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EAST ASIA

COMMUNIST CHINA

During World War II, the Chinese people suffered enormously from the Japanese invasion, and from the general chaos during the war. Many blamed the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek for China's problems. Meanwhile, the Communists, led by Mao Zedong, were expanding from their northwestern stronghold, gaining the support of peasants by treating them well and giving them land. The communist army was growing stronger, and communist-held territory was expanding. After World War II ended and the Japanese left, the communists and Nationalists waged a fierce civil war. In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and his forces fled to Taiwan, and the communists declared the formation of the People's Republic of China. Though they called it a republic, what they created was a communist totalitarian state. The Communist Party was the only legal political party, and Mao, as its chairman, was China's dictator. Mao, who was born into a peasant family, always believed that communism rested on the rural masses. He distrusted urban intellectuals, and was intolerant of intellectual dissent. Over the years, he would grow ever more convinced of his own infallibility.

Between 1949 and 1953, the Communists solidified their control of China and began expanding its borders, as troops marched into Tibet and the Xinjiang region (populated by the Turkic Muslim Uyghur people). In coming years, China would have border conflicts with many of its neighbors. The communists also embarked on an ambitious program of land reform, taking land from landlords and redistributing it to peasants. Landlords who were convicted of abusing peasants, or who resisted the reforms, were executed. Elementary schools were set up, and millions of Chinese children had access to a rudimentary education for the first time. Another stark break with the past was that women were given full legal equality with men.

China relied heavily on Soviet aid and advice at first. Mao, like Stalin, believed that a worldwide communist revolution was imminent, and tried to encourage it as much as possible. In 1950, for example, the two countries supported North Korea in the Korean war. Because the Chinese government advocated the overthrow of western governments, many did not recognize it at first, and the United States and others recognized the Nationalist government in Taiwan as the

rightful government of China.

In 1953, China launched a Soviet-style five-year plan. Government-controlled industries were soon expanded their production at the astounding rate of 15 % a year. Following the Stalinist model, peasants were made to pool their resources in great cooperative farms. Agricultural production increased, but not at the pace of industry. Chinese emulation of the Soviets declined after Khrushchev began speaking of peaceful coexistence in 1956. The Chinese accused the Soviets of selling out, and Chinese-Soviet ties deteriorated until diplomatic relations ceased in 1963. Now each state would compete to turn developing countries to its version of communism.

In 1958, Mao launched a second five-year program, which he dubbed the Great Leap Forward. Mao wanted to bring China's economy up to the level of industrialized nations, through an all-out effort by the entire population. Agricultural cooperatives were combined into huge communes, each worked by around 5,000 families. Small industries, such as backyard steel foundries, were set up on the communes. In the big factories, people and machines worked around the clock. A constant barrage of propaganda urged the people to work harder and harder. Mao seemed to believe that with enough determination, the masses could accomplish miracles. But determination wasn't enough. The Great Leap Forward tried to do too much, too fast, without enough industrial knowledge or infrastructure. The economy went into a decline, and widespread famine killed as many as 20 million people. The iron and steel from the backyard foundries turned out to be useless, and became a symbol of the failure of the Great Leap Forward. In the early 1960's, Mao changed his policies in favor of more gradual economic expansion.

Around the time, there was a growing split in the communist party, between radicals who felt that class differences and bourgeois culture not being wiped out quickly enough, and moderates who favored a more gradual revolution, and emphasizing economic development. In 1966, Mao sided with the radicals, and began a movement called the Cultural Revolution. Militant groups called Red Guards harassed anyone accused of bourgeois thinking. Intellectuals, teachers, and professionals were particular targets, and many were sent to rural labor camps, or simply tortured and killed. Universities closed from 1966 to 1970. Mao used the Cultural Revolution to solidify his control of the party by purging those whose communist principles he felt were weak. Millions of Chinese memorized *The Thoughts of Chairman Mao*, the famous Little

Red Book. Mao came to be considered infallible--almost godlike. His image was everywhere, and his cult of personality boasted far more members than Stalin's ever had. Eventually, radical groups took control of many cities, and began to fight amongst themselves. The country descended into chaos, wrecking the economy. The army began to restore order in 1967, and the extremes of the Cultural Revolution began to subside after 1969.

In 1970, several countries in the west began to recognize China's government. Since the formation of the United Nations, the Nationalist government (now in Taiwan) had held China's seat. In 1971, the UN voted to expel Taiwan and give the seat to the People's Republic Government. The next year, the US president Richard Nixon visited China, and relations between the two countries improved thereafter.

Mao died in 1976. Radicals, led by Mao's widow Jiang Qing and three others (called the "Gang of Four") struggled with moderates for control of China. Eventually, the Gang of Four were imprisoned, and the moderates gained control, with Deng Xiaoping emerging as the leader of China. Deng tried to tone down the absolute acceptance of Mao's thought, which was widespread among the population. He loosened central control of the Communist government, increased diplomatic and trade ties with other nations, and brought in experts to help modernize China's economy. Agriculture and industry remained collective and government-run, but farmers, workers, and managers were given increased decision making freedom, as well as incentives, such as the ability to sell surpluses for profit. These measures contributed to an economic boom beginning in the 1980's. However, economic growth per person was being held back by China's expanding population, already over a billion people. The response was the "one child" policy, whereby families were encouraged (often rather strongly) to have only one child. This was more successful in the cities than in the countryside, where children provide labor and security for parents. Nevertheless, China's population growth did begin to slow down.

Deng, like Khrushchev in the Soviet Union, was a moderate, reform-minded communist, but certainly no liberal. Many Chinese, especially university students, began to call for greater freedom of speech and other democratic reforms in the late 1980's. As the government debated how to respond, the protests grew louder. In 1989, protesters filled Beijing's Tiananmen Square. As the protests spread to other cities, China's leaders called in the army to crush them. Several thousand people were killed, and many more were imprisoned, as the government reasserted

itself. For China's leaders, increased economic freedom was one thing, but increased political freedom was quite another. They were determined not to see China go the way of the Soviet Union.

Deng maintained his power until the early 1990's, and died in 1997. His policy of economic, but not political, liberalization continued under his successors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. Considered strictly in terms of economic growth, the policy has been a success. China's GDP has ballooned in recent years, and today is second only to that of the United States. Of course, this is spread amongst 1.3 billion people, so the average per capita GDP is still quite low. And there have been problems with China's recent growth. Corruption has grown more prominent as government officials try to get rich. Income disparities are widening—some Chinese have grown very wealthy, while the vast majority live in poverty. As people have packed into the cities in search of wealth, urban problems have multiplied. Environmental damage is accelerating along with the economy. Nevertheless, the average Chinese person is growing more prosperous.

But China remains a repressive country with little regard for human rights or tolerance for dissent. While it still claims to be a communist country, it grows more capitalist all the time. Aspects of communism, such as state-owned industries, remain, but China today is not communist so much as authoritarian. And since China grows richer and more powerful all the time, other countries have been willing to look the other way. Bill Clinton, the US president, visited China in 1998. While Clinton denounced China's human rights abuses, trade barriers between the two countries were lowered. The US and many other countries supported China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), which occurred in 2001. Some argue that increased trade and prosperity will encourage greater demands for political freedom. This is likely to be true. What is uncertain is whether those demands will be met, or whether China will continue with other Asian nations, such as Singapore, in embracing capitalism without democracy.

TAIWAN AND HONG KONG

Since 1945, four small countries—Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore—have achieved amazing economic growth. Today they are often called the Four Asian Tigers. Though all but South Korea are populated mainly by ethnically Chinese people, the Asian Tigers have

followed the Japanese style of capitalism; relying on hard work, government support of capitalism, high savings rates, and steadily moving from less value-added products, such as textiles, to more value-added products, such as electronics. However, the Asian Tigers have not always advanced political freedom along with economic freedom.

Taiwan is an example. Taiwan has historically been ruled by China, but from 1895 to 1945 it was ruled by the Japanese, who established a basic industrial infrastructure there. Japan lost Taiwan in the war, and Chiang Kai-shek and his followers fled there in 1949 and established the Republic of China. At first, the United States recognized Chiang's government as the rightful government of China, and treaties and aid protected Taiwan from invasion by the People's Republic of China. Maintaining martial law, Chiang Kai-shek governed in an authoritarian manner, and the Nationalist Party was the only legal party. But things were run efficiently, and the economy began to take off. But the relationship between the two competing Chinese governments has remained quite tense. In the 1970's, the UN and many of its member countries, including the United States, recognized the People's Republic, and ceased recognizing Taiwan's government (though many countries have maintained informal and trading relations with Taiwan). China still sees Taiwan as a Chinese province, and has threatened to invade if Taiwan declares independence. After Chiang Kai-Shek died in 1975, Taiwan's government has grown more liberal. Martial law ended in 1987, and opposition parties were made legal in 1989. The Nationalist Party retained its control until 2000, when Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was elected president. The DPP, which gained control of the legislature the next year, favors independence, which has provoked anger in China. With one of the highest standards of living in East Asia, and an increasingly democratic government, Taiwan's future could be bright—if Taiwan and China can find a way to get along.

Like Taiwan, Hong Kong has historically been a part of China. Hong Kong became a part of the British empire in 1842, after the Opium War, and served as Britain's main port for trade with China. In 1898, China leased Hong Kong to Britain for 99 years. In the 20th century, Hong Kong's population swelled as waves of immigrants fled from China's various upheavals and disasters. This gave Hong Kong a steady supply of capital, as well as cheap labor. Hong Kong grew prosperous as a manufacturing and financial center, by continuing to trade with China during China's isolation after the revolution. Following British tradition, Hong Kong's government has

not intervened in the economy or the personal lives of its citizens as much as in the other Asian Tigers. In 1984, China and Britain agreed on terms for the transfer of Hong Kong back to China. Hong Kong would remain a “special administrative unit” within China, and would be allowed to maintain its liberal economic and social system, at least for 50 years. In 1997, Hong Kong once again became a part of China. So far, Hong Kong has remained free and prosperous, but many of its citizens wonder how much freedom China will be able to tolerate.

KOREA DIVIDED

Throughout its history, Korea has repeatedly found itself buffeted by the struggles of more powerful states. Under the Choson dynasty, Korea had become extremely isolationist in the late 1600's, though they still paid tribute to Manchu China. In the late 1800's, after the United States forced Japan to open itself to trade, Japan did the same to Korea; opening the way for a struggle among imperial powers for control. After defeating China in 1895, and Russia in 1905, Japan emerged as the strongest influence in Korea, and in 1910, they annexed Korea outright. The Japanese built up some industry there in the 1930's, but the Korean economy was geared toward Japanese, not Korean, benefit. As ultranationalism grew in Japan, Japanese rule grew increasingly harsh. The Koreans were made to speak Japanese, and adopt Japanese names. For a while, the Korean language was banned. During World War II, the Japanese imposed forced labor and military service on Koreans. Many young women were made to be prostitutes for the Japanese army.

After Japan was defeated in the 1945, Soviet troops occupied northern Korea, and U.S. troops occupied southern Korea. As tension between the two superpowers grew, each sponsored the formation of rival governments in the regions they occupied. Under the supervision of the United Nations, Republic of Korea was established in the south, with Syngman Rhee as president. The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, a Soviet-backed Communist government under Kim Il Sung, formed in the north. Each government claimed authority over all of Korea. Soviet and US troops withdrew in 1949. The next year, North Korean troops invaded South Korea, and rapidly overran most of the country. They were driven back almost to China by a UN force, made up mostly of US and South Korean troops and led by Douglas MacArthur. Then the

tide turned again, when Chinese troops entered the war on the North Korean side. Eventually, the front stabilized around the 38th parallel, close to the original line between the two sides. An armistice was signed in 1953, and the fighting ended. A Demilitarized Zone was established along the 38th parallel, heavily fortified by troops on each side. In Korea, the Cold War had become intensely hot. Not for the last time, a small nation had become a battleground in the struggle between the capitalist and communist worlds, and been left devastated. Around a million south Koreans were killed, and many more left homeless. Over half a million UN troops (most of them South Korean), and 1.6 million communist troops (almost a million of them Chinese) were killed or wounded.

