39

The End of Empire

"Hé Ram" were the last words that escaped his lips after three bullets savagely ripped through his frail body. Roughly translated, he uttered, "O! God," and then died. It had begun as a day much like any other in the life of Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948), or "Bapuji" as he was fondly called—a dear father of the country of India. On 30 January 1948, a few months after India gained its independence from Great Britain, he awakened at Birla House in Delhi at an early hour, 3:00 A.M., to continue his work hammering out solutions to the problems that plagued his land. That morning, he labored on a draft of a new constitution for the Indian National Congress, stressing as usual his major concerns for his newly independent and strife-ridden nation: that villages be empowered, that discrimination based on the caste system be abolished, that religious intolerance and violence between Hindus and Muslims cease. Still distraught over the partitioning of his land into a Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, he had weakened himself after independence through fasts and hunger strikes staged as *satyagraha,* or "truth and firmness," protests against the killings of Hindus and Muslims and the mistreatment of Pakistan. He weighed a mere 107 pounds that day.

Alternating between working, talking with visitors, and napping, Gandhi finally took a meal at 4:30 P.M. He nibbled on raw and cooked vegetables and oranges, and drank goat's milk and a special brew made with aloe juice, lemons, ginger, and strained butter. A little over half an hour later, he made his way to the evening prayer meeting he was to lead. A bit late, the skies already darkening, he took a shortcut across the emerald green, finely trimmed lawns of Birla House to reach the dais where he would speak. As he approached the dais, he stopped to press his palms together, offering the traditional Hindu greeting to the crowd waiting at the meeting. At that moment, out of the crowd stepped a large and impatient man who suddenly pulled a Beretta pistol from his pants pocket and fired the three shots that ended the life of the man many credited with Indian independence, the man seen as the very soul and conscience of India. The force of the shots crumpled Gandhi's thin body, his chest and abdomen riddled by bullets. As he slumped to the ground, his glasses fell from his face, his sandals slipped from his feet, and large crimson blood stains spread starkly over his white homespun shawl. After he whispered "Hé Ram," his breathing stilled.

Two days before he was assassinated by the Hindu extremist Nathuram Godse, Gandhi prophetically said, "If I am to die by the bullet of a mad man, I must do so smiling. There must be no anger within me. God must be in my heart and on my lips." Gandhi died as he had wanted, and as he lived, without anger and with God on his lips. His assassination, however, stood in bleak contrast to the nonviolence embraced by Gandhi throughout his life. Gandhi

OPPOSITE: This saintly image of Mohandas K. Gandhi captures his spiritual significance to the independence movement in India both before and after his death.

could have been forgiven some anger given the apparent failure of his nonviolence doctrine in the days after independence—a failure made publicly evident in communal killings after partition and personally evident in his violent death. Not all Hindus agreed with Gandhi's rejection of violence and avowal of religious tolerance for Muslims. Before he was executed by hanging in 1949, his assassin Godse declared Gandhi a "curse for India, a force for evil."

Gandhi's murder suggested the troubles and traumas faced by nations and peoples adjusting to independence from colonial rule, but his martyrdom also enshrined his principles of nonviolence and religious tolerance in Indian life after independence. Gandhi's death discredited Hindu extremism and halted communal violence, for a time. He became a more mythic hero in India, a new national symbol to be invoked in times of trouble and violence. His life and death spoke to the promise and perils of independence and its aftermath. Despite the hazards of life in a world without empires, peoples in the colonial world fought tenaciously for independence and then for national unity after World War II.

Like the cold war, decolonization contributed significantly to the global political transformation after World War II. Decolonization, in essence the relinquishing of all colonial possessions by imperial powers or the end to empires, brought the world to its current international standing. Imperial agents lost their control, new independent states gained autonomy and self-determination, and—given the concurrent developments in the cold war—the globe was no longer demarcated by clearly identifiable spheres of influence. These two developments, the cold war and the end of empire, intertwined to reshape the world in the late twentieth century. The end of empire was one of the most important outcomes of World War II, as dozens of new, independent nations emerged from the British, French, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese empires established in previous centuries. With the emergence of two superpowers dedicated to the overthrow of empire, the stage was set for a drastic overturning of colonial rule. As cold war animosities deepened, however, the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States tended to view new nations and struggling nationalist movements through a cold war prism. Emerging nations were often confronted by the demand that they take sides and choose between capitalism and communism. At times that demand compromised their independence, particularly in new nations deemed strategically important by the superpowers. Because the pressure exerted by the superpowers included the threat of nuclear weapons, the leaders of newly independent nations worried about upsetting the global balance of nuclear terror.

The demands of the cold war, however, could not dim the joy that colonized peoples felt on gaining independence. The imperial encounters engineered by European societies in the previous centuries ceased swiftly after World War II, leaving previously colonial peoples in charge of their own destinies. No brief treatment of such a broad and variegated process as decolonization can do justice to each individual nation, particularly because more than ninety nations gained independence between the end of World War II and 1980. Nations achieved independence at different times: India and Pakistan became independent nations as early as 1947, Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) as late as 1980. Algerians in North Africa fought a long, hard war against the French for freedom, whereas some peoples in sub-Saharan Africa followed less torturous routes to independence. Vietnam became deeply embroiled in the cold war even as it successfully fought French imperial domination, whereas other countries managed to avoid through neutrality or nonalignment becoming too perilously enmeshed in that ideological contest. Regardless of freedom's timetable, new and developing nations around the world discovered, as Gandhi had, that independence was just the first step on a much longer, and often much more difficult, road to national unity and social and economic stability.

Peoples in the former colonial world labored to build national identities, balancing their traditions against demands for development. Such difficulties were true for nations in areas

of the world where independence came long ago and in areas where peoples achieved independence from colonial or imperial rule recently. Latin American nations still struggled to achieve political stability free from European and U.S. interference, and South Africans put an end to white rule only after decades of political fighting and negotiation. Asian and African lands faced daunting challenges in their pursuit of domestic or regional goals in a rapidly changing world, and they worked to transform their societies in the midst of religious, sectarian, or ethnic crises or neoimperial or superpower pressures. Despite all the complications of decolonization and its aftermath, colonial peoples in Asia and Africa fought for freedom and then for security. The desire of nations to seek peace and stability after independence seemed reasonable, especially because independence often led to numerous problems. Freedom did not remain elusive for the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but peace often did—a fact Gandhi acknowledged in the days after Indian independence and on the day of his death.

Independence in Asia

In the wake of World War II, the power of Asian nationalism was irrepressible. New nations emerged throughout Asia, from India and Pakistan in south Asia to diverse Arab nations in southwest Asia and to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos in southeast Asia. These lands encountered different conditions in their quests for independence and freedom from imperial control, but everywhere Asian nationalists rallied their people against colonialism and imperialism. Whether fighting against colonial powers, which established formal political and territorial control, or against imperial powers, which often exercised a more informal and indirect control, Asians were successful. The result of their efforts, measured in years or decades, was independence and the end of empire in Asia.

India's Partitioned Independence

In the 1930s Great Britain had granted numerous reforms in response to the tireless campaign of Mohandas K. Gandhi and the Congress Party, as well as Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League. The gradual trend toward Indian self-rule, as in the India Act of 1935, faced challenges in the form of increasing calls for independent yet separate Hindu and Muslim states. World War II, however, interrupted the drive for any sort of self-rule.

Under the leadership of Winston Churchill, who despised Gandhi and vowed never "to preside over the liquidation of the British empire," measures for home rule were suspended, and India was ordered to support the war effort. British recalcitrance about Indian independence evaporated after the war, however. The British people voted Churchill out of office. His conservative government was replaced with a Labour government more inclined to dismantle the empire. The economic devastation of the war made it unrealistic for Britain to continue bearing the financial burden of empire in India.

The Coming of Self-Rule

The issue of Muslim separatism grew in importance as the probability of Indian independence became more pronounced, and Muslims increasingly feared their minority status in a free India dominated by Hindus. Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948), leader of the Muslim League, felt no qualms about frankly expressing Muslim concerns and desires for a separate Muslim state, even as Congress Party leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) and Gandhi urged all Indians to act and feel as one nation, undivided by what came to be known as communalism—emphasizing religious over national identity. In August 1946, in the midst of negotiations with the British to reach

Jawaharlal Nehru (left) and Mohandas K. Gandhi, Hindu leaders of India's independence movement.

terms regarding independence, the Muslim League called for a Day of Direct Action, even though the league's leaders recognized that Muslim demonstrations might lead to rioting and fighting between Muslims and Hindus. Some six thousand people died in the Great Calcutta Killing that resulted, further fueling communal feeling and adding weight to Jinnah's claim: "The only solution to India's problem is Pakistan."

Partition and Violence

The idea of partition, the division of India into separate Hindu and Muslim states, violated the stated ideals of men such as Gandhi and Nehru, who sickened at the prospect and only reluctantly came to accept the notion of a divided and independent India—perhaps in part because they belonged to the vast Hindu majority in South Asia. Gandhi nonetheless condemned the division of his homeland as "vivisection," using a term that refers to the cutting up of a living body. He avoided the celebrations on 15 August 1947 that accompanied independence for India and Pakistan, glumly prophesying that "rivers of blood" would flow in the wake of partition. His vision came true as the terms of partition were announced and hundreds of thousands of Muslim and Hindu refugees migrated to either Muslim Pakistan (divided between parts of Bengal in the east and Punjab in the west) or Hindu India. By mid-1948 an estimated ten million refugees made the tortuous journey to one or the other state, and between half a million and one million people had died in the violence that accompanied those massive human migrations. Gandhi undertook measures, including hunger strikes, in the hope of quelling the violence between Muslims and Hindus; he continually urged all Indians and Pakistanis to adhere to the practice of nonviolence. When Gandhi was shot he became a martyr to his cause, killed by the violence he so abhorred.

Sources from the Past

Muhammad Ali Jinnah on the Need for a Muslim Pakistan

Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948) served as the most visible and articulate leader of India's Muslims during the first half of the twentieth century. Like Mohandas K. Gandhi, he initially promoted cooperation and unity among Muslims and Hindus in order to achieve freedom from British rule. He came to feel strongly, however, that Muslims in an independent but Hindu-controlled India would only suffer from the discrimination they already faced from the Hindu majority. In the following speech to the Muslim League in 1940, Jinnah formulated some of the reasons why Muslims indeed deserved and already constituted their own nation.

It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of your troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans [Muslims] derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is the foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent. . . .

[W]e know that the history of the last twelve hundred years has failed to achieve unity and has witnessed, during the ages, India always divided into Hindu India and Muslim India. The present artificial unity of India dates back only to the British conquest and is maintained by the British bayonet, but termination of the British regime, which is implicit in the recent declaration of His Majesty's government, will be the herald of the entire break-up with worse disaster than has ever taken place during the last one thousand years under Muslims. Surely that is not the legacy which Britain would bequeath to India after one hundred fifty years of her rule, nor would Hindu and Muslim India risk such a sure catastrophe. Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu raj [rule]. . . .

Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory, and their state. We wish to live in peace and harmony with our neighbors as a free and independent people. We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social, and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of our people. Honesty demands and the vital interests of millions of our people impose a sacred duty upon us to find an honorable and peaceful solution, which would be just and fair to all.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

How does Jinnah employ the idea of "difference" to justify his calls for a separate Muslim state in an independent India?

SOURCE: Muhammad Ali Jinnah, "Hindus and Muslims: Two Separate Nations," from *Sources of Indian Tradition,* 2nd ed., vol. 2, edited by Stephen Hay. New York, 1988, pp. 228–31.

