

Asia (1900s-21st Century)

European Nations Exploit Their Colonies

A *colony* is a region or territory controlled by a foreign power. Since the 1600s, European nations have had *colonies* in many parts of the world. The European nations of Belgium, Great Britain, France, Portugal, Spain, Germany, and Italy controlled many colonies worldwide. They developed colonial empires in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (see Unit 11). Europe saw its colonies as places from which to take valuable resources such as food, gold, rubber, and even the *labor* of the local people. Not only did they strip these colonial territories of their valuables, European rulers often forced the local people to work for little or no pay.

Imperialism is the policy of extending a nation's rule over other countries or territories. Countries that seek to conquer and extend their rule over other lands are called *imperialist nations*. People in imperialist nations believed that their way of life was superior to that of the people in their colonial territories. They considered native people living in their colonies to be "second-class" citizens. European nations did not respect the cultures or people in their colonies. The *parent country*, the country which controlled the colonial empires, used the local natives as a source of cheap labor in their factories, farms, and mines. Imperialist powers used their colonies to raise money from mining valuable resources and growing profitable agricultural products. From the beginning of imperialism in the late 19th century, native populations benefited very little from the wealth created by their countries. It was the parent country that benefited most from the local native labor.

In most colonial subject countries, the parent country had little respect for existing social structures (tribes, **clans**, kingdoms, etc.). In their place, the parent countries often set up European-style social structures and government. Those with the lightest skin, the most formal education, and European ancestry usually held the highest positions and had the most authority. The result was that the existing culture and traditions were ignored, and, in many colonies, local cultures nearly died out. In many countries, colonial practices disrupted community and family life. For example, natives were forced to work on farms or mines far from their homes, and families were separated for months or years at a time.

Colonies Gain Independence and Face Many Challenges

Many colonies in Asia and Africa (see Unit 11) demanded independence after World War II. In many instances, colonies used *armed* revolution to break free and force the parent countries from power. When colonies gained independence, their newly-gained freedom produced many difficult challenges. These colonies sometimes put aside some of their native culture and traditions, while some of their people may have accepted European ways. This often caused conflict between those who wanted to reestablish their native culture and those who wanted to continue with a European-styled culture.

Newly-freed countries were not always able to form stable governments and build productive economies. Their governments and economies had been controlled for many years by Europeans. Consequently, the native people may have had little experience in running a government or establishing an economy. For a time, following independence, the people often faced worse economic and political conditions than when they were ruled by the parent country.



Colonies sometimes put aside some of their native culture and traditions.

Civil war often broke out in the former colonies because their original boundaries had been changed by the parent country. The new boundaries might have enclosed rival groups or contained so many different groups that a sense of unity was almost impossible to develop. Different languages, customs, and beliefs often kept different groups apart. Poor rural people often migrated to the cities in search of jobs. This migration quickly overpopulated the cities and turned them into slums.

Third World Countries

Following World War II, the nations of the world were grouped politically into three “worlds.” The *First World* included the United States and other western industrial nations and Japan. The *Second World* included the Soviet Union and other Communist bloc countries. The nations of the First and Second Worlds were relatively modern and industrialized. The newly

independent countries, or developing countries with less-advanced technology than the First or Second World countries, make up what is called the *Third World*. After breaking away from their parent countries, these Third World nations did not side with either superpower and chose to remain **nonaligned**. They chose to remain separate. However, they have become a new influence in world affairs. Third World countries are found in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Most of these countries have experienced political instability and poverty largely because of a long history of imperialism.

Throughout the Cold War, the superpowers used a number of strategies to gain influence in the Third World. The competing superpowers backed wars of revolution or liberation. Soviet and United States spies were involved in a wide variety of secret activities, from spying to assassinations. The United States gave military and financial aid to these countries. Programs to improve the education and health of the people in developing nations continue to this day. The Soviets also offered assistance to many developing nations as a means of gaining a foothold in a region.

Northeast Asia

China

The history of China is one of the longest and most complex of any nation in the world. Its written history goes back to 1500 B.C. From that time until the early 1900s, China was ruled by a series of *dynasties*. A dynasty in China began when a single ruler gained power and then passed it on through his family. Over time, a dynasty would begin to weaken and then be replaced by another dynasty. Sometimes, family dynasties ruled for hundreds of years before being overthrown by other *warlords* or military leaders within China.



China after World War II

China also has had many different cultures and languages at any single moment in its history. China is divided into many *provinces* (territories), and life in one province can look very different from life in another province. Its more than one billion people do not share a common language and do not observe the same customs.

During most of its history, China has remained cut off from the West. Until recently, just travelling the great distance to China was difficult. The

country is protected by natural borders. It is surrounded by both treacherous mountains and forbidding deserts.

During the mid 1800s, Europeans, Japanese, and Americans began to take an interest in China. Over the next 60 years, Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the United States signed treaties with China that gave them control over China. They carved up China into **spheres of influence**. A *sphere of influence* is a particular land area or seaport that grants a foreign country exclusive trading rights. These countries used their advanced weapons to gain control of areas in China and to put down any rebellions by the Chinese people.

Nationalism and Civil War

After the Europeans, Japanese, and Americans opened up China, many Chinese people believed that their country's only chance for survival was through modernization and **nationalism**. Many Chinese believed that a modern **republic** should replace the Manchu dynasty. The only way to achieve this goal was through revolution. A new nationalistic spirit swept across China, and the Chinese people began trying to gain independence from foreign rule. They urged their government officials to strengthen the army and navy, to build modern factories, and to reform education.

The Chinese Nationalist Party Gains Power

In 1911 the Chinese Nationalist Party, also known as the *Guomindang* (gwoh min dawng), succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu dynasty, which had ruled China since 1644. Sun Yixian (soon yee-shyahn) became the president of the new *Republic of China*. The end of imperial rule, after 2,000 years, left China weak. Sun Yixian had little control over the many provinces that stretched across China. Civil war broke out as warlords and their armies fought each other for more land and control. They terrorized the countryside. Peasants suffered the most. Famine took the lives of millions. The civil war destroyed roads, bridges, and crops. This was the situation in China when World War I broke out in 1914.

World War I

Although the Sun Yixian government was powerless, it sided with the Allies against Germany in World War I. Sun Yixian hoped that the Allies would return control of China to the Chinese when the war was over.

However, this did not happen. The Allied leaders refused to give up their territories and commercial interests in China. Japan was allowed to keep the Chinese territory that it had seized during the war.

Sun Yixian (1866-1925)

Sun Yixian was known as the father of modern China and the founder and early leader of China's Nationalist Party. He was born in the province of Kwangtung. He was educated in Hawaii and in Hong Kong, where he trained as a doctor. Alarmed by the way China clung to its traditional ways, he founded the Society for the Revival of China. On a visit to London, he was kidnapped by Chinese officials. The British Foreign Office intervened, and when Sun was released, the publicity gave Sun's career a powerful boost. Sun returned to China after the 1911 Wuhan rising and was elected provisional president. He realized that his **regime** was weak, and he made a deal with Yuan Shikai and voluntarily handed over the office to Yuan Shikai.