After the war, North and South Korea took increasingly divergent paths. US troops remained in South Korea, to protect against another invasion from the north. The country rapidly began to rebuild and industrialize, and its economy grew enormously. Rhee's government, however, became increasingly authoritarian. His continual modification of Korean law to extend his terms as president finally led to widespread protests, and he resigned in 1960. In 1961, the struggling new government was overthrown by General Park Chung Hee. Park called for new elections, and was elected president. Industry and foreign trade continued to grow under Park, but he also grew more authoritarian, suppressing opposition to his rule. Park was assassinated in 1979. A new president was elected, but soon the military, under Chun Doo Hwan, became the real power in South Korea. Protests were crushed in the early 1980's, but protesters continued to demand democratic reform. In 1987, Chun allowed free elections. A new president was elected, and a new constitution guaranteed many basic freedoms. The new atmosphere of freedom encouraged protesters to demand a range of economic and political reforms. This disrupted the country for a while, but eventually things stabilized and the economy continued to grow. Today, South Korea has one of the strongest economies and highest standards of living in East Asia. Like the other three "Asian Tigers"—Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan—South Korea has achieved astonishing rates of economic growth and development in recent decades, due in large part to extremely hard-working populations. This growth was disrupted for a while during the Asian financial crisis of 1997. But under the leadership of Kim Dae Jung, elected the same year, the economy has recovered. South Korea's biggest worry these days is its northern neighbor.

North Korea would have neither prosperity nor freedom. Kim Il Sung turned North

Korea into a Stalinist state. Industries were nationalized, agriculture was collectivized, and economic plans emphasized heavy industry. Consumer goods and food remained in short supply. North Korea remains a truly totalitarian state, and has not adopted any of the reforms of its communist allies. After the fall of the Soviet Bloc, North Korea's only ally was China. In 1994, Kim Il Sung died, and his son, Kim Jong Il, took control, continuing the totalitarian policies of his father. North Korea remains one of the world's most isolated and poor countries. In the late 1990's, floods and drought caused famine. In spite of food aid from other countries, hundreds of thousands of people starved.

North Korea has always been quite aggressive, and has secretly pursued a nuclear weapons program in recent years. Nevertheless, the two Koreas have gradually improved their relations since 1991. In 2000, Kim Jong Il and Kim Dae Jung met in a summit in Pyongyang and discussed reconciliation and eventual unification. Still, the relationship between the two countries remained shaky. Relations with the United States improved for a while during the 1990's, with the US offering aid and promises of non-aggression in return for North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear program. This dialogue ended when President Bush referred to North Korea as part of an "axis of evil" in 2002. Later that year, North Korea admitted to its nuclear weapons program, and expelled UN inspectors. In 2003, North Korea withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Agreement, and announced that it was in possession of nuclear weapons.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

TRAGEDY IN INDOCHINA: THE PLIGHT OF VIETNAM, LAOS, AND CAMBODIA

French Indochina (now Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam) was occupied by the Japanese during the war. The French tried to reassert themselves afterward, but nationalist movements had grown strong, and France had been badly weakened. Laos and Cambodia became self-governing members of the French Union, and then independent nations in 1953. In Vietnam, the Vietminh, a communist-nationalist group led by Ho Chi Minh, declared the independent Republic of Vietnam in 1945. The French did not want to lose Vietnam, however, and war broke out in 1946. The French controlled the cities, but the countryside, especially in the north, belonged to the Vietminh.

Even with US aid, the French were defeated in 1954. At a post-war conference in Geneva, it was agreed that a temporary line would divide the Communist-held North from the predominantly non-communist South. Elections were to be held for a unified Vietnam in 1956, but the southern Vietnamese, and the United States, feared that Ho Chi Minh would win, so the elections were never held. Instead, the US backed a government in the South led by Ngo Dinh Diem. Diem grew increasingly authoritarian, and refused to initiate the land reforms that many peasants were demanding, which made many of them more sympathetic to the communists. The National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong, a South Vietnamese rebel group supported by the north (which in turn was supported by China and the Soviet Union), began trying to topple the South Vietnamese government in the late 1950's. The Second Indochina War (called the Vietnam War in the United States, and the American War in Vietnam) was underway.

At first, the United States only sent a few hundred military advisors, and a great deal of money and arms, to aid South Vietnam. The number of advisors grew rapidly in the early 1960's. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson claimed that American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin had been attacked by North Vietnam (this has never been proven) and gained the authorization of Congress to “take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack and prevent further aggression”. The US began aggressively bombing North Vietnam, as well as Communist supply lines and camps running through neutral Laos and Cambodia (the Ho Chi Minh Trail). The first US ground troops began arriving in 1965, and by 1968 their numbers had grown to over 500,000.

Viet Cong forces relied on guerrilla warfare and bombings to combat US and South Vietnamese troops, who in turn carried out “search and destroy” missions to eliminate the Viet Cong. Since it was often impossible to tell who was Viet Cong and who wasn't, many civilians were killed, and many villages and farms destroyed. Defoliants such as Agent Orange were used to kill entire forests in order to expose communist troops. Back in the United States, as the cost of the war (in dollars and lives) climbed, and television showed the carnage, the war grew more unpopular with the American public. After the communist forces attacked South Vietnamese cities in the Tet offensive in 1968, many Americans realized the communists were far from defeated. After years of negotiations, a cease fire was arranged in 1973, and American troops began to withdraw. With US support gone, the South Vietnamese could not repel an invasion from the North in 1975, and Vietnam was unified under Ho Chi Minh's communist regime. As

North Vietnamese migrated into the South, as many as a million South Vietnamese were “reeducated” in communist doctrine, and many thousands spent years in labor camps. Hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese and Chinese fled.

Cambodia and Laos also fell to communist forces. American and South Vietnamese troops had invaded Cambodia in 1970, driving Vietnamese communists deeper into that country. Soon Cambodia was enveloped in a civil war between communists and non-communists. In 1975, a communist group called the Khmer Rouge seized control of Cambodia, renaming it Kampuchea. Led by Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge embarked on one of the most senseless reigns of terror in history. The regime tried to establish a purely agricultural, self-sufficient, money-free society, free from the corrupting influence of cities and intellectual impurity. Millions were driven from the cities and forced to work in labor camps. Many died of starvation and disease, and many, especially educated urbanites, were simply executed. Perhaps 3 million people died in the chaos. Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1977, and set up a new, pro-Vietnamese government two years later. Fighting and repression continued for the next decade. Communists also gained control in Laos in 1975. The regime there was not as murderous as Cambodia, but it was repressive, and many Laotians fled the increasingly impoverished country. During all this turmoil, hundreds of thousands of refugees streamed out of Indochina. Many spent years in refugee camps, or drowned when their fragile boats came apart in the open oceans. Some were accepted into the United States and other countries.

Both Laos and Vietnam are still one-party communist states, but both have liberalized somewhat in recent years. Each country reduced centralized control of its economy in the 1980's, and opened up to foreign investment. Laos, however, remains the poorest country in Southeast Asia. In 1994, the United States ended a trade embargo with Vietnam which had been in effect since the end of the war, and reestablished diplomatic relations. Soon after, Vietnam joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Laos joined in 1997. In 2000, the United States and Vietnam signed a trading deal, and US president Bill Clinton visited Vietnam. As with China, it remains to be seen whether economic liberalization will be followed by political liberalization. Cambodia has taken a different course. Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia in 1989, and in 1991 the UN brokered a peace treaty between warring parties. Free elections were held in 1993, and Cambodia reinstated its former king and became a constitutional

monarchy. Cambodia's democracy remained shaky, as shown when one of its two prime ministers overthrew the other in 1997. Pol Pot died in 1998, and in the late 1990's and early 2000's, some of his supporters were put on trial for genocide. The country remains poor, but the Khmer Rouge is gone.

THAILAND

Siam had become a constitutional monarchy in 1932, but by 1939, when its name was changed to Thailand, the military controlled the government. When the Japanese invaded Thailand during the war, Prime Minister Phibun cooperated with them, and Thailand even declared war on the Allies. The Free Thai movement, which arose in opposition to Japanese occupation, deposed Phibun in 1944. A civilian government lasted until 1948, when the military took power again. Thailand was ruled by Phibun and other military dictators from 1948 to 1973. These governments were strongly anti-communist, however, and Thailand received a great deal of economic and military aid from the United States in return for letting them set up military bases. In 1973, an uprising of university students deposed the military government, but the military violently seized control again in 1976. Democratic elections resumed in 1980, but the military remained powerful. Another military coup occurred in 1991, but since 1992 the government has been a civilian one. While most Thai people are still farmers, light manufacturing and tourism have grown in recent decades. The economy began to boom in the mid-1980's, but the 1997 Asian financial crisis forced Thailand to make economic reforms in return for international aid. Thailand gets less poor all the time, but it has had its share of growing pains. The AIDS epidemic has hit Thailand hard, and drug trafficking is a big problem. As millions of people have poured in from the countryside to seek urban jobs, Bangkok and other cities have grown overcrowded and chaotic.

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Burma was separated from India and granted some autonomy by the British in 1937. In 1942, however, Burma was invaded by Japan. The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), led by General Aung San, helped the allies fight the Japanese. By the end of the war,

the AFPFL had become a powerful force in Burma, and pressed for Burmese independence from Britain, which was gained in 1948. The new republic was plagued by rebellions of communists and minority ethnic groups, and by a growing split within the AFPFL. Amidst growing chaos, General Ne Win took control of the Burmese government in 1962. Ne Win and his followers set about turning Burma into a socialist country, with the Burma Socialist Program Party as the sole legal party. Ne Win was Burma's ruler (in fact, when not in name) until 1988. The government took over the economy and isolated Burma from the rest of the world, severely hurting the economy.

In 1988, a massive protest movement called for multi-party elections. Ne Win resigned, but the army seized control of the government, replacing it with the ominously named State Law and Order Restoration Council, or SLORC. Throughout the protests, thousands of people were killed by troops. SLORC changed the country's name to Myanmar, meaning "The People's Country". Multiparty elections were held in 1990, and the National League for Democracy, led by Aung San Suu Kyi (the daughter of the independence leader Aung San, and an inspiring leader of a non-violent human rights movement) won by a landslide. But SLORC did not allow them to come to power. Many members were arrested and killed, and Suu Kyi was put under house arrest. As human rights groups protested, many nations enacted economic sanctions against Myanmar. Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. She was finally released again in 1995, but continued to be harassed by SLORC, which retained a firm grip on the country. In 2003, Suu Kyi and her followers were attacked violently, and Suu Kyi was put under house arrest again. Myanmar remains authoritarian, isolated, and poor.

MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

Like Myanmar, Malaysia had been controlled by the British. When the British were gaining control in the 1800's, peninsular Malaysia was dominated by the Malay ethnic group, a Malayo-Polynesian people who had converted to Islam in the 1400's. There was also a range of other ethnic groups, such as the Dayaks of Borneo, many of whom were animists. The British added Chinese people to this mix, imported to work in tin mines, and Indians, to work on rubber plantations (rubber trees had been imported from South America). Today, Malays and other

indigenous people compose 58% of the Malaysia population, Chinese compose 24%, and Indians compose 8%. The British often encouraged divisions between ethnic groups, to keep them from uniting against British rule. These divisions remain to this day. While the Chinese are dominant in the Malaysian economy, the Malays dominate politics.