Conflict between India and Pakistan

After Gandhi's death Nehru announced, "The light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere." That sentiment expressed the void left by Gandhi's assassination, but efforts to build up the separate and independent nations of India and Pakistan continued. The hostility between migrating Hindus and Muslims spilled over into the enmity between the two states, complicating efforts to build their independent

Map 39.1 **Decolonization in Asia. Date is year of independence.** Note the dates of independence for the colonies of Great Britain, the Netherlands, the United States, and France. Why did independence occur in such a short time span for most of these colonies?
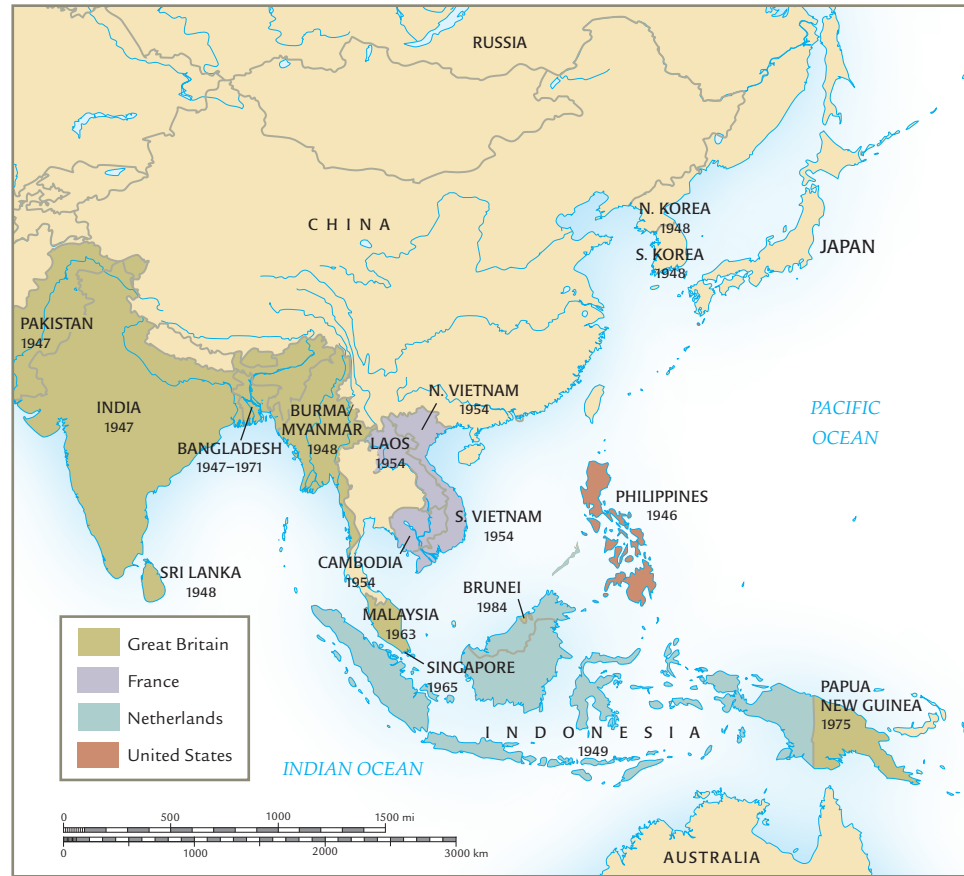
nations. War broke out in 1947 over the province of Kashmir, which was claimed by both states, and their continuing hostility made India and Pakistan vulnerable to the pressures of the cold war. When Pakistan lost the battle over Kashmir, it sought an alliance with the United States to strengthen its position. As India's prime minister, Nehru favored a policy of nonalignment, but India accepted military aid from the Soviet Union. Partition gave the superpowers a tenuous foothold in South Asia, given Nehru's successful neutrality and his ability to garner economic and military aid from both superpowers.

Though mired in violence, Indian independence became a reality with momentous consequences for the process of decolonization. India was the jewel in the crown of the British empire, and its breakaway marked a significant turning point. Just as Gandhi's nonviolent resistance to British rule inspired nationalists around the globe before and after World War II, independence in India and Pakistan further encouraged anti-imperial movements throughout Asia and Africa. Moreover, once India left the British empire, there could be little doubt about the fate of Britain's remaining imperial possessions.

Unlike the Dutch and the French, who at times tenaciously battled to maintain imperial control in Asia, the British recognized that Europeans could not rule in Asia without the cooperation of colonial peoples. Also unlike the Dutch and the French, the British could rely on their own models of decolonization, previously tested in Canada. Like Canada, India and Pakistan gained independence yet retained ties to

Britain, becoming Dominion members in the British Commonwealth and adopting English as their first official language.

Another way in which Indian independence inspired other nations and set a pattern for grappling with decolonization in the midst of a cold war was through Nehru's promotion of a nonalignment strategy. Nehru proved instrumental in fashioning a compelling position for newly independent nations caught in the cold war and in the superpower tug-of-war contests for the loyalties of new nations. He became one of the impassioned defenders of nonalignment, especially at the Bandung Conference where he was one of the most visible participants. In a speech made at the conference, he articulated the policy clearly:

Nonalignment

> The preservation of peace forms the central aim of India's policy. It is in the pursuit of this policy that we have chosen the path of nonalinement [nonalignment] in any military or like pact of alliance. Nonalinement does not mean passivity of mind or action, lack of faith or conviction. It does not mean submission to what we consider evil. It is a positive and dynamic approach to such problems that confront us. We believe that each country has not only the right to freedom but also to decide its own policy and way of life. Only thus can true freedom flourish and a people grow according to their own genius.

Leaders of new African and Asian countries first discussed nonalignment at the Bandung Conference. In April 1955 leaders from twenty-three Asian and six African nations met in Bandung, Indonesia, partly to find a "third path," an alternative to choosing either the United States or the Soviet Union. Besides neutrality in the cold war, the Bandung Conference stressed the struggle against colonialism and racism, and Indonesian president Achmad Sukarno (1901–1970) proudly proclaimed Bandung "the first international conference of coloured peoples in the history of mankind." Bandung was the precursor of the broader Nonaligned Movement, which held occasional meetings so that its members could discuss matters of common interest, particularly their relations with the United States and the Soviet Union. The movement's primary goal was to maintain formal neutrality. However, the Nonaligned Movement suffered from a chronic lack of unity among its members and ultimately failed to present a genuinely united front. Although theoretically nonaligned with either cold war superpower, many member states had close ties to one or the other, and this situation caused dissension within the movement. For example, the Philippines and Cuba clearly supported the U.S. and Soviet camps, respectively. Nevertheless, other individual states avoided becoming pawns in the cold war, and the new nations succeeded in declaring independence from the cold war by announcing the policy of nonalignment.

Nationalist Struggles in Vietnam

In contrast to India, Vietnam over time had more difficulty in keeping its nationalist struggle for independence separate from the complications of the cold war. In its fight for independence, Vietnam became deeply enmeshed in the cold war contest between capitalism and communism, but immediately after World War II the Vietnamese first engaged in a battle to free themselves from French colonial control. Vietnam's nationalist communist leader, Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969), had exploited wartime conditions to advance the cause of Vietnamese independence.

After the Japanese conquest of Vietnam, which effectively ended French rule, Ho helped oust the Japanese from Vietnam in the waning days of World War II. He then issued the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence, which was modeled on the U.S. declaration. However, the French, humiliated by their country's easy defeat and occupation by the Germans, sought to reclaim their world-power status through their

Fighting the French

Ho Chi Minh, leader of North Vietnam from 1945 to 1969 and one of southeast Asia's most influential communist leaders.

imperial possessions. Armed with British and U.S. weapons, the French recaptured Saigon and much of southern Vietnam in 1945. Faced with the hostility of the northern nationalist communists, organized as the Viet Minh, the French retook the north brutally, bombing Hanoi and Haiphong and killing at least ten thousand civilians. By 1947 the French appeared to have secured their power, especially in the cities, but that security proved to be temporary. Much like the Chinese communists in their battles against the Japanese and then against the nationalists in the postwar years, the Vietnamese resistance forces, led by Ho Chi Minh and General Vo Nguyen Giap (1912–), took to the countryside and mounted a campaign of guerrilla warfare. The Vietnamese communists grew increasingly influential in the anti-imperial war, especially after 1949 when communist China sent aid and arms to the Viet Minh. Thus strengthened, they defeated the French at their fortress in Dienbienphu in 1954. The French had to sue for peace at the conference table.

The Geneva Conference and Partial Independence

The peace conference, held in Geneva in 1954, determined that Vietnam should be temporarily divided at the seventeenth parallel; North Vietnam would be controlled by Ho Chi Minh and the communist forces, whereas South Vietnam would remain in the hands of noncommunists. The communist affiliation of Ho and his comrades, along with the globalization of the cold war that accompanied the Korean War, persuaded the United States to lend its support first to the French war effort and then to the government of South Vietnam. U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower applied the domino theory to Vietnam. Violating the terms of the Geneva Agreements, which required elections that would likely have brought Ho to power, South Vietnam's leaders, with U.S. support, avoided elections and sought to build a government that would prevent the spread of communism in South Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia. Ngo Dinh Diem (1901–1963), the first president of the Republic of (South) Vietnam, and other South Vietnamese leaders did not garner popular support with the people, however, and growing discontent sparked the spread of guerrilla war in the south.

In 1960 Vietnamese nationalists formed the National Liberation Front to fight for freedom from South Vietnamese rule. Although Vietnamese from the south made up the majority in this organization, it received direction, aid, weapons, and ultimately troops from the north also. In turn, the government in the north received economic and military assistance from the Soviet Union and China, and a cold war stalemate ensued.

Cold War Stalemate

Given the lack of popular support for Diem and U.S.-style democratic reforms, the nationalist communist attacks against the South Vietnamese government met with continued success. In 1965 President Lyndon Johnson (1908–1973) embarked on a course of action that exponentially increased U.S. involvement in Vietnam. He ordered a bombing campaign against North Vietnam and sent U.S. ground troops to augment the South Vietnamese army. Yet, even with the overwhelming firepower and military personnel, the best the United States and South Vietnam could achieve against

the Viet Cong was a draw. North Vietnam found a stalemate quite acceptable. Vietnamese forces fought for freedom from outside interference of any sort and could show patience while making progress toward independence. They were trapping U.S. troops in a quagmire and a war of attrition typical of successful guerrilla operations against powerful foes. Still, the nationalists' aspirations were thwarted and a long struggle remained. The stalemate in Vietnam dragged on, demonstrating the perils of cold war politics in the age of decolonization for democrats and communists, for small nations and superpowers (see chapter 38 for the U.S. defeat in Vietnam).

Arab National States and the Problem of Palestine

With the exception of Palestine, the Arab states of southwest Asia had little difficulty freeing themselves from the colonial powers of France and Britain by the end of World War II. Before the war, Arab states agitated for concessions under the mandate system, which limited Arab nationalist aspirations after the Great War. In fact, Egypt had almost complete autonomy from British rule, an autonomy limited by British military control of the strategic Suez Canal and the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

After the war, although Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan gained complete independence, significant vestiges of imperial rule impeded Arab sovereignty. The battle to rid southwest Asia of those remnants of imperialism took some twists and turns as the superpowers interfered in the region, drawn by its vast reserves of oil, the lifeblood of the cold war's military-industrial complexes. Throughout, one ambiguous legacy of imperialism—Palestine—absorbed much of the region's energies and emotions.

