into difficulties. We had big aid programs. There is a big postcolonial engagement with them and that too I think is part of this story. Now, again, you can call it neocolonialism, I don’t think you need to; I think it’s the sort of hangover of empire rather than wish to build a new empire.128

For Blair’s chief of staff, Jonathan Powell, the legacy was historical, but not directly imperial. He saw Blair’s policies as continuing the liberal interventionist streak that dates to the nineteenth century, citing for instance, Britain’s support to the Greeks during their War of Independence. In his

127 Ibid.
128 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
opinion, the Blair Doctrine was not imperial in the empire-building sense, but was instead progressive and humanitarian.129

Tony Blair may not have sought to create a new imperial role for Britain, but he reasserted Britain’s position in Africa, albeit in a more politically correct way. Britain’s interventionist legacy would continue, but it would no longer intercede in Africa (or indeed in the developing world) for naked self-interest, but out of legitimate concerns for struggling countries. While Britain and its former colonies had a natural link through the Commonwealth (whose members it did privilege), Blair’s African agenda applied across the continent. The 2004 Commission for Africa included countries that were not colonized by Britain, and when Blair pushed through a $50 billion aid package at the 2005 G8 Summit in Scotland, it was for all of Africa, not just the Anglophone parts. But back in 2000, Blair’s new doctrine would be tested in one of its more historically symbolic former colonies, stretching the limits between humanitarian and neo-colonial intervention.

**Sierra Leone During the Early Blair Years**

President Kabbah’s democratically elected government did not last two years. With the absence of the South African mercenary group Executive Outcomes, disaffected Sierra Leone Army (SLA) soldiers led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma staged a coup d’état in May 1997. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), as the coup government was called, soon made overtures to the RUF and invited Foday Sankoh and his rebels to join the government. Aside from showing solidarity by inviting Kabbah as his personal guest at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh,130 Blair, having just been elected, did not take an active role in Sierra Leone. Instead things were left to his more active British High Commissioner Peter Penfold, who keenly

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129 Interview with Jonathan Powell, 17 May 2013.

supported President Kabbah even against historical precedent.\textsuperscript{131} After organizing an evacuation of British, EU, and Commonwealth nationals from Freetown, Penfold followed Kabbah’s government-in-exile to Conakry, Guinea as a show of support, and continued to offer advice.

The government also championed Sierra Leone at the UN Security Council by drafting UNSC Resolution 1132 on 8 October 1997, a resolution that imposed sanctions on Sierra Leone and embargoed aircraft, petroleum, arms, and other military materiel.\textsuperscript{132} This resolution, while well meaning and aimed at the rebel fighters, soon turned into a scandal. Although the British supported the Kabbah government, the embargo applied to all sides of the conflict. While in Conakry, Penfold gave what appeared to be tacit consent to a proposed arms deal by a private British military company called Sandline International, a deal that seemingly breached the sanctions. When the proposed deal became public, it led to a furor in London, as it showed apparent disarray in a Foreign and Commonwealth Office that had passed a UN resolution only to apparently violate it. The parliamentary inquiry into the “Arms-to-Africa” affair, led by Sir Thomas Legg, challenged the notion of the “ethical foreign policy” by asking how ethical could it be if it led to sanctions violations, and proceeded to pressure the government to show it was sticking to its principled doctrine.\textsuperscript{133} This controversy, which was determined to have come not from malfecasance but from

\textsuperscript{131} The British government historically recognized governments if they exerted effective \textit{de facto} control over the country, even if they had achieved such control through illicit or undemocratic means by acting against a previously recognized government. In 1997, the most current British policy dated to 1980, when Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington declared that Britain would recognize states, not governments. By maintaining recognition of the Kabbah government, Penfold and the FCO broke precedent according to Kargbo. He explains this by quoting both Minister of State for Africa Tony Lloyd and Baroness Symons, who both asserted that AFRC/RUF regime did not have effective control over Sierra Leone, thus not obligating a shift in British recognition away from Kabbah. See: Kargbo, Michael S., \textit{British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone}, 271-7.


\textsuperscript{133} Dorman, Andrew M., \textit{Blair’s Successful War: British Military Intervention in Sierra Leone}, (United Kingdom: Ashgate, 2009), 62.
bureaucratic errors, needlessly distracted London when it came to Sierra Leone and cast a shadow over its future policy there.\textsuperscript{134}

Notwithstanding the Arms-to-Africa affair (which did not, incidentally, lead to delivery of weapons anyway),\textsuperscript{135} the Nigerian-backed Economic Community of West Africa States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) force restored the Kabbah government in any case.\textsuperscript{136} Britain, meanwhile, convened the Sierra Leone International Contact Group to steer policy on the conflict. Not wanting to repeat the mistakes from the Arms-to-Africa controversy, Britain led efforts through the Contact Group to loosen sanctions on the Sierra Leonean government. Britain’s strategy was to train enough Sierra Leonean forces (about five thousand) to defeat the RUF. To that end, the UK sent a small advisory training team to aid government forces. Other assistance included £4 million in logistical support to the government and ECOMOG forces and a further £27 million in commitments to rebuild Freetown after conflict had subsided.\textsuperscript{137} In July 1998, the United Nations established the UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), which was impossibly outmanned. By Christmas, the RUF attempted to seize power once more, and had invaded Freetown. Although the British were still sympathetic to Kabbah and his government, it was clear to them that his position was no longer tenable. Consequently, the British and American governments pressured Kababh and the RUF to enter negotiations (the presence of British warships encouraged the latter), and talks began in Lomé, Togo.

The Lomé Peace Agreement was hastily negotiated, and was signed on 7 July 1999. The war was technically over; the RUF was given four ministerial posts, four deputy ministerial posts, and


\textsuperscript{135} Kargbo, Michael S., \textit{British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone}, 284.

\textsuperscript{136} It should be noted that ECOMOG operated under the mandate of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS). Although Nigeria did lead the ECOMOG forces, they had initially intervened in Sierra Leone unilaterally with forces not under the ECOMOG banner. For more, see Kargbo, Michael S., \textit{British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone}, 168.

\textsuperscript{137} Kargbo, Michael S., \textit{British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone}, 285-6.
Foday Sankoh was brought into the cabinet in the portfolio that put him in charge of minerals (and the infamous blood diamond fields). Although he supported the agreement as a new beginning for the country, many felt that President Kabbah had betrayed his people by consenting to a blanket amnesty, and bringing Sankoh into the government (particularly with authority over diamonds). Although the official British line was supportive, with Prime Minister Blair saying it “offers the people of Sierra Leone the prospect of an end to the terrible suffering,”¹³⁸ High Commissioner Penfold was much more critical, writing in his memoirs that “Britain and the United States had acted disgracefully in forcing through the Accord,” in which “Sierra Leone’s infant democracy had been undermined.”¹³⁹ When the conflict resumed—again—Penfold’s criticism would be vindicated as Britain faced its biggest challenge yet in its former colony.

**Intervention**

The Lomé Peace Agreement called for a Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (DDR) process, which would be led by the United Nations. To support the process, the United Nations established the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) through UNSC Resolution 1270 in October 1999. UNAMSIL replaced the failed UNOMSIL force and relieved the West African Monitoring Group troops. However, the initial deployment of around six thousand troops proved insufficient when the RUF resisted disarmament and a number of small incidents of violence against the UN took place. Consequently, another resolution, UNSC 1289, expanded the UN force’s mandate and size to 11,100 while reaffirming an expectation of the government’s control of resources such as diamonds and gold.¹⁴⁰ As the mandate to challenge the RUF was strengthened,

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¹³⁹ Penfold, Peter, *Atrocities*, 152.
¹⁴⁰ This was a direct rebuke to Sankoh’s rebellion even after the Peace Agreement had granted him control of natural resources like diamonds and gold. See United Nations Security Council (SC), Resolution 1289, “Sierra Leone,” 7 February 2000, http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/283/50/PDF/N0028350.pdf?OpenElement.
the Nigerian ECOMOG troops that had aggressively dealt with the RUF were withdrawing, replaced by green UN forces. When UN forces initiated disarmament and demobilization procedures, they were challenged by local RUF commanders, including an incident in April in which the RUF seized and maltreated several UN Military Observers and proceeded to attack two UN compounds. Events quickly spiraled, and the RUF attacked UN forces around the country, affecting among others, a British International Development team.\textsuperscript{141} Given the weakened position of both the Sierra Leonean Army (which had given up much of its armory in the Lomé Accord) and the beleaguered UN forces, by May 2000 it was clear that the RUF could take Freetown unless there was an external intervention in support of the government.\textsuperscript{142} At this point, the United Nations, the Americans, and the French all saw the British, the former colonial power, as the party responsible to act in the face of the UN’s failure.\textsuperscript{143}

At the least responsible for evacuating nationals and other entitled persons, the British began moving operational units into position to Dakar, Senegal and off the Sierra Leonean coast. With the RUF quickly advancing on Freetown and the United Nations evacuated to the Mamy Yoko Hotel, it was clear that an evacuation would take place. High Commissioner Alan Jones (Penfold’s replacement) requested such an action from the commander on the ground, Brigadier David Richards, and Operation Palliser commenced on 8 May 2000, with British paratroopers securing Lungi Airport and the assembly area in Freetown at the Mamy Yoko Hotel.

Although the initial evacuation was quickly completed, there were still nationals unaccounted for, and so for tactical reasons to that end British troops remained on the ground at Lungi Airport. In order to continue the evacuation, British forces needed to stabilize Freetown and its environs; consequently, they began patrols and brought in reinforcements. Additionally, the British took

\textsuperscript{141} Dorman, Andrew M., \textit{Blair’s Successful War}, 53-55.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 57.
\textsuperscript{143} Derek Kilner, “Interest and Responsibility: Explaining Western Military Intervention in Civil Wars,” (Honors thesis, Stanford University, 2006).
several steps to directly support the UN, including transporting troops on British helicopters, providing technical advise by liaising with the UNAMSIL commanders and pro-Kabbah forces, including the Sierra Leonean Army, AFRC (the former coup force now backing the government), the Civil Defence Force, and the Kamajors, a pro-Kabbah militia. British forces also opened up communications and provided deterrence by conducting flyovers with aircraft and anchoring warships visibly from the coast and upriver. Moreover, by securing the airport, the British kept the UN’s supply lines open, thereby improving stability in Freetown; any withdrawal might undermine UNAMSIL and that stability. A number of UN observers (including several British soldiers under UN command) were under siege, and British forces staged operations to rescue them, including direct confrontation with the rebels.

Throughout the summer, events on the ground continued to move more quickly than many in London could manage. On 25 August, a group unrelated to the RUF called the West Side Boys seized eleven trainers that were part of the Short Term Training Team along with a Sierra Leonean officer. The West Side Boys were basically a criminal gang; “rebel” was probably too charitable a term to describe them. After protracted and confused negotiations, British authorities in London and on the ground determined that the hostages’ lives were in danger, and special forces launched a rescue mission, called Operation Barras. Although one of the rescuers was killed, all of the hostages were rescued. Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon said that the operation sent “a number of powerful messages,” not least of which was encouraging “rebel units in Sierra Leone” to “realize the futility of continuing unlawful operations.”

The hostage crisis and Operation Barras highlighted an uncomfortable truth for the Blair government: there was no end game for its intervention. To that end, the British worked at the UN

144 Dorman, Andrew M., Blair’s Successful War, 92-4.
146 Hoon, Geoff in Dorman, Andrew M., Blair’s Successful War, 113.
to pass Security Council Resolution 1313 on 4 August, which substantially changed the mission of UNAMSIL from impartiality to support the Kababhb government. With a newly empowered UN force and Britain helping with the logistics and training, the UN was able to directly challenge the RUF in March 2001. Meanwhile, Britain and the United States led efforts to reduce the illegal diamond trade that funded the RUF through Liberian President Charles Taylor. This pressure forced the RUF to the negotiating table, and in May 2001, the groups’ leaders agreed to a permanent ceasefire and the initiation of a disarmament process for both the RUF and the pro-government militias, but not the SLA. The civil war, at long last, was over.

**Intervention to What End?**

*An Ever-Changing Mission*

Looking back on Britain’s military intervention in Sierra Leone, critics widely laud it as a ‘successful’ intervention, especially in light of Tony Blair’s debacle in the Second Gulf War. Many saw it as a validation of the Blair Doctrine; a just war fought well with minimal British casualties. Here was a model for the future. Would that it were so simple.