After the Japanese withdrew from Malaysia in 1945, peninsular Malaysia became the semi-autonomous Federation of Malaya in 1946. The Federation gained complete independence in 1957. A communist guerilla movement, which had begun in 1948, was put down with British help in 1960. In 1963, Singapore, as well as Sabah and Sarawak in Borneo, joined to form the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore's population was mostly Chinese, and they could not tolerate Malay political dominance, so they withdrew in 1965. The new Federation of Malaysia was a constitutional monarchy (with regional sultans rotating to serve five year terms as king) with a prime minister and a parliament. Islam remained the official religion of Malaysia, though other religions were tolerated. The dominant political force was the Alliance, a coalition of Malaysian, Chinese, and Indian political parties. Still, ethnic strife continued to divide Malaysia. Riots broke out in 1969. The government responded by declaring a state of emergency and banning discussion of ethnic issues. In the early 1970's, the government tried to minimize ethnic differences by expanding the Alliance into a new multiethnic coalition called the National Front, which has been the major force in Malaysian politics ever since. A New Economic Policy was put into effect, to expand the economy while equalizing the wealth of the various ethnic groups. By the early 1990's, the Malaysian economy had expanded greatly, and ethnic strife had moderated. The financial crisis of the late 1990's slowed economic growth, but the country has since recovered. Long-time Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad was an effective leader, but his rule was blemished by apparent abuses of power, such as the imprisonment of his finance minister on very questionable charges. In 2002, Mahathir resigned, and the new Prime Minister, Abdullah bin Ahmad Badawi, has so far been both popular and reform-minded.

Singapore, a tiny island city-state off the southern tip of the Malay peninsula, has achieved economic wonders since its independence in 1965. Like the other predominantly-Chinese Asian Tigers Taiwan and Hong Kong, Singapore has continued to embrace the Confucian traditions of hard work and obedience to authority, while abandoning the traditional Confucian suspicion of innovation and commerce. Today, Singapore is the busiest port in Southeast Asia, and a leader in

manufacturing and finance. With a per capita GDP of 24,000 dollars, Singapore's people are by far the richest in Southeast Asia. They are also among the healthiest and most educated. But political freedom has not followed economic development in Singapore. Since 1959, Singapore has been ruled by a single party, the People's Action Party. From 1959 to 1990, Lee Kwan Yew was Prime Minister. He was an effective, but authoritarian, ruler, who always claimed that order was more important than freedom. His successor, Goh Chok Tong, has continued a similar policy. And Singapore is certainly orderly—crime, littering, and traffic jams are great rarities, due to stiff penalties and tight regulations. Drug dealers, for example, are executed, and chewing gum is illegal. Many citizens think the system is a good one. Singapore is a reminder that capitalism and democracy are not the same thing

INDONESIA

After the Japanese left in 1945, Indonesia declared its independence from the Dutch. The Dutch fought a war to hang on to Indonesia, but finally accepted its independence in 1949. The new nation had a lot going against it. Indonesia consists entirely of islands—a few big ones like Sumatra and Java, and several thousand small ones, spread over an area the size of the United States. There are around 300 ethnic groups, speaking over 250 languages. At independence all that united the peoples of Indonesia was Islam and the common experience of living under, and then fighting, Dutch rule. The Dutch had done little to develop Indonesia, except for extracting raw materials, and had not prepared the Indonesians for self-government, because they had not intended to give it to them. At independence, 90% of the Indonesian population was illiterate. All things considered, it's no surprise that Indonesia got off to a rocky start as an independent nation.

Indonesia's first president was a former nationalist leader named Sukarno. After dealing with the war against the Dutch, Sukarno put down rebellions in the early 60's. He kept Indonesia from splitting apart, but grew more authoritarian in the process. By 1963, he had been declared president for life. A fervent nationalist, he successfully wrested control of Irian Jaya (western New Guinea) from the Dutch, and unsuccessfully invaded Malaysia. Sukarno's regime badly mismanaged the economy, which declined as the population rose. In 1965, a communist uprising

was defeated by the army, lead by Lieutenant General Suharto. Mob violence against suspected communists broke out around the country, much of it directed against the small Chinese minority (who, as in Malaysia, control a large part of Indonesia's wealth). Sukarno was force to transfer power to Suharto, who became president in 1968.

Suharto was a far more effective ruler than Sukarno. He improved relations with other countries and the UN, the economy was stabilized, and foreign aid and investment in Indonesia increased. Literacy, health, food supplies, and general prosperity began to grow. But Suharto's regime remained violently authoritarian, and thousands of political dissidents were imprisoned. When Portugal withdrew from East Timor in 1975, Indonesia invaded. The mostly Christian East Timorese resisted Indonesian rule, and the Indonesians responded with brutality, killing hundreds of thousands in the next decades. Despite economic growth and other forms of progress, corruption was rampant in the Indonesian government, and wealth remained in the hands of a very few (especially the Suharto family). Opposition to Suharto grew during the 1990's. The financial crash of 1997 led to widespread protests (as well as rioting, and further violence against the Chinese). Suharto was finally forced to step down. After Suharto, Indonesia has become more democratic, but more chaotic. In 1999, East Timor voted for independence from Indonesia, and Indonesian militias responded with a campaign of terror, which was finally ended by a UN peacekeeping force. East Timor became independent in 2002. Other independence movements have led to violence in recent years. Ethnic violence has increased as well, as has terrorist activity by groups associated with Al Qaida. Indonesia's fledgling democratic government has its work cut out for it.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines saw some of the fiercest fighting in the Pacific theater during World War II. Manila was practically demolished. Semi-autonomous from the United States since 1935, the Philippines became fully independent on July 4, 1946. After centuries of Spanish rule, Filipino society was somewhat similar to Latin America's; predominantly Catholic, with most wealth and power concentrated in the hands of a few (often European-Filipinos or Chinese-Filipinos). The United States continued to influence the Philippines through economic and military aid, given in

exchange for US military bases in the Philippines. In 1954, communist rebels called Huks were defeated with US aid. The country began to industrialize soon after the war, and standards of living began to rise.

But Filipino politics were troubled. Ferdinand Marcos became president in 1965. In the late 60's and early 70's, there was a resurgence in rebellion by communists, and by Muslims in the southern Philippines. Marcos responded by declaring martial law, thus consolidating his power as a dictator, and stealing a fortune from the government in the process. In 1983, Benigno Aquino, Marcos' main rival, was assassinated by members of the army. Many Filipinos were outraged, and Marcos was forced to hold presidential elections in 1986. Corazon Aquino, Benigno Aquino's widow, was elected, but the Marcos regime tried to overrule the results. Huge protests broke out all over the Philippines, and Marcos was forced to flee to the United States. Corazon Aquino became president, and worked to strengthen democracy in the Philippines. But many problems remained, including poverty, urban overcrowding and crime, massive foreign debt, government corruption, and armed rebel movements. A cease-fire with some Muslim rebel groups was signed in 1994, though some groups rejected it and kept fighting. In 1998, Joseph Estrada, a populist former movie star, became president. He was accused of corruption in 2000, and was forced to step down amidst widespread protests. In recent years, the US has increased aid to the Philippines for fighting Islamic extremists, but terrorist attacks have increased. Whether peace, prosperity, and democracy will continue to gain ground in the Philippines remains to be seen.

INDEPENDENCE AND DIVISION IN SOUTH ASIA

During World War II, Britain declared India to be at war with the Axis. Many India troops fought bravely, but most Indians resented their forced participation. The Indian National Congress refused to support the war effort, and launched another non-violent campaign, called the Quit India movement. The British responded by jailing Congress members for the duration of the war. The Muslim League, however, supported the war in exchange for a British promise to consider an independent Muslim state. After the war ended, the British and Indians began negotiating an independence plan. Soon, differences between Hindus and Muslims led to violence

and separate states for the two groups seemed to many the only solution. In August 1947, the independent states of India and Pakistan were created. Since the major Muslim population centers were in eastern and western India, Pakistan had two parts, separated by over 1000 miles. Millions of people became refugees, as Hindus fled Pakistan and Muslims fled India. During the chaos, violence between the two groups killed half a million people. Gandhi also died a violent death, shot by a Hindu extremist. Many of the princely states, which had been governed indirectly by Britain through Indian rulers, were given a choice of joining India or Pakistan. In Kashmir, the majority Muslim population wanted to join Pakistan, but the Hindu ruler joined with India. This sparked a war between the two new countries that lasted until 1949. Kashmir has been a zone of contention ever since.

INDIA

India became a constitutional, parliamentary republic, with the popular and effective Jawaharlal Nehru as its first prime minister. Nehru tried to steer his country in an independent course between capitalism and communism. A democrat as well as a moderate socialist, he nationalized industries and announced five year plans to build the economy. Nehru was a founder of the Non-Aligned Nations Movement, which maintained relationships with both sides in the cold war, without joining either side. Relations with China soured after a violent dispute along the Tibetan border. Afterward, India's military was built up at the expense of other government programs. One of the biggest problems with governing India is its enormous linguistic and ethnic diversity. Over 1,000 languages are spoken in India. Though Hindi and English are widespread, they are not universal. One feature of Nehru's term was the re-drawing of India's internal state borders to better coincide with linguistic and ethnic divisions. This was helpful, but sectarian strife would continue to plague India.

Nehru died in 1964, and his daughter, Indira Gandhi (no relation to Mohandas Gandhi) took office in 1966. It was a troubled time. India and Pakistan had fought another, inconclusive war over Kashmir in 1965. In 1971, East and West Pakistan fought a civil war. India took the side of East Pakistan, which became the independent nation of Bangladesh. In the early 70's, India was plagued with food shortages, unemployment, and unrest. Facing demands for her

resignation, Gandhi declared a “state of emergency” in 1975. Critics of the government were censored and jailed, and forced sterilizations were imposed to deal with population growth. By 1977, things had stabilized somewhat, and Gandhi ended the state of emergency and freed political prisoners. National elections were held, and Gandhi was ousted. But the new government was ineffective, and Gandhi was reelected in 1979, promising to refrain from authoritarian “excesses”. In the early 1980's, Sikhs in the Punjab state were demanding independence. When militant Sikhs occupied the sacred Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984, Gandhi sent troops into the temple, killing several Sikh leaders, and deeply offending the Sikh population. Later that year, Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards.

Gandhi was succeeded by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv was an effective leader, but ethnic violence and separatist movements among Sikhs, Tamils, and other groups were growing strong. He resigned in 1989, after the Congress Party was defeated amidst charges of corruption, and was assassinated by Tamil separatists in 1991. The Congress party returned to power that year, and the prime minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, began an economic reform program, privatizing many national industries. Forced to compete, these industries grew more efficient. Foreign investment in India increased, and the economy expanded. But India’s social divisions remained a problem. Muslims in Kashmir continued to demand independence, and violent clashes with Indian troops have killed thousands in the last few decades. To the south, in the state of Uttar Pradesh, violence developed around a mosque, which Hindus claimed was built on the site of a sacred Hindu temple centuries before. In 1992, Hindu extremists tore down the mosque, sparking a wave of Hindu-Muslim violence.