Arab Independence

Great Britain served as the mandate power in Palestine after the Great War, and before and during its mandate made conflicting promises to the Palestinian Arabs and to the Jews migrating to Palestine to establish a secure homeland where they could avoid persecution. With the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the British government committed itself to the support of a homeland for Jews in Palestine, a commitment engendered in part by the vibrant Zionist movement that had been growing in Europe since the 1890s. Zionists were dedicated to combating the violent anti-Semitism prevailing in central and eastern Europe by establishing a national Jewish state. The Zionist dream of returning to Palestine, considered the site of the original Jewish homeland, received a boost from the Balfour Declaration and from the Allies' support for it at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Thus the British were compelled to allow Jewish migration to Palestine under their mandate, but they also had to allay the fears of those in possession of the land—the Palestinian Arabs. The British therefore limited the migration and settlement of Jews and promised to protect the Arabs' political and economic rights.

Palestine

This British attempt to balance the causes of two conflicting groups was unsuccessful, and large-scale violence was prevented only through the use of imperial military forces. To this day the dilemma of how to reconcile the claims of two peoples who became staunch foes remains unresolved. Arab Palestinians rejected British rule and Jewish settlement, seeing both as links in an imperial chain of control. The Jews migrating to Palestine were mostly of European descent, and threatened Arab interests when they purchased land and established kibbutzim, or communal farms. The Palestinian Muslims perceived the Jews as alien interlopers in their land. In the 1920s and 1930s, Arab resentment against the British and the Jews exploded in anti-Jewish riots and demonstrations. At the same time, European Jews were dangerously under attack. Under the pressure of Nazi persecution, Jews migrated to Palestine in increasing numbers in the 1930s, and Zionists in Palestine armed themselves to protect Jewish settlers against Arab reprisals. Those conditions exacerbated the tense situation in Palestine.

At the end of World War II, a battle brewed. As Arab states around Palestine gained their freedom from imperial rule, they developed a pan-Arab nationalism sparked by support for their fellow Arabs in Palestine and opposition to the possibility of a Jewish state there. The Holocaust, along with the British policy of limiting Jewish migration to Palestine after the war, intensified the Jewish commitment to build a state capable of defending the world's remaining Jews—and the tens of thousands of Palestinian Jews who had fought in the British army during the war were seen as potential defenders of the new state.

The Creation of Israel   The British could not adjudicate the competing claims of the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine. While the Arabs insisted on complete independence under Arab rule, in 1945 the Jews embarked on a course of violent resistance to the British to compel recognition of Jewish demands for self-rule and open immigration. The British gave up in 1947, stating that they intended to withdraw from Palestine and turn over the region to the newly created United Nations. Delegates to the UN General Assembly debated the idea of dividing Palestine into two states, one Arab and the other Jewish. The United States and the Soviet Union lent their support to that notion, and in November 1947 the General Assembly announced a proposal for the division of Palestine into two distinct states. Arabs inside and outside Palestine found this solution unacceptable, and in late 1947 civil war broke out. Arab and Jewish troops battled each other as the British completed their withdrawal from Palestine, and in May 1948 the Jews in Palestine proclaimed the creation of the independent state of Israel. This act precipitated what turned out to be the first of many Arab-Israeli wars as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq led the war on Israel in support of the Palestinian Arabs.

The Arab states, expecting a swift and triumphant victory over the outnumbered Jewish forces, underestimated the staying power and military skills of the new Israeli military. Arab attacks and campaigns, although boldly fought, were uncoordinated, and the Israelis managed to achieve a stunning victory, gaining territories far larger than those that would have been granted to the Jewish state under the United Nations partition plan. A truce went into effect in early 1949 under UN auspices, and the partition of Palestine resulted. Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley were divided between the new Israeli state and the Kingdom of Jordan, while Israel controlled the coastal areas of Palestine and the Negev Desert to the Red Sea. During and after the fighting, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs fled, first from the war and then from the prospect of life under Jewish political control, and for the surrounding Arab states these refugees served as a symbol of the Arabs' defeat in Palestine and as a spur to the Arab nations' determination to rid their region of the hated presence of Israel.

Egypt and Arab Nationalism   Egyptian military leaders, particularly officers under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–1970), committed themselves to opposing Israel and taking command of the Arab world. Forsaking constitutional government and democratic principles, they began a political revolution and campaign of state reform through militarism, suppressing the ideological and religious opposition organized by communists and the Muslim Brotherhood. In July 1952 Nasser and other officers staged a bloodless coup that ended the monarchy of Egypt's King Farouk. After a series of complicated intrigues, Nasser named himself prime minister in 1954 and took control of the government. He then labored assiduously to develop Egypt economically and militarily and make it the fountainhead of pan-Arab nationalism.

In his efforts to strengthen Egypt, Nasser adopted an internationalist position akin to Nehru's nonalignment policy in India. Nasser's neutralism, like Nehru's, was based on the belief that cold war power politics were a new form of imperialism. Nasser condemned states that joined with foreign powers in military alliances, such as the Bagh-

Map 39.2 **The Arab-Israeli conflict, 1949–1982.** Compare the boundaries proposed by the UN partition of Palestine with those claimed by Israel after 1948–49. What were the strategic advantages of the extra territories claimed by Israel in 1948–49?

Legend:
- Israel after UN partition of Palestine, 1947
- Israel after War of 1948–49
- Occupied by Israel after Six-Day War, 1967
- Occupied by Israel after October War, 1973
- Returned to Egypt, 1978–82

dad Pact, a British- and U.S.-inspired alliance that included Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. Nevertheless, he saw in the new bipolar world opportunities that could be exploited for the advancement of Egypt, and he used his political savvy to extract pledges of economic and military assistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. Nasser demonstrated how newly independent nations could evade becoming trapped in either ideological camp and could force the superpowers to compete for influence.

Nasser also dedicated himself to ridding Egypt and the Arab world of imperial interference, which included destroying the state of Israel. He gave aid to the Algerians in their war against the French. Nasser did not neglect the remaining imperial presence in Egypt: he abolished British military rights to the Suez Canal in 1954. Through such actions and through his country's antipathy toward Israel, he laid claim to pan-Arab leadership throughout southwest Asia and north Africa.

Nasser sealed his reputation during the Suez crisis, which left him in a dominant position in the Arab world. The crisis erupted in 1956, when Nasser decided to nationalize the Suez Canal and use the money collected from the canal to finance construction of a massive dam of the Nile River at Aswan. When he did not bow to international pressure to provide multinational control of the vital Suez Canal, British, French, and Israeli forces combined to wrest control of the canal away from him. Their military campaign was successful, but they failed miserably on the diplomatic level and tore at the fabric of the bipolar world system. They had not consulted

The Suez Crisis
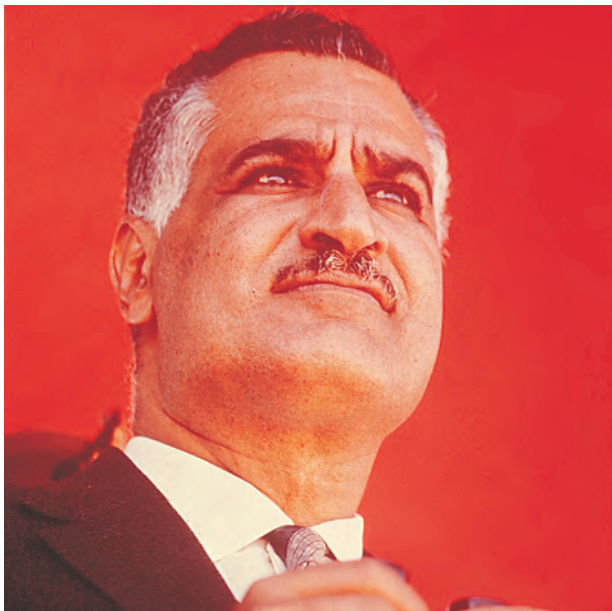
Gamal Abdel Nasser was president of Egypt from 1954 until his death in 1970.

with the United States, which strongly condemned the attack and forced them to withdraw. The Soviet Union also objected forcefully, thereby gaining a reputation for being a staunch supporter of Arab nationalism. Nasser gained tremendous prestige, and Egypt solidified its position as leader of the charge against imperial holdovers in southwest Asia and north Africa.

Despite Nasser's successes, he did not manage to rid the region of Israel, which was growing stronger with each passing year. More wars were fought in the decades to come, and peace between the Arab states and Israel seemed not only elusive but at times impossible. Although the partition that took place in Palestine appeared to lend itself to manipulation by the superpowers, the region of southwest Asia confused, complicated, and undermined elements of bipolarism. The strategic importance of oil dictated that both superpowers vie for favor in the Arab states, and while the United States became a firm ally of Israel, the Soviet Union also supported Israel's right to exist. The Suez crisis further tangled cold war power politics because it divided the United States and its allies in western Europe. Southwest Asia proved successful at ousting almost all imperial control and at challenging the bipolar worldview.

Decolonization in Africa

In the 1950s the superpowers' influence intensified. For African lands, that situation often meant delays in decolonization. Also complicating the decolonization process were internal divisions in African societies, which undermined attempts to forge national or pan-African identities. Tribal, ethnic, religious, and linguistic divides within and between state boundaries, all of which colonial rulers had exploited, posed a challenge to African leaders, particularly once independence came and the imperial enemy departed. Given the variety of barriers to African independence, from imperial resistance and the cold war to internal tribal conflicts, it is not astonishing that independence came more slowly in Africa than in other regions of the world.

Forcing the French out of North Africa

In Africa as in southeast Asia, the French resisted decolonization. In Algeria the French fought a bloody war that began in 1954, the year France suffered its defeat at Dienbienphu. Somewhat ironically, while it focused its efforts on Algeria in the 1950s and 1960s, France allowed all its other territories in Africa to gain independence. In 1956 France granted independence to its colonies in Morocco and Tunisia, and thirteen French colonies in west and equatorial Africa won their independence in 1960, a year that came to be known as "the year of Africa."

France in Africa

France's concessions to its other African colonies illustrated its determination to control Algeria at all costs. The French people expressed differing opinions on the Algerian conflict, being less determined than their government leaders. French settlers demanded that the government in Paris defend their cause in north Africa. Two

■ **French paratroopers search for terrorists near Algiers, January 1957.**

million French settled or were born there by the mid-1940s. The end of World War II, however, marked the beginning of a revitalized nationalist movement in Algeria, fueled by desire for independence from France and freedom from domination by white settlers. The event that touched off the Algerian revolt came in May 1945. French colonial police in the town of Sétif fired shots into an otherwise peaceful demonstration in support of Algerian and Arab nationalism. Algerian rioting and French repression of the disturbances took place in the wake of the incident. In the resulting melee more than eight thousand Algerian Muslims died, along with approximately one hundred French.

The Algerian war of liberation began in 1954 under the command of the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN, or National Liberation Front). The FLN adopted tactics similar to those of nationalist liberation groups in Asia, relying on bases in outlying mountainous areas and resorting to guerrilla warfare. The French did not realize the seriousness of the challenge they faced until 1955, when the FLN moved into more urbanized areas. In an attack on the town of Constantine, the FLN killed dozens of French settlers. France sent thousands of troops to Algeria to put down the revolution, and by 1958 it had committed half a million soldiers to the war. The war became ugly: Algerians serving with the French had to kill fellow Algerians or be killed by them; Algerian civilians became trapped in the crossfire of war, often accused of and killed for aiding FLN guerrillas; thousands of French soldiers died. By the war's end in 1962, when the Algerians gained independence from France, hundreds of thousands of Algerians had died.