After many struggles, Sun later set up a separate government at Guangzhou (Canton). In 1924 Sun reorganized the Kuomintang, so that authority descended from the top to the lower levels on the model of the Soviet Communist Party. Although these actions strengthened the Kuomintang, there was still considerable opposition to Sun's authority when he died in 1925.

Communists Battle the Nationalists for Power

In the early 1920s, the Soviet Union sent military advisors and equipment to China. China was in need of outside help to strengthen its government and feed its people. The Chinese Nationalist Party welcomed help from the Communist Soviet Union. By 1921, however, some Chinese had set up their own Communist Party modeled on **communism** in the Soviet Union. In 1923 the two parties, the Nationalists and the Communists, formed an alliance to oppose the warlords and drive imperialist powers out of China. For three years, the two parties overlooked their mutual distrust and worked together. With their combined armies, they were able to seize

control of China. By 1927 the Chinese Communists were competing with the Chinese Nationalists for control of the government. Eventually this split between Nationalists and Communists led to war. Many Communists were killed or forced to go into hiding. In 1928 Jiang Jieshi (jee-ahng jeh-shee) became the new leader of the Nationalist Republic of China.



Communist Chinese flag

At this time, a Communist revolutionary named Mao Zedong (mow dzuh-doong) organized the *Red Army*, a Communist military force dedicated to overthrowing the Nationalist government. Mao's goal was to make China a Communist country. He believed that the Communists could triumph with the help of China's millions of peasants. The Red Army had gained the popular support in rural areas of the country by overthrowing local landlords and distributing land to the peasants. By 1930 civil war raged in China. Meanwhile, as the civil war between Nationalists and Communists continued, Japan invaded China.

Mao Zedong (1893-1976)



Mao Zedong was born in Hunan. He helped to reshape the social and political structures of China and was a principal Chinese Marxist theorist, soldier, and statesman who led his nation's Communist revolution. He was a leader of the Chinese Communist Party and the chairman (chief of state) of the People's Republic of China from 1949 to 1959 and chairman of the party until his death.

When China emerged from a half century of revolution, it threw itself into economic development and social change. In 1966 Mao launched the Cultural Revolution—a movement against bureaucracy and complacency in the government, in the universities, and in the Communist Party. In 1972 his meeting with President Richard Nixon signaled better relations with the United States. Mao Zedong was the principal architect of the new China.

Japanese Invasion

The population of Japan was growing faster than any other country's on Earth. Since World War I, the Japanese government had faced a serious land and food shortage. To solve this problem, Japan decided to invade China. The Japanese government wanted to set up colonies in China.

In 1931 the Japanese army conquered a large section of northeast China known as *Manchuria* (see map on page 469). The attack marked the beginning of World War II in Asia. By 1939 the Japanese army had conquered much of eastern China. Japanese soldiers slaughtered and tortured the Chinese. In one city, over 200,000 Chinese were murdered. The Chinese government was nearly helpless to stop the Japanese.

Struggling to deal with the Great Depression and the rise of Hitler, European nations and the United States did nothing to stop the Japanese

invasion of China. During this same period, Jiang Jieshi and the Chinese Nationalist government asked Mao Zedong and his Communist Party members to join them to defeat the Japanese. Mao and Jiang Jieshi joined forces to fight against Japan. However, they still remained rivals with different goals for China. Weapons received from the United States to fight the Japanese were eventually used by the Nationalists and Communists against each other.

World War II

During World War II, the American army and air force had many bases in China. Under the command of General George Stillwell, the Chinese and the Americans were able to force the Japanese out of China in 1945. General Stillwell and some other Americans knew that, after the Japanese were gone, Mao would once again lead the Red Army against the Nationalist government. General Stillwell also understood that without support from the United States Army, the Nationalist Government in China would be overthrown. The Western-backed Nationalist and the Soviet-backed Communist forces fought a bitter civil war from 1946-1949.

Mao Zedong and the Red Army Gain Control

In 1949 Mao Zedong's Red Army defeated the Nationalist government. The Nationalist government fled to Taiwan, a small island off the southern coast of China (see map on page 469). After more than 20 years of almost constant struggle, the Communists took control of mainland China. Mao and the Communists established a new government, the *People's Republic of China*, with Beijing as its capital. The United States made it clear to the Communist Chinese government that it would protect Taiwan from any armed invasion. The defeated Nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi and his followers retreated to the island of Taiwan. There the Nationalists set up the *Republic of China*, whose government, they claimed, was the real Chinese government, not the Communist government that controlled the mainland.

The Transformation of China

During the next four decades of Communist rule, China underwent dramatic changes. Mao restructured China's economy based on the principles of **Marxism**, a form of **socialism**. The Communists seized the holdings of landowners and divided the land among the peasants. More

than a million landowners who resisted this policy were killed. During the 1950s, the Communist government forced peasants to join **collective farms** of up to 200-300 households. Gradually, the government *nationalized*, or put under government control, all private businesses. Like the Soviet Union, Mao put in place five-year plans that set high production quotas for its industries. Although industrial output increased dramatically, farm output increased at a much slower rate.

In 1958 Mao began a program known as the *Great Leap Forward*. Under this plan, collectives were merged into much larger, government-controlled farms called *communes*. Peasants lived a strictly controlled life in communes. They had to eat in communal dining rooms and sleep in dormitories. They also had to raise their children in communal nurseries. The Great Leap Forward proved to be a disaster. The peasants had no incentive to work hard when only the state profited from their labor. Crop failures between 1958-1961 led to a *famine* (an extreme scarcity of food), which killed approximately 20 million people. The program was finally discontinued in 1961.

Communist China and the Soviet Union

Communist China eventually became the most powerful force in Asia. Along with the Soviet Union, the Communist Chinese helped other Asian countries gain independence and set up Communist governments. For about 15 years after China's civil war, China and the Soviet Union enjoyed a peaceful friendship. However, in the late 1950s, the spirit of cooperation between China and the Soviet Union began to fade. Both wanted to control the worldwide Communist movement.

Mao was angered when the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev publicly denounced Stalin's abuse of power and supported **peaceful coexistence** with the West. Mao was a strict follower of Marxist *socialism*. The ideological differences between Mao's Chinese Communist philosophy and Soviet communism caused tension between the two Communist countries. Mao was unwilling to follow the Soviet Union's advice.

In 1960 the Soviets halted economic aid to China. In 1969 relations between China and the Soviet Union hit a low point when Chinese and Soviet soldiers fired upon each other on the northern border between the two countries. This period is known as the *Sino-Soviet split*. Relations between the Soviet Union and China did not fully recover for a long time.

Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution

After the failure of the Great Leap Forward and the split with the Soviet Union, Mao reduced his role in government. New leaders moved away from his strict Marxist ideas. New economic policies encouraged farm families to grow crops to sell at a profit on their own private plots of land. Factory workers were also encouraged to compete for wage increases and promotions. Mao disapproved of these new economic policies, believing that they would weaken communism.