A closer examination of Britain’s role during the conflict tells us that throughout the intervention, many aspects of the British mission changed, including scope, size, and objectives. An evacuation force turned into a training force, which turned into a stabilization force, which eventually confronted the RUF. In London and on the ground, British leaders were not always of the same mind with how to achieve success or even what success meant.

Official statements and debates during the time of intervention indicate the evolution of Britain’s military involvement in Sierra Leone. On 8 May 2000, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the operation in the House of Commons:

In view of the limited commercial opportunities to leave Sierra Leone and the current insecurity, we have taken the precautionary measure of deployment of a number of British
The British Aren't Coming

military assets to West Africa. The forward elements of the current spearhead battalion, the 1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment arrived in Dakar, Senegal over the weekend. They are currently moving from Dakar to Freetown. In addition, HMS Ocean, support vessels with 42 Commando and a number of helicopters are moving towards the region and will be at Sierra Leone early next week. HMS Illustrious has been withdrawn from a NATO exercise to be available as needed.

Those measures have been taken to ensure that we are best placed to respond quickly to safeguard the security of British nationals. Our forces will ensure the security of the international Sierra Leone airport. Not only is that of immediate utility for the evacuation, but it is valuable in allowing the UN forces to continue to build up.  

Based on Cook’s statement, Britain was clearly engaged in an evacuation, but not much more. Although British forces were required to occupy the airport and other strategic locations, there was little indication of active intervention on behalf of Kabbah’s government besides perhaps minimal logistical support for the UN where it was convenient. Hoon confirmed Britain’s carefully defined role two weeks afterward in the House of Commons, reasserting that “the mission. . . . is to secure the airport to allow for the evacuation of British other entitled nationals and to permit reinforcement by the UN of its contingent in Sierra Leone. That remains the task in which British troops are engaged.”  

Nonetheless, as early as 9 May, the British press was already reporting that Britain’s involvement had escalated. On 10 May, Kabbah requested British intervention to enforce the peace, a suggestion that Hoon rebuffed. Nonetheless, despite Hoon’s statements otherwise, by 23 May British troops had engaged with the RUF, provided much support to the SLA, and had helped to arrest Foday Sankoh. Parliamentary reaction was mixed; members appeared more based in the reality of what was happening on the ground than Hoon, and expressed frustration at this. Conservative (and opposition) MP Douglas Hogg reflected many MPs’ concerns when he questioned Hoon in the same Commons session:

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150 “Britain Rejects Sierra Leone Call for Military Support,” Xinhua, 10 May 2000.
Does the right hon. Gentleman understand that, despite the statement, there remains continuing anxiety about the nature, scale and length of the commitment? Does he also understand that, although we welcome statements, they are not a substitute for a full debate on a substantive motion? Will he therefore provide such a debate on our military and political commitment in Sierra Leone? Does he understand that many of us feel that the practice ought to be changed so that, whenever there is a substantial deployment of British forces overseas, the authority of this House is sought and obtained on a substantive motion?151

Hogg’s Conservative colleague, Cheryl Gillian, had similar concerns:

Two weeks ago, we were told that our troops had a clear mandate to organise the evacuation of British citizens and ensure their safety. It is clear that that was not the whole truth; following the Minister's frankness in evidence to the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, we are now closer to the truth. The Minister told us that the troops' mandate was to evacuate British citizens, to secure Lungi airport, to facilitate the entry of UN peacekeepers via that secure airport, to provide logistical support to the UN force, to carry out searches for the hostages and to assist in any way that is considered desirable. That sounds like a mission brief. I believe that the Minister said yesterday—I could have checked his words had the transcript been available—that nothing is outside its mandate. If that is so, he should clear up the uncertainty and confusion about the deployment of forces. The remarks of a British officer with detailed knowledge of the operation demonstrate that confusion. He said that one of the problems in putting the mission together was that the Government blows hot and cold on this issue, especially Robin Cook. British forces continue to receive our support in whatever they are called on to do. However, the nature of our commitment is changing and Ministers have still not provided enough clarity. We read reports about the possibility that the United Kingdom might supply arms. The subject is being considered at a meeting today. The mission now appears to be an open-ended commitment, with the Minister giving the impression that our troops could be tied up in Sierra Leone for months. Despite the Foreign Secretary's assurances at the beginning of the month that British troops would not be committed as a combat force, they are taking on a combat role. The longer the mission lasts, the more likelihood there is of troops being drawn deeper into the conflict.

Nonetheless, others offered support for the unofficially expanded mission. Speaking also on 23 May,

Liberal Democrat Paul Keetch’s comments reflected the changed situation:

We urge the Government to accept that British forces are now central to the UN mission in Sierra Leone and that the premature withdrawal of our troops would have a devastating effect on that mission and on the UN’s credibility in peacekeeping missions in general. We must keep some of our forces in Sierra Leone until UN troops have established their authority throughout the country.152

Keetch was supported by his Conservative colleague, Crispin Blunt:

Given the United Kingdom's responsibility for Sierra Leone, the Government should see the action through to its proper conclusion. They were faced with a choice when they decided to deploy military forces. At first, the operation was intended simply to evacuate British nationals. Then another aim was added—to secure Lungi airport to get a United Nations force into the country. The main objective should be to return Sierra Leone to the control of its democratically elected president and restore civil society and security for its people.\(^\text{153}\)

While Hoon could be accused of obfuscating, he could also be accused of ignorance of the situation on the ground. But in fact, the lack of clarity in parliamentary proceedings indicated a much deeper gap between political leaders over the justification for the mission itself.

\textit{Motives for Intervention}

The political confusion over the intervention’s scope was reflected in discussions about Britain’s actual reasons for intervening, of which a great many have been given. The initial justification, of course, was for an evacuation of British nationals and other entitled persons. Such an operation to protect one’s nationals is fairly common when a country has the capacity to do so.\(^\text{154}\)

In his 8 May 2000 statement to the House of Commons, Foreign Secretary Cook asserted as much, declaring that “our first duty is to protect the lives of British citizens in Sierra Leone and of others for whom we have consular responsibility.”\(^\text{155}\) These concerns were echoed in Geoff Hoon's aforementioned remarks on 4 May, and even later after the mission had clearly shifted.

Nonetheless, the operation that transpired was much more than an evacuation. Opposition and press accusations of ‘mission creep’\(^\text{156}\) were more than fair, but were they accurate? Was it mission creep or had war planners intended to expand the force’s remit? While evacuating nationals was certainly an important priority, Blair had moral intentions from the very beginning. In a statement on 11 May, right at the beginning of the Operation Palliser, Blair’s spokesman, Alastair

\(^\text{154}\) For instance, six years later, during the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, dozens of countries airlifted and ferried nationals to safety from Beirut to Cyprus.
Campbell, told the press: "The prime minister emphasised that we do have extra responsibilities as a former colonial power, it would be wrong not to be there, but emphasised the troops are there for evacuation, not for combat." Such a quote contradicts itself; what “extra responsibilities” beyond evacuation would Britain have beyond active intervention?

Those extra responsibilities eventually became humanitarian in nature, which has, post facto, become the most prominent justification for intervention by British officials. Despite the early statements that the intervention was consular in nature, Blair and his ministers ignore the evacuations in their memoirs. In A Journey, Blair never mentions evacuation when he discusses the Sierra Leone action; neither does Peter Hain, who at the time was a Minister of State in FCO with responsibility for Africa, in his book Outside In. Although he concedes the British were already guarding Lungi airport (without mentioning that they were there for the evacuation), Blair paints the decision to intervene further in Sierra Leone as an attempt to give “the UN a chance to bolster its force” by “sort[ing] out the RUF,” a group he describes as “a collection of gangsters, madmen and sadists.” The result for Blair: “The country’s democracy was saved.” Sir David Manning is blunter, asserting that a significant part of the intervention “was driven because Blair and Robin Cook believed we could help stabilise West Africa and stop these mad drug gangs from killing people and chopping peoples’ arms off.” For Lord Guthrie, the humanitarian aspect was also key; he was anxious to avoid a ”genocide” that he believed was already occurring. This word choice is notable because the violence in Sierra Leone was never formally labeled a ‘genocide’ by the international community; the fact that Britain’s senior military commander at least privately thought

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158 Blair Tony, A Journey, 246-7; Hain, Peter, Outside In, 217-8.
159 Blair, Tony, A Journey, 246.
160 Ibid., 247.
161 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
162 Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 28 February 2013.
that the violence was at such a level is telling of what truly motivated the British high command. Clearly human rights concerns were on the minds of top British officials.

Despite such humanitarian concerns, it was the commander on the ground, Brigadier Richards (now General Sir David and chief of the defence staff), and not the politicians, who took the initiative to expand the mission beyond an evacuation. Richards openly admits that he went beyond his mandate for the first eight or nine days of Operation Palliser, and recalls assuring President Kabbah by telling him that “the Brits were here and would help him; he didn’t need to worry about evacuating.”

Realizing that the same tactics needed to secure an evacuation were the same to defend Freetown and bolster the UN force, Richards went ahead and took charge of the defense of Freetown, coordinating amongst the Sierra Leone Army, UN force, Nigerians, and the Kamajors to form a motley army. He used this force to push out about twenty-five miles to give the RUF a “bloody nose” and deter them from offensives against Lungi Airport or Freetown.

Although he admits that his actions were outside the remit of his orders, Richards believed that his actions were in the vein of Blair’s liberal interventionism and what Blair would have

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163 Interview with Sir David Richards, 17 May 2013.
164 Ibid.
165 Ibid.
wanted. In this, his intuition was correct and he was vindicated when he received orders a week and half later to expand the mission to legitimize what he had been doing. Although Blair’s chief of staff, Jonathan Powell, concedes that Richards seized an “opportunistic chance,” he recalls that Blair was “keen” to give permission to the larger intervention once what Richards was doing became clear. In this way, Sierra Leone became an intervention fought under the Blair Doctrine. Even without Blair’s initiation, Richards’ actions were unquestionably inspired by Blair’s ethical aspirations for foreign policy, and this was a case of a military commander correctly interpreting his prime minister’s policies. Although Blair and others claims a bit more credit than they should in their memoirs, Blair did embrace the operation he unwittingly influenced and formally changed Richards’ orders to support Kabbah’s government, start the training regime, and confront the RUF.

Despite the enthusiasm British leaders showed for the Sierra Leone intervention, it is still an exception; Britain has decided not to intervene in many humanitarian crises. What made the situation in Sierra Leone different? On one hand, nothing. For many policymakers, Sierra Leone was just one in a series of morally driven humanitarian interventions undertaken by Tony Blair’s government. In his memoirs, Blair’s discussion of the Sierra Leone intervention comes in the chapter on Kosovo, and he directly links action in Sierra Leone with the lessons of inaction in Bosnia. Peter Hain includes Sierra Leone in a chapter entitled “Making a Difference,” and writes of how success there emboldened Blair’s doctrine of humanitarian intervention, especially in the run-up to the Iraq War.

166 Ibid.
167 Richards actually manipulated the press in Sierra Leone to get those orders from London. He gave reporters positive stories of the British mission, showing that it was succeeding, in order to get past bureaucratic obstacles and straight to Prime Minister Blair. For more, see Little, Alan, “The Brigadier Who Saved Sierra Leone,” BBC News, 15 May 2010, accessed 19 May 2013, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/8682505.stm.
168 Interview with Jonathan Powell, 17 May 2013.
169 Blair, Tony, A Journey, 249.
170 Hain, Peter, 215-8.
But if instead of humanitarian situations worldwide one considers Sierra Leone as an ex-colony, the intervention is unique. Britain might have been intervening all around the world, but it certainly was not intervening in either its former colonies or in Africa, and especially nowhere that met both criteria. Africa was beset by wars and humanitarian crises, and Blair’s interest in Africa supposedly extended to all countries, not just members of the Commonwealth. What was it about Sierra Leone that prompted a robust response?