The Congress Party was again charged with corruption in 1996, and lost control of the government. Since then, various coalitions have governed. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) a Hindu nationalist party, has become increasingly influential, which has alarmed non-Hindu groups. In 1998, a BJP-led government tested nuclear weapons, announcing that India would join the ranks of nuclear powers. The move was denounced by many countries, but was very popular with many Indians. Soon after, Pakistan responded by testing its own nuclear weapons. Relations between the two countries deteriorated further in the early 2000's, as India accused Pakistan of supporting Islamic rebel groups in Kashmir. War seemed imminent in 2002 as troops from both countries built up along the border. This alarming situation was defused with the help of frantic

international diplomacy. Relations between Pakistan and India have recently improved.

Today, India has over a billion people, and its population is still growing rather rapidly. Despite all its troubles, India has generally maintained the world's most populous democracy since its independence. With its huge population, and its increasing military and economic power, India's future is of global importance. But that future is uncertain. India has made great economic gains since its independence, but the benefits have been uneven. Beginning in the 1960's, a leap in agricultural technology called the Green Revolution has expanded food production. But only the wealthier farmers could afford the fertilizers and the new strains of rice and wheat introduced then, leading to growing disparities in the wealth of farmers. Disparities between the cities and the countryside have increased as well. Cities have expanded quickly and chaotically as people have arrived seeking jobs. India's rather large educated middle class has done well, and India's high tech and entertainment industries are becoming global forces. But many urbanites are poor, unskilled dwellers in growing slums. Overall, India remains predominantly agricultural and poor. Like other developing nations, it faces the issue of balancing modernization and growing western-style materialism with traditional values. The status of women has improved greatly, though men still dominate many Indian households. The lower castes, especially the untouchables, have demanded and won increased rights, but they still suffer intense prejudice. Social and ethnic divisions remain sharp in India. As the economy races the population, the environment has suffered. India might achieve greatness, if it can overcome its great problems.

PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

The two Pakistans were divided by more than just 1,000 miles of India. West Pakistan is a dry, mountainous region where many people still live by herding, while East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) is low, hot, and marshy. West Pakistan was populated by Punjabis, Sindhis, Pashtuns, and Baluchis, while East Pakistan was mostly Bengali. East Pakistan resented the dominance of West Pakistan in politics, and soon people were speaking of independence. In 1971, troops were sent into East Pakistan to put down protests. East Pakistan claimed its independence as Bangladesh (Bengal nation). War erupted, and refugees from Bangladesh

streamed into India. India joined Bangladesh against Pakistan, and Pakistan finally surrendered. About a million people died in the war.

Ever since, Pakistan and Bangladesh have struggled with unstable governments. In Pakistan, Yahya Khan, the military ruler, resigned after the war. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto established a civilian government, but he was overthrown in 1977 by the military, and executed in 1979. General Zia ul-Haq ruled until he was killed in a plane crash in 1988. Bhutto's daughter, Benazir Bhutto, was elected Prime Minister (the first elected female leader of a Muslim country). She was removed amidst charges of corruption in 1990. Afterward, a series of prime ministers, including Bhutto, came and went. Pakistan tested its first nuclear weapons in 1998, after India tested theirs. In 1999, a military coup once again overthrew the civilian government. General Pervez Musharraf claimed that he was acting to prevent corruption, and the change was welcomed by many Pakistanis. After the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, Pakistan allied with the United States against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The alliance with the US helped the Pakistani economy, but led to violent protests among Islamic hardliners. Musharraf allowed parliamentary elections in 2002, but he has held on tightly to the reins of power.

Bangladesh suffered a series of military coups early on, but has had a more or less stable parliamentary government since 1991. Bangladesh has big problems, though. With 133 million people crammed into a country not much bigger than England, it is one of the most crowded countries on Earth. The population puts a severe strain on Bangladesh's struggling economy in the best of times, and cyclones, floods, tropical diseases, and hunger have taken a heavy toll on the Bangladeshi people.

SRI LANKA, BHUTAN, NEPAL, AND AFGHANISTAN

Along the edges of the Indian subcontinent are smaller, independent states that have been influenced by Indian culture, though in very different ways. Off the southern tip of India is Sri Lanka, which was known as Ceylon until 1972. Ceylon was a British colony until it became an independent nation in 1948. Since then, it has had a relatively stable parliamentary government, and a higher standard of living than other South Asian countries. Sri Lanka's biggest problem is the relationship between its two main ethnic groups—the Sinhalese, who are mostly Buddhist and

of northern Indian descent, and the Tamils, who are mostly Hindu and of southern Indian descent. Since independence, the Sinhalese have dominated the government. Tamils resent this, and have sought their own state. Periodic clashes between Tamil separatists and Sinhalese troops descended into a full scale civil war in 1983. The conflict has killed thousands on both sides, and no lasting resolution has been found.

Far to the north are the isolated states along the mountainous border of the Indian subcontinent. Bhutan is a tiny kingdom pervaded by a monastic Buddhism similar to that of Tibet. Bhutan was isolated from the outside world until the late 1950's, when it began to be menaced by China. Since then, Bhutan has modernized somewhat, but has tried to preserve its traditional culture. Recent ethnic clashes have forced many people of Nepalese origin into refugee camps in Nepal. Like Bhutan, Nepal stretches from the hot lowlands to the peaks of the Himalayas. Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world, is on the border between Nepal and Tibet. Unlike Bhutan, most of the people of Nepal are Hindu, though Hinduism there is blended with Buddhism and older, animistic religions. Though tourism and international aid help the economy, Nepal remains very poor, and many of its people are illiterate. Diseases like tuberculosis and leprosy are still common, though malaria has been brought under control in recent decades. Nepal was an autocratic monarchy until 1990, when protests resulted in the establishment of a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament. The new government has been shaky, however. To complicate matters, Maoist rebels staged an uprising in 1996, as have gained control of some rural regions of Nepal. In 2001, Nepal was thrown into turmoil when the king and eight members of his family were gunned down by one of the king's sons, apparently in a drunken rage.

Afghanistan is a harsh, landlocked place of hot deserts and high mountains. Except for a few fertile valleys, most of Afghanistan is suitable only for nomadic pastoralism, and much of it is not suited for that. Afghanistan has always been a crossroads, not just for traders, but for conquerors. The region has been ruled by ancient Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Bactrians, Kushans, Sassanians, Arab Muslims (who converted the region to Islam), Turks, and Mongols. The stream of invaders, the rugged terrain, and the diversity of peoples living in Afghanistan (various Aryan and Turkic tribes) have always worked against unification. The Afghan peoples first united in 1747, though the region never became very centralized. Many of the nomadic peoples, even

today, think of themselves as belonging to a tribe, not a state. Russia and Britain fought over Afghanistan through the 1800's, and Britain controlled Afghanistan's foreign affairs from the late 1800's to the early 20th century. After the country became fully independent in 1919, a series of rulers tried, without much success, to turn Afghanistan into a modern, democratic country.

In 1978, a left-wing rebel group backed by the Soviet Union took over the government and began establishing a communist state. Most Afghans, as devout Muslims, wanted no part of the secularism or the Soviet influence of the new government, and they rebelled. The rebels called themselves mujahideen (holy warriors). In 1979, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan to support the communist government. But the Afghan rebels, aided by the US, fought a fierce guerilla war, and the Soviets could not conquer the region. The Soviets finally withdrew in 1989. The mujahideen finally defeated the government in 1992. Various factions then began to struggle for power over the wrecked country. By the late 1990's, an extremely conservative Islamic group called the Taliban ruled most of the country, and set up an intensely repressive Islamic state. Women were made to cover themselves with garments called burkas, kicked out of schools, and confined to their homes. Men were forced to grow their beards. Ancient Buddhist rock carvings were destroyed. Osama bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi who had been a rebel fighter in the Soviet war, was allowed to set up training camps for his terrorist group, al-Qaeda.

After al-Qaeda killed thousands of people in the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in 2001, a coalition of countries led by the U.S. invaded Afghanistan, and helped opposition rebel groups depose the Taliban. Bin Laden was never caught. An interim government, led by Hamid Karzai, was set up in late 2001. A constitution was ratified in early 2004, and elections (contested by some) were held later that year. Despite progress toward setting up a democratic government, Afghanistan remains a devastated society. In late 2004, warlords still controlled many regions, and insurgents were a constant threat to the new government and to peacekeeping forces. Many Afghans remained homeless, illiterate, and desperately poor. A stable government and a growing economy in Afghanistan would be an astonishing achievement.

THE MIDDLE EAST

introduction

TURKEY

Turkey stayed out of World War II as much as it could, though it did join the Allies late in the game. After the war, the Soviet Union tried to expand into Turkey. Turkey allied itself with the United States, gaining a great deal of money and military aid in return for allowing the US to establish military bases on Turkish soil. Kemal Ataturk died in 1938, but his legacy of modernization and secularism (sometimes enforced with a heavy hand) remained strong. Ataturk's program has been strongly supported by the military, which has remained influential in the Turkish government. Indeed, the military took over the government in 1960, 1971, and 1980, but Turkey has always returned to civilian, parliamentary government. One of Turkey's main challenges has been balancing its secular government with its overwhelmingly Muslim population. There has always been conflict between those who want to maintain secularism, and those who want to introduce Islamic features, either in part or wholesale. Armed Islamic extremists have engaged in terrorism and tried, without success, to overthrow the government. More moderate Islamic reformers have had more success in moving Turkey away from its rigidly secular stance. But the polarization remains. In the 1990's and early 2000's, pro-Islamist parties have won support in elections, but were then banned by the Turkish high court.

Turkey has historically had an antagonistic relationship with the Greeks. The two countries came to the brink of war over the island of Cyprus, which is divided between Greek and Turkish populations. When fighting broke out between the two groups in the 1960's, only international peacekeeping efforts prevented a war. In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus to help Turkish Cypriots set up their own autonomous region. Since then, international peacekeepers have stayed in Cyprus to prevent fighting between the two divisions. Turkey has also had a long conflict with Kurds living in the mountains of southeastern Turkey, who constitute about 10 % of the population. The Turkish government has tried to eliminate the Kurdish culture by outlawing the Kurdish language, and forcing Kurdish nomads to settle down in villages. This policy has moderated in recent years, but Kurds still suffer severe discrimination. Kurdish separatists continue to clash with Turkish government forces.

Turkey's standard of living has improved in recent decades, but the country remains rather

poor. Rapid urbanization has led to social problems such as the growth of slums around the larger cities. Many Turks go to Europe or the richer countries of the Middle East to find work. Turkey's application for membership in the European Union is being considered, but so far has not been accepted. Straddling Europe and the Middle East, Turkey continues to seek a stable position.

ISRAEL: THE CENTER OF CONTENTION

After the horrors of the Holocaust, support in western nations for a Jewish state in Palestine solidified. The British, who still controlled Palestine as a mandate, had a tense situation on their hands. The Palestinian Arabs were alarmed by the increasing numbers of Jews who wanted to settle there. Both Arabs and Jews believed they had been promised an independent state, and violent clashes were increasing between the two groups. Trying to decide what to do, Britain limited Jewish immigration, though tens of thousands moved in anyway. In 1947, Britain asked the United Nations to step in. The UN drew up a plan which divided Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, with Jerusalem under UN control. Jews accepted the plan, but Arabs rejected it. Fighting broke out, and Britain withdrew from the area.