Mao was greatly admired by the Chinese people. He had led the Communists in a successful revolution against the corrupt Nationalist government in 1949. Mao believed that even after the Communists were in power, the revolution must continue. He accused China's new Communist leaders of *taking the capitalist road*, or straying from the ideas of Communism, in their efforts to modernize China's economy. Thus in 1966,



statue in honor of Mao

determined to revive the Communist revolutionary spirit, Mao began the *Cultural Revolution* to rid China of anti-revolutionary influences. Mao told the people that to be pure Communists, they must rid China of all things and beliefs which were foreign. During this period, Chinese people were forbidden to wear Western clothing. Instead, all Chinese people wore the same style of clothing.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mao encouraged radical students and young adults to spread the Cultural Revolution throughout the country. Millions of high school and college students responded to Mao's call. Communist students wandered the streets of China's big cities burning books and destroying everything they believed was anti-Communist. These young people formed militia units called *Red Guards*. They persecuted and arrested local leaders, teachers, and other educated professionals.

The goal of the Cultural Revolution was to create a society of peasants and workers in which everyone was equal. The heroes of the revolution were the peasants and workers. Intellectuals, artists, and educated professionals were considered to be enemies of the revolution. Many professional people were **exiled** to remote villages to "purify" themselves by doing

years of hard labor on peasant farms. Violence and chaos spread throughout China. This resulted in many factories closing. Farm production suffered. Thousands of people were executed or died in jail. By the 1970s, Mao put an end to the Cultural Revolution, and order returned to China.

President Nixon Opens Relations with China

During the Cultural Revolution, China was not active in world affairs. In addition to its split with the Soviet Union, China had been hostile towards the United States because of its support for the Nationalist Chinese in Taiwan and also because of the Korean War. Gradually, China became more willing to form ties with the West. Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai (joh ehn-lie), a more moderate leader than Mao Zedong, shocked the world by inviting an American table tennis team to tour China. It was the first official visit by Americans to China since 1949. The visit began a new period in Chinese-American relations.



President Richard Nixon

The Sino-Soviet split gave the United States an opportunity to reestablish relations with China. In 1972 President Richard Nixon saw a golden opportunity to become friendly with China. President Nixon knew that if the United States and China became friends, the Soviet Union would lose influence in the world. President Nixon's Chinese diplomacy is perhaps his greatest achievement. President Nixon became the first American president to visit Communist China. As a result, the United States and China reestablished communications with each other. Trade and cultural exchanges between the United States and China grew. Around the same time, the United Nations invited the government of Mainland China to sit on the powerful Security Council. The Nationalist government in Taiwan was no longer recognized as the official Chinese government. In 1979 the United States recognized the Communist government of China and established formal diplomatic relations.

Deng Xiaoping Introduces Moderate Reforms

After Mao and Zhou died in 1976, Deng Xiaoping (dung show-ping), a moderate, emerged as China's new leader. Many of the radical leaders of the Cultural Revolution were jailed. By 1980 Deng Xiaoping was the most powerful leader in China. He introduced economic reforms and sought to expand China's relations with the outside world. He welcomed foreign investments. Under his leadership, China accepted some limited

capitalism. He permitted the people to open small private businesses. Deng eliminated Mao's unpopular communes and allowed individual farmers to lease the land and grow any crops they desired and sell it for a profit. Under this system, food production increased by 50 percent between 1978-1984. These economic policies produced dramatic changes in Chinese life. People's incomes increased, and this enabled them to buy appliances and televisions. The modern hotels filled with foreign tourists showed that China had a new policy of openness.

Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997)

Deng Xiaoping was born in Szechwan province, China. He studied in France, where he joined the Communist Party and became associated with Mao Zedong. In 1954 he became secretary-general of the Chinese Communist Party. When Mao launched the Cultural Revolution in 1966, Deng was criticized but was later restored to power in 1974. After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, Deng became vice-chairman of the party and China's most prominent leader. He opened China to foreign trade. From the late 1970s until his death in 1997, Deng was the most powerful figure in the People's Republic of China.

Tiananmen Square

Deng's economic reforms produced unexpected problems for the Chinese government. China's new **Open Door Policy** introduced new ideas to the Chinese people. Chinese students learned more about **democracy** and began to question the lack of freedom and human rights in China. One hundred thousand students marched in April 1989 to Tiananmen Square, a plaza in the center of Beijing, the capital of China. The demonstrators began a hunger strike and disrupted an important visit by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The student protesters demanded more *democracy*. They chanted "Down with corruption!" "Down with **dictatorship!**" and "Long live democracy!" **Martial law**, or military rule, was proclaimed in May as **demonstrations** spread to other cities. The prodemocratic demonstration came to an abrupt end six weeks later on June 3-4, 1989, when the Chinese government sent thousands of armed troops into Beijing. The assault that followed left hundreds of students dead and thousands wounded. Over 10,000 people were arrested.

The massacre of student and workers in Tiananmen Square shocked the world. The crackdown succeeded in slowing the Chinese people's democratic movement. The government used the media to announce that reports of a massacre were false. Instead, government officials claimed that a group of criminals had plotted against the government. The

television had already broadcast the truth to the world. World opinion was outraged by the Tiananmen Square incident. The United States and many other countries instituted **sanctions** against China; tourism declined and the economy went into general decline. International trade resumed in 1989-1990, and eventually the United States renewed China's most-favored-nation trading status in June 1990 after several hundred **dissidents** were released from prison. Western governments by 1991 lifted economic *sanctions*.

Reforms Continue under Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao

President Jiang Zemin (jee-ahng zeh-min) led post-Tiananmen China in the late 1990s through the early 21st century. During his five-year administration, China pulled an estimated 150 million peasants out of poverty and China realized an 11 percent economic growth rate. China joined the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** in 2001. The *World Trade Organization (WTO)* deals with the rules of trade between nations. Zemin's successor, Hu Jintao (hu-jin-tao) continued policies that promoted China's economic growth and development. However, China's rapid economic growth had a negative impact on the country's natural resources and its environment. In addition, the gap between rich and poor grew. Not all of its people benefited from its rapid economic growth. In recent years, China has played a greater role in calling for free trade agreements and security pacts with its neighbors in Asia. In 2005 China's expansion through its **exports** of manufactured goods strengthened its claim to leadership in this region.

Issues Facing China

Human Rights

Deng's harsh crackdown on the pro-democracy movement left him firmly in control of China. He continued his program of economic reform but he repressed any political reforms that promoted democracy. Deng Xiaoping died at the age of 93 in February of 1997 after a lengthy illness. Seventy-one-year-old Jiang Zemin became China's new president. He continued many of the economic and political policies of his predecessor. The Tiananmen Square incident brought attention to China's poor human rights record, which caused strained relations with the United States.



China's government put in place a policy called one-child-per-family.

China's rapidly growing population led the government to put in place a *one-child-per-family* policy. Couples who had only one child were rewarded with better medical benefits and improved housing. Those who had more than one child faced fines and other penalties. Many rural families refused to obey the policy. Others complied by killing their infant daughters because they considered sons more desirable. Human rights activists and religious groups have condemned China's "one child" policy as a violation of basic human rights.

During the 1990s, the United States put pressure on China to release political prisoners and guarantee basic rights for political opponents. China remained hostile to such pressure and continued to repress any prodemocracy movements. In August of 1999, China rounded up thousands of members of the *Falun Gong* sect, a popular religious movement that combines Buddhism, Taoism, and martial arts. China outlawed the sect and considered the group a threat because it was a well-organized group whose numbers exceeded the membership of the Chinese Communist Party. The United States Congress continued to vote in favor of renewal of China's most-favored-nation trade status despite its poor human rights record.