Despite discussions of Sierra Leone as just one of many humanitarian interventions, colonial legacy played a significant, though not decisive, part in the decision to go to war. At the end of the day, the reason the United Kingdom intervened and not France or the United States was because it was the former colonial power. Prior to the intervention, British diplomats took the lead because of the historical bilateral relationship between the two countries and because Sierra Leone was in the Commonwealth. High Commissioner Penfold played a large role in diplomatic maneuverings during the AFRC coup in 1997 to support Kabbah’s government, even advising him while they both were in exile in Conakry, Guinea. The warm relationship between Kabbah and Penfold extended to relations with Britain, despite the unfortunate legacy of the Arms-to-Africa Scandal. This diplomatic bond meant that the British were usually the best informed of the Western countries, simply because they had the most people on the ground.\textsuperscript{171} Moreover, the Sierra Leonean people were extremely pro-British and pro-Commonwealth, waving British flags at various points during the conflict and honoring Penfold by making him an honorary chief (and singing “God Save the Queen”).\textsuperscript{172} These warm ties cannot be underestimated. Kabbah asked for British assistance, and given that the intervention supported, rather than opposed, the government (as some interventions are wont to

\textsuperscript{171} Everard, John, interview by author, phone, Foster City, CA and London, United Kingdom, 24 March 2013.
\textsuperscript{172} Penfold, Peter, \textit{Atrocities}. 
do), Britain had added legitimacy in Africa and internationally, even without a UN Security Council resolution authorizing its intervention.

As evidenced by Penfold’s performance, vestigial responsibility for a former colony remained an important factor in the minds of officials in London. Sierra Leone, after all, is a member of the Commonwealth and once had Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state. Although Britain does not consider itself responsible to bring an end to every conflict in a former colony, it disconcerts officials in London to see a member of the Commonwealth in chaos. Britain might not have had a “special responsibility” for Sierra Leone, but it probably would not have intervened in Sierra Leone had it not been a former colony. Blair also conceded “Britain, the former colonial power, had an especial interest.” Moreover, having failed to intervene in the early 1990s, and having expended much diplomatic capital in the late 1990s to achieve an accord, the British felt they could not let down the country once again. This commitment—often framed in moral and humanitarian terms—was reflected in the press as well. In an opinion piece, The Economist’s Africa editor Richard Dowden drew historical parallels to Britain’s role in stamping out the slave trade in Sierra Leone and the ongoing conflict, which represented “a choice between good and evil, barbarism and civilization.” Even after the successful intervention, one editorial in The Independent declared that Britain now had a “moral duty toward the long-suffering people of Sierra Leone,” that might oblige British troops to “have to be sent back. . .if things go wrong” again.

British prestige was also a stake. The United Kingdom, after all, aspired to play a role on the world stage, a role it could not justify if it was unable to successfully intervene in a minor conflict. Moreover, failure to respond by Britain might have undermined Blair’s Doctrine of the International

174 Everard, John, letter to author, 10 March 2013.
175 Blair, Tony, A Journey, 246.
177 “Like It or Not, Britain Is Now Committed to Sierra Leone,” The Independent, 8 June 2000.
178 Dorman, Andrew M., Blair’s Successful War, 66.
Community. Having been previously involved in the conflict diplomatically, failure to act when it had the opportunity to do so would have made Britain look like a paper tiger.\textsuperscript{179} In his afore-cited opinion piece, Dowden wrote that “a line in the sand has been drawn on the world’s commitment in Sierra Leone,” and “to walk away now would” not only mean “to give this country up to death[,] it would also mean that, despite all the rhetoric about treating Africa the same as anywhere else, when the going gets tough, Britain and the US walk away. That would be shameful.”\textsuperscript{180} In Sierra Leone, as opposed to other conflicts, Britain was able to act unilaterally and was in a position to do so, with superior force posture in Africa compared to its NATO allies except for the United States.\textsuperscript{181} The presence of a strong British diplomatic contingent meant that London had some of the best (and only) intelligence of what was actually occurring in Freetown.\textsuperscript{182} British leaders may not have been trying to recreate the Empire, but if Britain were to retain credibility as having unilateral capability, Sierra Leone’s crisis begged a robust response.

The obligations tied to prestige were also tied to an obligation as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to answer the call to action. British leaders had no confidence in UNAMSIL, believing that without British intervention, UNAMSIL would fail yet again. Prestige aside Britain had no interest in seeing this happen, for it might undermine peacekeeping globally.\textsuperscript{183} Britian felt that its position as a member of the Security Council obligated it to act when it had the opportunity to do so, and was irritated that many of its European allies did not.\textsuperscript{184} Moreover, debates over the very future of UN peacekeeping added pressure for Britain to act,\textsuperscript{185} and concurrent

\textsuperscript{179} Kilner, Derek, “Interest and Responsibility,” 138,
\textsuperscript{180} Dowden, “Walking Away Now Is to Give This Country Up to Death.”
\textsuperscript{181} Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 19 February 2013.
\textsuperscript{182} Everard, John, interview by author, 24 March 2013.
\textsuperscript{183} Keetch, Paul, Hansard HC Deb 23 May 2000.
\textsuperscript{184} Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 19 February 2013.
discussion about a peacekeeping mission to the Democratic of the Congo might have also weighed at the back of British diplomats’ minds.\textsuperscript{186}

Nonetheless, support for the United Nations only went so far—the British command did not trust the theretofore-ineffective UN mission. As Britain expanded its role after Operation Palliser, the United Nations, having been upstaged by the smaller, independent British force, wanted to put at least some of the British contingent under the UN banner in order to save face.\textsuperscript{187} The British military leadership, however, had no confidence in the UN command, and refused to countenance their forces under what they saw as incompetent leadership. According to Lord Guthrie:

The United Nations seems to me totally ill equipped to tackle serious operation[al] problems and war fighting. In Sierra Leone, the leadership, both military and politically, was almost non-existent and the contingents of various nations were in Sierra Leone but doing very little. The British made themselves unpopular by saying we would go to Sierra Leone but we were not prepared to put our Forces under the command of the United Nations and wear blue berets. In the event this was absolutely the right decision and we were able to calm things down.\textsuperscript{188}

Even if the subsequent intervention Guthrie describes was not planned, the evacuation of British and Commonwealth citizens represented a colonial legacy itself. While not the largest British expatriate population in Africa, there were two thousand expatriates in Sierra Leone in 2006; Penfold evacuated one thousand British passport holders in 1997.\textsuperscript{189} British expatriates certainly live in countries not part of the Commonwealth, but the significant British community in Sierra Leone, in particular in Freetown, and the influence of the British high commissioner, indicate closer bonds than would probably have existed if Sierra Leone had not been a colony. The British community was the most prominent Western community in the country, and this only reinforced its special links as the former colonial power.

\textsuperscript{186} Kilner, Derek, “Interest and Responsibility,” 129.
\textsuperscript{187} Dorman, Andrew M., \textit{Blair’s Successful War}, 116.
\textsuperscript{188} Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 19 February 2013.
\textsuperscript{189} Penfold, Peter, \textit{Atrocities}, 38.
It is also worth remembering that there were subtle neo-colonial undertones in Blair’s Doctrine of the International Community. Blair may not have set out to reconstruct the British Empire, and many reject that colonialism played any part in his thinking, but Blair was an undoubtedly internationally focused prime minister. The world was (and continues to be) his stage as a leader, and Blair believed in Britain’s ability, if not right, to remake the world in a better image. Recalls Manning: “There was a view with Blair and his entourage that there were occasions where it was justified to intervene, especially if governments asked them to do so, as Sierra Leone did.”

Blair’s idea of Britain’s role in the world invited vigorous responses when a country was in trouble and Britain was in a position to help.

Conclusion

When Tony Blair visited Freetown in February 2002, its people greeted him as a hero. Such images have helped stamp Britain’s intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000 as the epitome of a “good” intervention. Quick, clean, and legally sanctioned, the British operation saved the UNAMSIL operations and the government of President Ahmad Kabbah. It also undoubtedly saved the lives of many civilians at the hands of the barbaric RUF. To read the memoirs of Tony Blair and other British leaders at the time, this is the happy narrative of what happens when the West does foreign interventions right.

By and large, this assessment of Britain’s intervention is correct, but with several crucial caveats. Blair, the military, and even his ministers might have intended for a larger operation all along, but that is not how it started. Operation Palliser aimed to do one thing: safely evacuate British and other protected nationals. In Parliament and in speeches, Blair, Cook, and Hoon all argued that British forces were not there to save the UN force or Kabbah. Meanwhile, the military was for an

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190 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
operation with a wider scope, and a disconnect between politicians became present in London. While opposition MPs queried government ministers over Britain’s expanded role in the conflict, Hoon and Cook played ignorant, perhaps not ready to accept that the political objectives had changed, or perhaps truly aloof from conditions on the ground. There is also a third possibility, which I think is most likely, that the confusion in Parliament reflected internal dissension over what the mission actually was becoming. The conflict was, after all, on distant shores; London had given considerable autonomy to its commanders on the ground and Brigadier Richards used the press to show politicians in London what was truly happening. While Blair inspired the operation and later supported the humanitarian expansion of it, Richards essentially worked outside of London’s control for over a week, actions that explain the consequential confusion in Westminster.

Although the intervention started as an evacuation and became primarily humanitarian in nature, one cannot say that the subtleties of colonial legacy played no role at all. Blair’s Doctrine of the International Community had nuanced neo-colonial influences, and envisioned an assertive United Kingdom reminiscent of its imperial role. The evacuation, of course, stemmed from expatriates in a historically English-speaking former British colony. Supporters of humanitarian intervention appealed to Britain’s anti-slave trade history in the country as a legacy to uphold in modern times. But more importantly, the privileged ties between London and Freetown, the diplomatic role Britain had played, and the expectations of the international community, all made Britain the obvious country to unilaterally intervene. In fact, Sierra Leone, proud of its British connection, welcomed the intervention that saved its democracy. After the war, some Sierra Leoneans even asked Brigadier Richards to stand for the presidency, and at the time of Blair’s 2002 visit, up to 70% of Sierra Leoneans were in favor of a British “trusteeship” over the country

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192 Kargbo, Michael S., *British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone*, 106.
194 Interview with Sir David Richards, 17 May 2013.
until its political future could be worked out. While they did not recolonize, British officials went halfway by taking command of the country's military and police.195

What does Sierra Leone mean for broader British foreign policy? It was, after all, just one conflict, and after the Iraq War, Blair's aggressive, interventionist style of foreign policy seemed to go out of style, having tarnished "ethical foreign policy" with interventionism.196 Yet the ghosts of Iraq have not quieted the echoes of victory in Sierra Leone. When Blair's New Labour successor Gordon Brown lost the 2010 General Election to Conservative David Cameron, it would not have come as a surprise if the newfound penchant for interventions disappeared into the history books an anomaly, particularly in the midst of an economic downturn. But this has proven not to be the case. In Britain, prime ministers feel the weight of history when they wield the power of their office, in particular prime ministers with such social background as David Cameron, whose ancestors ran the Empire. For men like him, the legacy of upholding Britain's role in the world remains an important factor in foreign policy.197 Even though the Conservatives under Cameron have taken great pains to distance themselves from Tony Blair's habit of interventionism (and the failure of Iraq), they retain the idea that Britain is a great power that owes the world its attention when something goes terribly wrong, particularly when a crisis is geographically close to Europe. In this way, the successes of Kosovo and Sierra Leone have changed British foreign policy for the foreseeable future.

Evidence of this continuity came as Britain confronted the Arab Spring. Speaking of the civil war in Syria, Foreign Secretary William Hague spoke of a similar values-based foreign policy as New Labour:

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195 Doyle, Mark, “Britain’s Future in Sierra Leone.”
196 Email from Senior British Official, 20 March 2013.
There is no single country that has the power to transform this situation [of human rights abuses worldwide] alone. . .this does not diminish the centrality of human rights in the core values of our foreign policy. We cannot have a foreign policy without a conscience. Foreign policy is domestic policy written large. The values we live by at home do not stop at our shores. Human rights are not the only issue that informs the making of foreign policy, but they are indivisible from it, not least because the consequences of foreign policy failure are human. When ceasefires break down or unchecked climate change takes hold, ordinary people suffer. Where there is lawlessness, human rights abuses inevitably follow, affecting our security in the UK as well as affronting our common humanity.198

In 2011, the Arab Spring came to Libya, and a rebellion there against longtime dictator Muammar Gaddafi led to massive reprisals against civilian populations. The British, partnering with the French, charged ahead (as the American president, Barack Obama, famously “led from behind”), and in Operation Ellamy, opened up a campaign of aerial sorties against the regime’s military. While not in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Libyan campaign went against the impulses of the mandarins at the Foreign Office, and ultimately, it was the moral conviction of David Cameron that made the difference in the British decision.199 Tony Blair’s neo-imperial doctrine had crossed party lines. We now know that humanitarian intervention is not Blairite, but British, and that the legacies that influenced Labour leaders also influenced their colleagues across the aisle. Blair’s advisor Manning remembers thinking that Blair could have given Cameron’s UN speech.200

Britain’s proclivity to act in the world is its most potent imperial legacy, of which its intervention in Sierra Leone is but one example. As for traditional post-colonial legacies, while they certainly influenced Britain’s involvement in Sierra Leone—and will undoubtedly play a role in the future when other former colonies are in peril—we can be certain that even if they are not the decisive factors in intervention decisions, they will certainly be important ones.