The Jewish community announced the creation of the independent state of Israel on May 14, 1948. The next day, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt invaded Israel. The Israelis were well-armed, well-organized, and extremely motivated, and they defeated the Arab forces and took control of a large part of the territory reserved for Palestinians. Some stayed, but several hundred thousand fled or were driven out, and settled in UN refugee camps in neighboring countries. The Arab nations refused to recognize Israel, though most western nations did. Elections for the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, were held in 1949, and David Ben-Gurion became Israel's first prime minister. Under the Law of Return, Israel opened itself to immigration to Jews from around the world, and the Jewish population of Israel doubled by 1951. The economy soon grew as well. Many of the immigrants were well-educated and skilled, and aid money flowing in from other countries, and from Jews around the world. A great deal of aid came from the United States, because many Jews lived there, and because the US saw Israel as an ally in the strategically important Middle East. Soon the Israeli economy was booming.

But the conflict between Israel and the Arab world was just beginning. In 1956, President

Abdel Nasser of Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal, seizing it from British and French control. Israel joined Britain and France in attacking Egypt. Under UN and US pressure, the invasion stopped and Egypt was left in control of the canal. In 1967, Nasser moved Egyptian troops into the Sinai Peninsula. Israel acted preemptively, attacking Egypt. Other Arab nations then joined the war, but within days, Israel had won a decisive victory. After this Six Day War, Israel controlled the Gaza Strip (a Palestinian area along the southern coast), the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank (another Palestinian area), and the strategic Golan Heights area along the Syrian border. Over a million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were now under Israeli occupation. Many fled to refugee camps in nearby countries. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a coalition of Palestinian groups, gained a great deal of support, both from angry Palestinians and from the leaders of Arab nations. The PLO carried out guerrilla warfare and terrorist attacks against Israel, whose existence it rejected. The UN ordered Israel to return the occupied territories, but Israel refused, and began to build Israeli settlements in them. As conflict between Israel and the Arab countries persisted, the US increasingly aided Israel, while the Soviet Union aided the Arabs. On the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel. After a fierce fight, the Israelis won again, though the war hurt their economy and left them more dependent on US aid. After the war, oil-rich Arab states placed an oil embargo on the United States, and cut back oil production, sending shock waves through the industrialized world and highlighting the strategic importance of Middle Eastern oil.

In the mid-1970's, the new Egyptian president, Anwar Sadat, grew increasingly conciliatory. In 1977, he met with the Israeli prime minister, Menachim Begin, for peace talks in Jerusalem. The next year, US president Jimmy Carter invited Begin and Sadat to Camp David, a presidential retreat, for further talks. The resulting Camp David accords established peace between Egypt and Israel. Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula, and was allowed to use the Suez Canal. Other Arab countries, however, were not about to make peace with Israel. They viewed Sadat as a traitor, and Egypt lost a great deal of influence in the Arab world. At the same time, violence was growing between Israel and the PLO. PLO rebels raided Israel from refugee camps in Arab countries, and Israel launched air strikes on the refugee camps in return. In 1978 and 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon in response to attacks by the PLO, which was based there.

In 1987, 20 years after Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, a massive protest called the intifada (uprising) broke out among Palestinians. Violent protests and terrorist

attacks by Palestinians were met with growing violence and repression by Israeli troops. After the fall of the Soviet Union, hundreds of thousands of Jews migrated to Israel from the former Soviet bloc. One result was the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Nevertheless, the early 90's saw some breakthroughs in peacemaking. In 1993, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin met with Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader. Israel recognized the PLO as the representative body of the Palestinian people, and gave Palestinians limited self-rule by a newly created Palestinian Authority, which came to be headed by Arafat. In return, the PLO recognized the right of Israel to exist, and renounced terrorism. But many on both sides refused to compromise. Radical groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah stepped up terrorist attacks, vowing to destroy Israel. Many hard-line Israelis believed that God had promised them all of Palestine, and were determined to continue settling the occupied territories.

In 1995, Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli extremist. He had represented the more left-leaning Labor party, which tends to be somewhat conciliatory toward Palestinians. In 1996, Benjamin Netanyahu, of the more hard-line Likud bloc, was elected prime minister. Soon after, Israel renewed the expansion of settlements in the West Bank, and in Jerusalem. Still, some progress continued, as Israel agreed to release control of some West Bank areas, and gradually began withdrawing troops. Ehud Barak of the Labor Party was elected in 1999, and met with Arafat in 2000, but the two could not reach an agreement. In 2000, the hard-line Likud leader Ariel Sharon made a provocative visit to a holy site called the Temple Mount. The Palestinian territories erupted in a second intifada. Palestinian suicide bombers began targeting Israeli civilians, and Israelis responded forcefully, often injuring and killing Palestinian civilians. Many Israelis grew more hawkish, deciding that Arafat could not or would not stop the terrorist attacks. In 2001, Sharon was elected prime minister. The intifada continued, and Israeli forces moved back into the Palestinian territories. The UN, US, EU, and Russia tried to restart the peace process by offering a “road map” with plans for the creation of a Palestinian state. But this failed, as terrorist attacks grew more awful, and Israel began assassinating rebel leaders and building a fence between Israeli and Palestinian areas in the West Bank. In October, 2004, Yasser Arafat died. How the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the wider Israeli-Arab conflict, will play out without him remains unclear.

EGYPT

Egypt had been granted independence in 1922, but the British had remained, unwilling to give up control of the Suez Canal. In World War II, Egypt became a battleground between Allied and Axis forces struggling for the canal. The Egyptian government lost a great deal of prestige after its defeat at the hands of Israel in 1948. In 1952, a military group led by Gamal Abdel Nasser deposed the king. Egypt became a republic, but Nasser held an enormous amount of power. Like Nehru in India (with whom he helped found the Non-Aligned Movement) Nasser believed in staying independent by steering a middle course between the competing Cold War systems, aligning with neither. Also like Nehru, he believed that government control of the economy was the best way to modernize. He expanded the educational system, introduced sweeping land reforms, and took control of many industries. He nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956 (resulting in a British, French, and Israeli invasion, as we have seen). With Soviet aid, the Aswan High Dam was constructed in the 1960's. The dam improved irrigation and control of the Nile, and expanded agricultural production, though at the expense of a host of environmental problems. After the disaster of the Six Day War in 1967, Nasser resigned, but the Egyptian people refused to accept his resignation. He remained president until he died in 1970.

Anwar Sadat, his successor, had participated with Nasser in the 1952 revolution. But Sadat governed differently than Nasser. He moved away from the Soviet Union, and closer to the United States, making Egypt one of the main recipients of US aid. After the failed invasion of Israel in 1973, Sadat moved to make peace with Israel, as we have seen. He believed that peace, along with increased private enterprise in government, would help the Egyptian economy, but the gains were slim. Many Arabs were outraged by Egypt's peace with Israel. Egypt was expelled from the Arab League in 1979, and Sadat was assassinated by Islamic extremists in 1981. Egypt had lost the great prestige that Nasser had commanded. The next president, Hosni Mubarak, quietly continued Sadat's policies, while repairing ties with other Arab states. Egypt was re-admitted to the Arab League in 1989. In 1991, Egypt joined the US and other nations in expelling Iraq from Kuwait.

Egypt has expanded and modernized its economy, but economic growth has struggled to keep up with population growth. Today, Egypt has over 70 million people, most of them concentrated along the Nile. Urban slums are growing around the cities. The City of the Dead, a cemetery outside Cairo, has become a home for thousands of poverty stricken families. Egypt's social problems, and its friendly relations with the west, have contributed to a rising tide of

Islamic fundamentalism. Attacks on westerners, Egyptian Coptic Christians, and politicians have increased in recent years. The government has responded with harsh crackdowns, which have helped increase discontent.

JORDAN, LEBANON, AND SYRIA

Like Palestine, Transjordan had been a mandate of the British, who installed Sharif Hussein's son Abdullah as king. The country became independent in 1946, and changed its name to Jordan in 1949. After the 1948 war with Israel, Jordan gained control of the West Bank, and responsibility for over 800,000 Palestinian refugees and West Bank residents (Jordan's population before was about 400,000). This put a strain on the economy, as well as the government, as Palestinians exerted influence in Jordanian politics. A Palestinian assassinated Abdullah in 1951, and his grandson Hussein took the throne in 1953. After Israel took the West Bank in 1967, 300,000 Palestinian refugees fled into Jordan. Meanwhile, the PLO, based in Jordan, was becoming powerful enough to compete with the Jordanian government. Jordan drove them out in 1970, and Yasser Arafat and the PLO moved to Lebanon. During the 70's and 80's, Jordan gradually lost influence with the Palestinians as the PLO came to be accepted as their governing body. Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1994. King Hussein died in 1999, and his son, Abdullah, took the throne. Since half of Jordan's population (now over 5 million) is Palestinian, its future is tightly bound up with the Israeli-Palestinian struggle.

Lebanon and Syria were both part of the French mandate. Though Lebanon's population was mostly Arab and Arabic speaking, a slim majority of its population was Christian, mostly a group called Maronites. The rest were Muslim, or Druze, a religion related to Islam. Lebanon became an independent republic in 1943, with a government giving proportional representation to each religious group. A beautiful country with strong ties to the west as well as the Middle East, Lebanon prospered for a while as a center of trade, banking, and tourism. But the relative balance between religious groups was changing, as the Muslim population grew faster than the Christian, and as waves of Palestinian refugees streamed into Lebanon, beginning in 1948.

The PLO moved to Lebanon in 1972, and began stepping up guerilla raids into Israel. This was supported by Muslims, but not Christians. Civil war broke out in 1975, killing 25,000 people and shattering the once-lovely city of Beirut. A cease-fire was signed in 1976, but

sporadic fighting continued. In response to PLO rocket attacks, Israel launched a massive invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Thousands were killed, and the PLO evacuated Beirut with the help of western peacekeeping forces. The radical Islamist group Hezbollah was formed in response to the invasion. Later that year, the newly elected president of Lebanon, a Christian, was assassinated. Christian militias responded by massacring hundreds of Palestinians, as Israeli troops looked the other way. In 1983, about 300 French and American soldiers were killed in terrorist attacks. These countries withdrew their troops the next year. Israel withdrew in 1985, except for a “security zone” in southern Lebanon. Lebanon remained a deadly war zone throughout the 80's. By 1991, most of the warring parties had laid down their arms, and Lebanon slowly began to rebuild itself. Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2000, but Hezbollah guerillas took control of part of the area soon after, and clashes have continued there.

Syria gained its independence from France in 1946. Set up as a secular republic, Syria suffered a series of military coups in its first decades, and has generally been under military rule since independence. The desire for Arab unity has always been strong in Syria. In 1958, Egypt and Syria joined to form the United Arab Republic, but Egypt dominated the arrangement and Syria withdrew in 1961. During the 60's, the Baath Party, which emphasized Arab unity and independence, as well as non-Marxist socialism, gained power, and the government took control of most aspects of the economy. Skirmishes with Israeli troops have recurred in the Golan Heights area since Israel seized it in 1967. Hafez al-Assad, a Baathist military officer, seized control of the government in 1970, beginning an authoritarian reign that would last for three decades. Syrian forces have been in Lebanon since 1976, wielding a good bit of power over the government there. Hafez al-Assad died in 2000, and his son, Bashar al-Assad, succeeded him as president, continuing the authoritarian family tradition. Syria has long been suspected of supporting international terrorism.