The Transfer of Hong Kong

After two years of negotiations, British and Chinese authorities agreed in 1984 that Hong Kong would return to Chinese sovereignty. Hong Kong was a major business center and a thriving British colony on the southeastern coast of China. The Chinese and the British negotiated the return of the colony upon the expiration of Britain's 99-year lease of the territory on July 1, 1997. This transfer ended 155 years of British colonial rule. The Chinese promised to respect Hong Kong's economic system and political freedoms for 50 years. Some citizens of Hong Kong worried that Chinese rule would bring an end to the political freedoms that they enjoyed, while others felt that the transfer to Chinese authority would have a positive influence on China and Hong Kong.

Taiwan

Tensions between Taiwan and Communist China grew worse in July 1999, when Taiwan's president said publicly that his country was a separate nation, not part of China. Communist China has always considered Taiwan a rebellious island province that eventually should be reunited with the mainland. China has threatened to use force if Taiwan officially declares itself independent from mainland China. In recent years, the People's Republic of China (PRC) had stopped promoting the immediate reunification with Taiwan under its "one country, two system" policy in favor of a more gradual approach of increasing economic and cultural integration.

Problems between China and the United States

Two of the world's most powerful countries, China and the United States, sometimes do not get along well. Relations between the United States and China became strained in 1999. Congress accused China of stealing nuclear secrets from the United States over the past two decades. When the United States bombed Serbia that year, it mistakenly hit the Chinese Embassy, killing and wounding several Chinese and caused further friction between the two countries.

Permanent Normal Trade Relations

The United States Senate approved a landmark China trade bill in September 2000. This bill ended the annual ritual of reviewing China's trade status. The bill also guaranteed Chinese goods the same low-tariff access to the United States markets as products from nearly every other nation. The bill established *Permanent Normal Trade Relations* (PNTR) with China, which opened a wide range of markets, from telecommunications to agriculture, to United States businesses. Approval of PNTR was important because this set the stage for United States-China relations in the decades to come.

Tragedy in Tibet

For centuries, Tibet was an independent country ruled by a Buddhist spiritual leader known as the *Dalai Lama*. In 1950, one year after the Communists took over China, they seized control of Tibet (see map on

page 469). When the Tibetans rebelled against Chinese rule in 1959, the present Dalai Lama escaped from his country, fleeing to neighboring India. He and his government still live in *exile* in northern India. Since his escape, the Dalai Lama has worked continuously to restore his country's freedom. The "Free Tibet" movement is a worldwide movement aimed at putting pressure on the Chinese to permit self-rule for Tibet.

China fears Tibet's desire for independence and treats Tibetans harshly, denying them basic human rights. Tibetans are jailed for any Nationalist discussions and forbidden to display photographs of the Dalai Lama. Many fear that Tibetan culture will not survive because of the Chinese crackdown on political activity, religious training, and the teaching of the Tibetan language. Many believe that the only hope for Tibet is the collapse of the Communist *regime* in China.

The 14th Dalai Lama (1935-)

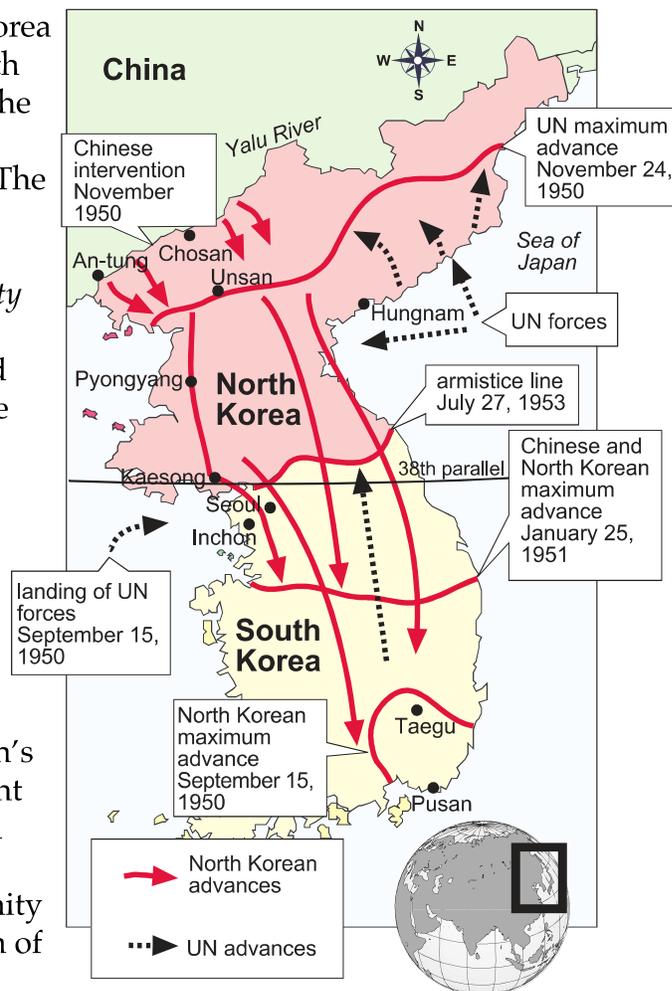
The Dalai Lama is the title of the leader of an order of Tibetan Buddhists. He is Tibet's spiritual and temporal ruler. The present Dalai Lama was born on June 6, 1935 in Taktser, China into a peasant family and was designated the 14th Dalai Lama in 1937. He was enthroned in 1940 but had to flee to India in 1959, when the Chinese government put down a rebellion in Tibet against Chinese rule. The Dalai Lama was forced into permanent exile, settling at Dharamsala in Punjab, India, where he established a democratically-based alternative government. He was awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his commitment to the nonviolent liberation of his homeland.

Korea

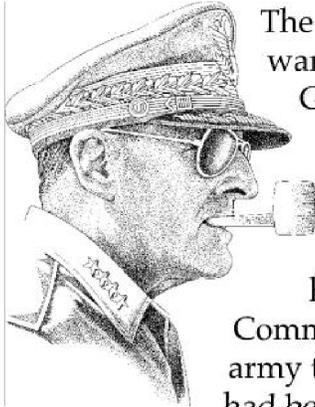
The Korean War: 1950-1953

As World War II ended, Korea wound up a divided nation. North of the 38th parallel (38 degrees North latitude), Japanese troops surrendered to the Soviet Union. South of the 38th parallel, Japanese troops surrendered to the United States. As in postwar divided Germany, two separate nations were created. In North Korea, a Communist *dictatorship* was established, while South Korea developed a non-Communist government. By 1949 both the Soviet Union and the United States had withdrawn their troops from the Korean peninsula.

In a surprise attack, the North Koreans invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. The North Koreans wanted to unify the entire country under a Communist government. The United Nations (UN) was asked to intervene by the South Koreans. The *Security Council* (group that deals with political, military and diplomatic disputes) of the UN voted to condemn the invasion. The Security Council voted to send a multinational military force composed of troops from 15 UN member nations to stop the North Korean invasion. The Soviet Union's UN ambassador was absent when the Security Council vote was taken and thus *forfeited* (lost) his opportunity to *veto* (block) the UN plan of action.