200 Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013.
Chapter IV: Once Wasn’t Enough: France, Côte d’Ivoire, and the Conflict That Brought About Two Interventions

Since decolonization, France has unquestionably been the greater intervener in its former African empire. Having frequently launched coups, backed rebellions, and strengthened dictators in Africa, France’s post-colonial reputation on the continent is decidedly—and deservedly—different than that of the relatively hands-off British. Despite declarations of the end of Françafrique in the 1990s and later in the 2000s, French forces intervened twice in Côte d’Ivoire in the twenty-first century: in 2002 to stop a civil war and in 2011 to remove President Laurent Gbagbo after he refused to concede the 2010 presidential election. Although these interventions differ, they nonetheless represent a continued French interest in its former colonies and can be more broadly applied to help us explain the nature of contemporary French military involvement on the continent. As two of the more prominent interventions of the last decade, Côte d’Ivoire is a lens through which we can apply a better understanding of the types of colonial legacies that impact French decision-making. Moreover, by contrasting them to Britain’s intervention in Sierra Leone—which came just two years before and was ongoing at the time of the first Côte d’Ivoire action—we can explore how the two former imperial powers exercise their militaries differently in Africa.

Franco-Ivorian Relations in Historical Perspective

French presence in Côte d’Ivoire dates back to the nineteenth century, when it was one of several regions in West Africa where the French traded and settled. Although there had been informal French protectorates on the coast, French sovereignty over the country was established in 1886, at which point aggressive exploration of the inland areas began. Côte d’Ivoire became a formal colony in 1893, and later was part of the administrative federation of French West Africa (Africain occidentale française, or AOF). Ivorian workers labored in the country’s fertile fields, making it a valuable colony for the French. Reflecting the colony’s wealth, the capital, Abidjan, was called the
‘Paris of West Africa.’ However, with a few exceptions, the French followed the concept of association in Côte d’Ivoire, leaving most Ivorians disenfranchised as subjects of the *indigénat*, the legal code that left Africans with very few rights.

Not immune to the nationalist movements throughout West Africa, Côte d’Ivoire under the leadership of Félix Houphouët-Boigny moved toward independence in the late 1950s. Houphouët-Boigny’s approach was a cautious one. He did not see immediate independence as a good thing, and endorsed a slow evolution toward that eventuality by strongly supporting Côte d’Ivoire’s membership in the *Communauté Française*. Moreover, as a member of the French National Assembly and a minister in the French government, he was quite pro-French, and saw his country’s fortune as tied with that of France in Africa.

Upon Ivorian independence in 1960, Houphouët-Boigny became president, and established a soft authoritarian regime, co-opting political opponents instead of jailing them, for instance. In order to maintain control, he reduced the size of the police and military, instead relying on a defense treaty with France to protect the country from aggression. In fact, French troops have been deployed in Côte d’Ivoire since independence. Such close ties extended across other sectors and were at the heart of Houphouët-Boigny’s regime.

The relationship between Côte d’Ivoire and France epitomized Françafrique; indeed Houphouët-Boigny coined the term as “France-Afrique” in 1955. For Côte d’Ivoire, the French relationship was all encompassing, and was based on Houphouët-Boigny’s close personal friendship with Jacques Foccart, the head of the Africa unit at the *Palais Élysée* under De Gaulle.201 Several Frenchmen, including his chief of staff, Guy Nairay, and the government’s secretary general, Alain Melkiri, occupied key roles in Houphouët-Boigny’s government.202 In addition to the defense pact, on which Houphouët-Boigny based the security of his country, Paris and Abidjan were keen

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partners in foreign affairs, helping each other meddle in conflicts and coups all over Africa. Among many such instances, Houphouët-Boigny aided rebels in Guinea, supported the coup plotters who overthrew Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, backed an attempted coup in Dahomey (later renamed Benin), participated in the Congo Crisis, and backed rebels in Biafra and Angola.\textsuperscript{203}

Economically, Côte d’Ivoire and France have maintained close trade relations, underpinned not least by the CFA Franc, which is still underwritten by the French government.\textsuperscript{204} Until 2008, France was Côte d’Ivoire’s largest trading partner and Côte d’Ivoire is France’s leading trade partner in the Franc area and fourth largest in Sub-Saharan Africa.\textsuperscript{205} French subsidiaries employ some forty thousand employees, and along with the over five hundred small and medium-sized French-owned businesses operating in the country, account for 30% of Ivorian GDP and 50% of the government’s tax revenue.\textsuperscript{206} The trade relationship is also important for both sides; in 2010, French imports totaled €617 million while exports totaled €817 million.\textsuperscript{207}

Moreover, French business interests play key roles in the dominant cocoa and coffee industries, as well as in the Ivorian banking sector.\textsuperscript{208}

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, French expatriates in Côte d’Ivoire number between fifteen and twenty thousand.\textsuperscript{209} The community there remains closely tied to metropolitan France.

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{Map of Côte d’Ivoire}
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Source: CIA World Factbook

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{205} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{207} Ouattara, Souleymanne, \textit{Les échanges commerciaux entre la Côte d’Ivoire et La France en 2010}, (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Industry, 2011).
\textsuperscript{208} Melly, “Why France Must Tread.”
and in the event of a crisis, its safety features in the French press. There is also a sizeable Ivorian immigrant population in France, though of negligible political importance.

2002 Intervention

Background to Ivorian Civil War

President Félix Houphouët-Boigny’s death in 1993 ushered in the most political instability the country had seen in years, setting the stage for the conflicts that would ultimately lead to the civil war of 2002. Although Houphouët-Boigny had held the nation together, his political heir, Henri Konan Bédié used identity politics to consolidate power, playing ethnic, religious, and geographic identities off of each other to divide the nation that his predecessor had united. Bédié preached a xenophobic and nationalist ideology called Ivorité, which privileged the southern Christian population over the northern Muslims, who were portrayed as foreigners and excluded from civic life in many cases. Leading up to the 1995 elections to replace Houphouët-Boigny, Bédié enacted laws that excluded candidates who had lived outside the country for the preceding five years or had a foreign-born parent. Although Bédié justified the laws using his Ivorité ideology, they were widely believed to be aimed at rival politician Alassane Ouattara, a former prime minister who had a foreign-born father and had been living outside the country as a top official at the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C.

Bédié won the election and established a government, but was overthrown four years later in a coup perpetrated by a group of soldiers, the first coup since Ivorian independence. The junta turned to Robert Guéï, the head of the army under Houphouët-Boigny and an opponent of Bédié, and made him president. Guéï held power until he lost elections held in 2000 to Laurent Gbagbo. At

first he refused to recognize the results, but popular protests forced him to flee, and Gbagbo took power.

An opponent of Houphouët-Boigny, Laurent Gbagbo founded the opposition *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI) in 1982, and spent much of the decade in exile. He returned to the country to contest elections in 1990 against Houphouët-Boigny only to lose to Bédié. Gbagbo’s politics were based on opposing France, and he sought to distance Côte d’Ivoire from Houphouët-Boigny’s Francophile policies. Meanwhile, France similarly held Africa at arm’s length under Prime Minister Lionel Jospin’s “ni-ni” policy, and French-Ivorian relations reached a low when France declined to intervene in the 1999 coup.

**First Ivorian Civil War**

On 19 September 2002, the people of Côte d’Ivoire awoke to chaos throughout the country. A group of soldiers, mostly from the increasingly disenfranchised north, attempted to seize power from Gbagbo’s government. The putschists failed after fierce fighting in the capital, but a connected rebellion in the north quickly took Bouaké, Côte d’Ivoire’s second city, and bifurcated the country between rebel and government sides. Gbagbo’s forces blamed former President Guéï for the coup, as many of his men were part of the rebellion, and he and his wife were killed on its first night. Opposition leader Alassane Ouattara, similarly accused of complicity despite a lack of evidence thereof, took refuge in the French embassy. Within a week, the rebels coalesced into a group called the *Mouvement Patriotique de la Côte d’Ivoire* (MPCI), and after they regrouped, it became apparent that they would march south toward Abidjan.

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The initial French reaction was noncommittal at best. Although the French government expressed its support for Gbagbo’s legitimacy, it declined to mobilize the six hundred French troops stationed at a base near Abidjan’s airport, considering the violence to be an “internal affair.” The message to the fifteen thousand French expatriates in the country was to remain inside and out of sight. Meanwhile, the French considered several options. First was to intervene militarily on behalf of Gbagbo and his government. Gbagbo accused Burkina Faso, which had longstanding ethnic and cultural ties to northern Ivorians, of supporting the rebellion. If this were true, then France’s mutual defense pact with Côte d’Ivoire obliged a French response on Gbagbo’s behalf. The French, however, rejected this version of the facts, and never seriously considered a full response on Gbagbo’s behalf. The second option was to encourage a political and diplomatic settlement. The third option was to move to protect and evacuate the French nationals whose safety the conflict compromised.

The French took the second and third options, deploying two hundred soldiers from bases in Africa to reinforce their forces already in country on 22 September. Opération Licorne (or “Unicorn”) was the first such operation in a number of years, and signaled the seriousness the French took the situation, especially in case of harm to their nationals. At the same time, Foreign Minister Dominque de Villepin took the diplomatic lead to try and resolve the crisis by holding a small emergency summit with African leaders in Marrakech, Morocco. By 28 September, diplomatic attention turned to military attention, as the French government acceded to Ivorian demands.

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217 Rueff, Judith, Le feu au pré-carré.
218 Rueff, Judith, Le feu au pré-carré, 90.
requests to provide “logistical support” in line with its defense treaty with Côte d’Ivoire. The aid comprised of transport, communications, and food aid. On 26 September, they evacuated two thousand French from Bouaké, repeating the exercise in Khorogo, a northern city, on 29 September. The rebels allowed the French to enter their territory in order to evacuate French nationals, but French soldiers stayed even after the Americans (with whom the French jointly evacuated nationals) had left. Without explicitly taking sides, this French action prevented the fall of Gbagbo’s government. Despite previous calls for an interposition force to be West African in makeup, the French evacuation took up position between rebel-occupied Bouaké and Sakassou on 1 October, blocking the southern progress of the rebels in order for a ceasefire to be negotiated. Without actively combatting the rebels, France acted decisively in Gbagbo’s interests, deploying its troops as a warning to the rebels that any advance southward would be met with French opposition.

Despite hopes for a quick exit, France’s role would only become more involved. An October ceasefire brokered by the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) proved not to hold; among other violations, two western rebel groups not affiliated with the main movement attacked French positions in December and early

Figure 11: Côte d’Ivoire Post-Civil War, with French Zone of Control

Source: WikiCommons

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January, leaving several French troops injured and more than thirty rebels dead.\textsuperscript{226} Partially as a consequence of those incidents, French President Jacque Chirac brokered a peace agreement signed on 26 January 2003.

The Linas-Marcousiss Accord left Gbagbo in office, but with a national unity government holding many of the president’s powers.\textsuperscript{227} The deal was deeply unpopular amongst Gbagbo supporters, who rioted and attacked French targets; protestors even asked for an American intervention instead.\textsuperscript{228} The French role had once again expanded; the forces that were to have left for the West African peacekeepers remained alongside them to protect the new government.

The civil war resumed in 2004—with France in the middle. The various factions were stalling on implementing the various peace agreements, and while the Linas-Marcoussis Accord had been signed, its timetable was not respected. When the rebels, renamed the \textit{Forces Nouvelles de Côte d’Ivoire} (FNCI or FN), declared they would not disarm, Gbagbo ordered an attack. In the course of the operation, government jets bombed an \textit{Opération Licorne} base, killing nine French soldiers and an American civilian, while wounding thirty-one French soldiers. Although the Ivorians claimed the attack was an accident, the French did not concur, and retaliated by bombing Ivorian aircraft on a base in Yamoussoukro. In response, mobs attacked French targets throughout the country.\textsuperscript{229} In one instance, French soldiers fired on a crowd, killing at least twenty Ivorians and leading to the


evacuation of nearly eight thousand French.230 Despite the tensions, both sides managed to deescalate the situation, and French peacekeepers remain today under the ongoing Opération Licorne.