War in Algeria

One ideological legacy for Africa stemmed from Algeria's war of independence. Frantz Fanon (1925–1961) gained fame as an Algerian revolutionary and as an influential proponent of national liberation for colonial peoples through violent revolution. Born in Martinique in the West Indies, Fanon studied psychiatry and medicine in France, went to Algeria to head a hospital's psychiatric department, and then participated in Algeria's battle to free itself from French rule. Fanon furthered his fame and provided ideological support for African nationalism and revolution in his writings. In works such as *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), he urged the use of violence against colonial oppressors as a means of overcoming the racist degradation experienced by

Frantz Fanon

peoples in developing or colonial nations outside the Soviet-U.S. sphere. Fanon died shortly before Algerians achieved independence, but his ideas influenced the independence struggles ongoing in Africa.

Black African Nationalism and Independence

Before and during World War II, nationalism flourished in sub-Saharan Africa. African nationalists celebrated their blackness and Africanness in contrast to their European colonial rulers. Drawing from the pan-African movements that emerged in the United States and the Caribbean, African intellectuals, especially in French-controlled west Africa, established a movement to promote *Négritude* ("Blackness"). Reviving Africa's great traditions and cultures, poets and writers expressed a widely shared pride in Africa.

Growth of African Nationalism
This celebration of African culture was accompanied by grassroots protests against European imperialism. A new urban African elite slowly created the sorts of associations needed to hold demonstrations and fight for independence. Especially widespread, if sporadic, were workers' strikes against oppressive labor practices and the low wages paid by colonial overlords in areas such as the Gold Coast and Northern Rhodesia. Some independent Christian churches also provided avenues for anticolonial agitation, as prophets such as Simon Kimbangu in the Belgian Congo promised his churchgoers that God would deliver them from imperial control.
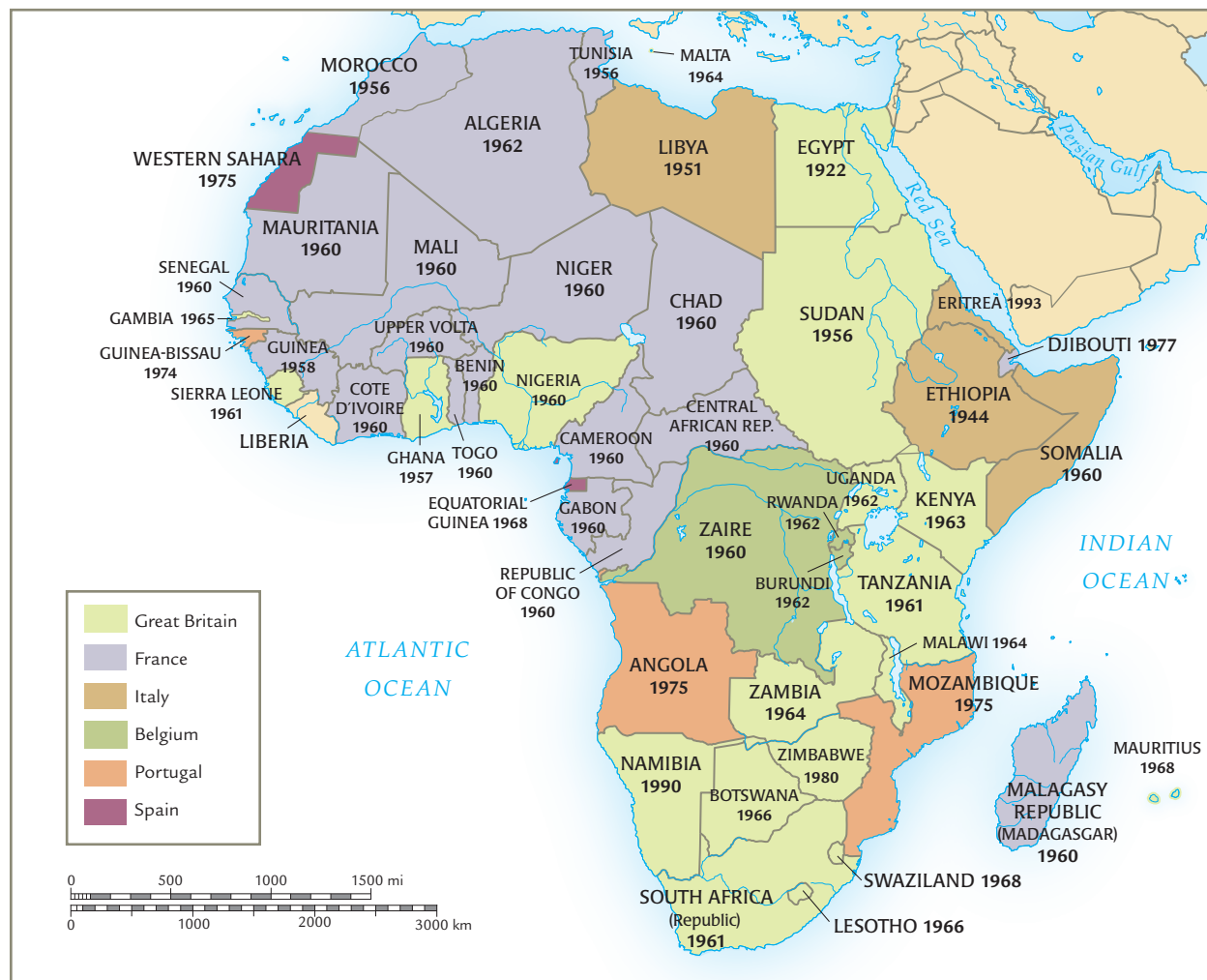
In the years after World War II, African poets associated with the *Négritude* movement continued to express their attachment to Africanness and encourage Africans to turn away from European culture and colonial rule. Bernard Dadié's poem "Dry Your Tears, Africa!" illustrates those sentiments:

> Dry your tears, Africa!
> Your children come back to you
> Out of the storms and squalls of fruitless journeys. . . .
> Over the gold of the east
> and the purple of the setting sun,
> the peaks of proud mountains
> and the grasslands drenched with light
> They return to you. . . .
> And our senses are now opened
> to the splendour of your beauty
> to the smell of your forests
> to the charms of your waters
> to the clearness of your skies
> to the caress of your sun. . . .

African Independence
The dreams and hopes of African nationalists frequently had to be placed on hold in the early years after World War II. Often assuming that black Africans were incapable of self-government, imperial powers planned for a slow transition to independence. The presence of white settlers in certain African colonies also complicated the process of decolonization. The politics of the cold war allowed imperial powers to justify oppressive actions in the name of rooting out a subversive communist presence. Despite the delays, however, sub-Saharan states slowly but surely won their independence as each newly independent nation inspired and often aided other lands to win their freedom.

Agitation for independence in sub-Saharan Africa took on many forms, peaceful and violent, and decolonization occurred at a different pace in different nations. Ghana became independent in 1957, but independence came much later to Angola

MOROCCO 1956
TUNISIA 1956
MALTA 1964
ALGERIA 1962
LIBYA 1951
EGYPT 1922
Persian Gulf
Red Sea
WESTERN SAHARA 1975
MAURITANIA 1960
MALI 1960
NIGER 1960
CHAD 1960
SUDAN 1956
ERITREA 1993
DJIBOUTI 1977
SENEGAL 1960
GAMBIA 1965
GUINEA-BISSAU 1974
GUINEA 1958
UPPER VOLTA 1960
BENIN 1960
NIGERIA 1960
CENTRAL AFRICAN REP. 1960
ETHIOPIA 1944
SIERRA LEONE 1961
COTE D'IVOIRE 1960
LIBERIA
GHANA 1957
TOGO 1960
CAMEROON 1960
SOMALIA 1960
EQUATORIAL GUINEA 1968
GABON 1960
ZAIRE 1960
UGANDA
RWANDA 1962
KENYA 1963
REPUBLIC OF CONGO 1960
BURUNDI 1962
TANZANIA 1961
INDIAN OCEAN
ANGOLA 1975
ZAMBIA 1964
MALAWI 1964
MOZAMBIQUE 1975
ATLANTIC OCEAN
NAMIBIA 1990
ZIMBABWE 1980
BOTSWANA 1966
MAURITIUS 1968
MALAGASY REPUBLIC (MADAGASGAR) 1960
SWAZILAND 1968
SOUTH AFRICA (Republic) 1961
LESOTHO 1966

Legend:
- Great Britain
- France
- Italy
- Belgium
- Portugal
- Spain

0   500   1000   1500 mi
0   1000   2000   3000 km

Map 39.3 **Decolonization in Africa. Date is year of independence.** Compare this map with Map 33.2. How do the borders of the newly independent African states compare with those drawn by European powers in the late nineteenth century?

(1975) and Zimbabwe, formerly Southern Rhodesia (1980). Freedom's aftermath often showcased the sorts of divisions and problems that tempered the joy of decolonization. The outbreak of civil war (as in Rwanda, Burundi, and Angola), economic instability, and political and ethnic divisiveness hampered postindependence nation building, but sub-Saharan African states nonetheless made the break from empire. African nations in many instances symbolized and sealed their severance from imperial control by adopting new names that shunned the memory of European rule and drew from the glory of Africa's past empires. Ghana set the pattern, and the map of Africa soon featured similar references to precolonial African places: Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe. As Dadié predicted, Africans had opened their political senses to the splendor of Africa past and present.

Freedom and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

Ghana's success in achieving its freedom from British rule in 1957 served as a hallmark in Africa's end of empire. Under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972), political parties and strategies for mass action took shape. Although the British subjected

Roadside portraits of Queen Elizabeth II and Kwame Nkrumah in Accra. The British monarch made a postindependence visit to Ghana in November 1961.

Nkrumah and other nationalists to jail terms and repressive control, gradually they al-lowed reforms and negotiated the transfer of power in their Gold Coast colony.

Ghana

After it became independent in 1957, Ghana emboldened and inspired other African nationalist movements. Nkrumah, as a leader of the first sub-Saharan African nation to gain independence from colonial rule, became a persuasive spokesperson for pan-African unity. His ideas and his stature as an African leader symbolized the changing times in Africa. In preparation for the 1961 visit of Britain's Queen Eliza-beth II (1926–), the people of Ghana erected huge side-by-side posters of the queen and their leader, Nkrumah. Those roadside portraits offered a stunning vision of newfound equality and distinctiveness. Ex-colonial rulers, dressed in royal regalia, faced off against new African leaders, clothed in traditional African fabrics, the once-dominating white faces matched by the proud black faces.

Anticolonial Rebellion in Kenya

The process of attaining independence did not always prove as nonviolent as in Ghana. The battle that took place in the British colony of Kenya in east Africa demon-strated the complexity and difficulty of African decolonization. The situation in Kenya turned tense and violent in a clash between powerful white settlers and nationalists, es-pecially the Kikuyu, one of Kenya's largest ethnic groups. Beginning in 1947, Kikuyu rebels embarked on an intermittently violent campaign against Europeans and alleged traitorous Africans. The settlers who controlled the colonial government in Nairobi re-fused to see the uprisings as a legitimate expression of discontent with colonial rule. Rather, they branded the Kikuyu tribes as radicals bent on a racial struggle for primacy. As one settler put it, "Why the hell can't we fight these apes and worry about the sur-vivors later?" Members of the militant nationalist movements were labeled by the British government as Mau Mau subversives or communists.