Korean War 1950-1953



General Douglas
MacArthur

The North Korean army was very successful early in the war, eventually controlling almost all of South Korea.

General Douglas MacArthur led the UN troops, which were mostly United States soldiers. UN forces eventually began a strong counterattack.

They pushed the retreating North Korean army north to the border with China at the Yalu River. A huge Communist Chinese army was sent to aid the Communist North Korean forces, soon forcing the UN army to retreat southward. By January 1951, UN forces had been pushed out of North Korea. With Chinese help, the North Korean army pushed southward, eventually capturing Seoul, the South Korean capital. General Douglas MacArthur wanted Harry Truman, the president of the

United States, to authorize the use of nuclear weapons to attack Chinese cities. Truman rejected this proposal, believing that the use of nuclear weapons against the Chinese would lead to a third world war, possibly involving a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. President Truman fired General MacArthur when he tried to get public support for the use of nuclear weapons by the United States during the Korean War.

Within two years the UN forces had driven the North Koreans back to the 38th parallel. By 1952 the fighting had reached a **stalemate** or *deadlock* and neither side was able to make further gains by advancing their troops. Finally on July 27, 1953, a *cease-fire* agreement, or an agreement to stop fighting, was signed. After three years and the deaths of five million people, the border between the two Koreas was again established at the 38th parallel, where the border had been before the fighting began. After a truce was signed ending the fighting, a **demilitarized zone** along both sides of the 38th parallel was established to separate North Korea from South Korea. United States troops have been stationed along the South Korean side of the *demilitarized zone* ever since. A permanent settlement of the war has never been signed.

Korea since the Korean War

North Korea

Korea remains divided into two separate countries. North Korea's Communist leader Kim Il Sung isolated his country from the rest of the world. He established a **repressive** Communist dictatorship in the North,

building up the country's military, heavy industry, and *collective farms*. After his death in 1994, his son Kim Jong Il came to power. Under his leadership, North Korea continued to develop an **arsenal** of nuclear weapons. In 1998 North Korea launched a test missile over Japan. Because of continued acts of aggression and continued tensions between North and South Korea, many nations continue to worry about the North Koreans' use of nuclear power.

During the 1990s, North Korea faced widespread crop failures and severe food shortages due to years of floods, extended **droughts**, and government mismanagement. Between two to three million people are estimated to have died of hunger between 1995 to 1998.

Korea Expands Its Nuclear Weapons Program

Since 2000, when North Koreans admitted that they had been secretly developing nuclear weapons, relations between North Korea and the United States have deteriorated. With the election of George W. Bush in 2000, the United States adopted a tougher, more aggressive stance toward North Korea. President George W. Bush publicly referred to North Korea as part of the "axis of evil" (which also included Iraq and Iran) and as an "outpost of tyranny." In 2003, North Korea withdrew from the **Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty**, a treaty that limits the spread of nuclear weapons. Relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and its neighboring countries took a turn for the worse in 2006 when North Korea test-fired four or five short-range missiles which landed in the Sea of Japan. It also launched several long and medium-range missiles. North Korea claims that it has the sovereign right to test its missiles and pursue its weapons program.

In 2003, *six-party talks* had been the method used to resolve the concern brought about by North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Six-party talks is the name given to a series of meetings with six participating states—the People's Republic of China, South Korea, North Korea, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, and Japan. These talks were a result of North Korea withdrawing from the *Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty* in 2003. The aim of these talks is to find a peaceful resolution to the security concerns raised by the North Korean nuclear weapons program. However, after five rounds of talks, little progress has been made. These actions motivated many in the international community to pursue more aggressive talks with the North Koreans.

The main points of concern are as follows:

- **Security guarantee**—North Korea is concerned that the Bush administration (2000-present) planned to overthrow their government. They became worried after the United States overthrew the **Taliban**, the very conservative Islamic government in Afghanistan in 2001. (See Afghanistan later in this unit.)
- **Peaceful use of nuclear energy**—the North Koreans claimed to be developing nuclear energy for civilian purposes, when in fact this was a cover for their development of their weapons program.
- **The restoration of diplomatic relations**—North Korea wants to normalize diplomatic relations with the United States as part of the bargain for giving up its nuclear weapons program.
- **Financial restrictions/Trade normalization**—the United States has placed heavy financial sanctions on North Korea for what is seen as an uncooperative attitude and unwillingness to dismantle its nuclear weapons program.
- **Verifiable disarmament**—members of the six-party talks have not all agreed on the best policy to insure that North Korea dismantles its nuclear weapons program. Gradual **disarmament** or immediate *disarmament* or the reducing the number of a country's weapon systems. In addition, North Korea wants the United States to guarantee in a treaty that they will not try to overthrow their government first before it will take any action in disarming their weapons program.
- **One-on-one talks with the United States**—the North Koreans want to abandon the six-party talks and negotiate directly with the United States. The Bush administration does not support this idea and wants the North Koreans to open talks with all member of the six-party group.

Kim Jong II (1941-)

Kim Jong II is the eldest son and successor to the longtime North Korean leader Kim II Sung. Mystery has surrounded Kim Jong II from birth to today. His father was in exile in the former Soviet Union where Kim Jong II was born February 16, 1941, but according to official North Korean accounts, he was born in a log cabin on North Korea's highest mountain, Mt. Paektu, in February 1942 where a double rainbow appeared over the mountain and a new star in the heavens appeared. Little is known about Kim Jong II's personal life even today.

Kim Jong II attended the Mangyongdae Revolutionary School, which was set up to train future political leaders in North Korea. After studying at various schools, he eventually transferred to Kim II Sung University, where he graduated in 1963 with a major in political economy.

After his father's death in 1994, Kim Jong II was eventually named as the chief of the Workers' Party of Korea, a major step to claim full leadership of the country. He was promoted to "Dear Leader," in late 1997, making him North Korea's general secretary of the main political party. By this time, North Korea had become one of the most isolated countries in the world with the economy in trouble.

Kim Jong II attracted global attention in September 1998 when North Korea fired a test missile over Japan. North Korea again surprised the world with a surprise attack in June 2002 on South Korea. But North Korea quickly apologized for the incident and reestablished diplomatic relations with Seoul and Tokyo. Later in the year, November 2002, Kim Jong II admitted that North Korea was developing weapons of mass destruction. This is about the same time that United States President George W. Bush was threatening military action against Iraq. The United States only option seem to be economic sanctions. In late December 2002, Kim expelled UN weapons inspectors from the country. On July 4, 2006, North Korea test-launched a series of ballistic missiles that could possibly be capable of reaching the American mainland, but they were unsuccessful in the test launch.

South Korea

With the help of the United States, the government of South Korea began to rebuild its economy. During the 1980s, South Korea's prosperity increased dramatically. South Korean industries *exported* automobiles, electronic products, and other goods. Since the 1960s, however, South Korea had a series of *repressive* dictatorships. Military backed dictators used the Communist threat as a means to limit civil liberties and to crush opposition groups.