Motives for Intervention

France had myriad reasons to intervene in Côte d'Ivoire, and while not all of them were neo-colonial, many of them were closely related to the legacies of France’s role in Africa. Even if the mission objectives changed over time, the initial French response was almost undoubtedly in order to protect the more than twenty thousand French and other Western civilians on the ground. This was the stated objective of French politicians, and operationally was what the French and American armies did. Speaking a day after the revolt, Defense Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie declared “France does not have the intention to interfere in a country’s domain. What is envisioned in the cooperation agreements, is that in the event of a foreign attack against one of the countries [with whom France has a mutual defense agreement], such as Côte d’Ivoire, France can intervene, but only in this case.”231 Alliot-Marie specified that France’s goal was to “make all necessary provisions to protect French nationals” in Côte d’Ivoire.232 In his memoirs, President Chirac also makes clear that as of 22 September, the French intervention was “to protect our citizens and those of other Western countries.”233

Although safeguarding citizens in distress is the responsibility of any government with the capacity to do so, the French expatriate population that obligated such a response in Côte d’Ivoire was large for a reason. Côte d’Ivoire’s place as the jewel of French West Africa made it an attractive location for French émigrés. The many dualnationals in the country reflected the close personal ties

232 Ibid.
between Ivorians who moved back and forth to France, and whose children were quite often born, raised, and held citizenship in France. Moreover, Côte d’Ivoire had the most significant economic ties to France of any of the other Francophone countries in West Africa; the presence of French banking, telecommunication, cocoa, and natural resource firms further entrenched French business in the country, strengthening economic ties and bringing even more Frenchmen as workers to the country as expatriates. The personal stakes of French citizens were thus quite high, and the collapse of the Ivorian state would have had disastrous ramifications on the French expatriate population; France really did have something to lose.\(^{234}\)

My research has been unable to discern whether or not Opération Licorne was intended as an interposition force from the beginning; nonetheless, it was certainly a contingency that was well planned and coordinated with the evacuation mission. Conveniently, holding French forces in place to facilitate further protection missions necessitated maintaining a position between the government and rebel lines, incidentally thwarting the latter.

Although they did not publically endorse any sort of intervention in the beginning, the writings of key French leaders indicate that they were motivated to do more than ferry citizens out of harm’s way. If not his first priority, Chirac believed any worsening of conditions would be “catastrophic,” and launched Opération Licorne to keep Côte d’Ivoire from collapsing.\(^{235}\) Defense Minister Alliot-Marie was even more concerned about the humanitarian situation, seeing the French role as “saving civilian lives and preserving the unity of the country.”\(^{236}\) This concern was also tied with the stability of the West African region. France feared that with Gbagbo making accusations against Burkina Faso and rebels easily able to obtain weapons and cross borders, the conflict had the

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\(^{234}\) “Malgré ses réticences, la France aspirée par le conflit intérieur ivoirien,” Agence France Presse, 4 April 2011.

\(^{235}\) Ibid.

potential to engulf a region already beset by ethnic strife. Moreover, conflict in Côte d’Ivoire upset regional trade and threatened to draw in members of ECOWAS, the regional trade bloc, whose interests were increasingly involved.

In order to protect its nationals and business interests, avoid a humanitarian disaster, and preserve overall stability in the region, averting the collapse of the Ivorian state became France’s military and diplomatic goal. If reaching that goal meant compelling a ceasefire by force, then that was what had to be done. Chirac agreed to use French troops as peacekeepers partially for this reason; the Africans could not deploy fast enough, so if the French left, Abidjan would likely have fallen, with many French citizens and business caught in the crossfire. Meanwhile, he pushed aggressively for a diplomatic accord, sending Foreign Minister de Villepin to Abidjan and pressuring Gbagbo to participate in, and later accept the results of the Marcoussis conference in January 2003.

In addition to protecting its nationals and business interests and promoting regional stability, France had other reasons for intervening. The colonial era’s Great Power Myth still influences French political thought, and in the eyes of its contemporary leaders, France’s geopolitical raison d’être is to be a great power with a voice and a role in the world. As a Gaullist, Chirac philosophically believed in French greatness, and wrote that during his presidency, his “constant goal had been to try to ensure that France remained a great power.” His speeches are littered with references to France’s Histoire (with a capital H), and celebrated the strong national heritage that obliged France to be a force in the world. “But is Gaullism,” Chirac wrote, “anything other, in fact, than a demand for truth in the service of the only worthy cause: that of France, its grandeur, its unity, and the

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example of humanism that it has the duty to set for the rest of the world?" Defense Minister Alliot-Marie, who we have seen was highly involved during the Côte d'Ivoire crisis, saw France’s role as a direct legacy of its former empire:

Like it or not, [France] has a place in the world, a place that has little to do with geography or its people, but owes everything to its History. . . Certainly we are no longer in the Europe of Louis XIV nor that of Metternich, while England and France were fighting for global supremacy. In a world full of the democratic spirit, each country must have its own voice. We cannot avail ourselves of the weight of our empire, or of a language used by the elites of the world.

While not perhaps its primary driving force, halcyon memories of France’s empire and an ideological desire to maintain the country’s great power status were and continue to be inextricably linked with French foreign policy.

In addition to explicit reasons for intervention, there were also several conditions on the ground that facilitated French intervention, some legacies of colonialism, some not. One of the most important ones was political. The *cohabitation* that persisted throughout the 1990s, with Socialist Lionel Jospin serving as prime minister to the Gaullist President Chirac, meant that there was dissension on foreign policy at the highest levels of government. Jospin and the Socialists aspired to continue the 1995 “*ni-ni*” policy toward Africa and “*leave Françafrique*.” This attitude actually explains in large part why France did not intervene after Robert Guéï’s coup in 1999; while Chirac wanted to deploy French troops to restore Bédié’s government, opposition from Jospin played a major role in obstructing a potential intervention. By the time of the rebellion against Gbagbo, Chirac had defeated Jospin in the 2002 presidential elections, and Chirac’s center-right movement had won a resounding victory over the Socialists in the vote for the French National Assembly.

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242 Ibid., 168.
244 The French system is distinct in that there are separate parliamentary and presidential elections. If one party wins the parliament (and the premiership) and another wins the presidency, the two leaders are forced to share power in a *cohabitation*, which literally translates “living together.”
246 Ibid., 217.
Consequently, the *cohabitation* was over, and Chirac was able to appoint an ally as the new prime minister. Without Jospin’s resistance, Chirac, who had wanted to intervene in Côte d’Ivoire in 1999, was able to do so without political opposition in 2002.

Although the 2002 intervention upended the trend as the first French intervention in Africa since 1996, the colonial legacies that Jospin tried to end were still extant despite his best efforts. The robust French military presence in Africa made intervention not only possible, but also made France the obvious candidate among foreign powers to act. French troops were already on the ground in Côte d’Ivoire at the time of the rebellion, and reinforcements were easily ferried in from Gabon. This capacity in West Africa is almost unique to France and certainly a legacy of the postcolonial regime that was tied together by a network of military pacts and bases. Before relations broke down, Gbagbo accused Burkina Faso of backing the coup for the express reason of activating Côte d’Ivoire’s defense pact with France, which partially acceded to the request by supplying the government with logistical support. These preexisting military capacities and relationships may not have led to the intervention, but did make Chirac’s decision much easier; he knew that France had the capacity to act unilaterally because its assets were already deployed in Africa.

**Second Ivorian Civil War**

*Election Crisis*

The 2002 Civil War cast a shadow over Côte d’Ivoire that lasted almost a decade. The UN peacekeeping mission (United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, or UNOCI), working alongside *Opération Licorne*, was to remain in the country until fresh elections, to be held in 2005, took place. A five-year delay translated to an extended mission for the UN and the French. When the elections were finally held on 28 November 2010, longtime opposition leader Alassane Ouattara challenged

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247 Campagne, Jean-Pierre, “Paris, préoccupée pour ses ressortissants.”
248 Smith, Stephen, “Paris apporte une aide militaire au pouvoir en guerre à Abidjan.”
President Gbagbo. Voting patterns mirrored the country’s north-south ethnic and sectarian divides, with the mainly Muslim north backing the Muslim Ouattara, and the Christian south supporting the Christian Gbagbo.

On 3 December, the country’s electoral commission declared an Ouattara victory of 54% to 46%. However, the Constitutional Council, run by Gbagbo ally Paul Yao N’Dre, declared that the incumbent had in fact won by the narrow margin of 51% to 49%. The international community, however, including the United Nations and France, upheld the results of electoral commission, and recognized Ouattara as the legitimate president-elect. Gbagbo refused to step down, and over the next few months, supporters of the two rivals increasingly clashed in the streets of Abidjan and around the country. In late March, Ouattara’s forces launched a significant offensive around the country, and closed in on Abidjan. Up until this point, France walked a fine line, diplomatically leading efforts to support Ouattara, while maintaining neutrality for its Opération Licorne forces in Côte d’Ivoire. For instance, in January 2011, Defense Minister Alain Juppé (who became foreign minister in February), insisted that France “would not do anything without a decision from the United Nations.” At this point, France again called on Gbagbo to “immediately withdraw, to cease violence, and to peacefully cede power to President Ouattara.”

French/UN Intervention

Despite entreaties from the international community, violence only escalated in the first days of April. Concerned for its approximately 12,200 nationals in Côte d’Ivoire, France reinforced Opération Licorne with an additional three hundred men. The 1,500-strong French force proceeded to

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251 “La France appelle Gbagbo à ‘se retirer immédiatement,’” LePoint.fr, 1 April 2011.
take control of Abidjan’s airport from the UN in order to enable evacuations.\textsuperscript{252} By 4 April, events escalated, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon requested the French assist the UN force by bombing heavy weapons used by Gbagbo in the capital against the civilian population.\textsuperscript{253} The next day, French and UN helicopters attacked pro-Gbagbo camps and the Presidential Palace. Despite accusations that the UN and French forces were taking sides against Gbagbo, Ban, like the French, insisted that all actions against Gbagbo’s side were to protect civilians, and that the UN was not partial in the conflict.\textsuperscript{254} Fighting continued for several days, but by 11 April, Ouattara’s soldiers, assisted by UN and French air support, arrested Gbagbo, bringing an end to the, brief, but bloody confrontation.\textsuperscript{255}

Motives for Intervention

In many ways, the Second Ivorian Civil War must be closely paired with the first one. First of all, the two conflicts paralleled each other; both featured a beleaguered Laurent Gbagbo facing a northern rebellion, French and other foreign forces acting militarily to protect expatriates, and a UN-backed end to the crisis. But more importantly, the Second Ivorian Civil War was a product, and even a continuation, of the first one, whose settlement had not resolved the issues that divided the country. Moreover, the war’s decisive belligerents—UN and French peacekeepers—were only there because of the previous civil war, ironically ending Gbagbo’s presidency when they had saved it nine years earlier.

These parallels remained true for many of France’s motivations, and much of the French operation can be traced directly back to its 2002 intervention. Once again, Paris’ primary initial concern was the safety of its expatriate population, which while smaller than before, was still

\textsuperscript{253} “La France s’engage directement dans les combats en Côte d’Ivoire,” \textit{Agence France Presse}, 4 April 2011.
\textsuperscript{255} “La chute de Laurent Gbagbo,” \textit{Le Monde}, 12 April 2011.
substantial and directly in the conflict’s crossfire. When the Licorne forces interceded on behalf of the UN against Gbabgo’s army, President Nicolas Sarkozy (Chirac’s Gaullist successor in 2007) declared the action necessary to protect Ivorian civilians and French and foreign nationals, evoking memories of Chirac’s similar declarations in 2002.

The importance of France’s military deployments in Africa cannot be understated. Not only did military bases in places like Gabon enable the straightforward deployment of reinforcements like before, but France had men on the ground in Côte d’Ivoire for the Licorne mission. This presence made it politically quite difficult for France not to answer the United Nations’ call to action, especially in light of its considerable technical capability compared to almost any other actor in the region. Consequently, French action in 2011 direct stemmed from its earlier action in 2002, and insofar as I have shown that that mission was largely the result of colonial legacies, then the Second Civil War must also at least in part be explained by those same colonial legacies as well.

Nonetheless the 2011 conflict did not completely echo 2002, and there were other elements of the post-colonial relationship that were factors in the intervention. The question of military accords, for instance, remains ambiguous. France certainly did not defend Gbagbo’s government, and took great pains to lend legitimacy to Ouattara and his representatives in Gbagbo’s stead. As the legitimate government in the eyes of Paris, Ouattara was legally entitled to call upon the traditional defense pacts between France and Côte d’Ivoire, and during the conflict, Ally Coulibaly, Ouattara’s ambassador in Paris, claimed that the French action was in accordance with the treaty. However, France rejected this interpretation, maintaining that its actions merely supported UN Security Council Resolution 1975.