In reality, Kikuyu radicalism and violence had much more to do with nationalist opposition to British colonial rule, especially land policies in Kenya. Kikuyu resent-

Sources from the Past

Kwame Nkrumah on African Unity

As the leader of the first African nation to gain independence, Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972) became a respected spokesperson for African unity as a strategy for dealing with decolonization during the cold war. In his book I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology *(1961), Nkrumah made an eloquent case for an African solution for the problems of African independence during a global cold war.*

It is clear that we must find an African solution to our problems, and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world.

Never before have a people had within their grasp so great an opportunity for developing a continent endowed with so much wealth. Individually, the independent states of Africa, some of them potentially rich, others poor, can do little for their people. Together, by mutual help, they can achieve much. But the economic development of the continent must be planned and pursued as a whole. A loose confederation designed only for economic cooperation would not provide the necessary unity of purpose. Only a strong political union can bring about full and effective development of our natural resources for the benefit of our people.

The political situation in Africa today is heartening and at the same time disturbing. It is heartening to see so many new flags hoisted in place of the old; it is disturbing to see so many countries of varying sizes and at different levels of development, weak and, in some cases, almost helpless. If this terrible state of fragmentation is allowed to continue it may well be disastrous for us all.

Critics of African unity often refer to the wide differences in culture, language and ideas in various parts of Africa. This is true, but the essential fact remains that we are all Africans, and have a common interest in the independence of Africa. The difficulties presented by questions of language, culture and different political systems are not insuperable. If the need for political union is agreed by us all, then the will to create it is born; and where there's a will there's a way.

The greatest contribution that Africa can make to the peace of the world is to avoid all the dangers inherent in disunity, by creating a political union which will also by its success, stand as an example to a divided world. A union of African states will project more effectively the African personality. It will command respect from a world that has regard only for size and influence.

We have to prove that greatness is not to be measured in stockpiles of atom bombs. I believe strongly and sincerely that with the deep-rooted wisdom and dignity, the innate respect for human lives, the intense humanity that is our heritage, the African race, united under one federal government, will emerge not as just another world bloc to flaunt its wealth and strength, but as a Great Power whose greatness is indestructible because it is not built on fear, envy and suspicion, nor won at the expense of others, but founded on hope, trust, friendship and directed to the good of all mankind.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

How does Nkrumah's call for African unity rather than fragmentation reflect the tensions between decolonization and the ongoing cold war?

SOURCE: Kwame Nkrumah. *I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961, x–xii.

ment of the British stemmed from their treatment in the 1930s and 1940s, when white settlers pushed them off the most fertile highland farm areas and reduced them to the status of wage slaves or relegated them to overcrowded "tribal reserves." Resistance began in the early 1940s with labor strikes and violent direct action campaigns designed to force or frighten the white settlers off their lands. In the 1950s, attacks on white settlers and black collaborators escalated, and in 1952 the British established a state of emergency to crush the anticolonial guerrilla movement through detention and counterinsurgency programs. Unable or unwilling to distinguish violent activism

Rebel suspects in a British internment camp, Nairobi, Kenya.

from nonviolent agitation, the British moved to suppress all nationalist groups and jailed Kenya nationalist leaders, including Jomo Kenyatta (1895–1978) in 1953. Amid growing resistance to colonial rule, the British mounted major military offenses against rebel forces, supporting their army troops with artillery, bombers, and jet fighters. By 1956 the British had effectively crushed all military resistance in a conflict that claimed the lives of twelve thousand Africans and one hundred Europeans.

Despite military defeat, Kikuyu fighters broke British resolve in Kenya and gained increasing international recognition of African grievances. The British resisted the radical white supremacism and political domineering of the settlers in Kenya and instead responded to calls for Kenya independence. In 1959 the British lifted the state of emergency, and as political parties formed, nationalist leaders like Kenyatta reemerged to lead those parties. By December 1963 Kenya had negotiated its independence.

After Independence: Long-Term Struggles in the Postcolonial Era

Political and economic stability proved elusive after independence, particularly in those developing nations struggling to build political and economic systems free from the domination of more powerful nations. The legacies of imperialism, either direct or indirect, hindered the creation of democratic institutions in many parts of the world—in recently decolonized nations, such as those of Africa, and in some of the earliest lands to gain independence, such as those of Latin America. Continued interference by the former colonial powers, by the superpowers, or by more developed nations impeded progress, as did local elites with ties to the colonial powers. The result was an unstable succession of governments based on an authoritarian one-party system or on harsh military rule. South Africa and India, however, transformed themselves into functioning democracies despite deep racial and religious divides. In Asia and the Islamic world, some governments kept order by relying on tightly centralized rule, as in China, or on religion, as in Iran after the 1979 revolution. Few developing or newly industrialized countries, however, escaped the disruption of war or revolution that also characterized the postcolonial era.

Communism and Democracy in Asia

Except for Japan and India, the developing nations in south, southeast, and east Asia adopted some form of authoritarian or militarist political system, and many of them followed a communist or socialist path of political development. Under Mao Zedong (1893–1976), China served as a guide and inspiration for those countries seeking a means of political development distinct from the ways of their previous colonial masters.

Mao's China   Mao reunified China for the first time since the collapse of the Qing dynasty, transforming European communist ideology into a distinctly Chinese communism. After 1949 he embarked on programs designed to accelerate development in China

and to distinguish Chinese communism from Soviet communism. The Great Leap Forward (1958–1961) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) were far-reaching policies that hampered the political and economic development that Mao so urgently sought.

Mao envisioned his Great Leap Forward as a way to overtake the industrial production of more developed nations, and to that end he worked to collectivize all land and to manage all business and industrial enterprises collectively. Private ownership was abolished, and farming and industry became largely rural and communal. The Great Leap Forward—or "Giant Step Backward" as some have dubbed it—failed. Most disastrous was its impact on agricultural production in China: the peasants, recalcitrant and exhausted, did

A 1966 poster shows Mao Zedong inspiring the people to launch the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

not meet quotas, and a series of bad harvests also contributed to one of the deadliest famines in history. Rather than face reality, Mao blamed the sparrows for the bad harvests, accusing these counterrevolutionaries of eating too much grain. He ordered tens of millions of peasants to kill the feathered menaces, leaving insects free to consume what was left of the crops. Between 1959 and 1962 as many as twenty million Chinese may have died of starvation and malnutrition in this crisis.

In 1966 Mao tried again to mobilize the Chinese and reignite the revolutionary spirit with the inauguration of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Designed to root out the revisionism Mao perceived in Chinese life, especially among Communist Party leaders and others in positions of authority, the Cultural Revolution subjected millions of people to humiliation, persecution, and death. The elite—intellectuals, teachers, professionals, managers, and anyone associated with foreign or bourgeois values—constituted the major targets of the Red Guards, youthful zealots empowered to cleanse Chinese society of opponents to Mao's rule. Victims were beaten and killed, jailed, or sent to corrective labor camps or to toil in the countryside. The Cultural Revolution, which cost China years of stable development and gutted its educational system, did not die down until after Mao's death in 1976. It fell to one of Mao's heirs, Deng Xiaoping, to heal the nation.

The Cultural Revolution

Although he was a colleague of Mao, Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997) suffered the same fate as millions of other Chinese during the Cultural Revolution: he had to recant criticisms of Mao, identify himself as a petit-bourgeois intellectual, and labor in a tractor-repair factory. When a radical faction failed to maintain the Cultural Revolution after Mao's death, China began its recovery from the turmoil. Deng came to power in

Deng's Revolution

Tiananmen Square

The student democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, June 1989.

1981, and the 1980s are often referred to as the years of "Deng's Revolution." Deng moderated Mao's commitment to Chinese self-sufficiency and isolation and engineered China's entry into the international financial and trading system, a move that was facilitated by the normalization of relations between China and the United States in the 1970s.

To push the economic development of China, Deng opened the nation to the influences that were so suspect under Mao—foreign, capitalist values. His actions included sending tens of thousands of Chinese students to foreign universities to rebuild the professional, intellectual, and managerial elite needed for modern development. Those students were exposed to the democratic societies of western Europe and the United States. When they staged pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989, Deng, whose experiences in the Cultural Revolution made him wary of zealous revolutionary movements, approved a bloody crackdown. Not surprisingly, Deng faced hostile world opinion after crushing the student movement. The issue facing China as it entered the global economy was how (or whether) to reap economic benefits without compromising its identity and its authoritarian political system. This issue gained added weight as Hong Kong, under British administration since the 1840s and in the throes of its own democracy movement, reverted to Chinese control in 1997. Chinese leaders in the twenty-first century have managed to maintain both centralized political control over China and impressive economic growth and development. The evidence of China's increasing global power and prominence should become especially visible during the 2008 summer Olympics in Beijing.

Indian Democracy

The flourishing of democracy in India stands in stark contrast to the political trends in developing nations in Asia and throughout the world. While other nations turned to dictators, military rule, or authoritarian systems, India maintained its political stability and its democratic system after gaining independence in 1947. Even when faced with the crises that shook other developing nations—ethnic and religious conflict, wars, poverty, and overpopulation—India remained committed to free elections and a critical press. Its first postindependence prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, guided his nation to democratic rule.

In 1966 Indira Gandhi (1917–1984), Nehru's daughter (and no relation to Mohandas K. Gandhi), became leader of the Congress Party. She served as prime minister

of India from 1966 to 1977 and from 1980 to 1984, and under her leadership India embarked on the "green revolution" that increased agricultural yields for India's eight hundred million people. Although the new agricultural policies aided wealthier farmers, the masses of peasant farmers fell deeper into poverty. Beyond the poverty that drove Indians to demonstrations of dissatisfaction with Gandhi's government, India was beset by other troubles—overpopulation and continuing sectarian conflicts.

Those problems prompted Indira Gandhi to take stringent action to maintain control. To quell growing opposition to her government, she declared a national emergency (1975–1977) that suspended democratic processes. She used her powers under the emergency to forward one of India's most needed social reforms, birth control. But rather than persuading or tempting Indians to control the size of their families (offering gifts of money for those who got vasectomies, for example), the government engaged in repressive birth control policies, including involuntary sterilization. A record eight million sterilization operations were performed in 1976 and 1977. The riots that ensued, and the fear of castration among men who might be forced to undergo vasectomies, added to Gandhi's woes.

When Indira Gandhi allowed elections to be held in 1977, Indians voted against her because of her abrogation of democratic principles and her harsh birth control policies. She returned to power in 1980, however, and again faced great difficulty keeping the state of India together in the face of religious, ethnic, and secessionist movements. One such movement was an uprising by Sikhs who wanted greater autonomy in the Punjab region. The Sikhs, representing perhaps 2 percent of India's population, practiced a religion that was an

■ **Indira Gandhi delivers a speech in 1972.**

offshoot of Hinduism, and they had a separate identity—symbolized by their distinctive long hair and headdresses—and a history of militarism and self-rule. Unable or unwilling to compromise in view of the large number of groups agitating for a similar degree of autonomy, Indira Gandhi ordered the army to attack the sacred Golden Temple in Amristar, which harbored armed Sikh extremists. In retaliation, two of her Sikh bodyguards—hired for their martial skills—assassinated her a few months later in 1984.

Indira Gandhi's son Rajiv Gandhi (1944–1991) took over the leadership of India in 1985 and offered reconciliation to the Sikhs. He was assassinated by a terrorist in 1991 while attempting to win back the office he lost in 1989. Despite those setbacks, however, Nehru's heirs maintained democracy in India and continued to work on the problems plaguing Indian development—overpopulation, poverty, and sectarian division. The legacy of Mohandas K. Gandhi lived on in the form of brutal assassinations and continued quests for peace and religious tolerance.