During the 1980s, student protestors demanded an expansion of democracy. By 1987 a new constitution was adopted that allowed more political freedoms. Students and workers continued their push for more



The faces of South Korea.

social and political reforms, as well as for the reunification of Korea. Many South Koreans resented the presence of United States forces in South Korea and longed for the day when both North and South Korea were again one country. South Korea continued its democratic reforms. Many South Korean political leaders accused of corruption were forced out of office. Eventually, voters were able to directly elect their president for the first time. In 1992 Kim Young Sam, a longtime political activist, won the

election as South Korea's first postwar civilian president. In 1998 Kim Dae Jung, another longtime supporter of democracy, was elected president. In July 2000, South Korean President Kim Dae Jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il met to discuss the future of the two Koreas. Many believed that this was an important first step toward eventual reunification, and eventually unification. However, the two sides were unable to agree on any substantial improvement in their relations.

Japan

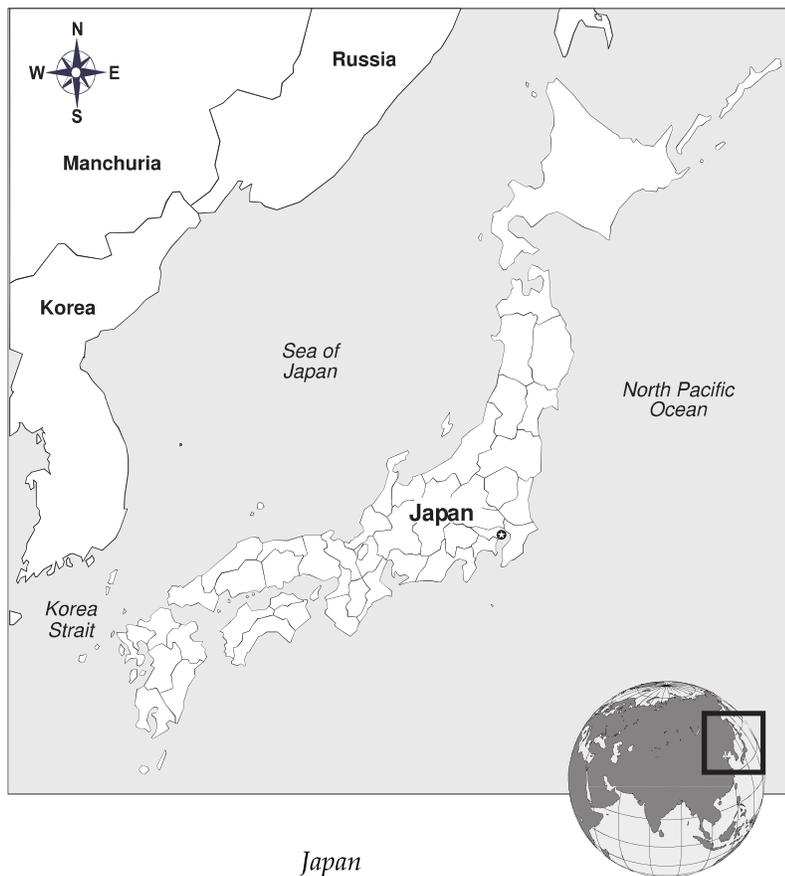
Democracy after World War II

Near the end of World War II, the Japanese government finally surrendered to the Allies after the United States destroyed the Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima with atomic bombs. Japan was in ruins after the war. The capital city of Tokyo and other major cities had been severely damaged by the Allied bombings. Japan was also stripped of its colonial empire after the war. Japan lost territories such as Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, and many small islands in the Pacific, as well as lands conquered during the war. The Allied countries that defeated Japan established an occupation government known as the *Supreme Command of the Allied Powers* (SCAP) to govern Japan after the war. General Douglas MacArthur, who led the United States troops to victory in the Pacific against Japan, became the military commander of Japan during the American occupation after the war. To ensure that Japan would not be a military threat, the SCAP *demilitarized* or disbanded Japan's armed forces. MacArthur also helped the Japanese set up a democratic form of government. In 1946 a new constitution was put in place. It created a *parliamentary* democracy similar to that of Great Britain, where the country is led by the *prime minister*, who is the leader of the majority party in the legislature. The new Japanese legislature would be elected by male and female citizens over the age of 20 and a bill of rights that guaranteed civil liberties was put into effect.

The Japanese people had thought of their emperor as a living god with divine powers. After the war, the new constitution forced the emperor to tell the Japanese people he was not a god, and he was stripped of all political power. The constitution also included an important provision known as *Article 9*. It stated that the Japanese people had to forever **renounce** war. This was done so that Japan would never again pose a threat to neighboring countries. An international **tribunal** tried many wartime leaders as war criminals in 1948. On April 28, 1952, a peace treaty between Japan and the United States went into effect, which ended the occupation of Japan.

During the 1950s, with the assistance of the United States, Japan's economy quickly recovered. SCAP put in place economic reforms that broke up the large farms and sold off the land at low prices to small farmers. The old giant industrial and banking organizations that had controlled Japanese industry were also divided in order to prevent Japan

from rearming itself. The Korean War changed American policies towards Japan, leading to the rapid growth of new Japanese industries. The United States poured billions of dollars into Japan so that its new factories could produce the supplies needed for the war effort. Japan eventually became an industrial giant as the United States provided the investment and training needed for Japan to build more new and modern factories. Although Japan had to **import** most of the raw materials needed to keep its factories efficient, its government worked hand in hand with corporate leaders to promote research and development in electronics and the automobile industry.



Japan

By the 1970s, Japan had emerged as a major world industrial power. Its radios, televisions, stereos, and other electronic goods competed well on the world market. Its fuel-efficient automobiles were sold around the world. Japan's rapid economic growth continued through the 1980s.



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Japan's prosperity created tensions, however. Because Japan sells more goods than it buys, many countries have *trade deficits* with Japan. A trade deficit occurs when a country *imports* more goods than it exports. The Japanese government limits the amount of foreign goods that can be sold in its country, causing trade deficits with Japan's Asian neighbors, Europe, and

the United States. The United States threatened to impose high *tariffs* (taxes or duties) on Japanese cars unless Japan agreed to open its markets to foreign competition. The United States and Japan have been working together to improve their trading policies.

Challenges Facing Japan

In the 1990s, Japan suffered a **recession** that caused the value of its real estate and foreign investments to drop, causing many workers to lose their jobs. The Japanese government, which had been the most stable government in Asia, began to face some difficult challenges. Japan had been a one-party state with the Liberal Democratic Party



Japan's rapid economic growth continued through the 1980s.

(LDP) dominating Japanese politics for over 30 years. Support began to crumble as the LDP faced political scandals and charges of corruption. In 1993 the LDP lost its sole control of power. The LDP had to share power with other political parties in a series of **coalition governments** made up of temporary alliances of opposing political groups. The rapid **industrialization** of Japan also led to environmental problems that the Japanese government has taken steps to correct. Japan has also had to deal

with an increase of violent crime. Violent crimes involving American servicemen in Okinawa and **terrorist** attacks shocked Japanese citizens who believed that their country was one of the safest in the world.

Japan

During the early 21st century, Japan's once stagnant economy began to rebound, and by 2004, foreign investment in Japan surged to a record high. Japan has maintained close economic and security ties to its main ally, the United States.

In recent years, Japan has had an ongoing dispute with North Korea over its nuclear weapons program and abduction of Japanese citizens. Its relationship with many of its neighbors is strained due to territorial disputes with Russia, South Korea, the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. These disputes concern control of marine and natural resources, such as possible reserves of crude oil and natural gas.