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256 La France s’engage directement,” *Agence France Presse.*
258 UNSC Resolution 1975, among other provisions, called on Gbagbo to step down, condemned attacks by his forces against civilians, and supported the French mission and its cooperation with the UN force. See “Malgré ses réticences,” *Agence France Presse.*
Although not loudly stated by Paris, economic ties between France and Côte d’Ivoire certainly influenced Sarkozy’s decision as well. Not only were French economic interests threatened by the specter of a further drawn out conflict, but after almost ten years of on and off war, establishing some degree of stability was very important. The degree to which the French were willing to protect these business interests cannot be underestimated.259

Personal ties amongst French and Ivorian political and business leaders were undoubtedly also influential. Alassane Ouattara’s wife, Dominque is a case in point. Born in French Algeria, Ouattara managed former President Houphouët-Boigny’s French business assets and built a multi-national company with over two hundred employees. Close with many in the French business community, guests at her 1991 Paris wedding to Alassanne Ouattara included Martin Bouygues, head of the eponymous French company with large assets in Africa, Jean-Christophe Mitterand, son and African advisor to his father, President François Mitterand, and directors of Bolloré, another French multi-national firm with important business interests in Africa. Meanwhile, the executives at Bouyges and Bolloré have been key supporters of French President Nicolas Sarkozy.260

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259 Fitzgerald, William, interview by author, phone, Stanford, CA, 12 April 2013. Mr. Fitzgerald was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for West Africa from 2009-2012.
Sarkozy completes this social triangle through his personal relationship with President-elect Ouattara. The two men had a twenty-year long friendship, and while they were not close, Ouattara was certainly more pro-French and (having worked at the IMF) pro-Western than Gbagbo.\textsuperscript{261} Sarkozy knew that in Ouattara, he would have a friend in Abidjan. In contrast, Gbagbo was connected to the international socialist group, and so had a sympathetic relationship with the French Socialist Party, whose leaders were not overly enthusiastic to the intervention. Certainly, Sarkozy, as well as his influential businessmen friends, were more comfortable with Ouattara in power than Gbagbo, with whom France had an historically prickly relationship.

Although the Ivorian immigrant population in France did stage protests both supporting and opposing the two sides and the French action, it did not appear to substantially affect French policy.\textsuperscript{262}

Finally, international expectations played a role in the intervention. The United Nations expected France, the colonial power with boots on the ground, to do the most technically difficult military tasks. While there was certainly not any legal obligation, Secretary General Ban put political pressure on France to act, not dissimilar to pressure put on Britain in Sierra Leone. In a certain sense, France, as a permanent member of the Security Council, faced humiliation if it did not intervene; surely a great power with forces already on the ground could handle the situation? If France did not to live up to these obligations, it could jeopardize its \textit{grandeur}, and Sarkozy, who launched the intervention against Muammar Gaddafi just months before the operation to put Ouattara in power, firmly believed that France had a role to play on the world stage.\textsuperscript{263}

\textsuperscript{261} Howden, Daniel and John Lichfield, “Profile: Ouattara, The Quiet Man with Connections,” \textit{The Independent}, 6 April 2011.


Conclusion

France having intervened so often around Africa, it is impossible for me to draw overarching conclusions about its policy in its former colonies based on just two interventions in the same country. Nonetheless, the 2002 and 2011 actions in Côte illustrate how strong post-colonial relations affect French involvement and intervention decisions in its former African colonies. Before the 2013 Mali intervention, one country was the primary target of French military actions in Africa over the last ten years, and that is no accident. In spite of the rhetoric of defending democracy or averting humanitarian disasters, Côte d'Ivoire, more than any other Francophone country in Sub-Saharan Africa, garnered France's attention because of its strong post-colonial links. Even without an explicit neo-colonial agenda, colonial legacies gave France key interests in Côte d'Ivoire that were impossible to ignore when threatened. Protecting French expatriates was the primary objective in 2002 and a significant one in 2011. However, personal, business, and political ties played a role as well. A crisis in Côte d'Ivoire impacts the balance sheets of major French companies, threatens the lives of French citizens and soldiers living there, and consequently, attracts much attention in the French press. French and Ivorian leaders continue to have a close relationship. And the international community, cognizant of these connections and French military capabilities, expects France to contribute to the solution diplomatically, and if necessary, militarily. All of these factors coalesce to push France into action.

Moreover, the colonial legacy of military bases and operations enabled, and even obliged, reaction when a conflict did occur. French military bases in Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere in Africa allowed for quick deployment during the 2002 crisis. Then, the 2011 operation was a legacy of the 2002 operation; Opération Licorne was still deployed in Côte d'Ivoire, making it all but impossible for France not to acquiesce to the UN secretary general’s request for assistance. Such expectations add pressure to maintain French prestige—so often based on its role in Africa—and no French
president wants to jeopardize his country’s historic position on the world stage. This is especially true when the conflict involves one of France’s most prestigious former colonies.

It would be easy to conclude that given France’s interventions in Côte d’Ivoire in 2002 and 2011, nothing has changed, and that France will continue to play gendarme in Africa. This conclusion is partially correct. On one hand, even after the retreats of the “Ni-ni” policy of the 1990s, the web of Françafrique compelled Presidents Chirac and Sarkozy to engage in Africa again. Both interventions ended in results that were more in line with French interests than the status quo (first with Gbagbo’s weakening, then his ouster). But on the other hand, Chirac and Sarkozy’s interventions were increasingly less unilateral and more in line with the wishes of the international community. The West African regional grouping strongly backed Opération Licorne in 2002, and in 2011, France acted with UN forces at the behest of the secretary general. Meanwhile, French action in Africa continues with Sarkozy’s Socialist successor, President François Hollande, who launched in 2013 a unilateral intervention in Mali, with the support of the Malian government itself, and later the United Nations. France has shown in Côte d’Ivoire that it is evolving in two ways. First, by wrapping its neocolonialism in multilateralism, French interventions become more normatively acceptable. Second, by waiting to intervene only when the situation is so dire the international community supports action, France can interfere knowing that its actions have legitimacy.
Chapter V: Three Non-Interventions

Despite the many cases of intervention since decolonization, there have been many instances where an intervention may have taken place or been considered, but was then not done. Understanding these “non-interventions” is especially important for the British, who as we have seen only intervened once since decolonization; though rarer for the French, such cases exist and are also instructive. In both cases, we can see the limits of colonial legacy; by understanding those ties that did not bring about an intervention, we can better understand the ones that did take place.

In examining these non-interventions, we also can see how colonial legacy itself can inhibit interventions. Heretofore, the discussion has focused on British and French interventions that have come about in large part due to colonial legacies that pull the metropoles closer to their former colonies. The opposite occurs as well. Concern about seeming neo-imperial to the rest of the world or the bad blood that came from a tortured colonial era is often enough to stymie an intervention. Rather than bringing the metropole and former colony together, in these cases, a strong negative colonial legacy pushes them apart.

By their very nature, “non-interventions” are hard to analyze because they did not happen. Absent a crisis moment, there is not necessarily much evidence or secondary source material. Nonetheless, there are identifiable instances where one might have expected a military intervention and one did not occur. In this chapter, I will explore several of them. For the British, I explore Britain’s relationship with Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe, which has seen several calls for an intervention over the past decade. For the French, I return to Côte d’Ivoire for a closer, in depth, look at France’s refusal to intervene during the 1999 coup against Henri Bédié. In addition, I will analyze France’s recent dismissal in 2013 of a request by President François Bozizé to help fight off rebels in the Central African Republic.
The Neo-Colonial Conundrum: Mugabe’s Zimbabwe

In the category of countries with abysmal human rights records whose internal crises seemingly invite foreign intervention, Zimbabwe ranks high on the list. However, for a variety of reasons, the former British colony of Rhodesia has never faced a Western military intervention, despite calls for the international community—the United Kingdom in particular—to do so. There can be no doubt of the love lost between British leaders and President Robert Mugabe, and it crosses party lines. Tony Blair “would have loved to” depose Mugabe, while Shadow Foreign Secretary Michael Ancram called Mugabe’s regime “censurable” and “reprehensible.” As late as 2008, former Liberal Democrat leader Lord Ashdown warned that military intervention might be necessary to prevent “genocide.” But despite the war of words, no such intervention has ever come to pass.

Following the logic of Tony Blair’s Doctrine of the International Community and the anti-Mugabe opprobrium from all the major political parties, this does not make sense, and thus constitutes a puzzle. In this section, I will analyze the British-Zimbabwean relationship and the various reasons an intervention has never taken place, paying attention in particular to elements of the relationship that result from postcolonial legacies.

After South Africa and its infamous apartheid state, Zimbabwe is perhaps the most problematic of Britain’s former colonies in Africa. As opposed to West Africa, British imperialism in

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264 Blair, Tony, _A Journey_, 229.
Zimbabwe produced a tortured legacy of racial tensions and civil war. There, a substantial settler population made the independence seen in West Africa difficult, and instead of a shared government, white colonists under Ian Smith issued the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, provoking the ire of London and setting off a civil war against much of the black population. However, despite British opposition to the UDI, no intervention took place against the white minority-rule government. After years of violence and sanctions, the British-brokered Lancaster House Agreement in 1979 paved the way for minority-rule Rhodesia to become majority-rule Zimbabwe, and Robert Mugabe assumed power as prime minister after winning elections in 1980. Although widely hailed as an anti-imperialist leader, over time his policies have become increasingly authoritarian and repressive, with widespread human rights abuses, economic crises, and election fraud. Despite international sanctions and criticism, he remains a hero in the eyes of many Africans, and persists in power despite opposition both domestically and amongst Western powers like Great Britain and the United States.

The Mugabe regime’s many human rights abuses have been compared to humanitarian crises in other countries, especially with white farmers bearing the brunt of land reform issues, significant sections of the population suffering from famine and illness, and brutal suppression during election campaigns. Thus the question: as a former colony with a government that successive British governments have vehemently opposed, why has Britain not intervened in Zimbabwe as it did in Sierra Leone?

From a purely tactical standpoint, an intervention in Zimbabwe has never really been feasible. Sierra Leone is a small country on the Atlantic coast with a fairly concentrated British population; by contrast, Zimbabwe is comparatively large, landlocked, and surrounded by supportive
neighbors. From the military’s point of view, these difficulties precluded even a politically desirable intervention.\textsuperscript{267} These limitations have been widely recognized by political leaders as well.\textsuperscript{268}

British leaders have also felt that a military intervention would be counterproductive, both for the democratic opposition in Zimbabwe that would inevitably suffer as a consequence of such an operation, but also because they felt there was little chance the international community would ever support them. Blair lamented that the leaders of Zimbabwe’s neighboring countries maintain an incomprehensible “lingering support” for Mugabe, and would have “strenuously” opposed military intervention.\textsuperscript{269} Geopolitics complicated the issue even more at the United Nations. Speaking in a 2004 House of Commons debate, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw spoke of challenges in those fora:

Regrettably, other African members of the UNCHR [United Nations Commission on Human Rights] have used procedural motions to block discussion of those resolutions [criticizing Zimbabwe]. That highlights the fact that many countries, including Zimbabwe’s neighbors, see the situation differently from us. Exposing those differences. . . in so high-profile an arena as the UN Security Council. . . would be counter-productive. . . as that would deliver [Mugabe] the propaganda coup of exposing division within the international community.\textsuperscript{270}

Unfortunately for Blair and his ministers, Britain was under pressure to act in Zimbabwe, given the “Ethical Foreign Policy,” Britain’s former colonial role, and general pressure on politicians to “do something,” especially in a country with so much attention in the British press.\textsuperscript{271} However, when viewed through the lens of the Blair Doctrine, non-intervention in Zimbabwe actually made sense; prudent and sensible military operations were one of its key tenets and Zimbabwe did not pass the test.\textsuperscript{272} Blair, accordingly, did not intervene.