THE SAUDIS AND THEIR ARABIAN NEIGHBORS

Unlike most Middle Eastern countries, Saudi Arabia was never occupied by European powers. Ibn Saud had proclaimed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. The next year, Standard Oil of the United States was allowed to explore for oil, and they found it in 1938. Saudi Arabia, it turned out, was sitting on a quarter of the world's oil supply. Standard Oil and

other companies combined to form the Arab American Oil Company, or Aramco, in 1944. The oil industry took off after World War II, and the poor country soon grew rich. Ibn Saud died in 1953, but his family has ruled Saudi Arabia ever since. The Wahhabi movement has continued to influence the country, whose laws are based on a strict interpretation of Sharia law. Saudi Arabia has never recognized Israel, but it did not participate militarily in the Arab-Israeli conflict. After the war of 1973, however, they found that oil was as potent a weapon as armies. Along with several other Arab members of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) they temporarily cut off supplies of oil to the United States and the Netherlands for supporting Israel. OPEC also cut back on oil production. These measures sent shock waves through the industrialized world, and made clear the power of oil in international politics. Around the same time, Saudi Arabia began to buy out and nationalize Aramco.

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, many feared that he would move into Saudi Arabia next, thereby gaining control of a large portion of the world's oil. Saudi Arabia joined the coalition against Iraq, and allowed foreign troops (mostly American) to base their forces there. Iraq was soon defeated, but many American troops were allowed to stay. This greatly offended many orthodox Muslims, who resented the presence of foreigners on the holy soil where Islam was born. Because the Saudi population is both wealthy and extremely conservative, a great deal of backing for international terrorism has originated in Saudi Arabia. Osama bin Laden, to take the most notorious example, is an exiled Saudi, and 15 of the 19 hijackers in the September 11 attacks were Saudis. In 2002, American troops were moved from Saudi Arabia to Qatar, a small country on the Persian Gulf. With its hard-line interpretation and application of Sharia law, Saudi Arabia has a dismal human rights record. Some criminals are still tortured, mutilated, and occasionally publicly beheaded. Women are subject to extreme restrictions and enforced subordination, though their prospects have improved somewhat with the country's economic modernization. In spite of all this, the Saudi rulers are rich, powerful, and basically friendly toward the United States, so the United States has remained a close ally.

Saudi Arabia shares the Arabian Peninsula with a few smaller states. Yemen lies along the southern coasts of the Red and Arabian Seas. In 1990, North Yemen and South Yemen (for a while the only Marxist state in the Middle East) combined to form the Republic of Yemen. Civil war broke out in 1994, but the country remained united. Yemen is still poor and underdeveloped, though the discovery of oil in the 1980's may help change that. To the east of Yemen is the

Sultanate of Oman. Many Omanis belong to the Ibadi branch of the Kharijite division of Islam, which is neither Shia nor Sunni. Oman was very poor until oil was discovered in 1964. Since then, standards of living have risen modestly. North of Oman is the United Arab Emirates, an association of seven independent states. Oil was discovered in the 1950's in the U.A.E. Since then, its per capita income has rocketed, and is now one of the highest in the world. Qatar, a peninsula extending into the Persian Gulf, is also rich from oil. Qatar is the home of Al Jazeera, the influential Arab news network. Bahrain is an island nation in the Persian Gulf, also rich from the oil industry. A monarchy, Bahrain adopted a constitution in 2001. At the northern end of the Persian Gulf is Kuwait, another small, oil-rich country. About 45% percent of the residents of Kuwait are native Kuwaitis. The rest are immigrant workers in the oil industry, many of them Egyptian, Iranian, or Palestinian. The immigrant workers may not vote, nor can women, although women hold many important jobs. Kuwait has generous welfare programs, and education and health care are free. Kuwait suffered greatly in the Iraqi invasion of 1990.

IRAQ

Like Palestine and Jordan, Iraq was a British mandate after World War I. The British installed Faisal I (who had led Arab revolts against the Ottomans) as king of Iraq in 1921. Iraq became independent in 1932, but Britain retained the right to use air bases there. The continued British presence led to widespread anti-British sentiment. During World War II, Iraq tried to side with the Axis powers to end British influence, but a British invasion forced the country to join the Allies. Iraq was a founding member of the Arab League, and was one of the countries defeated in the 1948 war with Israel. In the early 1950's, Iraq renegotiated its contracts with foreign oil companies and gained a higher percentage of the profits. This helped expand and develop the country's economy, though inflation became a problem. During the 1950's, Arab nationalists grew increasingly disgruntled with the monarchy under Faisal II (grandson of Faisal I), who maintained strong ties with the British. In 1958, Faisal was killed in a military coup, and Iraq was declared a republic. The new premier, Abdul Karim Kassem, moved away from the west and accepted aid from the Soviet Union.

Iraq is a place with serious ethnic and religious divisions. About 95 % of Iraqis are Muslim, but they are divided between Shi'ites, which compose 65% of the population and live

mostly in the south, and Sunnis, who mostly live in the north. Ethnically, around 80% of Iraqis are Arabs. Most of the rest are Kurds, who speak Kurdish and are mainly Sunni. Millions of Kurds occupy the mountainous region at the intersection of Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. They are one of the largest ethnic groups in the world without their own state, and they have suffered greatly as minorities in several countries. In 1961, the Kurds demanded greater autonomy within Iraq. This led to a violent conflict with the Iraqi government. A cease fire was declared in 1964, but the conflict was far from over.

Members of the Baath party assassinated Kassem and took control of the government in 1963. By 1970, the party, led by Ahmed Hasan al-Bakr, was in firm control of the government. Like their counterparts in Syria, the Baath party was socialist, Arab nationalist, and anti-western. The government took full control of the oil industry in 1973, and money flowed into Iraq as oil prices rose in the mid-1970's. The Kurds were given a degree of autonomy in 1974, but fighting continued through the late 70's. In 1979, Saddam Hussein succeeded al-Bakr as president. The same year, rebels overthrew the government of Iran and established an strict Muslim government. Iran, which is mostly Shi'ite, encouraged the Shi'ites in Iraq to rebel against Saddam's government, which favored Sunnis. They also supported the Kurds in their independence movement. At the same time, Saddam believed that Iran had been weakened by its revolution, and that it was ripe for invasion. War broke out in 1980. The war ended with a cease-fire in 1988, leaving each country severely damaged and hundreds of thousands dead. In retaliation for supporting Iran, Saddam's armies attacked the Kurds with poison gas, killing thousands.

Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, declared it a province of Iraq, and began abusing the population. The UN responded with a trade embargo, while a coalition of 39 nations began assembling troops in the Persian Gulf. The UN Security Council authorized the use of force to remove Iraqi troops if they did not withdraw by January 15, 1991. They did not, and the first Persian Gulf War began on January 17. Within days, the Iraqis had been driven out of Kuwait, and tens of thousands were killed in the fighting. The Iraqis set fire to Kuwaiti oil wells before they withdrew, causing enormous environmental and economic damage. In March, 1991, revolts broke out among the Kurds in the north and the Shi'ites in the south. Both groups hoped to topple Saddam's regime, and many expected the coalition to help them do so. But Saddam remained in power, and soon used what was left of his forces to attack the rebels. Thousands of Kurds fled into Iran and Turkey. The coalition forces set up refugee camps for Kurds in northern

Iraq, and established no-fly zones in the north and south to protect Shiites and Kurds from aerial attack. Still, thousands in both groups were killed or made homeless.

According to the cease fire agreement with the UN Security Council, Iraq was to cease any effort to develop weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons—and to allow UN inspectors to search for weapons production facilities and dismantle any that they found. Iraq persistently blocked the efforts of inspectors, so the UN left the trade embargo in effect. The embargo and the destruction of war made life very hard for the Iraqi population. In 1996, the UN agreed to let Iraq trade oil for food and medicine, but little of it reached the Iraqi people. Saddam Hussein retained an iron grip on the government, enriching himself and periodically launching murderous campaigns against Kurds, Shiites, or anyone else who opposed him.

Continued resistance to UN weapons inspectors led to air strikes by the United States and Britain in 1998. For the next few years, air raids continued against Iraqi targets in the no-fly zones. American policy toward Iraq grew more aggressive with the election of George W. Bush in 2000, especially after the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. Bush began calling for “regime change” in Iraq, claiming that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and actively supported international terrorism. In November, 2002, UN weapons inspectors returned to Iraq. Early the next year, they reported that Iraq had not made a serious attempt to disarm. The Bush administration began trying gather support at the UN for an invasion. They were supported by Britain and a few other countries, but many countries urged that the weapons inspectors be allowed more time. Bush declared that he would assemble a “coalition of the willing” to invade Iraq, with or without UN support.

On March 17, 2003 Bush declared that Saddam must leave Iraq within 48 hours. He did not, and the US-led coalition invaded on March 20. Some Iraqi troops offered fierce resistance, but by early April Saddam’s regime had collapsed. The war was declared over on May 1st, 2003. An Iraqi governing council was appointed and charged with drafting a democratic constitution. Saddam Hussein was captured in December, 2003. But the war in Iraq was far from over, despite declarations to the contrary. Many Iraqis were opposed to, or at least very suspicious of, the presence of western forces in their country. Guerrilla attacks and kidnappings of western soldiers and civilians, as well as Iraqi government officials and security forces, grew increasingly common and violent. Controversy erupted in the occupying countries when weapons of mass destruction

were not found. Many wondered if the Bush administration had manipulated intelligence on Iraq as a pretext for going to war. In September, 2004, power was transferred to the Iraqi interim government. Elections for a national assembly are scheduled for January 31, 2005. Over 150,000 coalition troops, most of them American, remain in Iraq. As of September, 2004, over 1,000 American troops have been killed. It is unknown how many Iraqi civilians have died, but it is probably over 10,000. Iraq remains a chaotic and violent place. It is not clear whether the attempt to install a democratic government in Iraq will be a success. Whatever the outcome, the cost has already been heavy.

IRAN

Iran was never a part of the Ottoman Empire, and is distinct in many ways from other Middle Eastern countries. It is an ethnically diverse land. About 60 % of the people are Persian, and the Persian language, Farsi, is the official language of Iran. However, there are a wide range of other ethnic groups, including Kurds, Baluchis, Turkomans, Azerbaijanis, Qashqais, and several others. While most of the Middle East is predominantly Sunni, Iran is mostly Shiite. There are also a few Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is (who believe that all religions are aspects of a universal truth). These groups, especially the Baha'is, have been persecuted since the revolution of 1979.

During World War II, Iran tried to stay neutral, but the British and Russians wanted to use Iranian railroads. When Reza Shah refused, they removed him and installed his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who was more open to western influence. The presence of foreign troops, as well as British control of Iranian oilfields, helped encourage Iranian nationalism. In 1951, the Iranian parliament, led by Mohammad Mossedegh, nationalized the oil industry. Britain boycotted Iranian oil. When the shah tried to remove Mossedegh, he was forced into exile, but with the help of the US Central Intelligence Agency, he returned and deposed Mossedegh. Since the shah was pro-western and anti-Soviet, the US supported his regime, which combined intensive modernization with authoritarian repression. Land reforms and the development of the oil industry spurred economic growth, education was encouraged, women were given extensive rights, and religion and state were kept separate. Iran as a whole grew more prosperous, but wealth disparities became intense, and many Iranians remained desperately poor. Discontent was

sharp, but dissent was ruthlessly suppressed with the aid of a secret police force.

During the late '70's, diverse opposition groups in Iran rallied behind an exiled religious leader, the Ayatollah Khomeini, who fiercely denounced the shah, his secular government, and his ties with the US. In 1979, the shah fled the country after a massive popular uprising. The Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran and declared an Islamic republic, based on an intensely conservative interpretation of Islamic law, with himself as the faqih, or supreme leader. Revolutionary councils tried members of the Shah's government, and executed hundreds. Newspapers and universities were closed down, political parties were banned, and the women's equality laws were stripped away. Western books and movies were banned. The new regime especially hated the United States, which the Khomeini called "the Great Satan" for its secularism and its support of the shah. Soon after the revolution, the shah was allowed into the United States for medical treatment. Iranian students responded by seizing the US embassy in Tehran, taking 52 hostages and holding them for over a year. The Iranian revolution served as an inspiration to conservative Islamic opposition groups in other Muslim countries, adding yet another destabilizing influence to a troubled region.