Islamic Resurgence in Southwest Asia and North Africa

The geographic convergence of the Arab and Muslim worlds in southwest Asia and north Africa encouraged the development of Arab nationalism in states of those regions that gained independence in the year after World War II. Whether in Libya, Algeria, or Egypt in north Africa or in Syria, Saudi Arabia, or Iraq in southwest Asia, visions of Arab nationalism, linked to the religious force of Islam, dazzled nations that wished to fend off European and U.S. influence. In north Africa, Egypt's Gamal

Abdel Nasser provided the leadership for this Arab nationalism, and Arab-Muslim opposition to the state of Israel held the dream together.

Muslim Revival and Arab Disunity

The hopes attached to pan-Arab unity did not materialize. Although Arab lands shared a common language and religion, divisions were frequent and alliances shifted over time. The cold war split the Arab-Muslim world; some states allied themselves with the United States, and others allied with the Soviet Union. Some countries also shifted between the two, as Egypt did when it left the Soviet orbit for the U.S. sphere in 1976. Governments in these nations included military dictatorships, monarchies, and Islamist revolutionary regimes. Religious divisions also complicated the attainment of Arab unity, because Sunni and Shia Muslims followed divergent theologies and foreign policies.

In southwest Asia, peace seemed a distant prospect for decades, given the political turmoil caused by the presence of Israel in the midst of Arab-Islamic states, many of which allied themselves with the Soviet Union as Israel became a staunch ally of the United States. Israel soundly defeated Egypt and Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and in the 1973 Arab-Israeli, or Yom Kippur, War, so named by Israel because the Arab attack took place on the major Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. Those conflicts greatly intensified the tensions in the region, but the wars also ultimately led to a long series of peace negotiations. Anwar Sadat (1918–1981), who replaced Nasser as Egypt's president, masterminded the Yom Kippur surprise attack on Israel, but he also facilitated the peace process. The United States helped negotiate the peace. In 1976 Sadat renounced his nations' friendship treaty with the Soviet Union, and in 1977 he traveled to Israel in an attempt to break a deadlock in the negotiations. Between 1978 and 1980 the leaders of Egypt and Israel signed peace treaties.

Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by opponents of his policies toward Israel, and the Arab states along with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) worked to isolate Egypt. The PLO, the political organization that served as a government in exile for Palestinians displaced from Israel, had been created in 1964 under the leadership of Yasser Arafat (1929–2004) to promote Palestinian rights. Despite more violence by Israelis and Palestinians in the 1990s, these implacable foes moved to end hostilities. In 1993 and 1995 Arafat and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin (1922–1995) signed peace treaties that advanced the notion of limited Palestinian self-rule in Israeli-occupied territories. The assassination of Rabin in 1995 by a Jewish extremist who opposed the peace agreements, as well as other hurdles, blocked the peace process. Although hope for a peaceful resolution of the long-running conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has persisted, deadly clashes such as the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict illuminate the complexity of this region's politics as well as the fragility of peace. The forces of Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shia resistance group benefiting from support from Iran and fighting against any Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory, instigated a conflict that saw Hezbollah rockets launched against Israel, Israeli air strikes and artillery barrages devastating parts of Lebanon, and many dead Lebanese and displaced Lebanese and Israelis. A UN-mandated cease-fire went into effect in August 2006, but hostility itself has not disappeared. Cease-fires and tentative moves toward peace have not, however, negated Muslim desires for solidarity and strength. A revival of Muslim traditions found expression in Islamism.

Islamism

At the heart of Islamism was the desire for the reassertion of Islamic values in Muslim politics. In this view, the Muslim world had been slipping into a state of decline, brought about by the abandonment of Islamic traditions. Many Muslims had become skeptical about European and American models of economic development and political and cultural norms, which they blamed for economic and political failure as well as for secularization and its attendant breakdown of traditional social and

religious values. Disillusionment and even anger with European and American societies, and especially with the United States, became widespread. The solution to the problems faced by Muslim societies lay, according to Islamists, in the revival of Islamic identity, values, and power. The vast majority of Islamic activists have sought to bring about change through peaceful means, but an extremist minority has claimed a mandate from God that calls for violent transformations. Convinced that the Muslim world is under siege, extremists used the concept of *jihad*—the right and duty to defend Islam and the Islamic community from unjust attack—to rationalize and legitimize terrorism and revolution.

The Arab-Muslim world was divided on a number of issues, but the revolution that took place in Iran in 1979 demonstrated the power of Islam as a means of staving off secular foreign influences. Islamist influences penetrated Iran during the lengthy regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (1919–1980), whom the CIA helped bring to power in 1953. The vast sums of money that poured in from Iran's oil industry helped finance industrialization, and the United States provided the military equipment that enabled Iran to become a bastion of anticommunism in the region. In the late 1970s, however, opposition to the shah's government coalesced. Shia Muslims despised the shah's secular regime, Iranian small businesses detested the influence of U.S. corporations on the economy, and leftist politicians rejected the shah's repressive policies. The shah fled the country in early 1979 as the revolution gained force, and power was captured by the Islamist movement under the direction of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1900–1989).

The Iranian Revolution

The revolution took on a strongly anti-U.S. cast, partly because the shah was allowed to travel to the United States for medical treatment. In retaliation, Shia militants captured sixty-nine hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, fifty-five of whom remained captives until 1981. In the meantime, Iranian leaders shut U.S. military bases and confiscated U.S.-owned economic ventures. This Islamic power play against a developed nation such as the United States inspired other Muslims to undertake terrorist actions. The resurgent Islam of Iran did not lead to a new era of solidarity, however. Iranian Islam was the minority sect of Shia Islam, and one of Iran's neighbors, Iraq, attempted to take advantage of the revolution to invade Iran.

By the late 1970s Iraq had built a formidable military machine, largely owing to oil revenues and the efforts of Saddam Hussein (1937–2006), who became president of Iraq in 1979. Hussein launched his attack on Iran in 1980, believing that victory would be swift and perhaps hoping to become the new leader of a revived pan-Arab nationalism. (Iran is Muslim in religion, but not ethnically Arab, as are Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.) Although they were initially successful, Iraqi troops faced a determined counterattack by Iranian forces, and the conflict became a war of attrition that did not end until 1988.

The Iran-Iraq War killed as many as one million soldiers. In Iran the human devastation is still visible, if not openly acknowledged, in a nation that permits little dissent from Islamist orthodoxy. Young people are showing signs of a growing discontent caused by the war and by the rigors of a revolution that also killed thousands. Signs of recovery and a relaxation of Islamist strictness appeared in Iran in the late 1990s, but the destruction from war also remained visible. Islamism has reemerged in twenty-first-century Iran and has aroused some international concern, particularly for the United States. A conservative supreme leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei (1939–), and a conservative president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (1956–), represented this trend. Ahmadinejad took office in 2005 and touted Iran's nuclear program and his antipathy to the state of Israel, which had the effect of increasing his status in the Islamic world while intensifying tensions with the United States.

The Iran-Iraq War

■ **Iranians show their devotion to the Ayatollah Khomeini at his funeral in 1989.**

Iraqis continued on a militant course. Two years after the end of the Iran-Iraq War, Hussein's troops invaded Kuwait (1990) and incited the Gulf War (1991). The result was a decisive military defeat for Iraq, at the hands of an international coalition led by the United States, and further hardships for the Iraqi people. Hussein's troubles deepened in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States as President George W. Bush (1946–) vastly expanded his nation's war on terror (see chapter 40). A coalition of forces aligned with the United States launched a preemptive invasion of Iraq in 2003 to destroy Hussein's "weapons of mass destruction" and Iraq's capacity to harbor global terrorists. Iraqi military units suffered defeat and coalition forces captured Saddam Hussein in December 2003. Tried and found guilty of crimes against the Iraqi people, Hussein faced execution by hanging on 30 December 2006. Deadly conflicts have persisted, however, as both Iraqis and U.S. occupation forces have become targets for those Iraqis disgruntled with new Iraqi leaders and with the continued presence of foreign troops in Iraq.

Politics and Economics in Latin America

The uneasy aftermath of independence visible throughout Asia also affected states on the other side of the world—states that gained their freedom from colonial rule more than a century before postwar decolonization. Nations in Central and South America along with Mexico grappled with the conservative legacies of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism, particularly the political and economic power of the landowning elite of European descent. Latin America moreover had to deal with neocolonialism, because the United States not only intervened militarily when its interests were threatened but also influenced economies through investment and full or part ownership of enterprises such as the oil industry. In the nineteenth century Latin American states may have looked to the United States as a model of liberal democracy, but by the twentieth century U.S. interference provoked negative reactions. That condition was true after World War I, and it remained true during and after World War II.

Mexico   Only President Lázaro Cárdenas (in office 1934–1940) had substantially invoked and applied the reforms guaranteed to Mexicans by the Constitution of 1917. The

constitution's provisions regarding the state's right to redistribute land after confisca-
tion and compensation, as well as its claim to government ownership of the subsoil
and its products, found a champion in Cárdenas. He brought land reform and redis-
tribution to a peak in Mexico, returning forty-five million acres to peasants, and he
wrested away control of the oil industry from foreign investors. Cárdenas's national-
ization of Mexico's oil industry allowed for the creation of the *Petróleos Mexicanos*
(PEMEX), a national oil company in control of Mexico's petroleum products. The
revenues generated by PEMEX contributed to what has been called "El Milagro Mex-
icano," or the Mexican economic miracle, a period of prosperity that lasted for
decades. Conservative governments thereafter, controlled by the one-party rule of the
Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), often acted harshly and experimented with
various economic strategies that decreased or increased Mexico's reliance on foreign
markets and capital. The PRI came under attack in the 1990s as Mexican peasants in
the Chiapas district protested their political oppression. Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas, the
son of Lázaro Cárdenas, took on the leadership of an opposition party, the Democra-
tic Revolutionary Party (PRD), and this shift to democratic political competition and
multiparty elections has continued into the twenty-first century. Vincente Fox Que-
sada (1942–) won the 2000 presidential election as a candidate for the National Ac-
tion Party (PAN), breaking the PRI's long-term monopoly on the office. Another
PAN candidate, Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa (1962–) replaced him as president
in 2006, but only after a hotly contested race and an extremely narrow victory over
the PRD's Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (1953–).

    Mexico served as one model for political development in Latin America, and Ar-   *Argentina*
gentina seemed to be another candidate for leadership in South America. It had a rea-
sonably expansive economy based on cattle raising and agriculture, a booming urban
life, the beginnings of an industrial base, and a growing middle class in a population
composed mostly of migrants from Europe. Given its geographic position far to the
south, Argentina remained relatively independent of U.S. control and became a leader
in the Latin American struggle against U.S. and European economic and political in-
tervention in the region. A gradual shift to free elections and a sharing of political
power beyond that exercised by the landowning elite also emerged. Given the mili-
tary's central role in its politics, however, Argentina became a model of a less positive
form of political organization: the often brutal and deadly sway of military rulers.

    During World War II, nationalistic military leaders gained power in Argentina and   *Juan Perón*
established a government controlled by the army. In 1946 Juan Perón (1895–1974),
a former colonel in the army, was elected president. Although he was a nationalistic
militarist, his regime garnered immense popularity among large segments of the Ar-
gentine population, partly because he appealed to the more downtrodden Argentines.
He promoted a nationalistic populism, calling for industrialization, support of the
working class, and protection of the economy from foreign control.