More than any one factor however, Britain’s complicated imperial past directly impacts its relationship with Zimbabwe. Ironically, colonial legacy has made the idea of British intervention

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{267} Lord Guthrie, letter to author, 19 February 2013.
\textsuperscript{268} Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013; Interview with Lady Neville-Jones, 1 March 2013; Interview with Jonathan Powell, 17 May 2013.
\textsuperscript{269} Blair, Tony, \textit{A Journey}, 229.
\textsuperscript{271} Blair, Tony, \textit{A Journey}, 229; Interview with Sir David Manning, 28 February 2013; Porteous, \textit{Britain in Africa}, 111.
\textsuperscript{272} Blair, Tony, “Doctrine of the International Community.”
\end{footnotes}
unpalatable in Africa; British leaders believe that any intervention would be seen as a flat out invasion, and fears of being seen as neocolonial have thus stopped British leaders. While elsewhere, postcolonial ties led to cooperation between metropole and former colony, in Zimbabwe, colonialism has had the opposite effect. Whether a British action is neo-colonial or not, Mugabe’s central strategy (as articulated by Straw with regards to the UN) has been to frame each British speech, policy, and law against his government as such. This allows him to paint legitimate international criticisms of his record as nefariously motivated, especially when they come from the United Kingdom. British leaders thus faces a quandary; although London has been at the forefront of international activities against the Mugabe government, it is weary of unilateral action, be it sanctions or military intervention, because of the neo-colonial accusations that would inevitably result and fears that Mugabe would consequently benefit politically. According to Jack Straw, “If we are to deal with the Zimbabwe issue, however, we must avoid doing what Robert Mugabe wants most, and making this a bilateral dispute between the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. That is at the heart of Mugabe’s strategy.” The consequences of this would be to tar the opposition as puppets of neo-imperialism, endangering any hopes at democratic development. Finally, Zimbabwe’s difficult racial history adds to the complexity of British policy toward the country. Having not intervened against the UDI in 1965—at the expense of the black population—intervening against Robert Mugabe, the liberation hero, would be seen as hypocritical and possibly racist.

Nevertheless, several issues—some of them legacies of imperialism—have compelled Britain to engage in Zimbabwe. Regardless of Mugabe’s incompetence, the Empire bears some of the blame for Zimbabwe’s current problems, and commitments to help undo at least in part the damage from

273 Mark Malloch Brown, Baron Malloch-Brown, letter to author, 29 April 2013.
its colonial legacy has inextricably entangled successive British governments in Zimbabwe. Moreover, Zimbabwe’s white population, another legacy of colonialism, has endured the brunt of Mugabe’s land seizures, and brought much attention to their cause back in Britain, leading to pressure on politicians to help “kith and kin,” even if such help would be seen in a negative light. Finally, Mugabe’s Zimbabwe was the fly in the ointment of Blair’s Africa policy, and threatened the message of Blair’s many successes there. Consequently, in order to both placate domestic demand for action and live up to his own commitments to human rights and Africa, Blair (and Gordon Brown after him) did compensate military inaction with aggressive policies elsewhere with regards to Zimbabwe, with both vigorously pursuing aid and economic development, the latter being a favorite of Brown.

Blair and Brown both worked in all areas to help Zimbabwe’s people. Under Blair, Britain was the largest cash donor to Zimbabwe in the mid-2000s, spending £67 million from 2001-2004 on food and humanitarian aid, £26.5 million on AIDS victims, and additional funds focused on building up Zimbabwean civil society. Furthermore, Britain gave asylum to dissidents and pushed for individualized sanctions against top officials of the Mugabe regime. The Blair government also galvanized members of the international community—including the United States, European Union, and the Commonwealth—to sanction Zimbabwe; among those measures enacted were an EU arms embargo and suspension of Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth.

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277 Porteous, *Britain in Africa*, 34.
279 Lord Malloch-Brown, letter to author, 29 April 2013.
281 Ibid.
Mugabe. During the crisis surrounding the 2008 presidential election, Foreign Secretary David Miliband reiterated that Britain would continue to pressure both Mugabe and his international supporters, and continue to support all those working for democracy in the country.\(^{282}\)

Nonetheless, despite these and other efforts in working toward democracy in Zimbabwe, Britain has not seriously considered intervention. Notwithstanding parallels drawn between Zimbabwe and other interventions like Kosovo or Sierra Leone, British leaders have held the crises in Zimbabwe at arms' length. If possible, Zimbabwe would be the perfect target for intervention, with natural domestic support in Britain and cross-party political backing in Parliament. But tactically infeasible, Zimbabwe is not a natural candidate for military invasion.

It is the colonial legacy that most dictates Britain’s non-intervention, however. Mugabe’s role as black nationalist independence leader fighting a racist white republic has made his regime sacrosanct in many corners of Africa, making regional or UN support of military action all but impossible to acquire. Meanwhile, Mugabe’s racial policies have enabled him to spin any British action as hypocritically pro-European and a step toward re-colonization; not only would a British military operation play right into his propaganda narrative, but it would only help him retrench his increasingly desperate domestic political situation. Just as Britain’s empire created Mugabe, the legacy of that empire has made undoing him—at least in the immediate future—all but impossible.

**An Exception to the Rule: Côte d’Ivoire, 1999**

Although already discussed in Chapter Three, it is worth returning to Côte d’Ivoire, even for a moment, to understand the non-intervention that occurred there in 1999. A military insurrection quickly became a *coup d’état* against President Henri Konan Bédié. General Robert Güći, an opponent of Bédié, was placed in charge to form a provisional government, which he did quite

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quickly. Despite condemnation of the coup and the presence of forces nearby, France did not intervene to save Bédié’s government. Why did France, which played an active role in Côte d’Ivoire from 2002, not act in 1999?

First, domestic political structures played a significant role. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, a Socialist, had promised to put an end to Françafrique through his “ni-ni” policy of non-interference and non-indifference toward Francophone Africa. He made good on this promise by vetoing President Chirac’s desire to intervene to save the government.283 But several other factors contributed to the decision not to stop the coup. As we saw in both 2002 and 2011, France quickly intervened when its nationals were in danger; this seemingly was not the case in 1999. Moreover, unlike in 2002, when France was trying to protect Laurent Gbagbo’s government, or 2011, when it instated Alassane Ouattara, France really had no leader it felt comfortable backing in 1999.284 Although France had supported Bédié as Félix Houphoüët-Boigny’s successor, his autocratic tendencies made him unpopular, especially his disenfranchisement of Ouattara’s right to contest the presidential election. With no civil war having broken out, and French nationals not threatened, it simply was not worth it for France to intervene when it was in fact indifferent as to which side would emerge victorious.

The pendulum of French interventionism in Africa has now swung several times since the end of the Cold War. The Socialists have done their best to eliminate Françafrique, and although both Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy reengaged in the traditional style, the nonintervention in Côte d’Ivoire in 1999 was a shot across the bow, an indication that the Socialist Party would impede Françafrique, even if it could not stop it. In an instance where French interests were not at risk in the same way as they would be just three years later, Jospin could say no to intervention and not

284 Interview with William Fitzgerald, 12 April 2013.
endanger French lives. This, and relative indifference toward the factions in the conflict, left France out of the fight.

**Central African Republic—Vive la (nouvelle) Françafrique!**

Perhaps France’s starkest—and most consequential—instance of non-intervention is its latest. Shortly after sending troops to stop an Islamist rebellion in northern Mali in 2013, Socialist President François Hollande very publicly declined to save the government of François Bozizé, president of the Central African Republic. France has historically played a significant role in the Republic, having backed Jean-Bédel Bokassa, the president who became emperor, only to overthrow him in Operation Barracuda in 1979. Despite such involvement in the 1970s, and the presence of 250 French troops in the capital, Bangui, Hollande refused to save Bozizé’s regime. Following Hollande’s decision, a tentative agreement with Séléka, the rebel group, quickly fell apart, and Bozizé fled the country in March 2013.²⁸⁵

Although France deployed some of its forces to protect its embassy, Hollande pointedly refused to help Bozizé—and that lack of assistance allowed his government to fall. Hollande signified that his decision had to do with ending Françafrique, saying: “If we have a presence, it’s not to protect a regime, it’s to protect our nationals and our interests and in no way to intervene in the internal business of a country. Those days are over.”²⁸⁶ But how can this statement be reconciled with the intervention in

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²⁸⁶ Ibid.
Mali? While it is still too early to analyze the Mali conflict in depth, it seems that Hollande is continuing the Socialist legacy of Lionel Jospin to only intervene if vital French interests are at stake; Mali apparently met that test. That conflict shows that Françafrique is not dead, but merely evolved. Sarkozy kept French interventionism alive by protecting leaders with cozy ties to Paris, but Hollande’s brand of foreign policy looks out more explicitly for French interests, focused on transnational threats like terrorism or humanitarian crises. Hollande has not been shy about using force in Africa, striking in Somalia against Islamists there, and in Mali, where an Islamist victory risked establishing a desert Afghanistan-like enclave not far from France’s Mediterranean shores. Therein lies the difference: no such threat to French interests existed by letting Bozizé fall in the Central African Republic. Even with the legacy of troops on the ground in Bangui, Hollande resisted the temptation to reengage in Françafrique, making that non-intervention the most important one yet for understanding future French African policy.

Conclusion

In an interesting way, the colonial legacy impedes intervention sometimes as much as it encourages it, as concerns about neo-colonialism have occasionally prevented French and British leaders from intervening in former African colonies. For Britain, the bitter colonial legacy itself has made unilateral action in Zimbabwe practically impossible, and precluded serious talk of intervention. Despite partisan acrimony in the House of Commons over inaction over Zimbabwe, politicians on both sides of the aisle have never seriously contemplated removing Mugabe by force; according to Lady Neville-Jones, Conservative politician Michael Ancram’s calls to intervene in Zimbabwe were never really taken seriously on any political side. Instead, for all political parties, the message is clear—neo-colonialism is something to be avoided, and as any intervention in

288 Interview with Lady Neville-Jones, 1 March. 2013.
Zimbabwe would be inextricably connected to colonial legacy, an intervention there has not been an option and likely will not in the foreseeable future. In this way, the ugly side of colonial legacy shows its impact: not all postcolonial ties are positive, and that is the case, intervention becomes much more difficult.

For France, it is an effort to get away from colonial legacy that matters for Socialist politicians like Lionel Jospin and François Hollande. Even when the legacy of intervention—in Côte d’Ivoire and in Central African Republic—suggests action be taken, non-intervention has been a partisan way for the Socialists to signal their disapproval of the old post-colonial modus operandi. Hollande has continued Jospin’s approach to Africa, perhaps changing the nature of France in Africa altogether.

This does not mean that Françafrique has ended; it has merely been altered for the twenty-first century. In looking after French interests, Hollande’s Africa policy is now a means to an end, rather than an end in and of itself. In Mali, the French military showed in Operation Sérval (its Malian operation) that it remains an effective unilateral force that can and will continue to intervene where its former colonies are concerned. After all, despite widespread Western concern, France’s NATO allies let it do the heavy lifting in Mali. The difference is that France is now playing by the rules as far as international norms are concerned, intervening in cases of humanitarian crisis or where there is international backing, rather than to protect favorites, as it would have done by saving Bozizé. For him, the nouvelle Françafrique manifested itself not in his salvation, but in the evacuation of French citizens, who could rest easily knowing that French forces secured their exit by occupying the airport in Bangui. Protecting them is a key objective; saving Bozizé’s government, non plus.
Chapter VI: Conclusions

After centuries of paralleled imperial histories, one would expect British and French post-colonial regimes to be analogous as well. This would seem particularly apt in Africa, where they had comparable empires. Instead, France has intervened militarily dozens of times in its former African colonies since decolonization, while Britain has intervened just once.

This divergence in postcolonial policies is an historical puzzle, but one that becomes increasingly less opaque after delving deeper into the comparative stories of the two empires, both in Africa and around the globe. The root to the differences in intervention lies in colonial histories that shaped Britain’s and France’s worldviews, which in turn impacted each of their imperial structures, from inception of empire in the 1600s to decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s to the postcolonial regimes of today. Although colonial legacies are not the only determinant in British and French strategic interests in Africa, they serve as the foundation of relations between former colony and former metropole and are the bedrock on which intervention decisions have been and will continue to be made. That they exist is no surprise, but while others often study them to understand the polities born out of colonial dismemberment, I have used them to understand their effect on modern-day foreign policy.

Although both nations’ contemporary attitudes toward interventions are legacies of empire in and of themselves and can be traced back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the vestigial web of empire is far stronger for the French than the British. Ideologically and strategically, France was more attached to its empire, and its continued presence post-decolonization is a consequence thereof. In all manner of bilateral relations—strategic, military, economic, cultural, political, expatriate, and immigration—France has cultivated or maintained stronger links with its former possessions—especially in Africa—than has Britain. From an ideological standpoint, French leaders continue to promote the idea of Greater France and their country’s importance as a great power;
being the *gendarme* of Africa is still considered imperative to that mission despite attempts in recent years to shift away from such a role. Britain’s colonial legacy on the other hand is applied much more globally and, consequently, British leaders do not confine their interventions to former colonies or to Africa. Despite the strategic variance, this does not mean that Britain and France never intervene for similar reasons. One trend that both Britain and France have in common relates to the starts of interventions; in recent years, most operations start as evacuations, which then serve as gateways to mission creep and expanded political objectives once expatriates are secured.

