



Cold War



Decolonization

Frames in Unit 8 – Part 2

The Cold War and decolonization were struggles that can be studied through all three frames of the course, giving us different pictures of how they were related.



<p>0:12</p> <p><i>Trevor Getz speaking; graphic of the U.S. and Soviet flags spliced together as one; photo of a large crowd gathered in protest</i></p>	<p>Two great global struggles dominated the second half of the century, from the end of the Second World War in 1945, to around 1990. One struggle was the clash between two alliances: one led by the United States, and the other by the Soviet Union in what we call the Cold War. The other struggle was a conflict between the remaining global empires, and their colonized people who were fighting for independence. This struggle is known as Decolonization.</p> <p>Now, these two struggles are often studied separately, but the Cold War and Decolonization are best understood together, as we can see when we view them through our three frames.</p>
<p>0:58</p> <p><i>Soviet propaganda poster from the Cold War; Trevor Getz speaking</i></p>	<p>The United States and Russia had been the two principal victors of the Second World War, so from one perspective the Cold War was just a confrontation between these two powerful states, the most powerful communities of the age. But the United States and the Soviet Union also had two very different systems of production and distribution. On the one hand, the economy promoted by the United States was capitalist; it relied on a free market with relatively little government oversight, and people could exchange goods and services pretty freely. On the other hand, the Soviet Union represented a centralized communist economy in which the government played a very big role.</p>
<p>1:38</p> <p><i>Trevor Getz speaking</i></p>	<p>Now capitalism and communism each had their own strengths and weaknesses, but they also each had similar needs, and one of those needs was for raw material. The battle to control raw materials played a role in the struggles to end colonial rule, and helped draw both superpowers into Decolonization conflicts.</p>
<p>1:58</p> <p><i>Trevor Getz speaking; map of the world highlighting the countries under colonialist rule</i></p>	<p>Still, Decolonization conflict centered on the shape of communities, as well as issues of production and distribution. People fighting for independence in Africa, Asia across the Pacific, and the Caribbean wanted what others had fought for before. They wanted independent nation-states of their own. Ironically, in fighting against the British, the French, and other Western empires, these independence fighters adopted and used many ideas about sovereignty and legitimacy that the British, the French, and other empires practice at home.</p>
<p>2:32</p> <p><i>Two photos side-by-side, one of Fidel Castro and the other of European colonialists; world map graphic composed of the flags of each country; series of photos depicting leaders of the U.S and Soviet Union meeting with leaders of smaller nations fighting for independence</i></p>	<p>So Decolonization movements used many tools of their oppressors to win their freedom. Although they also developed many ideas of their own, those fighting for an end to empire were in many ways seeking equality in the world of nation-states. They were simply striving to become a nation among nations. But the Cold War superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, saw these independence battles as opportunities. They sought to further their own interests by enlisting these new states, or independence movements, to join either the communist or capitalist side.</p>
<p>3:07</p>	<p>Meanwhile, from their perspective, the leaders of anti-colonial movements in each colony knew they would have little chance in fighting against the imperial rulers</p>



<p><i>Trevor Getz speaking; series of photos featuring the leaders of the Decolonization movement</i></p>	<p>alone, so they sought support not only from the superpowers, but also from each other. They built networks of supporters, they found ways to help each other morally, financially, even by hiding Guerilla armies for each other. And as one colony became independent, it tended to help others around it, or even far away.</p>
<p>3:38 <i>Photos of Fidel Castro speaking on television and the President of Ghana giving a speech before a large crowd</i></p>	<p>The leaders of Decolonization movements also used new technologies like television to appeal for support in the Soviet Union in the United States and even to influence public opinion in the countries that ruled them.</p>
<p><i>Photos of U.S. Presidents Truman, Kennedy, and Nixon meeting with Soviet leaders on different occasions; photos of African colonies protesting colonialist rule; photo of the fall of the Berlin Wall</i></p>	<p>So these two Global conflicts the Cold War and decolonization continued alongside each other for half a century yet both conflicts would largely resolve by the 1990s. Almost all the colonies in Africa Asia the Caribbean and elsewhere achieved political independence by that date and also by the 1990s the Soviet Union and its centralized economic system would collapse along with Communist governments almost everywhere.</p>
<p>4:18 <i>Trevor Getz speaking</i></p>	<p>But this was not the end of the human story no matter what frame you look through. New issues of community networks and production and distribution emerged from behind the scenes even as these two great struggles played out. You'll take up the next chapter in these stories in Unit 9.</p>



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