    However opportunistic Perón may have been, his popularity with the masses was   *Evita*
real. His wife, Eva Perón (1919–1952), helped to foster that popularity, as Argentini-
ans warmly embraced their "Evita" (little Eva). She rose from the ranks of the desper-
ately poor. An illegitimate child who migrated to Buenos Aires at the age of fifteen, she
found work as a radio soap-opera actress. She met Perón in 1944, and they were mar-
ried shortly thereafter. Reigning in the Casa Rosada (the Pink House) as Argentina's
first lady from 1946 to 1952, Eva Perón transformed herself into a stunningly beauti-
ful political leader, radiant with dyed gold-blonde hair and clothed in classic designer
fashions. While pushing for her husband's political reforms, she also tirelessly minis-
tered to the needs of the poor, often the same *descamisados,* or "shirtless ones," who
formed the core of her husband's supporters. Endless lines of people came to see her

■ **Eva Perón waves to adoring *descamisados* in Buenos Aires in 1950.**

in her offices at the labor ministry—asking for dentures, wedding clothes, medical care, and the like. Eva Perón accommodated those demands and more: she bathed lice-ridden children in her own home, kissed lepers, and created the Eva Perón Foundation to institutionalize and extend such charitable endeavors. When she died of uterine cancer at the age of thirty-three, the nation mourned the tragic passing of a woman who came to be elevated to the status of "Santa Evita."

Some saw Eva Perón not as a saint but as a grasping social climber and a fascist sympathizer (she had, for example, made an official visit to General Franco's Spain) and saw her husband as a political opportunist, but after Juan Perón's ouster from office in 1955, support for the Perónist party remained strong. However, with the exception of a brief return to power by Perón in the mid-1970s, brutal military dictators held sway for the next three decades. Military rule took a sinister turn in the late 1970s and early 1980s when dictators approved the creation of death squads that fought a "dirty war" against suspected subversives. Between six thousand and twenty-three thousand people disappeared between 1976 and 1983. Calls for a return to democratic politics increased in the aftermath of the dirty war, demands that were intensified by economic disasters and the growth of the poor classes.

Guatemala and Nicaragua

The political models and options open to states in Latin America were rather diverse, even though cold war issues complicated some political choices made after World War II. The establishment of communist and socialist regimes in Central and South America—or the instigation of programs and policies that hinted of progressive liberalism or anti-Americanism—regularly provoked a response from the United States. The United States did not need the impetus of a communist threat to justify its intervention in Latin America, because the northern neighbor had upheld the right to make southern incursions since the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823. Moreover, one hundred years later, Latin America had become the site of fully 40 percent of U.S. foreign investments. Nonetheless, cold war imperatives shaped many U.S. actions in Latin America in the postwar years, especially in Cuba (see chapter 38) and the Central American nations of Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Democratically elected president of Guatemala in 1951, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (1913–1971) publicly announced in 1953 a government seizure of hundreds of

thousands of acres of uncultivated land owned by the United Fruit Company, a private enterprise controlled mainly by U.S. investors. Foreign companies such as the United Fruit Company dominated Guatemala's economy and its major export crop of bananas. President Arbenz was attempting to reassert Guatemala's control over its economy and its lands—for redistribution to the peasants. He offered monetary compensation to the company, based on the land's declared value for tax payments, but both the company and the United States government found that amount insufficient. U.S. officials also believed Arbenz's policies to be communist inspired, and they feared a spread of such radical doctrines throughout Central America.

President Dwight Eisenhower therefore empowered the CIA to engineer the overthrow of Arbenz's government. The United States sent arms to Guatemala's neighbors, Nicaragua and Honduras, to shore up their defenses against communism, and the CIA trained noncommunist Guatemalans under Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas (1914–1957) to attack and weaken the Arbenz government. With a continued supply of U.S. weapons and air support, Castillo Armas and his troops forced the fall of Arbenz in 1954. Castillo Armas established a military government, returned land to the United Fruit Company, and ruthlessly suppressed opponents with methods that included torture and murder. After his assassination in 1957, Guatemalans plunged into a civil war that did not end until the 1990s.

Anastacio Somoza Garcia (1896–1956) served as president of Nicaragua during the CIA-backed coup that removed Arbenz from Guatemalan government, and he demonstrated himself to be a staunch anticommunist U.S. ally. He had funneled weapons to Guatemalan rebels opposing Arbenz, and he outlawed the communist party in Nicaragua during the cold war. Somoza first grasped power in the 1930s, propelled into a position of leadership when members of his Nicaraguan National Guard killed nationalist Augusto César Sandino (1893–1934). Sandino had led a guerrilla movement aimed at ending U.S. interference in Nicaragua, including the stationing of U.S. Marines. Somoza and his sons, Luis Somoza Debayle (d. 1967) and Anastacio Somoza Debayle (1928–1980), controlled Nicaraguan politics for more than forty years.

The brutality, corruption, and pro-U.S. policies of the Somoza family—which extended to allowing the United States to use Nicaragua as a staging place during the Bay of Pigs attack on Cuba in 1961—alienated other Latin American nations as well as Nicaraguans. In the early 1960s, a few Nicaraguans honored the memory and mission of Augusto Sandino and created a movement opposing the Somozas by founding the Frenté Sandinista de Liberacíon Nacional (FSLN), or the Sandinista Front for National Liberation. The Sandinistas, as they became known, garnered support over the decades for their guerrilla operations aimed at overthrowing the Somozas, but they did not take power until 1979. The assumption of power by the Sandinistas, many of whom were avowed Marxists dedicated to a socialist agenda, was in some respects surprisingly supported by the actions of the United States.

Under President Jimmy Carter (1924–), U.S. cold war policies in Latin America moderated. In some cases, the United States refused to interfere in Latin American nations pursuing more autonomy or progressive and even socialist goals. Carter helped make Anastacio Somoza Debayle's position untenable in 1978 by withdrawing U.S. military and economic aid, and when the dictator fled Nicaragua in 1979, the United States offered recognition and aid to the new Sandinista government. Carter's commitment to human rights contributed to this shift in U.S. cold war policy—which also led to withdrawal of U.S. support for Latin American dictators and to the negotiations of the 1979 Panama Canal Treaty that gave Panama sovereignty over all its territory, including the Canal Zone (restored by treaty to Panama on 31 December 1999).

This thaw in U.S.–Latin American cold war relations did not last long. President Ronald Reagan (1911–2004) abandoned Carter's policies and renewed attacks on communism. Nicaraguan Sandinistas felt the full force of Reagan's anticommunism after his assumption of the presidency in 1981, especially because he believed that the Sandinistas were abetting communist rebels elsewhere in Central America, as in El Salvador. He halted aid to Nicaragua and instituted an economic boycott of the country. In 1983 Reagan offered increasing support—monetary and military—to the Contras, a CIA-trained counterrevolutionary group dedicated to overthrowing the Sandinistas and engaging over time in such activities as the bombing of oil facilities and the mining of harbors. Members of the U.S. Congress and public expressed wariness about Reagan's ventures in Nicaragua, and in 1984 Congress imposed a two-year ban on all military aid to the Contras. Representatives of the Reagan administration went outside the law to provide funds for the Contras in 1986, illegally using the profits that accrued from secretly selling weapons to Iran—a scandal that became public and highly visible in late 1986 and early 1987.

In the face of U.S. efforts to destabilize Sandinista rule in Nicaragua, Central American leaders decided to take action themselves on their region's troubles. President Oscar Arias Sánchez (1940–) of Costa Rica became especially influential in promoting a negotiated end to the Contra war in Nicaragua. A 1989 agreement provided for the presence of a UN peacekeeping force, for monitored elections, and for the disarming of the Contras. Elections in the following decade brought new political parties to the forefront, and the Sandinistas worked to form coalition governments with opposition parties. Sandinista power was weakened but not eliminated despite the overwhelming interference of the United States, and democratic politics and a normalization of relations with the United States emerged in Nicaragua in the late twentieth century.

Nicaragua's experiences after World War II suggested clearly the political complications associated with the cold war and with continued U.S. interference in Latin America. The economic and political conditions in South and Central America nonetheless made experiments with revolutionary doctrines and Marxist programs attractive to many of the region's peoples. These interested people included members of normally conservative institutions such as the Catholic Church; numerous priests in Latin America embraced what was called "liberation theology," a mixture of Catholicism and Marxism meant to combat the misery and repression of the masses through revolutionary salvation. Brutal regimes ordered the assassinations of hundreds of priests preaching this message of liberation, including Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador in 1980.

Liberation for Nations and Women

Revolutionary ideologies and political activism also provided opportunities for Latin American women to agitate for both national and women's liberation. Nicaraguan women established the Association of Women Concerned about National Crisis in 1977 and fought as part of the FSLN to rid their nation of Somoza's rule. In 1979 they renamed the organization the Luisa Amanda Espinoza Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMNLAE) to honor the first woman who died in the battle against Somoza. The group's slogan—"No revolution without women's emancipation: no emancipation without revolution"—suggested the dual goals of Nicaraguan women. By the mid-1980s, AMNLAE had over 80,000 members. Despite facing problems typical to women's movements trying to navigate between national and personal needs, AMNLAE has been credited with forwarding women's participation in the public and political spheres, an impressive accomplishment in a region where women's suffrage had often been delayed. Although women in Ecuador attained voting rights in 1929,

women in Nicaragua could not vote until 1955; Paraguay's women waited for suffrage rights until 1961, when that nation became the last in Latin America to incorporate women into the political process.

The late twentieth century witnessed a revival of democratic politics in Latin America, but economic problems continued to limit the possibility of widespread change or the achievement of economic and social equity. In many Latin American nations, the landowning elites who gained power during the colonial era were able to maintain their dominant position, which resulted in societies that remained divided between the few rich, usually backed by the United States, and the masses of the poor. It was difficult to structure such societies without either keeping the elite in power or promoting revolution on behalf of the poor, and the task of fashioning workable state and economic systems was made even more troublesome given the frequency of foreign interference, both military and economic. Despite the difficulties, the mid-twentieth century offered economic promise. During World War II, many Latin American nations took advantage of world market needs and pursued greater industrial development. Profits flowed into these countries during and after the war, and nations in the region experienced sustained economic growth through expanded export trade and diversification of foreign markets. Exports included manufactured goods and traditional export commodities such as minerals and foodstuffs such as sugar, fruits, and coffee.

The Search for Economic Equity

Latin American nations realized the need to reorient their economies away from exports and toward internal development, but the attempts to do so fell short. One influential Argentine economist, Raul Prebisch (1901–1985), who worked for the United Nations Commission for Latin America, explained Latin America's economic problems in global terms. Prebisch crafted the "dependency" theory of economic development, pointing out that developed industrial nations—such as those in North America and Europe—dominated the international economy and profited at the expense of less developed and industrialized nations burdened with the export-oriented, unbalanced economies that were a legacy of colonialism. To break the unequal relationship between what Prebisch termed the "center" and "periphery," developing nations on the periphery of international trade needed to protect and diversify domestic trade and to use strategies of import-substituting industrialization to promote further industrial and economic growth.