With just one postcolonial intervention in Africa, conclusions come far easier for the British, though. For the United Kingdom, colonial legacy is a contributory factor, but not the decisive one for carrying out interventions. All else being equal, Britain will help a former colony before another country, but there still has to be a separate reason, germane to British national interests, to intervene. In Sierra Leone, both the ideological and bilateral strands of colonial legacy were contributory factors. Ideologically, Tony Blair’s Doctrine of the International Community—called the “New Imperialism” by Blair aide Robert Cooper—encompassed a subtle echo of empire, which while not directly influenced by imperial notions, conferred Britain and other similar powers with the right to intervene around the world. These humanitarian impulses were not new—Britain after all led the campaign against slavery in the early 1800s and many Britons adopted the nineteenth-century liberal cause of Greek independence—and in a way demonstrated which historical and imperial values were in fact the most important. But while the Blair Doctrine shifted Britain from *Realpolitik* to a more normatively based foreign policy, it was not entirely divorced from the essential idea that Britain is a global power and ought to have an ongoing role in the world. This idea manifested itself at the United Nations, where the weight of responsibility as permanent member of the UN Security Council (and not letting a UN mission fail) contributed to Britain’s intervention decision in Sierra Leone.
Sierra Leone’s status as a former colony certainly made a difference in that decision’s calculus, but bilateral colonial legacies were not the primary reasons for the United Kingdom’s involvement there. Britain’s initial operation was to evacuate expatriates and stemmed from its extensive diplomatic role throughout the conflict. But, the primary reason for its expanded intervention was humanitarian; only insofar as the Blair Doctrine was neo-colonial can we attribute this part to colonial legacy.

Britain’s colonial legacy is in many ways more impactful when considering its non-interventions. In the case of Zimbabwe, the lack of military resources in Africa has made a potential intervention logistically impossible. This is a legacy of having vacated Africa, an action pointedly not taken by the French. Simply put, the British did not establish the means to readily engage in military operations across Africa, and that has made interventions in general much more difficult—particularly so where landlocked Zimbabwe is concerned. Politically, Britain’s messy post-colonial relationship with Zimbabwe has made the most difference. A fiercely anti-British Robert Mugabe bases his autocratic regime in part on racism and anti-imperialism, and British officials have learned that to take unilateral action—military or diplomatic—against him, only worsens the situation.

Importantly, Zimbabwe also shows how historically difficult colonial relationships sometimes prevent intervention. The weight of Zimbabwe’s colonial baggage, with its Unilateral Declaration of Independence and white minority government, means that Britain has little room to maneuver without looking hypocritical; given Britain’s lack of intervention in response to the UDI, Mugabe would easily paint an intervention against him as racist. Unlike in a country like Sierra Leone, where the postcolonial relationship is positive, Britain’s checkered past makes all its actions in Zimbabwe suspect.

Finally, Britain’s preference for multilateralism is quite important. Although Britain is not afraid to go it alone, it prefers to have allies when it intervenes; this was true for Bosnia, Kosovo,
Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. As we see in Zimbabwe, British diplomats prefer to use ties with Commonwealth countries or with NATO allies to present a unified front amongst many nations. Such a penchant for multilateralism means that when an intervention does take place, it is typically on the basis of international norms, and not the narrow self-interests of the United Kingdom.

As an aside, this thesis also advances the historiography on the Doctrine of the International Community, the Sierra Leone conflict, and on British-Zimbabwean relations, through new interviews with the political and military leaders who helped form those policies and played a role in the dramatic events of the spring and summer of 2000. For the Blair Doctrine, new analysis suggests a subtle neo-imperialism through a tacit understanding that Britain ought to have a powerful role in the world, reminiscent of empire in attitude, if not in motives. With Sierra Leone, it is not evident that political and military leaders agreed about the objectives and motivations of the intervention. Lord Guthrie, then chief of the defence staff, believed there to be genocide ongoing in the country, minimizing the relative significance of the evacuation that was in fact the initial cause of intervention. Meanwhile, Sir David Richards, the commander on the ground, took a risk and used the evacuation operation to save Freetown without explicit orders to do so, believing that his actions were in line with the Blair Doctrine. Although at the time politicians denied the humanitarian nature of the conflict after mission creep had occurred, now they claim it was a humanitarian intervention all along. Even if the humanitarian intervention was not initially on the orders of Tony Blair, it was in line with his beliefs—indeed after a few days the orders were changed to reflect the new objectives—and in some ways his attitude inspired then Brigadier Richards. With Zimbabwe, corroboration from diplomatic and military sources, including interviews, confirms that despite the bluster, an intervention was never politically or logistically feasible. This explains why there was no action despite a doctrine that suggested otherwise.

It is clear that empire left a different imprint for France, and that that difference explains the
The British Aren’t Coming

intervention gap with Britain in their former African colonies. In the case of the French, I have not tried study how every legacy affects every intervention, and make no claims to the whole universe of French interventions. Instead, I have used several cases as lenses through which to view the differences between British and French post-colonial ties, and how intervention comes about so much easier for the latter due to greater links in almost every area. Nonetheless, in examining Côte d’Ivoire, it is evident which factors mattered and continue to matter for the most recent French intervention decisions. Like the British, the presence of expatriates and other nationals was key; both as an excuse for an intervention and an objective in and of itself, protecting them continues to be a priority that leads French leaders to war. Unlike the British, there was no need for humanitarian motivation (though it was given as justification) to intervene; business and political interests coalesced to encourage French action. Meanwhile, local French military bases—a direct legacy of the defense pacts signed at independence in the 1960s—have facilitated interventions (as they continue to today) in a way that cannot happen for the British in Africa; French presidents have had the luxury of speedy mobilization. This factor cannot be stressed enough; France’s ability to quickly deploy its forces around Africa makes it the most potent force on the continent. And, insofar as previous military actions lead into future ones, French military actions can in fact be legacies of themselves, perpetuating and drawing themselves into conflicts out of sheer momentum, as seen in the second Côte d’Ivoire intervention.

French non-interventions are curious, because they are often unexpected and go against their own intervention patterns. France declined to save Côte d’Ivoire’s Henri Bédié in 1999, in part because it had no preferred leader in play, but mostly because of domestic politics. This is clearly not a colonial legacy. President Chirac would have been happy to intervene, had Prime Minister Jospin not been easing France out of Françafrique. François Hollande has continued that policy in Central African Republic, in a conflict where his predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy might well have engaged.
Nonetheless, reports of Françafrique’s death are greatly exaggerated. The colonial legacies of France’s African empire were so strong that even after the non-intervention in 1999, both Chirac and Sarkozy found themselves in African wars throughout the 2000s. And even Hollande himself has not disengaged completely. His refusal to intervene in Central African Republic contrasted sharply with his simultaneous action in Mali to save its government and fight off northern Islamists. He has framed that intervention as distinct from Françafrique, as an example of France helping another sovereign government fight terrorists who threaten the doorstep of Europe. This is all well and good—and to his credit, African states have helped as well—but where are the Italians, the Spanish, the British, or the Germans? Surely their shores are just as at risk if terrorists were to conquer a not so small swath of northern Africa? For all the French assurances that its action is divorced from neo-imperialism, it was still the French who swept in to save a Francophone capital.

The dual intervention decisions in Mali and Central African Republic epitomize the policy implications of this centuries-long tale of empire and its legacy in foreign policy today. The international community often assumes that great powers with historical roles in a given country should take the lead to address problems there. Presumptions such as these lead to expectations to intervene. This was certainly the case in Sierra Leone in 2000 and in Côte d'Ivoire in 2011. These expectations are no longer valid. They were never valid for the British; the UN had no historical basis whatsoever to assume the British would unilaterally save Sierra Leone. Indeed, such action was virtually unprecedented. Britain's colonial legacy has been widely misread; its effect has been in actuality to give Britain a keen sense of its own worldliness. Ironically, while French claims to universalism tied them to their colonies, Britain's imperialism is now a global and normative affair. Britain can be expected to intervene, and be more partial to helping former colonies, but only if it is in a conflict that invites international intervention anyway.

The expectations for intervention were, however, valid for the French until quite recently; as
shown by the successive Côte d'Ivoire interventions (and other, smaller actions in Africa in the 2000s), France continued to actively engage in Francophone Africa through Sarkozy’s presidency.

But France’s robust support for Mali in 2013 should not the lull the international community into false complacency that France will continue to do the heavy lifting in its former empire. Contrary to Hollande’s claims, the Malian intervention was a form of Françafrique; it was, however, an evolution thereof, and the international community should take note. Heretofore, Hollande has continued Jospin’s legacy and is trying to make French Africa policy less capricious and more normatively based. He is trying to make French foreign policy more British: based more on actual national interests, protective of human rights, and international norms as well as more multilateral in nature. France’s discarding of François Bozizé constituted an important development; it can no longer be expected to save the likes of him. But in areas of genuine international concern, France can be expected to play a leading role if the area concerns a former African colony. It will take more than one non-intervention to shift that paradigm.

History, we are taught, is the study of the past. But every day, the past influences the present. Historical legacy takes many forms—irredentism, prejudice, pacifism, rivalry, outrage over past crimes, territorial and border disputes—and can be manipulated by leaders to garner support for their causes and ideologies. But as much as historical legacy is purposely used to further specific agendas, it often has unintentional effects. Sometimes, the events of history unconsciously create their own ideologies and form unseen connections that last long after the event has passed. Such is the case for the legacies of the European colonial empires. Colonialism represents one of the most impactful movements in history, one whose consequences we still live with. As much as the imperial powers shaped the colonial world, the ideologies of colonialism and the very empires themselves in
turn shaped those powers back—and continue to exert a latent influence over how those countries interact with the world.

In a more ambitious project, I would thus extrapolate my findings to the other imperial powers; here I will not be so bold. Nonetheless, by examining how empire has influenced the foreign policies of two of the greatest colonial powers, in the confined and fairly comparable space of their former Sub-Saharan African empires, we can better understand how foreign policy is often rooted in the past and not necessarily the logical realism of the present. British and French policy toward their former African imperia relates directly to how the empires were structured, how they were decolonized, and then how the post-colonial regimes were established. One would be hard-pressed to find clearer cases of the past influencing the present; as I have shown, intervention decisions are often related both to the degree of interests one has in a former colony and the general foreign policy outlook of the metropole, an outlook that is often based in that country’s historical legacy, especially when that country once had a great empire. This is not an absolute truism; sometimes strategic and economic relationships are purely transactional and would occur regardless of colonial history. As we saw in Libya, France, Britain, and the United States intervened for humanitarian reasons in a former Italian colony; colonial legacy had nothing to do with it. But for better or worse, contemporary Africa is a product of the imperial era, and to understand the events that transpire there—from the standpoint of the Africans, the former imperial powers, and even outside powers—we have to look to the past.

As direct neo-imperial interventions become less and less common for Britain and France, one could make the argument that colonial legacy is increasingly unimportant to understanding intervention decisions today. But even if there is a decline in the frequency of such interventions, post-colonial ties will continue to be a contributing factor whenever a former imperial power contemplates action—military or not—in a former possession. Between strategic links, normative
legacies, and expected responsibilities, imperial history casts a long shadow that can be amongst the most powerful forces when considering policy options. Britain and France unequivocally aspire to maintain great power status, even when impractical, and will insist on playing a role in the world—not to mention the countries—in which they have dealt too long to retreat from now. Such is the most important colonial legacy of all.
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### Appendices

**Appendix A: List of British Colonies in Africa**

<table>
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<th>Colony</th>
<th>Present Country</th>
<th>Year of British Control</th>
<th>Year of Independence</th>
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<td>1966</td>
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<td>1956</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>• Cape Colony</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Natal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Orange Free State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transvaal</td>
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<td>• Zululand</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>1910 (Dominion);</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1961 (Republic)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>insular Tanzania</td>
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Appendix B: List of French Colonies in Africa

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<td>1960</td>
</tr>
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<td>1801/1882</td>
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Appendix C: Full-Time British Residents in Africa, 2006 (IPPR)

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<th>Full-time Residents</th>
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