Iran remained intensely conservative and repressive throughout the 1980's, while the Iran-Iraq war brought death and misery to both countries. Things began to change after the cease-fire of 1988, and the death of Khomeini in 1989. Since then, opposition to the restrictive Iranian government has grown more vocal. In 1997, Mohammad Khatami, a moderate cleric, won the presidential election. Khatami has supported liberalizing reforms, but he has been opposed by Khomeini's successor, Ayatollah Khamenei, and other conservative leaders. Reformists gained control of the parliament in 2000, but in the 2004 elections, many reformist candidates were barred from participating and hardliners regained control. Meanwhile, Iran's economy has remained stagnant. The Iranian government has long been suspected of supporting international terrorism, and has defied international law by continuing research on nuclear weapons. After the reformists gained power, dialogue between Iran and the United States increased somewhat, but this ended when President Bush called Iran, Iraq, and North Korea an "axis of evil". Iran remains both repressive and aggressive, with strong nuclear ambitions.

AFRICA

NORTH AFRICA

The borders of Libya, like those of many African states, don't reflect ethnic or physical boundaries so much as colonial history. Libya was occupied by Italy from 1912 until World War II. The area was a battleground during the war. The Sanusi brotherhood, a group which had long resisted the Italians, helped the Allied forces defeat the Axis and end Italian control over Libya. The region was then administered by Britain and France until 1951, when it became an independent constitutional monarchy. The leader of the Sanusi brotherhood became King Idris I. After oil was discovered in 1959, the Libyan economy exploded. Wealth disparities remained large, however, and many Libyans became discontented with Idris I, who was seen as aligned too much with the west and not enough with Arab interests.

In 1969, a group of army officers overthrew him. Their leader, Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi, set up a new regime based on the idea of *jamahiriya* (state of the masses), which was a blend of egalitarian socialism and Islamic law. Popular assemblies were set up, but Qadhafi was in fact the dictator of Libya. Qadhafi vigorously supported the PLO, as well as radical Islamist movements in Western Sahara, Chad, and Iran. In the 1980's Libya and the United States came into conflict as the United States accused Libya of supporting terrorism. The US broke off diplomatic relations and bombed Libyan military installations in 1986. An American and a French airliner were blown up in the late 1980's, killing 441 people. After Qadhafi refused to turn over Libyan nationals suspected in the attacks, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Libya. The suspects were turned over in 1999, and sanctions were lifted. By this time, Qadhafi had moderated his aggression toward the west. He shared information about terrorist organizations with the United States after the September 11 attacks, announced an end to Libya's pursuit of nuclear weapons, and accepted responsibility for the airline bombings. Relations with the US and other countries have improved as Libya moves toward the mainstream in international politics.

By 1914, the French had gained control of most of West Africa. The oldest and most important of the African colonies was Algeria, which by World War II had been settled by about a million French colonists. The majority of Algerians, however, were Muslim Berbers or Arabs who resented the domination of the French. In 1954, the Algerian nationalist Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) launched a revolt. The French settlers and army resisted fiercely, and the revolution turned into a bloody war with horrible acts of violence on both sides. After the

struggle over Algeria led to the fall of the Fourth Republic in France, and the return of Charles de Gaulle, Algeria was finally given its independence in 1962. The French settlers left.

Algeria became a socialist state with the FLN as the only legal political party. It remained a one-party, authoritarian state until 1989, when other parties became legal. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was on the verge of winning a majority in the national assembly in 1991 when the army intervened and nullified the elections. The FIS was banned, and many members were arrested. After General Liamine Zeroual won the presidential elections in 1995, Algeria returned to a nominally civilian government, but the military remained very powerful, and elections have seemed less than fair. In 1996, Algeria banned any political party based on religion, sex, or ethnic differences. Since the early 1990's Algeria has suffered from ongoing violence between the government and Islamic radicals and revolutionaries.

To the west and east of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia gained their independence rather easily, in 1956. Tunisia became a republic, though only one party was legal until 1981. Since then, Tunisia has grown more democratic. Morocco became a constitutional monarch. Moroccan kings have retained a great deal of power, and have taken full control of the government in times of crisis. Spain ruled the region now known as Western Sahara until 1976. That year, they gave control of the region to Morocco and Mauritania, a former French colony to the south. The two countries divided Western Sahara between themselves, but a group called the Polisario Front fought for independence. Mauritania withdrew in 1979, and Morocco claimed the entire region. Fighting between Morocco and the Polisario Front continued until 1991, when the UN organized a cease-fire. The status of Western Sahara remains unresolved.

WEST AFRICA

In the French colonies south of the Sahara, Guinea became independent in 1958, followed in 1960 by Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, Burkino Faso, Benin, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, and Gabon. Guinea Bissau and the island nation of Cape Verde gained their independence from Portugal in 1974, after a long war. Togo and Cameroon, which had been German colonies until World War I, were administered by the League of Nations, and then the United Nations, until they became independent in 1960. The tiny colony of Spanish Guinea became Equatorial Guinea in 1968. The Gold Coast, a British colony, was the first sub-Saharan

state to gain its independence, in 1957. Kwame Nkrumah, an independence leader and advocate of African unity, became the first prime minister, and named the new nation Ghana, in honor of the old African empire to the northwest. Nkrumah was an inspiration to other Africans seeking independence, but he soon began ruling as a dictator. Corruption and economic turmoil led to a military overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966. Since then, the country has wavered between military and civilian governments, though it has had a multi-party civilian government since 1992.

Other former British colonies in West Africa include Gambia (independent in 1965), Sierra Leone (independent 1961), and Nigeria (independent 1960). Nigeria, with vast natural resources including generous stocks of oil and a large and relatively skilled population, has become a study what can go wrong with new African states. Like many African nations, Nigeria has an enormous number of ethnic groups, drawn together only by the fact that they were once ruled by Britain. The military, claiming that they were trying to eliminate corruption and ethnic strife, took over the government in 1966. In 1967, the Ibo people in the oil-rich south announced the independent state of Biafra. The Nigerians attacked Biafra, and set up an economic blockade that led to mass starvation. Hundreds of thousands of people had died by the time Biafra surrendered in 1970. Nigeria returned to a civilian government in 1979, but the military took control again in 1983. The regime tried to restore order, but resorted to heavy handed methods. Critics of the government were imprisoned and even executed. But political parties were legalized in 1996, and a president was democratically elected in 1999. The new government has privatized industries in accordance with tough IMF prescriptions. It remains to be seen whether these measures will revitalize the economy, and whether Nigeria will remain democratic. Ethnic strife continues to lead to sporadic violence.

CENTRAL AFRICA

After the Belgian government took control of the Congo Free State in 1908, renaming it the Belgian Congo, the murderous abuses of King Leopold's rule were moderated. Still, the Belgians exploited the region for its natural resources, especially copper, and did little that gave the people of the Congo any experience in government. In 1960, the region became the independent state of Congo. Soon, over 100 political parties, representing over 200 different ethnic groups, were struggling for power, and the nation descended into civil war. The war ended

in 1964, with the help of UN peacekeeping forces. The government remained in turmoil, and General Mobutu Sese Seko took control in 1965 and renamed the country Zaire. Mobutu held control for over three decades, running an increasingly murderous regime that devastated the Congolese economy while enriching Mobutu and his aides. While the Cold War lasted, he stayed in good graces with western powers through his anti-communist posturing. In the early 90's, he made token gestures of allowing more democracy, but did not allow any real reforms. He was overthrown in 1997 by rebels led by Laurent Kabila, and the country became known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. Soon however, rebel forces sponsored by Uganda and Rwanda began trying to overthrow Kabila. The civil war became a struggle between several African states, leading to the deaths of over 3 million people through violence, disease, and starvation. Kabila was assassinated in 2001, and his son took his position. Since then, foreign troops have left the country, and rebel groups have agreed to share power in a multi-party government.

Just east of the Democratic Republic of Congo lay the small, mountainous countries of Rwanda and Burundi. This area is the home of two groups—the Tutsi and the Hutu. The Hutu, who are the majority, have traditionally been farmers, and for hundreds of years they were ruled by the cattle-herding Tutsi. The area was ruled by Germany from the late 1800's until World War I, when it became a Belgian mandate. The Belgians favored the Tutsis while discriminating against the Hutu majority. The two countries became independent in 1962. In Rwanda, the Hutus staged a bloody rebellion against the Tutsis, and dominated politics in the new country. Many Tutsis fled into nearby countries. In 1990, a rebel force led by Tutsis invaded Rwanda from Uganda, sparking a civil war and a massive exodus of refugees. As the Rwandan president was negotiating a power sharing agreement with the Tutsis in 1994, his plane was shot down by an unknown attacker, killing him and the president of Burundi. Afterward, Hutu extremists launched a genocidal campaign against Tutsis and Hutu moderates. Hundreds of thousands were killed, often hacked to death with machetes. Over two million people fled to refugee camps across the border, where many died of disease and starvation. After the massacre, however, the Tutsis emerged in control of the government. Moderate Hutus were given roles as well, and Rwanda has remained a multiparty democracy. Many refugees have returned, but the country remains poor, overcrowded, and full of ethnic tension.

EAST AFRICA

If you followed the Nile northward from southern Sudan to the Egyptian border, you would start in dense tropical forests, then move into the dry grass and scrub lands of the Sahel, and finally into the bone-dry Sahara, where the population clusters around the river. In the north, Arabs and Islamic culture are prevalent. The people of the south are mostly black Africans who practice traditional religions or Christianity. Sudan was jointly ruled by Egypt and Britain from 1898 until its independence in 1956 (Britain tended to be the dominant parent). Sudan's government has been turbulent ever since, and usually been dominated by Islamic northerners. Since a rebellion broke out in the south in the mid-1980's, over two million people have died. As the civil war in the south was coming to an end in 2004, pro-government militias known as the Janjaweed began massacring black Muslims in the northwestern region of Darfur. As many as a million people have been made homeless, and tens of thousands have been killed, but so far there has been no effective international response.

To the south of Sudan, the countries of Uganda and Kenya are also former British colonies. Uganda became a republic after its independence in 1962, but in 1911, General Idi Amin seized power. Amin was a ruthless dictator whose regime murdered up to 300,000 dissidents, and expelled 45,000 Asians from the country. Amin was overthrown in 1979. Milton Obote, the new president, also ran a brutal regime, and guerrilla groups began fighting to overthrow him. He was ousted in 1985. Yoweri Museveni became president in 1986. Uganda has grown more peaceful and democratic under his administration. In Kenya, independence was complicated by the fact that white settlers had dominated the native peoples for decades. The Kenya African Union (KAU), a independence movement, was established in 1944, and came under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta in 1946. In 1952, a radical group of KAU members, whom the British called Mau Mau, began attacking settlers and killing livestock. The British responded by jailing Kenyatta and confining thousands of Kenyans to concentration camps. Fighting continued until 1956, by which time less than 100 British, and over 10,000 Kenyans, had been killed. Kenya was granted independence in 1963, and Kenyatta became president. He encouraged national unity among Kenya's many ethnic groups, and oversaw a period of economic growth. However, he developed a tendency to suppress dissent, a tendency which expanded under his successor, Daniel arap Moi. Kenya had been governed by a single party, the Kenya African National Party, since 1964. In 2002, an opposition candidate, Mwai Kibaki, was elected president.