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Southeast Asia

Independence Movements in Southeast Asia: French Indochina

Nearly all of the countries in Southeast Asia have been under colonial rule at one time in their histories. Following World War II, some of these countries gained their independence from European control without war or violence. However, in the eastern part of Southeast Asia—called *French Indochina*—one of the bloodiest struggles for independence took place. As you can tell by its name, the French-controlled Indochina. This colony included the modern-day countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.



Vietnam War 1964-1975

Eventually, France left Indochina. The United State's involvement in Vietnam was a result of its Cold War policy of *containment*. America's main foreign policy goal in the post-World War II period was to halt the spread of communism and keep Southeast Asia from becoming Communist. The United States eventually began to fight an *undeclared* war in Vietnam. The Vietnam War proved to be one of the costliest and most unpopular wars the United States has ever fought.

Vietnam

Ho Chi Minh and War with France

After World War II, the popular Vietnamese Nationalist leader Ho Chi Minh called on the people of Vietnam to demand independence from French rule. The French were not willing to grant independence. Ho Chi Minh told his people that they would have to fight the French in Vietnam until the French were forced to leave. Vietnamese Nationalists and Communists joined forces. The French armies controlled the major cities, but in the countryside, the *Vietminh* (Independence) league had the widespread support of the peasants.

Ho Chi Minh set up a government in northern Vietnam, while the French set up a government in the south. Communist countries throughout the world supported Minh and his northern government. In southern Vietnam, the United States aided the French. Vietnam was becoming a divided country fighting a civil war.



From 1945 to 1954, the Vietminh fought the French using **guerrilla warfare**. *Guerrilla warfare* is a strategy in which small bands of **guerrilla** fighters who are not part of a formal army attack the enemy using hit-and-run tactics and then quickly disappear into the cover of their surroundings. *Guerrilla* soldiers usually make *sneak attacks* (attacking at night). In South Vietnam, the guerrillas (also called the *Viet Cong*) hid in the jungle, rice paddies, caves, and underground tunnels. The French armies never knew when or where they would be attacked.

As the years passed, Ho Chi Minh's popularity with the Vietnamese people increased. In 1954 a large French army was attacked and defeated by the Vietnamese army at a place called *Dien Bien Phu*. After that loss, France agreed to a settlement. At the peace conference in Geneva, the United States and France tried to limit Communist influence in Vietnam, a goal politically important to the United States. The United States was afraid that the Communists were gaining too much power in Asia. Even with free elections in Vietnam, the United States government knew that Ho Chi Minh would probably win and set up a Communist government. President Eisenhower said that the United States government would not sign a treaty that would create a Communist country. He described the Communist threat in terms of the **domino theory**. According to this theory, the Southeast Asian countries were like a row of dominos, and the fall of one to Communist control would lead to the fall of its neighboring countries.

Vietnam Becomes a Divided Country



Vietnam divided

According to the peace terms, Vietnam was divided along the 17th parallel or latitude. Vietnam, like Korea, was now divided in half. The north became a Communist country with its capital in the city of Hanoi. Ho Chi Minh became the leader of North Vietnam. To the south, the United States and France set up an anti-Communist government with its capital in the city of Saigon. With the help of the United States, an anti-Communist government was set up in South Vietnam with Ngo Dinh Diem (noh dihn d'yem) as president. The leaders of South Vietnam promised the United States that they would create a democracy with free elections in South Vietnam. With that promise,

the United States agreed to continue assisting South Vietnam in its struggle against North Vietnam.

The Vietnam War: 1964-1975

The involvement of the United States in Vietnam gradually increased. The United States sent increasing numbers of tanks, planes, and other military equipment to South Vietnam. The United States government never officially declared war on North Vietnam. In the early days of this conflict, the government kept secret from the American people much information about the extent of American involvement in Vietnam. Throughout the late 1950s, President Eisenhower sent military and economic aid to South Vietnam. President Kennedy continued this policy and also sent American military *advisers* to South Vietnam.



American military advisers fought alongside the South Vietnamese troops.

In North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh received weapons and advice from the Soviet Union and China. In the early 1960s, Ho Chi Minh began guerrilla warfare to overthrow the government of South Vietnam. As the Viet Cong increased its guerrilla warfare, the United States increased its involvement. For the first time, American military advisers fought alongside the South Vietnamese troops. Vietnam was being torn apart, not only by its own people but also by the superpowers and their Cold War.

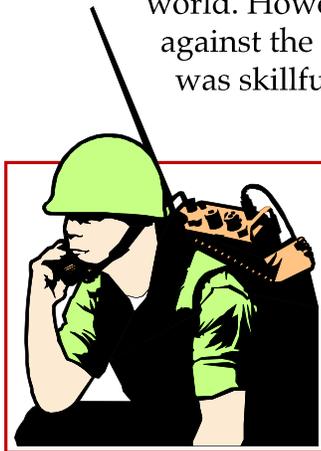
South Vietnam: An Unstable Government

The government and leadership of South Vietnam were not very popular with the people. The South Vietnamese leader Ngo Dinh Diem ruled as a dictator—free elections were never held. In 1963 a group of South Vietnamese generals—with the quiet backing of the United States—planned a **coup**. They overthrew the government and killed Diem. The new leaders were no more popular than Diem had been. The government of South Vietnam remained corrupt and inefficient. In the next three years, nine different military groups ruled South Vietnam. It soon became apparent that South Vietnam could not win a war against the North Vietnamese Communists unless the United States increased its military support.

President Johnson Increases United States Involvement

In August 1964, United States President Lyndon Johnson told Congress that North Vietnamese patrol boats had attacked two American destroyers in the Tonkin Gulf. As a result, Congress passed the *Gulf of Tonkin Resolution*, which gave the president authority to wage an *undeclared* war on North Vietnam. The number of American troops in South Vietnam then significantly increased under President Johnson. By late 1965, more than 185,000 United States soldiers were in South Vietnam. American planes began to bomb North Vietnam. In the years following, the war escalated and the number of troops and amount of fighting increased steadily. By 1968 over 500,000 American soldiers were sent to South Vietnam to fight the North Vietnamese.

The United States had the best-equipped and most advanced army in the world. However, it faced two major difficulties in its war against the North Vietnamese. The United States military was skillful at fighting a *conventional*, or traditional war, the



The number of American troops in South Vietnam significantly increased under President Johnson.

kind of open warfare it had fought in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. The United States military was not used to fighting a guerrilla war in unfamiliar jungle *terrain* (land). Also, the Viet Cong had strong popular support among the Vietnamese people. The South Vietnamese government, on the other hand, had steadily become more unpopular. When the United States was unable to win a *decisive* or a final and complete victory on the ground, it began to increase the use of air power. In order to destroy enemy hideouts, American forces bombed millions of acres of forests and farmland.

The War Becomes Unpopular in America

As the 1960s wore on, many Americans began questioning their government's involvement in the Vietnam War. The war became increasingly unpopular in the United States, and by 1968, a majority of Americans opposed United States involvement in Vietnam. Peace marches and antiwar demonstrations took place throughout the United States. The turning point in the war came in early 1968, when the Viet Cong began a

major offensive known as the *Tet Offensive*. The bitter fighting made Americans realize that United States involvement in the war had not weakened the Viet Cong. In late 1968, President Johnson announced a limited *halt* or stop to the bombing of North Vietnam.