Prebisch's theories about the economic ills of the developing world, though influential at the time, have since declined in currency. Many Latin American nations remained committed to export trade and foreign investment, and economic expansion resulted from an infusion of funds from developed nations. The global recession of the 1970s and 1980s halted that expansion. Latin American states incurred huge foreign debts, and declining commodity prices reduced export profits so much that it became almost impossible for them to pay the interest on those debts. The recession and debt crisis hit Latin America hard, and renegotiating debt payments to developed nations opened the region to outside pressures on domestic economic policies—reducing commitments to social welfare and income redistribution, for example. Latin American economies have shown resilience in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, however, and Latin American nations have maintained links to global markets and money. Their economies appeared strong enough to limit the effects of their export-oriented systems and their use of foreign investment monies, and further economic growth should aid in the search for a social and economic equity that have been elusive in Latin America from colonial times.

Whites telephone kiosk. The South African system of apartheid institutionalized racial segregation.

War and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa

The optimism that arose in Africa after World War II faded over time. There seemed little prospect for widespread political stability in sub-Saharan Africa. Civilians running newly independent states were replaced by military leaders in a large number of unsettling coups. In Africa, as in Latin America, this condition largely reflected the impact of colonialism: European powers carved Africa into territories whose boundaries were artificial conveniences that did not correspond to economic or ethnic divisions. As a result, achieving national unity was difficult, especially because there were numerous conflicts between ethnic groups within states. Political institutions foundered, and the grinding poverty in which most African peoples lived increased tensions and made the absence of adequate administration and welfare programs more glaring. Poverty also prevented nations from accumulating the capital that could have contributed to a sound political and economic infrastructure.

The Aftermath of Decolonization

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), created in 1963 by thirty-two member states, recognized some of those problems and attempted to prevent conflicts that could lead to intervention by former colonial powers. The artificial boundaries of African states, though acknowledged as problematic, were nonetheless held inviolable by the OAU to prevent disputes over boundaries. Pan-African unity was also promoted, at least by the faction headed by Kwame Nkrumah, as another way for African states to resist interference and domination by foreign powers. But, although national borders have generally held, unity has not; African nations have been unable to avoid internal conflicts. Nkrumah, the former president of Ghana, is a case in point: he was overthrown in 1966, and Ghanaians tore down the statues and photographs that celebrated his leadership. Thus in Ghana, as in many other sub-Saharan states, politics evolved into dictatorial one-party rule, with party leaders forgoing multiparty elections in the name of ending political divisiveness. Several African nations fell prey to military rule. South Africa managed in part to solve its political crisis and discord, providing a model for multiethnic African transformation even as ethnic violence flared.

South Africa

As elsewhere in Africa, the presence of large numbers of white settlers in South Africa long delayed the arrival of black freedom. South Africa's black population, though a majority, remained dispossessed and disfranchised. Anticolonial agitation thus was significantly different in South Africa than in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa: it was a struggle against internal colonialism, against an oppressive white regime that denied basic human and civil rights to tens of millions of South Africans.

The ability of whites to resist majority rule had its roots in the South African economy, the strongest on the continent. That strength had two sources: extraction of minerals and industrial development, which received a huge boost during World War II. The growth of the industrial sector opened many jobs to blacks, creating the possibility of a change in their status. Along with black activism and calls for serious political reform after World War II, these changes struck fear into the hearts of white South Africans. In 1948 the Afrikaner National Party, which was dedicated to quashing any move toward black independence, came to power. Under the National Party the government instituted a harsh new set of laws designed to control the restive black population; these new laws constituted the system known as apartheid, or "separateness."

Apartheid

The system of apartheid asserted white supremacy and institutionalized the racial segregation established in the years before 1948. The government designated approximately 87 percent of South Africa's territory for white residents. Remaining areas were designated as homelands for black and colored citizens. Nonwhites were classified according to a variety of ethnic identifications—colored or mixed-race peoples, Indians, and "Bantu," which in turn was subdivided into numerous distinct tribal affiliations (for example, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho). As other imperial powers had done in Africa, white South Africans divided the black and colored population in the hope of preventing the rise of unified liberation movements. The apartheid system, complex and varied in its composition, evolved into a system designed to keep blacks in a position of political, social, and economic subordination.

However divided the nonwhite population might be, the dispossessed peoples all found in apartheid an impetus for resistance to white rule. The African National Congress (ANC), formed in 1912, gained new young leaders such as Nelson Mandela (1918–), who inspired direct action campaigns to protest apartheid. In 1955 the ANC published its Freedom Charter, which proclaimed the ideal of multiracial democratic rule for South Africa. Because its goals directly challenged white rule, the ANC and all black activists in South Africa faced severe repression. The government declared all its opponents communists and escalated its actions against black activists. Protests increased in 1960, the so-called year of Africa, and on 21 March 1960 white police gunned down black demonstrators in Sharpeville, near Johannesburg. Sixty-nine blacks died and almost two hundred were wounded. Sharpeville instituted a new era of radical activism.

When the white regime banned black organizations such as the ANC and jailed their adherents, international opposition to white South African rule grew. Newly freed nations in Asia and Africa called for UN sanctions against South Africa, and in 1961 South Africa declared itself a republic, withdrawing from the British Commonwealth. Some leaders of the ANC saw the necessity of armed resistance, but in 1963 government forces captured the leaders of ANC's military unit, including Nelson Mandela. The court sentenced them to life in prison, and Mandela and others became symbols of oppressive white rule. Protests against the system persisted in the 1970s and 1980s, spurred especially by student activism and a new black-consciousness movement. The combined effects of widespread black agitation and a powerful international anti-apartheid boycott eventually led to reform and a growing recognition that, if it was to survive, South Africa had to change.

When F. W. de Klerk (1936–) became president of South Africa in 1989, he and the National Party began to dismantle the apartheid system. De Klerk released Mandela from jail in 1990, legalized the ANC, and worked with Mandela and the ANC to negotiate the end of white minority rule. Collaborating and cooperating, the National Party, the ANC, and other African political groups created a new constitution and in April 1994 held elections that were open to people of all races. The ANC won

The End of Apartheid

overwhelmingly, and Mandela became the first black president of South Africa. In 1963, at the trial that ended in his jail sentence, Mandela proclaimed, "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." Mandela lived to see his ideal fulfilled. In 1994, as president, he proclaimed his nation "free at last." Mandela left office in 1999, replaced by Thabo Mbeki (1942–) as both president of the ANC and president of South Africa. An ANC activist in exile for decades before the end of apartheid, Mbeki was reelected in 2004. Although his fiscally conservative policies have alienated some in South Africa, his nation has remained the most stable, prosperous, and industrialized country in Africa.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Outside South Africa political stability remained difficult to achieve. The fleeting character of African political identity and stability can be seen in the history of the land once known as the Belgian Congo, which was reconfigured as Zaire in 1971 and renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1997. Mobutu Sese Seko (1930–1997) took power in 1960 by having Zaire's first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba (1925–1961), killed in a military coup in 1961. Lumumba was a Maoist Marxist, and the United States supported Mobutu's coup. Mobutu thereafter received support from the United States and other European democracies hoping to quell subversive uprisings. With international backing and financial support, Mobutu ruled Zaire in dictatorial fashion, using his power to amass personal fortunes for himself, his family, and his allies but devastating Zaire's economy. One observer termed Mobutu and his cronies "a vampire elite" as they plundered one of the richest African nations.

Mobutu's full adopted name, Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga, means "the all-powerful warrior who, by his endurance and will to win, goes from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake." Mobutu endured until 1997, when he was ousted by Laurent Kabila. Having earlier called Zaire "a fabrication of the dictator," Kabila changed the nation's name to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kabila's first concern was stability, which translated into vast personal power for himself as president, head of the military, and head of state. Kabila promised that this stage was a transition phase, preparatory to a democratic and stable Republic of Congo. However, a year after his revolution, Kabila came under attack by rebels in Congo who were aided by the governments of neighboring Uganda and Rwanda. In January 2001 during a failed coup attempt, a bodyguard shot and killed Kabila. His surviving son, Joseph, took over the reins of power. Joseph Kabila (1971–) worked to promote democratic elections and a new constitution, which an interim parliament approved in 2005, even though he faced disruptions from persistent outbreaks of violence within Congo and between Congo and bordering states. In elections held in 2006, Kabila was democratically elected to his position as president.

Developing Economies

Most African nations are less developed countries—countries that have the world's lowest per capita incomes and little industrial development. Africa contains 10 percent of the world's population but accounts for only 1 percent of its industrial output. By the mid-1980s only seven African nations had per capita incomes of $1,000 or more, and the continent had the world's highest number of low-income states. Africa is rich in mineral resources, raw materials, and agricultural products, but it lacks the capital, technology, foreign markets, and managerial class necessary to exploit its natural wealth. An ever-growing population compounds Africa's economic woes. Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the highest rates of population growth in the world—between 2.5 and 3 percent per year. While the populations of African states continue to grow, so do hopes for a new generation of economic solutions that can promote the health and welfare of those populations.

Africa's economic prospects after decolonization were not always so bleak, and they may improve in coming decades. The postwar period saw growing demand for Africa's commodity exports, and many African nations initiated or continued financial links with ex-colonial powers to finance economic development. After the 1970s, however, nations in Africa and Latin America faced the same crises: huge foreign debts, falling commodity prices, and rising import costs. Africa's burdens were complicated by droughts, famines, and agricultural production that could not keep pace with population growth. Leaders of African nations were among the strongest supporters of the New International Economic Order that was called for by a coalition of developing nations. These states sought a just allocation of global wealth, especially by guaranteeing prices and markets for commodities. African states have continued to attempt wider integration into the global economy, as well as to nurture closer economic and political cooperation among themselves. The African Union (AU), which superseded the Organization of African Unity and encompassed the African Economic Community (AEC, 1991), has fifty-three member nations and has been committed to working toward economic unity and integration in Africa. These nations seek to strengthen themselves by combating the conflicts so disruptive of African life and by establishing a common market designed in planned stages to unify Africa.

I n the years immediately before and after World War II, a few nations controlled the political and economic destiny of much of the world. The imperial and colonial encounters between European elites and indigenous peoples defined much of the recent history of the world before the mid-twentieth century. The decades following 1945 witnessed the stunning reversal of that state of affairs, as European empires fell and dozens of newly independent nations emerged. Decolonization changed the world's political, economic, and social landscape in often radical ways, and the peoples of these newly free countries thereafter labored to reshape their national identities and to build workable political and economic systems. The effervescence of liberty and independence at times gave way to a more sober reality in the days, years, and decades after liberation. Religious and ethnic conflict, political instability, economic challenges, and neoimperialism dampened spirits and interfered with the ability of nations to achieve peace and stability. Nothing, however, could ever truly diminish the historic significance of what transpired in the colonial world after World War II. The global balance of power had been irrevocably altered by this attainment of worldwide independence. The fall of those age-old empires, along with the disappearance of the superpowers' bipolar cold war world, pointed to the emergence of a new kind of world order: one without borders.

CHRONOLOGY	
1946	Perón elected president of Argentina
1947	Partition of India
1948	Creation of Israel
1948–1989	Apartheid in South Africa
1954	Overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala
1954	French defeat at Dienbienphu
1954–1962	Algerian war of liberation
1955	Bandung Conference
1956	Suez crisis
1957	Ghana gains independence
1958–1961	Great Leap Forward in China
1963	Founding of Organization of African Unity
1964	Creation of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)
1973	Arab-Israeli War
1979	Revolution in Iran
1979	Sandinistas in power in Nicaragua
1980-1988	Iran-Iraq War
1990–1991	Gulf War
1997	Transfer of British Hong Kong to People's Republic of China
1999	Canal Zone returned to Panama
2003	U.S.-led invasion of Iraq
2006	Execution of Saddam Hussein

FOR FURTHER READING

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