The mainland portion of what is now Tanzania was controlled by Germany until World War II, when it became a British mandate, called Tanganyika. Off the coast, the British had gained control of Zanzibar from its previous rulers, the Omani Sultans. Tanganyika became independent in 1961. Zanzibar became independent in 1963, and then joined with Tanganyika to form Tanzania. Julius Nyerere, a former independence leader, became Tanzania's first president. Nyerere was an idealist who tried to shape an "African socialism" based on traditional forms of cooperation in African villages. Industries were nationalized and Tanzania became a one-party state, although multiple candidates could run for office. Families were encouraged, and eventually forced, to move to large collective farms. But farmers resented this, and output remained stagnant. By the early 1980's, Tanzania's economy was in a shambles. Nyerere resigned as president in 1985, though he remained powerful until his death in 1999. His successors gradually backed away from socialism, reduced the government bureaucracy, and ended one-party rule in 1992. Tanzania remains an extremely poor country. But its history has not been as unfortunate as many African states. Among roughly 120 ethnic groups, none is large enough to dominate the others. Religions are also balanced, with roughly equal numbers of Muslims, Christians, and animists. In 1999, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya joined in a cooperative alliance called the East African Community. The community had been tried from 1967 to 1977, but differences between the countries worked against it. This time, it may work.

In the Horn of Africa, the French controlled the country now called Djibouti, while the British controlled northern Somalia. The Italians controlled southern and eastern Somalia, as well as Eritrea. The Ethiopians had successfully fought off the Italians in the 1880's, but they could not stop Mussolini's forces in 1936. The Italians in Ethiopia were defeated by Allied forces by 1941. Ethiopia regained its independence that year, and emperor Haile Selassie returned to power. The British administered Eritrea until 1952, when they ceded it to Ethiopia. After Ethiopia rejected Eritrean calls for independence, a war broke out that would last for three decades. Uneven distributions of wealth and land, combined with intense drought and famine, led to violent uprisings in the early 70's. Haile Selassie was dethroned by a military group in 1974, who set up a socialist state closely allied with the Soviet Union, instituted sweeping land reforms, and killed thousands of dissidents. Somalia became independent in 1960. The Somali president was assassinated in 1969 by a military group led by Muhammad Siad Barre, who declared Somalia a socialist state in 1970. In the late 1970's, ethnic Somalis in eastern Ethiopia,

aided by the Somali government, rebelled against Ethiopia. They were defeated in 1978 by the Ethiopians, with the aid by Cuban troops and Soviet arms. Fighting continued until a peace agreement was signed in 1988.

Famine continued to plague the region. In the mid-1980's, drought and famine killed up to a million people in Ethiopia, despite international aid efforts. In 1991, a coalition of rebel groups overthrew Ethiopia's military regime. A republic was set up, and multiparty elections were held in 1995. Eritrea declared its independence in 1993, but a border dispute soon developed with Ethiopia. The two countries fought a bloody war from 1998 to 2000, when a peace treaty was signed. The border was established by an international tribunal in 2002. Peace and democracy have advanced in the two countries, but the specter of famine remains. The Somalian military regime was overthrown by rebels in 1991. Soon the country descended into civil war between rival warlords, and chaos and drought began to kill thousands. Other countries sent food, but it was confiscated by bandits and warlords. When the US led a coalition of UN troops to prevent this, a US effort to capture the warlord Muhammad Farah Aidid led to a ferocious battle in Mogadishu which killed 18 American soldiers and over 500 Somalis. This turned American public opinion against US involvement. US troops left in 1994, and the UN pulled out in 1995. Somalia has remained in chaos ever since, though there have been some talks between rival groups.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

In southern Africa, relatively large numbers of European settlers tried hard to maintain their domination of African natives. Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana were all British territories (known as Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and Bechuanaland, respectively). The Rhodesias had been taken over from Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company in the early 1920's. In 1953, they were joined with Nyasaland to form the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Native Africans opposed the union, because a minority of white settlers controlled the government in Southern Rhodesia. The federation was broken up in 1964, and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland became the independent nations of Zambia and Malawi. Britain demanded that Southern Rhodesia, which was now simply Rhodesia, give Africans a greater role in government before granting independence. Rhodesia refused, and declared their

independence anyway in 1965. Britain, the UN, and most other countries imposed economic sanctions. Soon native Africans were waging guerrilla warfare against the white government. The fighting ended in 1979, when a new government was formed that gave political representation to blacks. Robert Mugabe became prime minister, and the country was re-named Zimbabwe, gaining recognition as an independent country by the international community. Fighting between rival black factions continued until 1984.

Though the black majority now controlled the government, whites, composing 1% of the population, still controlled 70% of the land. In 2000, some blacks began forcibly squatting on white lands, with the encouragement of Mugabe, who declared that land would be redistributed without compensation to white owners. This, and apparent fraud in elections, have resulted in international sanctions. Zambia and Malawi were both ruled by single parties until the early 1990's, when multiple parties were legalized. Botswana, which gained its independence in 1966, has had a democratic government ever since. Rich diamond mines have made it one of the wealthier nations in Africa, but this wealth is very unevenly distributed. Botswana has one of the highest AIDS infection rates (over 35 % of the population) in a continent ravaged by the disease.

The regions that are now Angola and Mozambique had generally been controlled by Portugal since the early 1500's. By the twentieth century, Portugal had become a relatively weak country (by European standards). Its colonies were profitable, however, and had been increasingly settled by Portuguese colonists after World War II, so Portugal's military dictatorship had no intention of giving them up. The Portuguese fought increasingly costly wars in Africa until 1974, when the dictatorship was overthrown. The new government quickly granted independence to most Portuguese colonies, including Angola and Mozambique. Mozambique came under the control of a former independence group, which adopted Marxist policies. The country was plagued by drought, civil war with opposition groups, and economic turmoil throughout the 1980's. In the early 1990's the government abandoned socialism, legalizing other parties and freeing up markets. The main opposition group laid down its arms and became a political party, and over a million refugees returned to the country. Despite all this, Mozambique remains impoverished, and has recently been hit with disastrous floods.

Angola's independence has been even more troubled than Mozambique's. Fighting broke out between rebel groups immediately after independence. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, while the National

Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was backed by South Africa and the United States. By the late 1970's, the MPLA controlled most of the country, but the fighting continued through the 1980's. The MPLA renounced communism in 1990, signed a peace treaty with UNITA in 1991, and held multiparty elections in 1992. But UNITA protested the results, and the fighting began again. UNITA signed a peace agreement in 2002, although rebels in the Cabinda province continued fighting. Over a million people have died, and 2.5 million people been made homeless, in Angola's civil war.

Off the southeast coast of Africa lies the large island of Madagascar. Nature has gone its own way in Madagascar, producing a range of organisms that don't exist anywhere else, such as the famous and diverse lemurs. The island has also incubated a unique culture. Madagascar was originally settled by the Austronesian voyagers. These people later intermarried with black settlers from Africa, to produce a range of ethnic groups collectively known as the Malagasy. The French gained control of the island in the late 1800's, after struggling for decades with the powerful Merina kingdom. Madagascar became a republic in 1960, but French influence remained strong until 1972, when the president was replaced by a military regime; lead after 1975 by Didier Ratsiraka. The government lessened its control over the economy in the late 1980's, and allowed multiple parties in 1990. A transitional civilian government took charge the next year. A new president was elected in 1993, but he was impeached in 1996 and Ratsiraka was re-elected. Economic troubles helped make him unpopular, and in 2001, he was replaced by Marc Ravalomanana after a bitterly disputed election.

South Africa, where whites had settled in the 1600's, was the last country to relinquish white control. British and Afrikaner (Boer) colonies were combined in 1910 into the Union of South Africa, an independent commonwealth state. In 1948, the pro-Afrikaner National Party won elections, and set about enforcing a policy of apartheid. Under apartheid, blacks could not vote or hold many jobs. Millions were confined to *Bantustans*, artificial states which were set up in desolate areas. Those who were allowed to work outside the Bantustans had to abide by strict segregation laws. Asians (mostly Indians) and "Coloureds" (those of mixed race) were also discriminated against, but not as severely. Protests were violently suppressed, and opposition groups, especially the African National Congress, were banned. This forced such groups underground, and into neighboring countries, which were used as bases for guerilla attacks. The South African government responded with laws allowing arbitrary detention, and opposition

leaders such as Nelson Mandela were imprisoned or exiled. As the rest of Africa gained its freedom, these practices were steadily becoming less acceptable to other nations. Facing British criticism, South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961. Obviously, relations with neighboring black governments were poor, especially after South Africa launched raids on guerilla camps across the borders.

By the late 1970's, the white government was beginning to realize that it was fighting a losing battle, and grudgingly repealed some apartheid laws. A new constitution was enacted in 1983, giving political representation to Asians and "Coloureds", but not blacks. This led to widespread protests and violence, and the government declared a state of emergency, giving security forces sweeping powers. Following the urging of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, many nations increased their sanctions against South Africa. F.W. de Klerk, who became president in 1989, decided that it was better if apartheid ended without a civil war, which seemed imminent. He legalized opposition parties and freed Nelson Mandela, who had been in prison for 27 years. As it became apparent that things were about to change, fighting broke out between blacks and hard-line whites, and between rival black groups. Thousands of lives were lost, but the reforms continued. Remaining apartheid bills were repealed, and voting rights were extended to all races. Nelson Mandela was elected president in 1994. Two years later, a new constitution was approved, with a strong bill of rights. Mandela stepped down in 1997, and his deputy president, Thabo Mbeki, was elected in a landslide.

South Africa had, with relatively little violence, made the transition to a stable, representative government. With its large stocks of natural resources, especially gold and diamonds, and its growing manufacturing and service sectors, South Africa is by far the richest country in Africa. There are problems, of course. The white minority still holds many of the best jobs, and most of the wealth in South Africa. This is partly because of lingering, illegal discrimination, but mostly because other populations have not had the chance to gain skills and education. Now they have that chance. South Africa, like other southern African nations, is even more plagued by the AIDS epidemic than the rest of Africa. Over 20 % of adults are infected with the virus. Still, South Africa has gone from being a symbol of oppression to a source of inspiration, for Africa and the rest of the world.

In the Drakensberg mountains, surrounded entirely by South Africa, is the country of Lesotho. The Basotho people of Lesotho (once called Basutoland) were able to hold out in

mountain strongholds against the Zulu and then the Boers. In 1868, the king of Basutoland asked the British for protection against the Boers. The region was a British protectorate until 1960, when it became the independent country of Lesotho. Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy, but it has been plagued with recent insurgencies. Many men in Lesotho, as in many nearby countries, find work in South Africa. Swaziland is also a small country that was once a British protectorate. The Swazi people have been ruled by a single dynasty for 400 years. In 1968, Swaziland became an independent constitutional monarchy in 1968, but the king revoked the constitution in 1973. Since then, efforts at democratic reforms have met with resistance from the royal family.

Namibia, a large, dry country, has had a history closely bound up with South Africa's. The region was a German colony from the late 1800's until World War I, when it became a mandate of South Africa. After World War II, South Africa refused to cede control of Namibia to the UN. Namibia was treated as a South African province that strongly favored the tiny minority of white Namibians. The South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) waged a guerrilla war against South Africa, aided by Cuban troops (who were also fighting in Angola). In 1988, South Africa, Angola, and Cuba signed a cease-fire, and Cuban troops began withdrawing from Angola and Namibia. Namibia became independent in 1990, and SWAPO became the dominant, but not the only, political party. Since then, the country has retained its democratic government.