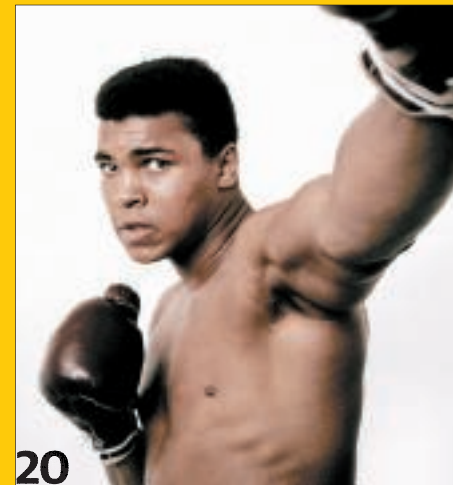




CLR James

Writer and historian (1901-1989)

One of the most outstanding writers on black history. Born in Trinidad, CLR James was a tireless fighter against racism. His key passions were politics and cricket. His book *The Black Jacobins*, which tells the story of the successful slave revolt led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, has inspired generations. James was friends with some of the giants of the 20th century: Paul Robeson, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah and Richard Wright, to name but a few. There is a library that bears his name in Hackney, London.



Muhammad Ali

Boxer and political activist (1942-)

Muhammad Ali has become more than just one of the greatest sportsmen who have ever lived. He was three times world heavyweight champion, but his eloquence, his opposition to the war in Vietnam for which he was stripped of his world title and threatened with jail, his refusal to accept racism, and his conversion to Islam (he joined the Nation of Islam and was friends for a time with Malcolm X) have made him an icon the world over. Ali subverted the idea that black athletes should be both quiet and submissive.



Nelson Mandela

Great African leader (1918-)

Became the first black president of a fully representative democracy in South Africa in 1994. As a young lawyer he led opposition to apartheid. His African National Congress movement abandoned pacifism following the brutal massacre of 69 peaceful demonstrators at Sharpeville in 1960. He was put on trial and made an inspirational speech from the dock. He spent 27 years in prison but emerged unbowled in 1990, to worldwide acclaim. He refused to seek revenge against the white population, and became a symbol of reconciliation between the races.



Barack Obama

Politician (1961-)

After securing the Democratic nomination in August 2008, Barack Obama is the first black person to gain a major party's backing for the American presidency. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he was the first black president of the prestigious Harvard Law review. As a lawyer he was a community organiser in disadvantaged areas in Chicago. He was elected to the US Senate in 2004 (only the third African American since reconstruction). He came to public notice the same year, after a keynote address at his party's convention.

1948 1957 1960 1961 1963 1964 1967 1968 1970 1971 1974-75 1976 1977 1980 1984 1994 1997 2000 2004 2005 2006 2008

Apartheid

The Afrikaner nationalists take power and legalise white domination in South Africa under what is known as apartheid (from the Afrikaans word for separateness). South Africans are divided into different categories: whites, coloureds (mixed-race people), Indians and Pakistanis, and Bantus (black Africans). From its very inception it sparks opposition.



Ghana gains independence

Ghana becomes one of the first independent African states, led by Kwame Nkrumah.

Tennis triumph

Althea Gibson becomes the first black Wimbledon champion. In 1975 Arthur Ashe becomes the first black man to win the title.

Independence

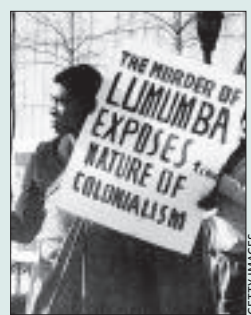
Mauritania, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria, Gabon, Rwanda, to name but a few African states, gain their independence. British prime minister Harold Macmillan acknowledges the British empire is crumbling, declaring that a "wind of change" is blowing through Africa.

Sharpeville massacre

In South Africa 69 peaceful anti-apartheid demonstrators are killed by police

Lumumba murdered

Patrice Lumumba, first prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo, is murdered. His death sparks outrage and demonstrations across the world.



Nigerian civil war

After the governor of the Eastern region of Nigeria declares Biafra an independent state, a civil war ensues that costs almost a million lives. TV images of malnourished African children with bloated stomachs shock the world.