The United States Withdraws: Communist Victory

The Pentagon Papers, a top-secret study officially titled “The History of the U.S. Decision Making Process in Vietnam,” were revealed to the public in 1971. The Pentagon Papers detailed government deceptions about United States policy in Vietnam dating back to the administration of President Harry S Truman (1945-1953).

The documents revealed that the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was drafted months before the incident for which it was named took place. The papers also revealed that President Lyndon Johnson (1963-1969) had been committing infantry to Vietnam while telling the nation that he had no long-range plans for the war. The Pentagon Papers stirred growing antiwar sentiment.



Vietnamization allowed for a gradual troop withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam from 1971-1972.

Fulfilling a campaign promise, newly-elected President Richard Nixon began a program called *Vietnamization*. It allowed for a gradual troop withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam from 1971-1972. Nixon wanted the South Vietnamese to increase their combat role in the war, while American troops were being withdrawn. Massive bombings of North Vietnamese bases and supply routes in Laos and Cambodia escalated. Finally in 1973, an agreement was reached for a cease-fire. The remaining 25,000 American troops returned home. However, the United States Air Force withdrew only to nearby Thailand, and the United States continued to supply aid to the South Vietnamese.

Fighting continued until the spring of 1975, when South Vietnam, unable to fend off the North Vietnamese on their own, fell to the Viet Cong. Following North Vietnam’s victory, all of Vietnam came under a Communist government. North and South Vietnam were united into one country. The capital of Vietnam remained at Hanoi. Saigon, South Vietnam’s capital, was renamed Ho Chi Minh City in honor of the Communist leader. Ho Chi Minh’s dream of a united, independent

Vietnam was realized. By the end of the war, an estimated 58,000 American troops and 250,000 South Vietnamese troops had died. Viet Cong and North Vietnamese deaths numbered over 1.5 million.

Estimated Deaths during the Vietnam War	
American troops	58,000
South Vietnamese troops	250,000
Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops	1.5 million

Refugees

In 1975 the Communists moved into South Vietnam and its capital, Saigon. Thousands of South Vietnamese people were sent to *reeducation camps* for training in Communist *ideology*. The Communists took control of businesses and nationalized industries. Communist **oppression** caused 1.5 million people to flee Vietnam. These **refugees**, who fled to escape danger, came to be known as the *boat people* because they escaped in small, overcrowded ships. More than 200,000 of these boat people died at sea. Many were victims of storms, disease, and pirates. Survivors spent months or years in crowded refugee camps in Southeast Asia. About 70,000 Vietnamese *refugees* settled in the United States or Canada.

Vietnam Today

Since the end of the war, Vietnam has faced many economic problems. To improve its economy, it began to encourage some limited *private enterprise* (business) and trade with the West. During the 1990s, Vietnam and the United States began to improve their relationship. The Vietnamese government began to help American families locate and return the remains of American soldiers killed in the Vietnam War. However, the remains of many military personnel *missing in action* (MIAs) have not yet been located. In 1994 the United States, satisfied with Vietnam's efforts to account for American *prisoners of war* (POWs) and MIAs, ended its 19-year trade **embargo** with Vietnam. In 1995 full diplomatic



The Three Servicemen Statue at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington DC.

ties were established between the United States and Vietnam. The United States government appointed Florida congressman Douglas “Pete” Peterson as ambassador to Vietnam. Many American and Western companies have built factories and opened businesses in Vietnam.

In recent years, Vietnam has encouraged foreign investment. Western companies have built factories and opened businesses. During the early 21st century, Vietnam’s government had developed policies to encourage the modernization of the economy and signed a trade agreement with the United States. By 2001, the government was taking steps toward its goal of joining the *World Trade Organization (WTO)*. The WTO is an international trade organization that establishes rules for the global trading system. All WTO members are supposed to grant each other “most favored nation status” in regards to free trade without restrictions with all trading partners.

Douglas “Pete” Peterson (1935-)

Pete Peterson was born in Omaha, Nebraska on June 26, 1935. He received a B.A. degree from the University of Tampa and did graduate work at Central Michigan. Peterson served in the Air Force from 1954-1981. On a bombing raid in 1966 over North Vietnam, Captain Peterson was shot down and captured by Vietnamese militia. On his 67th mission, Peterson was hit by anti-aircraft fire. He ejected from the plane and crashed landed into a tree. The local militia were under strict orders not to kill American pilots. He and other pilots who were captured were paraded through villages. They were objects of hate for people who had lived too long with a destructive war. He was held prisoner for the next six and a half years characterized by isolation, torture, and interrogation. He and 500 other POWs were released in 1973 following the signing of the Paris Accords.

After serving 26 years in the United States Air Force, Peterson retired in 1981. He eventually settled in Marianna, Florida after several family tragedies and became a Florida State University faculty member. In 1990 Peterson decided to run for United States Congress. He was 53 years old. He beat the incumbent and went on to serve three terms as a member of the House of Representatives. Peterson returned to Vietnam in 1991 as a member of Congress, and in 1996 President Bill Clinton nominated him to be an ambassador to Vietnam. It took more than a year to confirm him as ambassador because so many different groups did not want to re-establish relations with Vietnam. In April 1997, Peterson became the first ambassador to Vietnam in 22 years. This was a historic turning point in Vietnamese-American relations.

Cambodia: A Reign of Terror

In 1953 Cambodia won its independence from France. The country then became a **constitutional monarchy** led by King Norodom Sihanouk. Cambodia tried to remain neutral during the Vietnam War. However, when North Vietnam and the Viet Cong troops began using Cambodia as a hiding place, Cambodia was drawn into the war. American planes began bombing Viet Cong camps and supply lines in Cambodia. As a result of the bombing, the conflict between Communist rebels and the Cambodian government increased. In 1970 an army officer named Lon Nol overthrew the Cambodian government of Sihanouk.



Cambodia

Between 1970-1975, North Vietnam and the Viet Cong forces in Cambodia supported Cambodian Communist guerrillas called the *Khmer Rouge* to fight Lon Nol's government. Cambodia eventually fell to the Communist leader Pol Pot and his troops in 1975. The country was renamed *Kampuchea*. In order to drastically change Cambodian society, the Pol Pot government began a *reign* (period of rule) of terror. The government killed anyone that it believed to be an enemy of the Communist Revolution. All the people

who lived in cities were moved to rural areas. They were forced to work on government-run farms under the close supervision of the army. The Khmer Rouge wanted Cambodia to become a self-sufficient agricultural country. Pol Pot's army murdered government workers, teachers, and many other educated professionals who may have supported the old system. Conditions in Cambodia were terrible. Starvation, torture, and famine were widespread. The Khmer Rouge killed over three million people, one third of the nation's population.

In December of 1978, Vietnam invaded Kampuchea and eventually overthrew the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot. Vietnam installed a new government and attempted to rebuild the country's economy. The Vietnamese withdrew their forces in 1979. The Khmer Rouge withdrew to remote areas and continued fighting for years to regain power. Since 1990 the United Nations has attempted to restore peace to Kampuchea, which