ANC leaders imprisoned

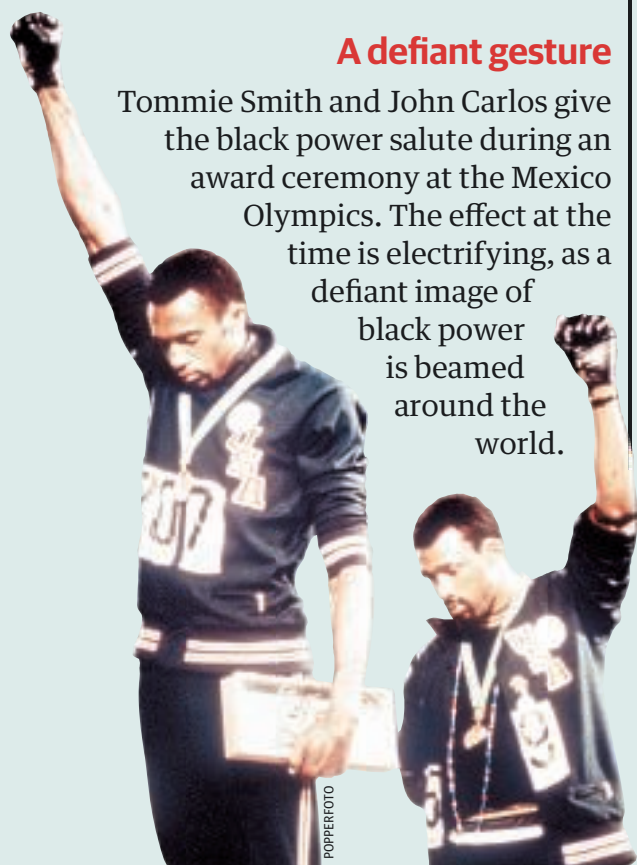
Nelson Mandela and other ANC leaders are sent to prison by the apartheid regime. The struggle for Mandela's release spawned a mass movement in Britain. Many South African exiles, both black and white, spent time in the UK.

I have a dream

The March on Washington, where Martin Luther King makes his famous "I have a dream" speech.

A defiant gesture

Tommie Smith and John Carlos give the black power salute during an award ceremony at the Mexico Olympics. The effect at the time is electrifying, as a defiant image of black power is beamed around the world.



Idi Amin

Idi Amin overthrows Milton Obote of Uganda. During Amin's brutal reign some 300,000 Ugandans were killed and 80,000 Ugandan Asians deported. Many Ugandan Asians came to live in Britain, adding to the growing racial tension in the wake of Enoch Powell's speech (see Windrush timeline below).



Autobiography acclaim

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou is published.

Independence continued

The Portuguese colonies Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique gain their independence after a long struggle.

Soweto

UK demonstrations are held against the teaching of Afrikaans (the language of the country's white rulers) in black schools in South Africa. In Soweto the police fire on unarmed crowds, killing hundreds. This incident leads to rioting throughout the country.

Biko murdered

Steve Biko, a South African black consciousness leader, is killed in police custody.



Zimbabwe

White rule is ended in Rhodesia after a bloody struggle and the state of Zimbabwe is declared. Another important stage in the ending of colonial rule in Africa.



Man of peace

Cape Town's Archbishop Desmond Tutu wins the Nobel peace prize for his outspoken criticism of the apartheid regime. Meanwhile, an international boycott of cultural and trade links with South Africa grows.

First black secretary general

Kofi Annan is the first sub-Saharan African to be elected to the top position within the United Nations.

Congo-Zaire

After 32 years in power, the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko is deposed. In the ensuing civil war, lasting several years, an estimated 5 million people are killed.

Freedom

Nelson Mandela, released from prison in 1990, is elected president of a multiracial South Africa.

... and genocide

Mass genocide in Rwanda. As many as half a million Rwandans die as the Hutu-dominated army massacres the Tutsi population. One of the biggest cases of genocide since the second world war.



Nobel prize

Kenyan environmental activist Wangari Maathai becomes the first African woman to receive the Nobel peace prize.

Obama gains nomination
Barack Obama becomes the first African American to secure the Democratic party nomination.



Madame president

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf takes office as president of Liberia, becoming Africa's first elected female head of state.

Katrina

A flood in New Orleans throws into bold relief the problems of class, race and the persistent legacy of slavery in the US. The black urban poor are seen to get little assistance from the government, in the full glare of the international media.



French riots

The death of two youths of north African origin, running away from the police in north-eastern Paris, leads to rioting across France. The government imposes a range of emergency measures including curfews.

... and some of today's black British history makers (left to right, from top row): Malorie Blackman, author; Theo Walcott, England's teenage football star; Zandie Smith, author; Lewis Hamilton, formula one racer; Ozwald Boateng, fashion designer; Baroness (Patricia) Scotland, attorney-general; Steve McQueen, artist; Thandie Newton, actor; Damon Buffini, private equity chief; Paul Ince, Premier League manager



Political representation

After Dadabhai Naoroji stood down in 1895 (see box C, left), few if any ethnic minority MPs were elected. But in the historic election of June 1987, Bernie Grant, Diane Abbott, Keith Vaz and Paul Boateng were elected to parliament, all Labour candidates.

Grant (pictured far right) had been leader of Haringey council in north London, and had gained national attention in 1985 when he reported that young people on the local Broadwater Farm council estate thought they had given the police "a bloody good hiding" during riots there (pictured right). Grant died in 2000.

Abbott (pictured left) was Britain's first black woman MP. Vaz, a solicitor, later became a minister for Europe. Boateng, who had made

his name as a civil rights lawyer during the 1970s and 80s, declared on his election, "Brent South today, Soweto tomorrow!" — referring to both his new constituency and the then ongoing anti-apartheid struggle. He later became the first black member of the cabinet, as chief secretary to the Treasury, and in 2005 was appointed Britain's high commissioner to South Africa.

He was followed into Cabinet by Baroness (Valerie) Amos, who served as international development secretary and, later, leader of the House of Lords. In the 2005 general election, Adam Afriyie, the director of an IT services company, became the first black Conservative MP.



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